



Bashō's Haiku

Selected Poems of Matsuo Bashō

Translated and with an Introduction by
David Landis Barnhill

Published by
State University of New York Press, Albany

© 2004 State University of New York

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America

No part of this book may be used or reproduced
in any manner whatsoever without written permission.
No part of this book may be stored in a retrieval system
or transmitted in any form or by any means including
electronic, electrostatic, magnetic tape, mechanical,
photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the prior
permission in writing of the publisher.

For information, address State University of New York Press,
90 State Street, Suite 700, Albany, NY 12207

Production by Kelli Williams
Marketing by Michael Campochiaro

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Matsuo Bashō, 1644–1694.

[Poems. English. Selections]

Bashō's haiku : selected poems by Matsuo Bashō / translated by
David Landis Barnhill.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-7914-6165-3 — 0-7914-6166-1

1. Haiku—Translations into English. 2. Japanese poetry—Edo
period, 1600–1868—Translations into English. I. Barnhill, David
Landis. II. Title.

PL794.4.A227 2004

891.6'132—dc22

2004005954

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

BASHŌ'S HAIKU

Selected Poems by Matsuo Bashō



Matsuo Bashō

Translated by, annotated,
and with an Introduction by
David Landis Barnhill

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK PRESS

for Phyllis Jean Schuit

spruce fir trail
up through endless mist
into White Pass
sky

CONTENTS

PREFACE	IX
SELECTED CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF MATSUO BASHŌ	XI
INTRODUCTION: THE HAIKU POETRY OF MATSUO BASHŌ	1
TRANSLATION OF THE HOKKU	19
NOTES	155
MAJOR NATURE IMAGES IN BASHŌ'S HOKKU	269
GLOSSARY	279
BIBLIOGRAPHY	283
INDEX TO BASHŌ'S HOKKU IN TRANSLATION	287
INDEX TO BASHŌ'S HOKKU IN JAPANESE	311
INDEX OF NAMES	329

P R E F A C E

“You know, Bashō is almost too appealing.” I remember this remark, made quietly, offhand, during a graduate seminar on *haiku* poetry. I’m not sure the other student even noticed the comment, but it spoke volumes not only about the scholar, but about Bashō’s impact on Japanese culture and now our own. It was about one hundred years ago that Bashō became known in the West through the translations of Basil Hill Chamberlain and, more importantly, the influence on the poet Ezra Pound. That influence expanded in midcentury, with R. H. Blyth’s voluminous and high quality translations of *haiku* and the surge of American interest in Japanese culture following World War II. The last fifty years has seen increasing interest in Bashō among scholars, poets, nature writers, and environmental philosophers.

In this translation of Bashō’s *haiku* and the accompanying volume, *Bashō’s Journey: The Literary Prose of Matsuo Bashō*, I offer a collection of his poetry and prose that I hope will help extend that interest and his influence even further. It has been decades in the making, with a numerous people who have impacted it in a variety of ways. Professor Lee Yearley first introduced me to East Asian culture, the study of religion, and the intellectual life. Poets Kenneth Rexroth and Gary Snyder intensified my interest while enriching my perspective. Professors Edwin Good and Susan Matisoff were instrumental to my graduate work on Bashō, as was Makoto Ueda, whose scholarship on Bashō has been extraordinarily important. Friends Scott, Jerry, Phil, Zack, and Bill helped ensure the trip would be a long and strange one. My wife, enduring my solitary character and

obsessive work, has been a true companion along the way. Guilford College provided a nourishing environment for someone dedicated to interdisciplinary approaches to learning. And I am grateful to Nancy Ellegate and the State University of New York Press for their support of this project.

SELECTED CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF MATSUO BASHŌ

- 1644 Matsuo Kinsaku (Bashō) is born in Ueno, Iga Province.
- 1656 Matsuo Yozaemon, Bashō's father, dies.
- 1662 Earliest extant poem.
- 1666 Death of Tōdō Yoshitada, Bashō's friend and fellow poet, son of his Lord.
- 1672 Dedicates a poetry contest he judged, *The Seashell Game (Kai ōi)*, at a Shinto Shrine. He moves to Edo.
- 1675 Participates in a linked verse (*haikai no renga*) gathering with Nishiyama Sōin (1605–82), the founder of the Danrin school. By now he has students, including Sugiyama Sampū (1647–1732) and Takarai Kikaku (1661–1707).
- 1676 Participates in two Danrin-style linked verse sequences, *Two Poets in Edo (Edo ryōgin shū)*.
- 1677 Begins to work at the waterworks department in Edo as he continues to be a rising star in the Danrin school.
- 1679 Becomes a lay monk.
- 1680 Two major collections by his school are published, *Twenty Solo Sequences by Tōsei's Disciples (Tōsei montei dokugin nijikkasen)* and *Haikai Contests*

- (*Haikai awase*). He moves out of central Edo into a hut on the rustic outskirts in the Fukagawa district. His poetry begins to reflect the emotional intensity and spiritual depth of Chinese poetry.
- 1681 A disciple transplants a *bashō* (banana) tree at the hut. Before the year is over, the hut and the poet are known by that name. He practices Zen meditation under Butchō (1642–1716), and Zen and Chinese Daoism become influential in his poetry.
- 1683 The Bashō Hut is destroyed by fire in January. The first major anthology of his school, *Shriveled Chestnuts* (*Minashiguri*), is published. In August his mother dies.
- 1684 In September, begins a long journey to the West that will give rise to his first travel journal, *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field* (*Nozarashi kikō*). During a visit in Nagoya, he leads five linked verse sequences (*kasen*) that will be published as *The Winter Sun* (*Fuyu no hi*).
- 1685 Visits his native village of Ueno to celebrate the New Year. After several other stops, he returns to Edo in the summer.
- 1686 Writes the unfinished *Critical Notes on the New Year Sequence* (*Hatsukaishi hyōchū*).
- 1687 Travels to Kashima Shrine to see the harvest moon, which results in *Kashima Journal* (*Kashima kikō*). He publishes *Collected Verses* (*Atsumeku*), a selection of thirty-four of his hokku. In late November, he sets off on a long journey to the west, which results in *Knapsack Notebook* (*Oi no kobumi*).
- 1688 Travels to Sarashina village to see the harvest moon, which results in *Sarashina Journal* (*Sarashina kikō*), and then returns to Edo in September.
- 1689 Leaves Edo in May for a very long journey to the north country and the west coast of Japan, which

becomes the basis for *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* (*Oku no hosomichi*).

- 1690 Lives from May to August in the “Unreal Hut” by Lake Biwa, and then moves to his native village of Ueno. He begins to speak of his new poetic ideal of lightness (*karumi*).
- 1691 Spends late May at the “Villa of Fallen Persimmons” in the hills west of Kyoto, where he writes *Saga Diary* (*Saga nikki*). The linked-verse anthology *Monkey’s Straw Raincoat* (*Sarumino*) is published. He returns to Edo in December.
- 1692 After many relatively quiet months, a new hut is built for him, and he becomes busy again as a haikai master.
- 1693 Tōin, a nephew he had looked after for many years, becomes ill, moves in with Bashō, and dies in April. Bashō begins to take care of Jutei, a woman with three children. In August he closes his gate to visitors.
- 1694 Begins a journey to the southwest in June in poor health. Two anthologies of his school are published, *The Detached Room* (*Betsuzashiki*) and *A Sack of Charcoal* (*Sumidawara*). On November 28, while in Osaka, he dies.

INTRODUCTION

THE HAIKU POETRY OF MATSUO BASHŌ

stormy sea—
stretching out over Sado,
Heaven's River
arami ya / sado ni yokotau / amanogawa

Bashō was standing on the western shores of Japan looking out upon the night sea. He was pausing on his long journey to the “deep north” of Japan, and he could hear the crashing of the waves. Miles beyond lay Sado Island. Sado was known as a place of riches, where gold was being mined. But even more it was known as a place where numerous people, including the Emperor Juntoku, the Buddhist leader Nichiren, and the great medieval Nō dramatist Zeami, had endured the enforced solitude of exile. The poem begins with an exclamation of the violence and vastness of the water, the cutting word *ya* functioning somewhat like an exclamation point. Then our consciousness is brought to a focus on the melancholy island, small in the cold sweep of ocean. The island lies in contrast to the ocean that surrounds it, yet it harbors centuries of the emotional storm of exile. Then our consciousness is pulled up and out across the sky, as Heaven's River (the Milky Way) reaches from horizon to horizon. As a metaphorical river, it flows in eternal tranquillity above the storms of the sea and of human life, sparkling with a scattered brightness more pure than gold. Bashō, the island, and everything on earth seem to be alone yet together under the

stream of stars. Over the storm is silence; above the movement is a stillness that somehow suggests the flow of a river and of time; and piercing the darkness is the shimmering but faint light of stars.

The modern novelist Kawabata Yasunari was so moved by this verse that in the climax of his masterpiece, *Snow Country*, Bashō's River of Heaven becomes a principal actor. The protagonist Shimamura looks up into the night sky and feels himself floating into the Milky Way and wonders: "Was this the bright vastness the poet Bashō saw when he wrote of Heaven's River arched over a stormy sea?" A fire rages nearby, with sparks rising to the stars. "And the River of Heaven, like a great aurora, flowed through his body to stand at the edges of the earth. There was a quiet, chilly loneliness in it, and a sort of voluptuous astonishment." The novel concludes with this sentence: "As he caught his footing, his head fell back, and Heaven's River flowed down inside him with a roar" (Kawabata, 134, 137, 142).¹ The River of Heaven continues to flow today not only in the night sky, but also through sensitive readers of Bashō's poetry.

Bashō had come a long way by the time he wrote this poem, not only on his journey to the back country of Japan but in his life. Born in 1644, he grew up in a small town as a member of a low-ranking samurai family. While the still new Tokugawa Period (1600–1868) was characterized by feudal stability compared to the war-ravaged medieval period, the burgeoning affluence of the time opened up aesthetic transformation and social mobility. Literacy spread through many classes, and the merchant class in particular began to take up interest in the arts. The relatively new form of poetry of *haikai no renga*² (comic linked-verse) appealed both to the merchant class and to samurai. As a young man, Bashō began to participate in poetry gatherings with his friend Tōdō Yoshitada, the son of his family's Lord. In 1666, Yoshitada suddenly died, shaking Bashō into considering a departure from traditional feudal society. Because the arts were expanding, it was possible for some gifted writers to opt out of the strict class distinctions of farmer, samurai, artisan, and merchant and establish a livelihood as a master poet. Bashō did just that, heading first to the capital of Kyoto and then to the growing metropolis of Edo (now Tokyo). By 1680,

he had established himself as a successful poetry master, but dissatisfied with the superficial poetics of the time, he developed his own aesthetics that reflected spiritual depth and aesthetic subtlety, exemplified in the Sado Island poem. In the last ten years of his life, he travelled often and wrote five travel journals. In 1694, after starting out on yet another journey, he died in Osaka. Shortly before his death he wrote:

ill on a journey:

my dreams roam round
over withered fields

tabi ni yande / yume wa karen o / kakemeguru

The remarkable power of Bashō's poetry and prose continues today, expanding into cultures he could not have dreamed of. His works, and the life he lived, have been influencing Western literature since Ezra Pound popularized imagistic haiku a hundred years ago. Over the past fifty years, his impact on poetry has increased as distinguished poets such as Kenneth Rexroth, Cid Corman, Sam Hamill, and Robert Hass have translated his verse.³ His influence is also increasing among nature writers, such as John Elder and Gretel Ehrlich.⁴ He continues as a master poet to the growing number of haiku and haibun writers in English.⁵ And recently the scholarly study of Bashō in the West has reached a new level of insight.⁶ My hope is that this translation will help to extend his impact on Western culture.

HAIKAI, HOKKU, AND HAIKU

In studying Bashō's poetry, the modern reader is faced with a seeming confusion of terms, in particular *haikai*, *hokku*, and *haiku*. To clarify these terms, we need to step back in time to classical Japanese poetry. The waka, a short poem with a 5-7-5-7-7 syllabic rhythm, was the principal verse form in classical literature beginning in the Heian Period (794-1186). Waka poetics were characterized by highly refined sensibilities, vocabulary, and themes severely restricted by aristocratic tastes, and highly conventionalized associations in imagery.⁷ *Renga*, a verse form that became predominant in the medieval period (1186-

1600), continued the classical waka aesthetics while expanding the poetic structure. It is a linked-verse form usually composed by a group of poems, and consists of distinct but conjoined stanzas in alternating syllabic rhythms of 5-7-5, 7-7, 5-7-5, 7-7, and so on.⁸

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw the rise of a “comic” form of linked verse, *haikai no renga*, which appealed to a broader audience. A number of different schools, with distinctive poetics and techniques, evolved, and Bashō’s poetic school, *Shōmon*, was one form of *haikai no renga*. Bashō spoke more broadly of haikai art and the haikai spirit (*haii*), which included not only linked verse but also *haiga* (haikai painting) and *haibun* (haikai prose) and involved both earthy humor and spiritual depth. So it is most accurate to speak of Bashō as a master of “haikai” poetry.

In linked-verse, whether classical *renga* or its haikai form, the first stanza (hokku) sets the stage for the entire poem and is considered particularly important. One feature that distinguishes a hokku from other stanzas is that it must contain a season word (*kigo*), which designates in which season the poem was written in: hokku are by definition poems about the current season. A hokku also must be a complete statement, not dependent on the succeeding stanza.⁹ Because of its importance to linked-verses and its completeness, haikai poets began to write them as semi-independent verses, which could be used not only as a starting stanza for a linked-verse, but also could be appreciated by themselves. So the individual poems that Bashō created are, properly speaking, “hokku.”

“Haiku,” on the other hand, is a modern word. It was popularized by the Masaoka Shiki (1867–1902), the first great modern haiku poet, as a way to distinguish his type of verse from its antecedents, haikai and hokku. In particular, Shiki emphasized that a haiku is a completely independent poem, not part of a linked-verse. During most of the twentieth century, Western scholars and translators used the term haiku for both modern haiku and premodern hokku, and haiku has thus come to be the generally accepted term in the West for both premodern and modern forms. In addition, Bashō’s hokku now function in modern culture (both in Japan and the West) the same way Shiki’s haiku does, as independent verses.

Such a situation poses a problem for translators. Should we be historically proper and speak of Bashō's hokku poems and haikai poetry, or should we accept the modern if anachronistic idiom and speak of his haiku poetry? Especially for translations intended for both a scholarly and a general audience, I simply don't think there is a fully satisfactory approach. As an indication of the complexity involved, the eminent scholar Haruo Shirane uses a combined approach in his *Early Modern Japanese Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). He has sections on "Composing Haiku" (187) and "The Poetics of Haiku" (202) and yet speaks of Bashō's poems as hokku. In a similar way, I use the term hokku when talking about Bashō's verse and haikai when referring to his particular conception of art. However, I use the term haiku and the haiku tradition to refer to the poetic form more generally when I am referring to the long tradition that includes premodern hokku and modern haiku. And since haiku is the more familiar term, I have used it in the title of this book.

THE STRUCTURE OF HAIKU

It is common knowledge that the traditional form of a Japanese haiku is three lines with seven, five, and seven syllables. Unfortunately, this common knowledge is not quite accurate. As Hiroaki Sato has argued, Japanese hokku and haiku are not lined in the way we are used to in the West. As it is written in Japanese script, it may be one line or two lines, and in printed editions it is virtually always presented as one line (horizontally, from top to bottom). As a result, Sato and a few others translate Japanese haiku and write American haiku in one line.

Concerning syllable count, the notion that haiku has a structure of seven, five, and seven syllables has led some Westerners, especially in the past, to translate Japanese haiku into English or write American haiku with that structure. It is particularly common in public schools to teach students to write haiku in this form. But the English syllable is different from the Japanese equivalent (*on*, sound). Japanese "syllables" are quite uniform, most of them consisting of a consonant and a vowel: *ka*, *ri*, *to*, and so forth. As a result, they are also very short.

English syllables have much greater variety in structure and length. Many English syllables would require two Japanese *on* to pronounce, and not a few would require three (for instance, “grape” would be pronounced something like “gu-re-pu” in Japanese). The result is that a Japanese haiku with five, seven, and five *on* is generally more concise than one with the same number of English syllables—and so a translation or an American haiku using 5–7–5 syllables will be longer. Also, in Japanese the five-seven-five has a more regular cadence because of the similarity in the length of the *on*. This is why I prefer to speak of the structure as a five-seven-five *rhythm*. In part for these reasons, few contemporary translators or Western haiku poets attempt to capture the five-seven-five pattern.

But the pattern is certainly there in the Japanese. For this reason, I don't agree with the one-line method of translating Japanese haiku. They are a three-part poem, and even though they are printed in one line, the Japanese reader is aware of that rhythm in a way that readers of one line of English cannot be. On the other hand, I agree that the conventional technique of using three separate lines in translation is also misleading: there is more flow in the original, even when there is a cutting word. As a result, I translate Bashō's hokku with overlapping and indented lines, to suggest both the three-part rhythm and the continuity of the original.

THE NATURE OF BASHŌ'S HOKKU

While haiku is one of the best known of foreign verse forms, the conventional understanding of it remains somewhat limited. In a conventional view, haiku is primarily an objective nature poem. It concerns the pure present—the haiku moment—and so allusions to the past and narrative content are not significant. The poem also presents the object in itself, rather than images with symbolic reference, with the poet writing within the solitude of his encounter with nature. As a result, the cultural context, whether it is the literary traditions or the circumstances of the poem, are unimportant. And so, too, titles or headnotes are not appropriate.

This view is probably the result of a number of different factors. Masaoka Shiki popularized the notion of haiku as *shasei* (a sketch of nature).¹⁰ Zen, with its emphasis on the pure perception of things as they are, has also influenced this perspective. There may be more subtle Western influences as well, including the (now old) school of New Criticism, which maintained that a literary text stands as an independent entity and so cultural and biographical context is not significant. One could also speculate that the notion of objectivity popularized by the Scientific Revolution and the European Enlightenment may be at work here, in particular the notion that it is possible to understand the object as it exists beyond the limitations of subjectivity. And Western individualism, found both in the Protestant emphasis on the individual's encounter with the divine and the Romantic notion of the solitary artist transcending tradition, may be a factor.

As with most conventional views, there is considerable truth in this understanding of haiku. But it is also incomplete and misleading. Narrative content may be central to a haiku, as it was to many written by Bashō and the great poet Yosa Buson (1716–1784). As Haruo Shirane has demonstrated so well in his brilliant *Traces of Dreams*, cultural memory is a crucial part of Bashō's apprehension of the present, and allusions to the past are essential to our understanding of some of his hokku. Particularly important are what we might call "imbedded associations." Although sometimes Bashō employed a symbol, that is, something standing for something else (as a dove for peace), what is crucial to the entire Japanese literary tradition are conventions of reference and association that some images include. A bush warbler, for instance, is a bird of spring, particularly early spring, despite the fact that it is a common year-round resident throughout Japan. Part of the reason it has this seasonal association is that it is one of the first birds to sing in the new year. Its song is not only considered beautiful but is said to sound like the title of the Lotus Sutra (*Hokke-kyō*); it is as much an aural as a visual image. It is also associated with another image of early spring, plum blossoms. All of these meanings are embedded in the one word, *uguisu*.

Another important feature of haikai poetry is its social nature. *Haikai no renga* was usually made by a group of poets,

and many of the hokku that seem to be poems of solitude served as the introduction to a communally created linked-verse.¹¹ In addition, many of Bashō's poems were "greeting" (*aisatsu*) poems, offered to a host (or even a place). That social context is integral to the meaning of the poem and is one of the reasons titles and headnotes are significant.¹² Like the literary associations, the social context of the haiku extends the richness of meaning of these brief poems.

NATURE IN HAIKU POETRY

The significance of nature in haiku poetry is well-known, but it is important to keep in mind the emphasis placed on seasons. As noted before, every hokku or haiku is supposed to be a poem of a season, indicated by one or more season words. The season word may, in fact, refer to a human activity, such as a religious ritual that is only performed in a particular season. But even here the human event implies a period of time in the natural world, with nature understood as a temporal process as much as collection of flora and fauna. Thus, every poem is located in both nature and time. (Most Japanese editions of haiku indicate the season and season word involved, as does this translation.)

There have been two apparently contrasting responses to the significance of nature in the haiku tradition. One holds that the poems are models of "nature poetry," particularly an imagistic portrait of the "thing-in-itself." The other view holds that the haiku tradition doesn't really concern true nature, but rather a culturalized nature that has been defined by tradition and thus is artificial.

First, it should be stated that Bashō was both an inheritor of his tradition's conventions about nature and a transformer of them. He applied "haikai twists" to some poetic conventions, expanding or even inverting some associations. Consider what is probably Bashō's most famous haiku:

old pond—

 a frog jumps in,
 water's sound

furuike ya / kawazu tobikomu / mizu no oto

This verse was striking in its time because the frog always had been an aural image that implied the resonant croaking in summer. Bashō was the first poet to present the frog not singing but leaping into the water—a very different sound, coming suddenly and yet seeming to linger in the ear the way the ripples spread out and slowly die away. Bashō was not completely tied to the restrictions of the tradition.

More importantly, we need to realize that the literary conventions are based on several assumptions that our own culture would do well to consider seriously. One is that plants, animals, and even scenes have a “true nature,” just as humans do. A bush warbler, a pine, a moment of late autumn dusk when the light fades behind silhouetted trees: they are not mere objects but are characterized by certain qualities that make them distinctive. One can appreciate the true nature of a bush warbler most fully as it sings in early spring with the plum blossoms in bloom. A pine tree that grows in a manicured suburban lawn may grow straight, dense with needles, but the true nature of the pine is manifested by a one holding on at cliff-edge, bent, stunted, and with few needles because of a century of frigid wind. (This idea is the basis of Japanese pruning techniques and bonsai training.) And while we tend to think “beauty is in the eye of the beholder” and that emotions are subjective, the moment of the day’s last light as autumn fades into winter (*aki no yūgure* or *aki no kure*) has a type of beauty and feeling that is in and of the scene itself. The Japanese held to an idea of “poetic essences” (*hon’i*), that captured the true nature of a thing and could be handed down in the literary tradition.¹³

A second assumption is that the natural world and the experience of nature are not wholly distinct. Each implies the other in a way that is similar to the school of phenomenology.¹⁴ There is nature-that-we-are-conscious-of and consciousness-of-nature. The strict split between subject and object, subjectivity and objectivity, is not part of the East Asian tradition. It certainly is not a part of the Buddhist tradition, which emphasizes that the dichotomy between the ego-self and the world-out-there is the principal delusion that causes suffering and desires. In the Chinese poetic tradition, a principal goal was to achieve a unity of feeling and scene. A true poet has cultivated his sensibility to the point that his “subjective” feelings match the

“objective” atmosphere in the scene being experienced. Similarly, Bashō's aesthetic term *sabi* (loneliness) was a quality inherent in scene (such as autumn evening) as well as a feeling experienced by the refined poet. It was the culturally refined poet who could enter into and experience the true quality of scenes in nature.

A third assumption, related to the previous one, is that there are authoritative experiences of nature. Some experiences of nature are “truer”—more deeply insightful of the essential nature of things—than others. We can look to the experiences of great poets of the past as guides for what can and should be experienced when we see a bird, tree, or scene. In this way, great poets are similar to sages in Asian spiritual traditions who embody the experience of a deep insight. These authoritative aesthetic experiences can be codified in literary conventions.

A fourth assumption is that nature and culture are not separate. In the Chinese poetic tradition, writing and literature are human expressions similar in kind to the tracks of birds. Poetry is a natural expression of human feeling, akin to birdsong, an idea presented in the famous preface to the Japanese collection of court poetry, the *Kokinshū* (ca. 920). As the previous assumptions imply, it is the highly cultured person that can truly experience nature and express her feelings about it. “Culturized nature,” if done with deep cultural insight into nature, is “true nature.”¹⁵

So Bashō's “nature” is a combination of what we call the “natural world” and the Japanese tradition associated with it. In order to deepen the reader's understanding of the meaning of nature in his writings, I have tried to supply information both cultural and scientific, including genus and species when I could discover what they are.¹⁶ For images used once or twice, the information is brief and found in the notes to poems. In the case of major nature images used frequently, I have supplied a glossary at the end of the book with more extensive information. My assumption is that the more we know of the nature images both culturally and scientifically, the fuller will be our understanding of the Japanese experience of nature, which will enrich our own experience of the complexity of the natural world and its relation to culture. Indeed, in designing the structure of this

book, I have in mind not only students of Japanese literature and religion, but also naturalists and students of nature writing.

STAGES OF BASHŌ'S POETRY AND POETICS

Bashō's poetic style and aesthetic ideas went through many changes—except perhaps his view that a poet's style and aesthetics *should* undergo change.¹⁷ We cannot here enter into a detailed discussion of those changes, but let me note a few major stages. In his early poetry, Bashō wrote under the influence of the Teimon school, established by Matsunaga Teitoku (1571–1653). This type of poetry drew on the imagery, diction, and elegant beauty of the court tradition while relying on verbal wit to amuse the reader. By 1672, his poetry was beginning to display the characteristics of the Danrin school, founded by Nishiyama Sōin (1605–1682). Under its influence, poets such as Bashō enjoyed greater freedom in subject matter, imagery, tone, and poetic composition. Courtly topics were subject to parody and classical allusions were given “haikai twists.” Verbal wit continued to be used, but more to advance the comically unorthodox perspective than to display classical erudition. In the late 1670s, Bashō began to use more frequently a technique of striking juxtaposition, in which two images were brought together but kept separate enough to suggest (rather than explain) a comparison.

By 1679, he had become a lay Zen monk, and the following year he moved out of the center of the bustling capital of Edo and took up residence in a hut by the Fukagawa River on the outskirts of the city. His hokku, sometimes accompanied by prose introductions, were showing an increasingly dark tone, some bordering on desolation. The following hokku, written in 1680, is sometimes said to be the first example of his mature style.

on a withered branch
 a crow has settled—
 autumn evening
kareeda ni / karasu no tomarikeri / aki no kure

He clearly was being influenced by the seriousness and depth of Chinese verse as well as the spiritual aesthetics of Zen.

In 1684, Bashō set forth on the first of his journeys that resulted in travel journals. By that time, his aesthetic of “loneliness” (*sabi*) was well-developed, and he had established his own school of poetry, *Shōmon*. Although Bashō had become a serious and mature poet, his haikai did retain humor. Part of the genius and appeal of Bashō was his ability to combine deeply spiritual poetics with an earthy humor. The period of 1689–1691, when he traveled to the Deep North of Japan and then spent time in the Kyoto area, Bashō’s life was particularly rich in experiences of nature, stimulation by various disciples, and periods of productive solitude.

In the early 1690s, he began to emphasize lightheartedness and day-to-day subject matter, promoting a new aesthetic of “lightness” (*karumi*). This aesthetic reflected his renewed sense of the significance of the mundane dimension of life and art. It also helped him deal with an increasingly troubled spirit, something that became apparent in his writings after he returned to Edo in 1692. In 1694, frail but determined to continue the hard work of poetry, he set off again on a journey. He made it as far as Osaka, where he died in November. One can only imagine how his poetry might have evolved further if he had lived.

TRANSLATION STYLE AND PHILOSOPHY

As is obvious to those who know any Japanese, my style of translation tends toward the literal. This is not because I am striving for a correct scholarly translation, although accuracy in this sense is certainly a virtue. Rather, I believe the distinctive power of the original poem is usually captured most fully by staying close to what the original poem says and how it says it.

There are several major components of this approach. The first concerns the imagistic quality of many of the hokku. Bashō’s hokku have been called a “poetry of nouns” because of its tendency to rely primarily on images rather than statement. We can look back at the Sado Island, crow on a withered branch, and old pond poems as examples. In each case we have the same pattern of noun, noun-verb, noun. Much of the

360, 405). However, in the case of several poems whose date of composition we do not know, I gave them a separate section (see hokku 114–16).

Premodern Japanese culture followed a lunar calendar: the new year began with the coming of spring, which was a different date each year although it was usually around late February. Winter, then, ranged over two of our calendar years, so to avoid confusion I give both years (e.g., winter, 1689–90). When known, I specify the date of composition of the poem (or of its earliest draft) in terms of both the lunar calendar and the Western Gregorian calendar (e.g., 23rd of Third Month: May 12).

There are, of course, many translations of Bashō's hokku, and some of his poems have been translated innumerable times. In a few cases, especially when another translator has remained close to Bashō's original, my translation differs little from a predecessor—something that is true for earlier translators as well. I have avoided replication of earlier translations, but I also have avoided creating awkward translations simply in order to avoid similarity.

dynamism of these poems is the stark imagism that turning them into a statement would only dilute. One could, for instance, translate the old pond as:

sitting by an old pond
 a frog jumps in
 giving off the sound of water.

Obviously this is an intentionally prosaic translation (although one could quote similar ones that have been published), but it illustrates how turning a series of images into a statement of an event robs the original of its power.

Another key component is the order in which the images are presented. Consider the following alternative translations of poems previously discussed:

Heaven's River
 stretches out over
 Sado Island

autumn evening:
 a crow has settled
 on a withered branch.

a frog jumps in
 and the water sounds:
 an old pond

The imagery of these versions is the same as in the original, but with the different image order these versions become quite different poems. The point is that many hokku are psychologically subtle, and the order of experiencing the images is critical to the poem's meaning. As we saw with the Sado Island poem, the movement from sea to island to sky is crucial to its effect. It is also crucial that the crow poem begins with the more general sense of autumn and settles, like a bird, on a withered branch, and that the old pond begins with the pond and ends with the resonating sound of water. If we are to capture in translation the complex experience of the Japanese poem, there must be a high priority on keeping the image order of the original.

Also worth consideration is the type of imagery—for instance, between noun and verb forms. Consider the following: “plovers cry,” “the plovers’ cry,” and “the crying plovers.” At one level all three images denote the same phenomenon, but the first one presents our mind with an image of an activity (crying), the second emphasizes the sound itself (the cry), and the third presents us with an object (the plovers). Subtle differences, to be sure, but poetry thrives on subtlety.

Another aspect of this approach to translating is the attempt to reproduce the laconic, abbreviated style of many hokku. It is tempting to add to the original verse explanations that might clarify it. Indeed, sometimes this is necessary, but I think it should be avoided whenever possible. Part of the meaning of some hokku is found in the very absence of words and lack of explanation. This is most notable in the case of cutting words (*kireji*), such as *-keri* (as in *tomarikeri*) and *ya* (as in *furuike ya*). These words separate the poem into two parts, and some of the power of the verse comes from the gap and tension between the parts.¹⁸

Sometimes, however, the laconic style results from words simply being left out—and left up to the reader to fill in. For instance,

usually hateful,
 yet the crow too
 in this dawn snow
bigoro nikuki / karasu mo yuki no / ashita kana

bamboo shoots—
 and my childhood
 sketches of them
take no ko ya / osanaki toki no / e no susabi

Most translators have added explanatory fillers in order to make explicit what is implicit, or make specific what is ambiguous. The crow too is: beautiful, endearing, welcome . . . there are many words that could be used. But Bashō did not use them. Rather he left a “hermeneutical space,” a gap in the meaning of the poem that invites the reader in to complete the poem in her own experience. To add the term “beautiful,” for instance, only

reduces the richness of the original. Similarly, most translators have explained the bamboo shoots, the old sketches, and the connection between them: the sketches resemble the bamboo shoots; the shoots remind him of his childhood; he used to love doing the sketches; the sketches were an artistic training, and so forth. All of these are possible interpretations of the original, but when one is specified, that lush multiplicity of interpretation is eliminated. Part of the richness of the hokku is in how the copresence of the two distinct but related elements of consciousness creates a complex psychological state: the sight of bamboo shoots growing before him and the memory of his sketches of those shoots when he himself was but a sprout of a man. There is nostalgia, a complex sense of the power of nature's growth, the relationship between that growth and both the maturing process and the growth of artistic ability, as well as a faint echo of his own advanced age. These poetic meanings are upheld by the absence of explanation, a gap between the two images, and an invitation to the reader to enter into the poem. We should not be in a hurry to eliminate ambiguity if it is part of the poetry of the original text.

Similarly, I usually avoid another type of explanation. Here the issue isn't an ambiguity in the original but the associations that are implied. The image of the *hototogisu*, a cuckoo, is often used by itself—in part because it conveniently consists of five syllables. By literary convention (stemming from but not limited to ornithological knowledge), the *hototogisu* is a bird of the summer; it is an aural rather than visual image, because it is more often heard than seen; its call is both beautiful and uncommon, so one anxiously awaits its song as summer comes on. Because it is an image of sound (and also because they may be uncomfortable with a one-word line), most translators will add a verb such as “to sing.” This is accurate, but it is extra. A key part of the Japanese sensitivity to nature is its tendency to *hear* birds and tree breeze. Our experience of nature, which tends to be dominated by the ocular, will be enriched if we cultivate the Japanese sensibility of hearing, learn the birdsongs, and pay attention to the texture of wind through pines. It is a different kind of reading experience (and experience of nature) to say “the cuckoo sings” than to say “cuckoo” and *hear* the image.¹⁹

My general preference is obviously to let the reader come to the poem as it is in the original. This asks more of the reader, for it assumes the reader will bring to the text a knowledge of the traditional associations and won't be asking for footnotes embedded in the translation. Actually, I consider this a matter of respecting both the original text and the reader. I don't think the reader benefits by having the translator hold her hermeneutical hand by filling in the poem. As this approach asks more of the reader, it also asks more of the translator, not only because it is difficult to resist the tendency to explain the poem in the translation, but because the translator has to devise a format that can help the reader become learned enough to enter the poem on her own. (Notes to the poems, word-by-word translations, scientific names when known, and a glossary thus became essential for this translation.) And it asks more of the translator because the goal is not merely to communicate the basic sense of the original, but the structure and style that carries much of its meaning.

I want to be quick to note that none of these principles are absolute. Sometimes it is simply impossible to follow them, and other times a strict adherence to them would result in plain awkwardness. This is particularly true since one principle can work against the other. The translator may be left asking: should I maintain the image order, or change it in order to keep the type of imagery and avoid adding explanatory words? As any translator knows, translation is a craft of very relative success, and I am painfully aware of how often my translations fall short of my ideals.

TEXTS USED, TEXTUAL NOTES, AND ORGANIZATION

Depending on which complete edition you refer to, there are approximately 980 extant hokku by Bashō. I have translated 724, as well as numerous variants that give a sense of Bashō's creative process. I have not attempted a complete translation in order to avoid making the book unacceptably long and to avoid offering translations I thought did not work sufficiently well.

There are numerous excellent editions of Bashō's hokku, and I have referred to many in doing these translations. In general I have taken Kon Eizō's edition, *Bashō kushū*, as my stan-

dard, including the choice of title or headnote (of which there may be several versions). In some cases the combination of the headnote and the hokku constitute a haibun, which are included also in the companion volume of translations from his prose, *Bashō's Journey: The Literary Prose of Matsuo Bashō*. When his hokku are found in journals or haibun included in *Bashō's Journey*, I mention that in the notes.

Because knowledge of associations and circumstances are often crucial to the meaning of Bashō's hokku, I have included notes that give season, season word, year, and in many cases other information that seems important. A thorough commentary on over seven hundred of his hokku is not feasible, and frequently I had to battle my desire to add more information. I have also included in the notes a word-by-word dictionary-like translation that should help readers understand the poems better. They are also meant to encourage readers to create their own translations.

Traditionally Japanese verse is arranged by season rather than chronologically. I considered using a seasonal organization, but the reader would not be able to place the poems in the framework of Bashō's life. So I have used a combined format: the poems are listed chronologically, but I have emphasized the seasonal framework as well by organizing the translations by seasons within a given year. In the few cases where Bashō wrote a hokku out of season (see hokku 289, 375, 404, 415, 490, 714, 718, 723), I have kept the poem in its chronological context but highlighted the different seasonal context in the notes. Unfortunately, we do not know the exact date of composition of all of his verse and in some cases scholars offer different conjectures as to the time period. In general, I have followed Kon's dating, but sometimes when another scholar suggests a more specific year (e.g., 1684 instead of 1684–94), I have gone with the more specific, noting the uncertainty with a question mark after the date. To maintain the combined chronological and seasonal approach, I have grouped those known only by period (e.g., 1681–83) as a separate section, then grouped all those in that period according to the seasonal rhythm of spring, summer, fall, and winter. In the few cases of miscellaneous poems—those that lack a season word—I have ordered them chronologically within the season they were written (see hokku 66, 243, 354,

TRANSLATION
OF THE HOKKU

1662 TO 1669

1

Because spring began on the 29th

has spring come

or has the year gone?

second-to-last-day

haru ya koshi / toshi ya yukiken / kotsugomori

2

the moon's your guide:

please come this way

to a traveler's inn

tsuki zo shirube / konata e irase / tabi no yado

3

the old-lady cherry

in bloom: a remembrance

of her old age

ubazakura / saku ya rōgo no / omoiide

4

in the capital:

ninety-nine thousand people

blossom viewing

kyō wa / kuman-kusen kunju no / hanami kana

5

the blossoms are seen
 even by the eyes of the poor:
 demon thistle
hana wa shizu no / me ni mo miekeri / oni azami

6

blue flag irises
 looking just like their images
 in the water
kakitsubata / nitari ya nitari / mizu no kage

7

autumn wind
 through an open door—
 a piercing cry
akikaze no / yarido no kuchi ya / togarigoe

8

At the home of someone whose child had died
 withered and bent over,
 the whole world upside down:
 bamboo in snow
shiore fusu ya / yo wa sakasama no / yuki no take

9

withering frost:
 melancholy blossoms
 through the flower field
shimogare ni / saku wa shinki no / hana no kana

10

the faces of blossoms,
 do they make you shy?
 hazy moon
hana no kao ni / hareute shite ya / oborozuki

11

among blossoms:

grieving that I can't even open
my poem bag

hana ni akanu / nageki ya kochi no / utabukuro

12

blossoming waves:

has snow returned to water,
flowering out of season?

nami no hana to / yuki mo ya mizu no / kaeribana

1670–79

13

like clouds drifting apart,

a wild goose separates, for now,
from his friend

kumo to hedatsu / tomo ka ya kari no / ikiwakare

14

a hangover:

but while the cherries bloom,
what of it?

futsukayoi / mono kawa hana no / aru aida

15

an acupuncturist

pounding into my shoulder;
the cast off robe

haritate ya / kata ni tsuchi utsu / karakoromo

16

Musashi Plain—

just an inch,
the deer's voice

musashino ya / issun hodo na / shika no koe

17

on the scales—

Kyoto and Edo balanced

in this spring of a thousand years

tenbin ya / kyō edo kakete / chiyo no haru

18

At Saya no Nakayama

still alive:

under my traveler's hat,

a bit of coolness

inochi nari / wazuka no kasa no / shita suzushimi

19

summer moon:

leaving Goyu,

in Akasaka

natsu no tsuki / goyu yori idete / akasaka ya

20

wind from Mt. Fuji—

carrying it in my fan,

a souvenir for those in Edo

fuji no kaze ya / ogi ni nosete / edo miyage

21

Cat in love

a cat's trysts:

she crosses back and forth

over a crumbling stove

neko no tsuma / hetsui no kuzure yori / kayoikeri

22

Summer rains

summer rains—

offering his dragon lights,

the city watchman

samidare ya / ryūtō aguru / bantarō

23

chopping a tree,
 then looking upon the cut end—
 tonight's moon

ki o kirite / motokuchi miru ya / kyō no tsuki

24

Winter showers

passing clouds—
 like a dog running about and pissing,
 scattered winter showers

yuku kumo ya / inu no kake-bari / murashigure

25

Frost

wearing a robe of frost,
 the wind spread as its sleeping mat:
 an abandoned baby

shimo o kite / kaze o shikine no / sutego kana

26

well—nothing's happened
 and yesterday's come and gone!
 blowfish soup

ara nani tomo na ya / kinō wa sugite / fukutojiru

27

the Dutch consul too
 lies prostrate before Him:
 spring of the Shōgun's reign

kabitan mo / tsukubawasekeri / kimi ga haru

28

a day of rain—
 autumn in the world around
 Boundary Town

ame no hi ya / seken no aki o / sakaichō

29

the Dutchmen too
 have come for the flowers:
 the horse saddle
oranda mo / hana ni kinikeri / umi ni kura

30

on a blue sea,
 waves fragrant with rice wine:
 tonight's moon
sōkai no / nami sake kusashi / kyō no tsuki

31

looking around,
 gazing intently, beholding:
 autumn in Suma
miwataseba / nagamureba mireba / suma no aki

32

morning snow:
 onion shoots rising
 mark the garden plot
kesa no yuki / nebuka o sono no / shiori kana

33

ah spring, spring,
 great is spring,
 etcetera
aa haru haru / ōinaru kana haru / to unmen

AUTUMN 1680

34

spider, what is it,
 in what voice—why—are you crying?
 autumn wind
kumo nani to / ne o nani to naku / aki no kaze

35

rose of sharon:

in the hair of a naked child
a spray of flowers

hana mukuge / hadaka warawa no / kazashi kana

36

at night, stealthily,

a worm in the moonlight
boring into a chestnut

yoru hisokani / mushi wa gekka no / kuri o ugatsu

37

in my humble view

the netherworld must be like this—
autumn evening

gu anzuru ni / meido mo kaku ya / aki no kure

38

on a withered branch

a crow has settled—
autumn evening

kareeda ni / karasu no tomarikeri / aki no kure

WINTER 1680–81

39

where's the winter shower?

with umbrella in hand
the monk returns

izuku shigure / kasa o te ni sagete / kaeru sō

40

For nine springs and autumns, I lived austerely in the city. Now I have moved to the bank of the Fukagawa River. Someone once said, “Since of old, Chang-an has been a place for fame and fortune, so hard for a wayfarer empty-handed and penniless.” Is it because I’m impoverished myself that I can understand his feelings?

against the brushwood gate
 it sweeps the tea leaves:
 windstorm
shiba no to ni / cha o konoha kaku / arashi kana

41

Feelings on a cold night in Fukagawa
 the oars' sound striking the waves,
 a bowel-freezing night —
 and tears
ro no koe nami o utte / harawata kōru / yo ya namida

42

The rich dine on meat; sturdy youths eat vegetable roots; but I
 am poor:
 snow morning:
 alone, I manage to chew
 dried salmon
yuki no ashita / hitori karazake o / kami etari

43

the rocks withered,
 the waters wilted—
 not even the feeling of winter
ishi karete / mizu shibomeru ya / fuyu mo nashi

SPRING 1681–83

44

wake up! wake up!
 let's be friends,
 sleeping butterfly
okiyo okiyo / waga tomo ni sen / nuru kochō

45

At a portrait of Zhuangzi

butterfly! butterfly!

I would ask you about

China's haikai

chō yo chō yo / morokoshi no haikai / kototowan

SUMMER 1681–83

46

The valor of the noonflower

even in snow

the noonflower does not wither:

the sun's light

yuki no naka wa / hirugao karenu / hikage kana

47

by the noonflower

a rice-pounder cools himself:

a sight so moving

hirugao ni / kome tsuki suzumu / aware nari

48

cuckoo:

now there are no

haikai masters

hototogisu / ima wa haikaishi / naki yo kana

AUTUMN 1681–83

49

white chrysanthemum, white chrysanthemum

all that shame with your

long hair, long hair

shiragiku yo shiragiku yo / haji nagakami yo / nagakami yo

WINTER 1681-83

50

Black Forest:

so now what are you called?
a morning of snow

kuromori o / nani to iu tomo / kesa no yuki

SPRING 1681

51

swarming in the waterweeds,
the whitefish: if taken in hand
they would vanish away

mo ni sudaku / shirauo ya toraba / kienubeki

52

Rika offered me a banana plant
having planted the *bashō*,
now I despise them:
the reed sprouts

bashō uete / mazu nikumu ogi no / futaba kana

SUMMER 1681

53

cuckoo,
were you invited by the barley
plumed with seed?

hototogisu / maneku ka mugi no / mura obana

54

in summer rains
the crane's legs
become short

samidare ni / tsuru no ashi / mijikaku nareri

55

foolishly, in the dark,
 he grabs a thorn:
 hunting fireflies
gu ni kuraku / ibara o tsukamu / hotaru kana

56

moonflowers white
 at night by the outhouse,
 torch in hand
yūgao no / shiroku yoru no kōka ni / shisoku torite

AUTUMN 1681

57

“live austere and clear!”
 Moongazer’s recluse
 drinking song
wabite sume / tsukiwabisai ga / naracha uta

58

Feelings in my thatched hut
 banana in a windstorm:
 a night of listening to rain
 dripping in the tub
bashō nowaki shite / tarai ni ame o / kiku yo kana

WINTER 1681–82

59

at a poor mountain temple,
 a kettle crying in the frost,
 the voice frigid
hinzan no / kama shimo ni naku / koe samushi

60

Buying water at this thatched hut

ice is bitter

in the mouth of the rat

quenching its thirst

kōri nigaku / enso ga nodo o / uruoseri

61

the year ending

with echoes of pounding rice-cakes—

a desolate sleep

kurekurete / mochi o kodama no / wabine kana

AUTUMN 1682

62

A response to Kikaku's firefly poem

one who breakfasts

with morning glories:

that's what I am

asagao ni / ware wa meshi kū / otoko kana

63

crescent moon—

a morning glory bud at night

swelling

mikazuki ya / asagao no yūbe / tsubomuran

64

Thinking of old Du Fu

wind through his beard,

lamenting late autumn:

who is he?

higekaze o fuite / boshū tanzuru wa / ta ga kozo

65

in a world of rain
 life is like Sōgi's
 temporary shelter
yo ni furu mo / sarani sōgi no / yadori kana

WINTER 1682–83

66

my bedclothes are so heavy
 perhaps I'll see the snow
 from the sky of Wu
yogi wa omoshi / goten ni yuki o / miru aran

SPRING 1683

67

New Year's
 First Day—
 deep in thought, lonely
 autumn's evening
ganjitsu ya / omoeba sabishi / aki no kure

68

is the bush warbler
 her spirit? asleep,
 a lovely willow
uguisu o / tama ni nemuru ka / taoyanagi

SUMMER 1683

69

sing cuckoo:
 you're the Sixth Month's
 plum blossoms
hototogisu / mutsuki wa ume no / hana sakeri

70

“That monk who’s wearing a hat and riding a horse, where’s he coming from, what’s he after?” “That,” replied the painter, “is a portrait of you on a journey.” “Well, if so, bumbling wayfarer of the three worlds, watch out you don’t topple from that horse.”

the horse ambling,

I see myself in a painting:

summer moor

uma bokuboku / ware o e ni miru / natsuno kana

WINTER 1683–84

71

A new Bashō Hut is built for me

listening to hail—

my self, as before,

an old oak

arare kiku ya / kono mi wa moto no / furugashiwa

SPRING 1684–87

72

the bell fades away,

the blossoms’ fragrance ringing:

early evening

kane kiete / hana no ka wa tsuku / yūbe kana

73

eccentric—

on grass devoid of fragrance,

a butterfly settles

monozuki ya / niwanu kusa ni / tomaru chō

SUMMER 1684–87

74

just as I scoop it,
 it rings in my teeth:
 spring water
musubu yori / haya ha ni hibiku / izumi kana

AUTUMN 1684–87

75

its sound clear,
 echoing to the Northern Stars:
 a fulling block
koe sumite / hokuto ni hibiku / kinuta kana

76

Receiving rice from someone
 in the world,
 is it harvest time?
 my thatched hut
yo no naka wa / inekaru koro ka / kusa no io

77

This work does not quite fit the genre of travel journal. It's just a record of the movements of the heart during scenes of mountain bridges and country stores. Nakagawa Jokushi has applied his painting colors to a scroll of the journal, making up for my inability to depict the scenes in words. If others see his paintings, I'll certainly feel ashamed.

spend nights on a journey,
 then you'll know my poems—
 autumn wind
tabine shite / waga ku o shire ya / aki no kaze

SPRING 1684–94

78

falling blossoms—

birds too are startled:

the dust of the koto

chiru hana ya / tori mo odoroku / koto no chiri

79

blooming wildly

among the peach trees:

first cherry blossoms

sakimidasu / momo no naka yori / hatsuzakura

80

a spring night:

and with dawn on the cherries,

it has ended

haru no yo wa / sakura ni akete / shimaikeri

81

squeaking in response

to the young sparrows:

mice in their nest

suzumeko to / koe nakikawasu / nezumi no su

82

At Lord Rosen's house

this too seems

to be Saigyō's hut:

a garden of blossoms

saigyō no / iori mo aran / hana no niwa

83

you too come out, bat:

all these birds amid the blossoms

of this floating world

kōmori mo / ideyo ukiyo no / hana ni tori

84

spring rain—

blowing back and forth like straw coats,
river willows

harusame ya / mino fukikaesu / kawa yanagi

85

the fragrance of plums:

carrying me back
to the cold

ume ga ka ni / oimodosaruru / samusa kana

86

butterflies and birds

ceaselessly fluttering—
clouds of blossoms

chō tori no / uwatsuki tatsu ya / hana no kumo

87

for one who says

“I’m weary of my children”
there are no blossoms

ko ni aku to / mōsu hito ni wa / hana mo nashi

88

cherries in bloom

throughout the world: to them too
“hail Amida Buddha”

yo ni sakaru / hana ni mo nebutsu / mōshikeri

89

this mallet—

long ago was it a camellia?
a plum tree?

kono tsuchi no / mukashi tsubaki ka / ume no ki ka

SUMMER 1684-94

90

Bamboo, at Bokuin's house

not raining, yet

on bamboo-planting day

a raincoat and hat

furazu tomo / take uuru hi wa / mino to kasa

91

this hut:

even the water rail hasn't found

your door

kono yado wa / kuina mo shiranu / toboso kana

92

hydrangeas—

at the time for summer clothes

pale blue

ajisai ya / katabiradoki no / usuasagi

93

a squid-seller's call:

indistinguishable from the

cuckoo's

ikauri no / koe magirawashi / hototogisu

94

Awaiting the dawn at Taisui's house

periodic rain

so no need to worry:

rice sprouts

ame oriori / omou koto naki / sanae kana

AUTUMN 1684-94

95

Brushwood hut:
 the words sound
 so despicable and yet
 in this world it is
 a thing of true delight

*shiba no io / to kikeba iyashiki / nanaredomo /
 yo ni konomoshiki / mono ni zo arikeru*

This poem, included in the Sankashū, was written by the Priest Saigyō when he visited a monk named Amidabō living in the Higashiyama district of Kyoto. I delight in wondering what kind of person that monk was. Here I offer a poem to a monk who now spends his life in a grass hut.

this brushwood hut's
 moon; just as it was
 for Amidabō

shiba no to no / tsuki ya sonomama / amidabō

96

that's something to see—
 chrysanthemums after
 autumn's storm

midokoro no / are ya nowaki no / nochi no kiku

97

as the hackberry fruit falls
 the sound of starling wings—
 morning's windstorm

e no mi chiru / muku no haoto ya / asa arashi

98

Japanese lantern plant:
 fruit, leaves, and shells all
 the color of autumn leaves

hōzuki wa / mi mo ha mo kara mo / momiji kana

99

a chrysanthemum drops
 its dew, but when I pick it up:
 a brood bud

kiku no tsuyu / ochite hiroeba / nukago kana

100

my hut:
 a square of light
 from the window's moon

waga yado wa / shikaku na kage o / mado no tsuki

101

A motto: don't speak of other's shortcomings; don't brag about
 your strengths

say something
 and the lips go cold:
 autumn wind

mono ieba / kuchibiru samushi / aki no kaze

102

what do they eat
 in their tiny house?
 autumn in willow's shade

nani kūte / koie wa aki no / yanagi kage

103

this temple:
 a garden full
 of banana plants

kono tera wa / niwa ippai no / bashō kana

104

mushroom—
 it's become so ragged
 it looks like a pine

matsudake ya / kabureta hodo wa / matsu no nari

105

a monkey showman
 with a little monkey jacket
 on a fulling block
saruhiki wa / saru no kosode o / kinuta kana

WINTER 1684–94

106

through the whole night
 did the bamboo freeze?
 morning frost
yo sugara ya / take kōrasuru / kesa no shimo

107

I've hit the bottom
 of my bag of discretion:
 year's end
funbetsu no / soko tatakikeri / toshi no kure

108

Words on a painting of bamboo
 winter windstorm—
 hiding itself in bamboo,
 grown still
kogarashi ya / take ni kakurete / shizumarinu

109

with chrysanthemums gone,
 other than the radish
 there is nothing
kiku no nochi / daikon no hoka / sara ni nashi

110

At the memorial for Senka's father
 my sleeves,
 dingy colored and cold:
 darkest gray
sode no iro / yogorete samushi / koi nezumi

111

a Motonobu painting:
 whence such a sad state?
 year's end

kohōgen / dedokoro aware / toshi no kure

MISCELLANEOUS 1684-94

112

these three
 of the moon and flowers:
 masters of the truth

tsuki hana no / kore ya makoto no / arujitachi

113

On a portrait of Hotei

so desirable—
 inside his satchel,
 moon and blossoms

monohoshi ya / fukuro no uchi no / tsuki to hana

114

Musashino fields—
 no hindrances now,
 your bamboo hat

musashino ya / sawaru mono naki / kimi ga kasa

SPRING 1684

115

spring begins—
 in a new year,
 ten quarts of old rice

haru tatsu ya / shinnen furuki / kome goshō

SUMMER 1684

116

are needles falling
 in the pine wind?
 the water's cool sound
matsukaze no / ochiba ka mizu no / oto suzushi

AUTUMN 1684

117

It was the first year of Jōkyō, autumn, Eighth Month. As I left
 my ramshackle hut by the river, the sound of the wind was
 strangely cold.

bleached bones
 on my mind, the wind pierces
 my body to the heart
nozarashi o / kokoro ni kaze no / shimu mi kana

118

autumn, ten years:
 now I point to Edo
 as the old home
aki totose / kaette edo o / sasu kokyō

119

On the day I crossed the Barrier, it was raining and all the
 mountains were cloud-hidden.

misty rain,
 a day with Mt. Fuji unseen:
 so enchanting
kirishigure / fuji o minu hi zo / omoshiroki

120

with clouds and mist
 in a brief moment a hundred scenes
 brought to fulfillment
kumo kiri no / zanjū hyakkei o / tsukushikeri

121

those who listen for the monkeys:
 what of this child
 abandoned in autumn's wind?
saru o kiku hito / sutego ni aki no / kaze ikani

122

Poem on horseback
 roadside rose of
 sharon: devoured
 by my horse
michinobe no / mukuge wa uma ni / kuwarekeri

123

I arrived at Sayo-no-nakayama and was startled awake as if waking from a lingering dream in Du Mu's "Early Morning Departure"

dozing on my horse,
 with dream lingering and moon distant:
 smoke from a tea fire
uma ni nete / zanmu tsuki tōshi / cha no keburī

124

I visited Mutsubaya Fūbaku in Ise, resting my feet for about ten days. As night came on, I worshipped at the Outer Shrine. With shadows draped across the First Torii and sacred lanterns lit here and there, the "pine wind from the high peak" pierced my flesh and struck deep into my heart.

month's end, no moon:
 a thousand year cedar
 embraced by a windstorm
misoka tsuki nashi / chitose no sugi o / daku arashi

125

There's a stream in the lower end of Saigyō Valley. As I gazed at women washing potatoes:

potato-washing women:
 were Saigyō here,
 he'd compose a *waka*
imo arau onna / saigyō naraba / uta yoman

126

When I stopped at a teashop, a woman named Butterfly asked for a poem referring to her name. She brought me some white silk, and on it I wrote:

an orchid's scent—
 its incense perfuming
 a butterfly's wings
ran no ka ya / chō no tsubasa ni / takimono su

127

Visiting the thatched hut of a recluse living in tranquillity

ivy planted,
 and four or five stalks of bamboo
 in the windstorm
tsuta uete / take shigo hon no / arashi kana

128

I returned home at the beginning of Ninth Month. The Forgetting Grass by my mother's room had withered with frost, and no trace of it remained. Everything from the past had changed. The temples of my brothers and sisters were white, wrinkles around their eyes. "We're still alive!"—it was all we could say. My older brother opened a relic case and said, "Pay your respects to Mother's white hair. Like Urashima with his jewelled box, your eyebrows have aged." Then, for a time, we all wept.

should I take it in my hand
 it would melt in these hot tears:
 autumn frost
te ni toraba kien / namida zo atsuki / aki no shimo

129

We continued our pilgrimage into Yamato Province to a place called Take-no-uchi in Katsuge District. This was Chiri's hometown, so we rested our feet for a few days.

cotton-beating bow—
 as consoling as a lute
 deep in the bamboos
wata yumi ya / biwa ni nagusamu / take no oku

130

Visiting the Taima Temple on Mount Futagami, we saw a pine in the courtyard that must have been a thousand years old, “big enough to hide oxen.” Though nonsentient, its connection to the Buddha preserved it from the woodsman’s axe. How fortunate, how awesome!

monks, morning glories:
 how many died, and reborn;
 pine of the dharma
sō asagao / iku shinikaeru / nori no matsu

131

a house that knows no winter—
 the hulling of rice
 sounding like hail
fuyu shiranu / yado ya momisuru / oto arare

132

Spending the night at a certain temple lodging.
 beat the fulling block,
 make me hear it—
 temple wife
kinuta uchite / ware ni kikaseyo ya / bō ga tsuma

133

The remains of Saigyō’s thatched hut is off to the right of the Inner Temple, reached by pushing a few hundred yards along a faint woodcutter’s path. It faces a steep valley—a stunning view. The “clear trickling water” seems unchanged from of old, and even now the drops trickle down.

dew trickles down:
 in it I would try to wash away
 the dust of the floating world
tsuyu tokutoku / kokoromi ni ukiyo / susugabaya

134

the imperial tomb has stood
 for ages: what do you recall,
 fern of longing?

gobyō toshi hete / shinobu wa nani o / shinobugusa

135

From Yamato I passed through Yamashiro, taking the Ōmi Road into Mino. Beyond Imasu and Yamanaka lay the grave of Lady Tokiwa. Moritake of Ise once wrote, “autumn’s wind resembling Lord Yoshitomo,” and I had wondered what the similarity was. Now I too wrote:

Yoshitomo’s heart
 it does resemble:
 autumn wind

yoshitomo no / kokoro ni nitari / aki no kaze

136

At Fuwa Barrier

autumn wind—
 just thickets and fields
 at Fuwa Barrier

akikaze ya / yabu mo hatake mo / fuwa no seki

137

When I set off on my journey from Musashi Plain, I had bleached bones by the roadside on my mind, but now:

not dead yet
 at journey’s end—
 autumn evening

shini mo senu / tabine no hate yo / aki no kure

WINTER 1684–85

138

so harsh—
 the sound of hail
 on my cypress hat

ikameshiki / oto ya arare no / hinokigasa

139

At Hontō Temple in Kuwana:

winter peonies
 and plovers, like
 cuckoo in snow
fuyu botan / chidori yo yuki no / hototogisu

140

I went out to the beach in the predawn darkness

daybreak—
 a whitefish, whiteness
 one inch
akebono ya / shirauo shiroki / koto issun

141

Seeing a traveler

even a horse:
 gazing up on it on a
 morning of snow
uma o sae / nagamuru yuki no / ashita kana

142

Worshipping at Atsuta Shrine

even the fern of longing
 is withered; buying rice-cakes
 at an inn
shinobu sae / karete mochi kau / yadori kana

143

Running into early winter showers on the road

no rain hat
 in the winter showers?
 well, well!
kasa mo naki / ware o shigururu ka / ko wa nan to

144

a wild poem:

in winter's winds

don't I look

just like Chikusai

kyōku / kogarashi no / mi wa chikusai ni / nitaru kana

145

grass for my pillow:

is a dog too being rained on?

night's voices

kusa makura / inu mo shigururu ka / yoru no koe

146

Walking out to view the snow

market townsfolk!

I'll sell you this hat,

a snow umbrella

ichibito yo / kono kasa urō / yuki no kasa

147

snow upon snow:

is tonight the twelfth month's

full moon?

yuki to yuki / koyoi shiwasu no / meigetsu ka

148

Spending a day at the seashore

the sea darkening,

a wild duck's call

faintly white

umi kurete / kamo no koe / honoka ni shiroshi

149

Removing my straw sandals in one place, setting down my staff
 in another, I kept spending nights on the road as the year drew
 to a close.

the year gone,
 still wearing my bamboo hat
 and straw sandals
toshi kurenu / kasa kite waraji / bakinagara

SPRING 1685

150
 Spending New Year's at a mountain hut back home
 whose son-in-law?
 bearing fern fronds and rice-cakes
 this Year of the Ox
ta ga muko zo / shida ni mochi ou / ushi no toshi

151
 a wayfaring crow:
 its old nest has become
 a plum tree
tabigarasu / furusu wa ume ni / narinikeri

152
 On the road to Nara
 yes it's spring—
 through nameless hills,
 a faint haze
haru nare ya / na mo naki yama no / usugasumi

153
 Secluded in Second Month Hall
 the water drawing—
 in the frozen night,
 the sound of monks' clogs
mizutori ya / kōri no sō no / kutsu no oto

154

At Single Branch Eaves in Takenouchi

a wren of a single branch:
 the fragrance of its plum blossoms
 throughout the world
yo ni nioi / baika issshi no / misosazai

155

I went to the capital, visiting Mitsui Shūfū's mountain villa at Narutaki.

Plum Grove

the plums so white:
 yesterday did someone steal
 the cranes?
ume shiroshi / kinō ya tsuru o / nusumareshi

156

the dignified stature
 of the oak, indifferent
 to the blossoms
kashi no ki no / hana ni kamawanu / sugata kana

157

Meeting Priest Ninkō at Saiganji Temple in Fushimi

onto my robe
 sprinkle dewdrops from
 Fushimi's peach blossoms
waga kinu ni / fushimi no momo no / shizuku se yo

158

Crossing the mountains on the road to Ōtsu

on a mountain path,
 somehow so moving:
 wild violets
yamaji kite / naniyara yukashi / sumiregusa

159

A view of the lake

pine of Karasaki:

more vague even
than the blossoms

karasaki no / matsu wa hana yori / oboro nite

160

Sitting down for lunch at a traveler's shop

azaleas all arranged:

in their shade, a woman
tearing dried cod

tsutsuji ikete / sono kage ni hidara / saku onna

161

Poem on a journey

in a field of mustard,

with flower-viewing faces:
sparrows

nabatake ni / hanamigao naru / suzume kana

162

At Minakuchi I met a friend I had not seen for twenty years

our two lives:

between them has lived
this blossoming cherry

inochi futatsu no / naka ni ikitaru / sakura kana

163

A field of sunlight

butterflies only

fluttering in this field
of sunlight

chō no tobu / bakari nonaka no / hikage kana

164

blue flag irises
 stirring in my mind
 a hokku

kakitsubata / ware ni hokku no / omoi ari

SUMMER 1685

165

A monk from Hiru-ga-kojima in Izu Province, on pilgrimage since last autumn, heard of me and came to Owari to join my journey

well now, together
 let's eat ears of barley:
 a grass pillow

iza tomo ni / homugi kurawan / kusa makura

166

The Abbot of Engakuji, Daiten, had passed away early in First Month. Shaken, I felt as if I was in a dream, and from the road I sent word to Kikaku:

yearning for the plum,
 bowing before the deutzia:
 eyes of tears

ume koite / unohana ogamu / namida kana

167

Given to Tokoku

for the white poppy
 it tears off its wing:
 the butterfly's memento

shirageshi ni / hane mogu chō no / katami kana

168

Once again I stayed with Tōyō, and as I left for the Eastern Provinces,

from deep in the
 peony's pistils, the bee's
 reluctant parting
botan shibe fukaku / wakeizuru hachi no / nagori kana

169

Stopping over in the mountains of Kai Province

my journey's horse
 solaced with barley:
 a night's lodging
yuku koma no / mugi ni nagusamu / yadori kana

170

At the end of Fourth Month, I returned to my hut, and as I
 rested from the weariness of the journey,

summer robes:
 still some lice
 I've yet to pick
natsugoromo / imada shirami o / toritsukusazu

AUTUMN 1685

171

All through the night the sky kept shifting between clear and
 cloudy, leaving us restless.

clouds now and then
 give us a rest:
 moonviewing
kumo oriori / hito o yasumeru / tsukimi kana

172

Three men living in Reiganjima visited my grass-thatched hut as
 night deepened. They all happened to have the same name,
 Shichirobei. Recalling Li Bo's poem about drinking alone, I
 playfully wrote:

with a full wine cup
 I drink to three names
 this evening
sakazuki ni / mitsu no na o nomu / koyoi kana

SPRING 1686

173
 how many frosts
 has it endured—my banana plant
 is my New Year's pine
iku shimo ni / kokorobase-o no / matsu kazari

174
 old fields—
 off to pick shepherd's purse blossoms
 with male companions
furu hata ya / nazuna tsumiyuku / otokodomo

175
 looking closely:
 a shepherd's purse blossoming
 beneath the hedge
yoku mireba / nazuna hana saku / kakine kana

176
 overcome with illness,
 I can't even eat a rice cake:
 peach blossoms
wazuraeba / mochi o mo kuwazu / momo no hana

177
 Kannon Temple:
 looking off at its tiled roof
 in clouds of blossoms
kannon no / iraka miyaritsu / hana no kumo

178

My neighbor, priest Sōha, left his hut to go a journey
 the old nest:
 so lonely it will be
 next door

furusu tada / aware narubeki / tonari kana

179

Grieving for Priest Tandō

falling to the ground,
 returning to the roots:
 a flower's farewell

chi ni taore / ne ni yori hana no / wakare kana

180

old pond—
 a frog jumps in,
 water's sound

furuike ya / kawazu tobikomu / mizu no oto

AUTUMN 1686

181

east and west,
 the pathos is the same:
 autumn wind

higashi nishi / awaresa hitotsu / aki no kaze

182

harvest moon—
 wandering round the pond
 all night long

meigetsu ya / ike o megurite / yomosugara

183

seeming like
 someone blind:
 moonviewing

zatō ka to / hito ni mirarete / tsukimi kana

184

just one possession,
 my world light
 as a gourd

mono hitotsu / waga yo wa karoki / hisago kana

185

Heading off to a certain place, I passed the night on a boat. At daybreak, I stuck my head out from under the thatched roof of the cabin, deeply moved by the late waning moon.

dawn comes—

even on the night of the 27th,
 a crescent moon

akeyuku ya / nijūshichi ya mo / mika no tsuki

WINTER 1686–87

186

An old garden

flowers all withered,
 spilling their sadness:
 seeds for grass

hana mina karete / aware o kobosu / kusa no tane

187

Sent in reply to Priest Genki for his gift of sake

water so cold:

it was hard for even a gull
 to fall sleep

mizu samuku / neiri kanetaru / kamome kana

188

A frigid night

the water jar cracks:
 in the frozen night
 I lie awake

kame waruru / yoru no kōri no / nezame kana

189

Hoping to view the first snow at my grass hut, whenever the sky clouded over I rushed home—many times I did this. Then, on the 8th of Twelfth Month, snow finally fell, a true joy:

first snow—
 great luck to be here
 in my own hut
hatsuyuki ya / saiwai an ni / makariaru

190

first snow—
 just enough to bend
 narcissus leaves
hatsuyuki ya / suisen no ha no / tawamu made

191

Snowy night at Fukagawa
 drinking sake
 and now it's harder to sleep:
 night of snow
sake nomeba / itodo nerarene / yoru no yuki

192

A man named Sora has set up temporary lodging nearby, and morning and night we visit each other. When I cook something, he feeds the fire; when I make tea, he breaks up ice for water. By nature he loves quiet solitude, and our friendship is greater than gold. One evening he visited in a snowfall.

you start a fire,
 I'll show you something fun:
 a great ball of snow
kimi hi o take / yoki mono misen / yuki maruge

193

“moon and snow”:
 so I've indulged myself
 to the end of the year
tsuki yuki to / nosabarikerashi / toshi no kure

SPRING 1687

194

Village plums

hey village kids,

leave some plum branches:

ox whips

sato no ko yo / ume orinokose / ushi no muchi

195

I went to see a certain person at his hermitage, but an old man caretaking the hut said, “the master is off on a temple pilgrimage.” The plums by the hedge were in full bloom so I replied, “These will take his place—they look like him.” To which he responded, “Well, they belong to the neighbors.”

arriving when you were out,

even the plums are far away

beyond the hedge

rusu ni kite / ume sae yoso no / kakio kana

196

please don't forget:

in the grove,

a plum blossom

wasuru na yo / yabu no naka naru / ume no hana

197

All things are self-realized

at play in the blossoms,

a horsefly: do not eat it

friend sparrow

hana ni asobu / abu na kurai so / tomosuzume

198

A mountain cottage

nesting storks:

viewed through branches

of blossoms

kō no su mo / miraruru hana no / hagoshi kana

199

My grass-thatched hut

clouds of blossoms;

the temple bell:

Ueno? Asakusa?

hana no kumo / kane wa ueno ka / asakusa ka

200

all the long day

singing, singing, yet not enough:

a skylark

nagaki hi mo / saezuri taranu / hibari kana

201

mid the plain—

attached to nothing,

the singing skylark

haranaka ya / mono ni mo tsukazu / naku hibari

SUMMER 1687

202

cuckoo:

singing singing as it flies,

so very busy

hototogisu / nakunaku tobu zo / isogawashi

203

Self-portrait of a miserable man

my hair grown out,

my face pale:

summer rains

kami haete / yōgan aoshi / satsukiame

204

in the summer rains

I'll go view the floating nest

of a grebe

samidare ni / nio no ukisu o / mi ni yukan

205

My disciple Sanpū me sent a thin kimono as a summer gift

now look at me

in this fine summer robe!

a cicada kimono

ide ya ware / yoki nuno kitari / semigoromo

206

Enjoying the evening cool

I'll fall asleep drunk,

the wild pinks blooming

over the rocks

yōte nemu / nadeshiko sakeru / ishi no ue

207

I visited the overgrown old hut of a man who had gone into
seclusion

you who raised melons:

“would that you were here”

in the evening coolness

uri tsukuru / kimi ga are na to / yūsuzumi

208

a little crab

creeping up my leg:

clear water

sazaregani / ashi hainoboru / shimizu kana

AUTUMN 1687

209

Sent to Rika:

lightning

clenched in the hand:

torchlight in the dark

inazuma o / te ni toru yami no / shisoku kana

210

Ransetsu painted a morning glory and then asked me to write a
verse on it

morning glory:

even when painted poorly,
it has pathos

asagao wa / heta no kaku sae / aware nari

211

field of bush clovers—

be their shelter for a night:
mountain dogs

hagi hara ya / hito yo wa yadose / yama no inu

212

The countryside

in the half harvested

rice paddies, a crane—
autumn in the village

karikakeshi / tazura no tsuru ya / sato no aki

213

peasant boy—

husking rice, he pauses
to gaze at the moon

shizu no ko ya / ine surikakete / tsuki o miru

214

taro leaves—

awaiting the moon
on the village's burnt field

imo no ha ya / tsuki matsu sato no / yakibatake

215

the moon swift,

the branches still holding
the rain

tsuki hayashi / kozue wa ame o / mochinagara

216

sleeping at a temple,
 reverent, with my true face:
 moon viewing
tera ni nete / makotogao naru / tsukimi kana

217

Before the Shrine
 this pine sprouted
 in the age of the gods—
 so holy an autumn
kono matsu no / mibae seshi yo ya / kami no aki

218

Listening in tranquillity
 bagworms:
 come hear their cry;
 a thatched hut
minomushi no / ne o kiki ni koyo / kusa no io

219

Rain at my thatched hut
 rising again,
 the chrysanthemums faint
 after the rains
okiagaru / kiku honoka nari / mizu no ato

220

emaciated and yet
 somehow the chrysanthemum
 buds out
yase nagara / warinaki kiku no / tsubomi kana

WINTER 1687-88

221

“wayfarer”

will be my name;

first winter showers

tabibito to / waga na yobaren / hatsushigure

222

Fuji

is one ridge

clouded with winter showers?

Fuji in snow

hito one wa / shigururu kumo ka / fuji no yuki

223

to the capital,

half the sky left—

clouds of snow

kyō made wa / mada nakazora ya / yuki no kumo

224

Staying over at Narumi

“gaze into

the darkness of Star Cape”:

is this the plovers’ cry?

hoshizaki no / yami o miyo to ya / naku chidori

225

so cold and yet

a night sleeping together:

so delightful

samukeredo / futari neru yo zo / tanomoshiki

226

At an inn on the journey

burning pine needles

to dry my hand towel:

the cold

go o taite / tenugui aburu / samusa kana

227

winter sun—

frozen on horseback,
my shadow*fuyu no hi ya / bashō ni kōru / kagebōshi*

228

On the road to Irago, Etsujin was drunk riding on his horse

may it be snow and sand
you fall into from your horse:
drunk on sake*yuki ya suna / uma yori otochi yo / sake no yoi*

229

a lone hawk:

finding it brings such joy
at Cape Irago*taka hitotsu / mitsukete ureshi / iragosaki*

230

Cape Irago was close by, so I went to see it

Cape Irago:
nothing can match
the hawk's cry*iragozaki / niru mono mo nashi / taka no koe*

231

I visited Tokoku, who was living in difficult circumstances at
Cape Irago. From time to time I heard the cry of a hawkmore than dream
the hawk of reality
heartens me*yume yori mo / utsutsu no taka zo / tanomoshiki*

232

According to the people here, this village is called “Hobi”
because in olden times a retired emperor praised it, saying “pre-
serve its beauty” (*ho bi*). I don’t know where this might be writ-
ten down, but such gracious sentiment is awe-inspiring.

plum and camellia:
 praise to their early bloom
 here in Hobi Village
ume tsubaki / hayazaki homen / hobi no sato

233

Atsuta Shrine after reconstruction
 freshly polished,
 the sacred mirror too is clear:
 blossoms of snow
togi naosu / kagami mo kiyoshi / yuki no hana

234

At someone's gathering
 smoothing it out,
 I'm off to snowviewing:
 my paper robe
tametsukete / yukimi ni makaru / kamiko kana

235

well then,
 let's go snow-viewing
 till we all fall down
iza saraba / yukimi ni korobu / tokoro made

236

Hakone Pass:
 someone seems to be crossing it
 this morning of snow
hakone kosu / hito mo arurashi / kesa no yuki

237

At the party of a certain person
 searching out the plum fragrance
 I gaze up at the eaves
 of the warehouse
ka o saguru / ume ni kura miru / nokiba kana

238

the dew frozen,

I soak it dry with my brush:

the pure water spring

tsuyu itete / hitsu ni kumihosu / shimizu kana

239

resting on my journey,

I watch the year-end housecleaning

of the floating world

tabine shite / mishi ya ukiyo no / susu harai

240

I rented a horse at the village of Hinaga, mentioned in the poem “From Kuwana I came with nothing to eat. . . .”, so I could ride up Walking-stick Hill. But my pack-saddle overturned and I was thrown from the horse.

if only I had walked

Walking-stick Hill:

falling from my horse

kachi naraba / tsue-tsuki-zaka o / rakuba kana

241

my native home—

weeping over my umbilical cord

at year’s end

furusato ya / heso no o ni naku / toshi no kure

1688–94

242

through gaps in snow,

pale purple,

sprouts of the *udo**yuki ma yori / usu murasaki no / me udo kana*

243

I'd like to sleep
 borrowing the scarecrow's clothes—
 midnight frost
karite nen / kakashi no sode ya / yowa no shimo

SPRING 1688

244

On New Year's Eve, reluctant to part with the passing year, I
 drank deep into the night, and then slept through New Year's
 morning:

on the *second* day
 I won't fail:
 flowering spring
futsuka ni mo / nukari wa seji na / hana no haru

245

Early spring
 spring has risen
 only nine days now and
 these fields and mountains!
haru tachite / mada kokonoka no / noyama kana

246

even the heart of Akokuso
 I do not know:
 plum blossoms
akokuso no / kokoro mo shirazu / ume no hana

247

An area by Iga Castle yields what is known as coal. The odor is
 repugnant.

give forth your fragrance!
 on a coal mining hill,
 plum blossoms
ka ni nioe / uni horu oka no / ume no hana

248

At a mountain cottage in Iga

even the sound

of someone blowing his nose:

plum blossoms

tebana kamu / oto sae ume no / sakari kana

249

withered grass—

faint heat waves

one or two inches high

kareshiba ya / yaya kagerō no / ichi ni-sun

250

sixteen foot Buddha:

heat waves rising

from the stone base

jōroku ni / kagerō takashi / ishi no ue

251

At Yamada in Ise Province

from what tree's

blossoms I know not:

such fragrance

nani no ki no / hana to wa shirazu / nioi kana

252

the shrine maidens:

the loveliness of the lone plum here

in blossom

okorago no / hito moto yukashi / ume no hana

253

Ichiu's wife

inside the shop curtains,

in the quiet depths,

plum blossoms of the north

nōren no / oku monofukashi / kita no ume

254

Meeting with Setsudō, son of Ajiro Minbu

out from an old plum tree
 grows a young sprout—
 plum blossoms

ume no ki ni / nao yadorigi ya / ume no hana

255

For the Priest Ryū Shosha

first I'll ask
 the names of things: these reeds
 with new leaves

mono no na o / mazu tou ashi no / wakaba kana

256

At a gathering in a grass-thatched hut

the taro is planted,
 the gate covered with vines'
 new leaves

imo uete / kado wa mugura no / wakaba kana

257

At Bōdai Temple

of this mountain's
 many sorrows, tell the tales
 old yam diggers

kono yama no / kanashisa tsuge yo / tokorohori

258

At Kusube

don't drop your dirt
 into my wine cup—
 flock of swallows

sakazuki ni / doro na otoshi so / muratsubame

259

At Rosō's house

my paper robe is wet,
 but I'll go break a branch:
 blossoms in the rain

kamiginu no / nurutomo oran / ame no hana

260

On the 15th, in the precincts of the Outer Shrine

inside the shrine's fences—
 so unexpected this portrait
 of Buddha entering nirvana

kami-gaki ya / omoi-mo-kakezu / nehan-zō

261

On the 17th day of Second Month, leaving Mt. Kamiji

be naked?
 not yet, with second month's
 windstorm

hadaka ni wa / mada kisaragi no / arashi kana

262

The first gathering of the monthly linked verse group at Yakushi Temple

the first cherries blooming:
 right now, today,
 is such a fine day

hatsuzakura / orishimo kyō wa / yoki hi nari

263

The Honorable Tangan held a blossom-viewing party at his villa. Things were just as in the old days.

so many many
 memories come to mind:
 cherry blossoms

samazama no / koto omoidasu / sakura kana

264

I spent time at “Gourd Bamboo Hut,” resting from the difficulties of the journey

blossoms as my lodging
 from beginning to end—
 twenty days

hana o yado ni / hajime owari ya / hatsuka hodo

265

Two wayfarers with no abode in Heaven and Earth

the Yoshino cherries

I will show you:
 cypress hat

yoshino nite / sakura mishō zo / hinokigasa

266

At Hatsuse

spring night—

someone in retreat, so mysterious
 in a corner of the temple

haru no yo ya / komorido yukashi / dō no sumi

267

Hoso Pass, on the road from Tafu Peak to Ryūmon

higher than the lark:

resting in the sky
 at the pass

hibari yori / sora ni yasurau / tōge kana

268

Dragon's Gate

the blossoms at Dragon's Gate:

a splendid souvenir
 for my drinking friends

ryūmon no / hana ya jōgo no / tsuto ni sen

269

I'll tell my drinking friends
 of these blossoms hanging
 over the waterfall
sake nomi ni / kataran kakaru / taki no hana

270

During my pilgrimage through Yamato Province, I lodged at a
 farmhouse for a night. My host showed me deep kindness and
 warm hospitality.

in the shade of blossoms
 it seems like a Nō play:
 a journey's rest
hana no kage / utai ni nitaru / tabine kana

271

with a fan
 drinking sake in the shadows—
 falling cherry blossoms
ōgi nite / sake kumu kage ya / chiru sakura

272

were my voice good,
 I'd chant from the Nō:
 falling cherry blossoms
koe yokuba / utaō mono o / sakura chiru

273

Nijikō
 petal after petal
 mountain roses flutter down:
 the sound of the rapids
horohoro to / yamabuki chiru ka / taki no oto

274

cherry blossom viewing:
 admirable it is to walk
 ten or twelve miles a day
sakuragari / kidoku ya hibi ni / go-ri roku-ri

275

with the sun darkening
 on the blossoms, it is lonely—
 a false cypress

hi wa hana ni / kurete sabishi ya / asunarō

276

The moss pure spring
 spring rain
 flowing down the tree:
 the pure water spring
harusame no / koshita ni tsutau / shimizu kana

277

The moss pure spring
 beginning to melt,
 I soak it dry with my brush:
 the pure water spring
ite tokete / hitsu ni kumihosu / shimizu kana

278

Yoshino
 blossoms at their peak,
 with the mountains as always
 at daybreak
hanazakari / yama wa higo no / asaborake

279

Mount Kazuraki
 all the more I'd like to see it
 with dawn coming to the blossoms:
 the face of the god
nao mitashi / hana ni akeyuku / kami no kao

280

Mt. Kōya

for my father and mother

I yearn so deeply—

a pheasant's cry

chichi haba no / shikirini koishi / kiji no koe

281

Wakanoura

departing spring—

I've finally caught up with it

here at Wakanoura.

yuku haru ni / wakanoura nite / oitsukitari

SUMMER 1688

282

Clothes-changing day

removing a one layer

I carry it over my shoulder:

clothes-changing day

hitotsu nuide / ushiro ni oinu / koromogae

283

Buddha's birthday:

on this day is born

a little fawn

kanbutsu no / hi ni umareau / kanoko kana

284

Ganjin of Shōdaiji Temple endured seventy adversities in his attempts to come to Japan from China. He is said to have lost his sight due to the salt wind blown into his eyes. Worshipping at his sacred image:

with a young leaf

I would wipe the tears

from your eyes

wakaba shite / onme no shizuku / nuguwabaya

285

Departing from an old friend at Nara

deer horns

developing their first branch:
our separation

shika no tsuno / mazu hitofushi no / wakare kana

286

travel weary,

just as I finally find lodging—
wisteria blossoms

kutabirete / yado karu koro ya / fuji no hana

287

The lotus is called the Lord of Flowers. The peony is said to be the wealthy noble among blossoms. But rice seedlings rise from the mud, and are more pure than the lotus. In autumn, it yields fragrant rice, richer than the peony. Thus one plant combines the virtues of both, truly pure and rich.

villagers sing

verses in the rice fields:
the capital

satobito wa / ine ni uta yomu / miyako kana

288

At a certain person's house in Osaka

iris blossoms:

conversations about them are
one joy of the journey

kakitsubata / kataru mo tabi no / hitotsu kana

289

Suma

the moon is here

yet there seems an absence:
summer in Suma

tsuki wa aredo / rusu no yō nari / suma no natsu

290

seeing the moon
 yet something is lacking—
 summer in Suma

tsuki mite mo / mono tarawazu ya / suma no natsu

291

The sky of mid-Fourth Month was still misty and the moon of the brief night was exceptionally lovely. The mountains were dark with young leaves, and at dawn, the time the cuckoo sings, light began to fall upon the sea. The high plain was reddened with waves of wheat, and white poppies were visible among the eaves of the fishers' huts.

the faces of the fishers
 were seen first—
 poppy flowers

ama no kao / mazu miraruru ya / keshi no hana

292

is it crying from an arrow
 from the fishers of Suma?
 cuckoo

suma no ama no / yasaki ni naku ka / hototogisu

293

Temple of Suma—
 hearing the unblown flute
 in the deep shade of trees

sumadera ya / fukanu fue kiku / koshitayami

294

cuckoo:
 off where it disappears—
 a single island

hototogisu / kieyuku kata ya / shima hitotsu

295

Spending the night at Akashi

octopus traps—
 fleeting dreams under
 summer's moon

takotsubo ya / hakanaki yume o / natsu no tsuki

296

in the summer rains
 one thing unhidden—
 the bridge of Seta

samidare ni / kakurenu mono ya / seta no hashi

297

While I was thinking of my upcoming journey on the Kiso Road, I was staying at Ōtsu and I went to see the fireflies at Seta.

these fireflies,
 like the moon
 in all the rice paddies

kono hotaru / tagoto no tsuki ni / kurabemin

298

Fireflies

held in my eye:
 with Yoshino's blooms
 Seta's fireflies

me ni nokoru / yoshino o seta no / hotaru kana

299

falling from
 a grass blade, and flying away:
 a firefly

kusa no ha o / otsuru yori tobu / hotaru kana

300

At Ōtsu

summer in the world:
 floating on the lake
 over waves
yo no natsu / kosui ni ukamu / nami no ue

301

Coolness

moonflowers—
 and in autumn,
 various gourds
yūgao ya / aki wa iroiro no / fukube kana

302

Gathering on the 5th day of Sixth Month, the first year of
 Genroku

noonflower,
 with a short night's sleep:
 daytime
hirugao no / mijikayo neburu / hiruma kana

303

Hearing that Chine had died, I sent a message to Kyorai from
 Mino

and now also
 the clothes of the deceased—
 summer airing
naki hito no / kosode mo ima ya / doyōboshi

304

I would lodge here
 until the days the goosefoot
 has grown a staff
yadorisen / akaza no tsue ni / naru hi made

305

Responding to an invitation from a certain Rakugo, I enjoy the cool under the pines of Mount Inaba, soothing the hardships of my journey

mountain cove—

I would nourish my body
with this field of melons

yamakage ya / mi o yashinawan / uribatake

306

I would compare them
to a delicate child: flowers
of a summer field

moroki hito ni / tatoen hana mo / natsuno kana

307

Mount Inaba

a temple bell too
seems to be ringing:
cicada's cry

tsukigane mo / hibiku yō nari / semi no koe

308

A certain Kisaburō lives in quiet retreat at the base of Mt. Inaba and has invited me over to enjoy the cool of evening.

castle ruins—

pure water from the old well
is what I'll seek first

shiro ato ya / furui no shimizu / mazu towan

309

Going to see fishermen using cormorants on the Nagara River in Mino

so fascinating,

but then, so sad:
cormorant fishing boat

omoshirōte / yagate kanashiki / ubune kana

310

in this place
 all that meets the eye
 is cool

kono atari / me ni miyuru mono wa / mina suzushi

311

summer has come
 yet just one leaf on
 the one-leaf-fern

natsu kite mo / tada hitotsu ha no / hitoha kana

AUTUMN 1688

312

3rd day of the month

like nothing
 it's been compared to:
 the crescent moon

nanigoto no / mitate ni mo nizu / mika no tsuki

313

In the rice fields at the Treasury of the Dharma Temple
 after the reaping—

from the side of a field of early rice
 a snipe's call

kari ato ya / wase katakata no / shigi no koe

314

Congratulations on a new house

such a fine house—
 out back, sparrows delight
 in the millet field

yoki ie ya / suzume yorokobu / sedo no awa

315

A View of Narumi

early autumn—

the ocean and the rice fields

all one green

hatsuaki ya / umi mo aota no / hitomidori

316

First day of autumn

weary of the journey,

how many days like today?

autumn's wind

tabi ni akite / kyō iku ka yara / aki no kaze

317

lotus pond—

left as they are, unplucked,

for the Festival of Spirits

hasu ike ya / orade sono mama / tamamatsuri

318

The fifth year of Jōkyō, Seventh Month, 20th day. I was entertained at Chōkō's "Bamboo Leaf Eaves" hut.

With millet and grass

not a thing wanting:

grass-thatched hut

awa hie ni / toboshiku mo arazu / kusa no io

319

Butterfly on a chrysanthemum blossom

deep into autumn—

a butterfly sipping

chrysanthemum dew

aki o hete / chō mo nameru ya / kiku no tsuyu

320

not hidden

at this house: vegetable soup
with red pepper

kakusanu zo / yado wa najiru ni / tōgarashi

321

Yasui departing on a journey

seeing you off,
your back in the distance—
lonely autumn wind

miokuri no / ushiro ya sabishi / aki no kaze

322

seeing friends off,
being seen off, and now:
autumn in Kiso

okuraretsu / okuritsu hate wa / kiso no aki

323

so many plants,
each with its own
brilliant blossom

kusa iroiro / ono ono hana no / tegara kana

324

Friends saw me off at the outskirts of town and we shared a few
drinks

morning glories
oblivious to all the drinking
are in full bloom

asagao wa / sakamori shiranu / sakari kana

325

trembling, teetering,
now even more dew-like—
lady flowers

hyoro hyoro to / nao tsuyukeshi ya / ominaeshi

326

its inside I'd like
 to line with lacquer:
 moon at the inn
ano naka ni / makie kakitashi / yado no tsuki

327

the hanging bridge—
 grasping for dear life,
 ivy vines
kakehashi ya / inochi o karamu / tsuta katsura

328

high hanging bridge—
 what first comes to mind
 is the Meeting with the Horses
kakehashi ya / mazu omoiizu / uma mukae

329

Mt. Obasute
 her face—
 an old woman weeping alone:
 moon as companion
omokage ya / oba hitori naku / tsuki no tomo

330

moon of the sixteenth
 and still I linger here
 near Sarashina
izayoi mo / mada sarashina no / kōri kana

331

biting deep within,
 the pungent radish:
 autumn wind
mi ni shimite / daikon karashi / aki no kaze

332

chestnuts of Kiso:

for those of the floating world,
my souvenir

kiso no tochi / ukiyo no hito no / miyage kana

333

Zenkōji Temple

the moon's light—
four gates, four sects
yet only one

tsuki kage ya / shimon shishū mo / tada hitotsu

334

blowing away

the rocks: Asama's
autumn windstorm

fukitobasu / ishi wa asama no / nowaki kana

335

The old master of this lotus pond loves chrysanthemums. Yesterday, there was a celebration at Mount Lu, and today we drink the rest of the wine, each of us sporting with making verse. We wonder now, who among us will enjoy good health next year on this day?

the sixteenth night moon?
or is it this morning's lingering
chrysanthemums?

izayoi no / izure ka kesa ni / nokoru kiku

336

emaciated in Kiso

and still not recovered:
late harvest moon

kiso no yase mo / mada naoranu ni / nochi no tsuki

337

the ivy leaves
 are tinged with the past:
 autumn foliage
tsuta no ha wa / mukashi mekitaru / momiji kana

338

departing autumn—
 wrapping my body
 in the narrow bedding
yuku aki ya / mi ni hikimatou / minobuton

339

chrysanthemums and
 cockscombs: every flower cut
 for Nichiren's death day
kiku keitō / kiri tsukushikeri / omeikō

WINTER 1688–89

340

winter seclusion:
 again I'll lean back against
 my old post
fuyugomori / mata yorisowan / kono hashira

341

five or six of us
 lined up before the tea cakes:
 the sunken hearth
itsutsu mitsu / cha no ko ni narabu / irori kana

342

I had heard the good name of the Buddhist layman Dōen of Daitōan Hut. With warm feelings toward him, I promised that we would meet, but before that day could come, he passed away like the frost of an early winter evening. Hearing that today is the first anniversary of his death,

I long to imagine
 how you looked—your staff
 of withered wood
sono katachi / mibaya kareki no / tsue no take

343

Grieving over Rika's wife
 lying down,
 the futon pulled up:
 cold, desolate night
kazuki fusu / futon ya samuki / yo ya sugoki

344

At the memorial of a certain person
 do they extinguish even
 the banked charcoal?
 the sound of hissing tears
uzumibi mo / kiyu ya namida no / niyuru oto

345

Jūzō of the province of Owari is known as Etsujin, a name that comes from the place where he was born. Now he hides himself in the city, but only to supply himself with some food and fuel. If he works two days, he plays the next two; if he works three days, he plays the next three. He loves his wine, and he sings from the *Tales of the Heike* when he's drunk. A true friend indeed.

that snow we saw:
 this year also
 has it fallen?
futari mishi / yuki wa kotoshi mo / furikeru ka

346

On a snowy night I playfully sought a *dai* hood, using the two words “buying rice” as my topic
 off to buy rice
 with a snow covered bag—
 my winter hood
kome kai ni / yuki no fukuro ya / nagezugin

347

are you a companion
 to these creepers secluded away?
 winter vegetable seller
sashikomoru / mugura no tomo ka / fuyuna uri

SPRING 1689

348

New Year's Day:
 it's the sun in each field
 that brings such longing
ganjitsu wa / tagoto no hi koso / koishikere

349

so enticing—
 in the spring of this year too
 the sky of wayfaring
omoshiro ya / kotoshi no haru mo / tabi no sora

350

morning and evening,
 as if someone waits for me at Matsushima:
 my unfulfilled love
asa yosa o / taga matsu shima zo / katagokoro

351

Second year of Genroku, Second Month, at Tōzan's lodging
 heat waves
 shimmering from the shoulders
 of my paper robe
kagerō no / waga kata ni tatsu / kamiko kana

352

red-blossom plums—
 unseen love engendered
 by the courtly blind
kōbai ya / minu koi tsukuru / tamasudare

353

Worshiping at Futamigaura

doubt it not:

the blossoms of the tide also show

spring upon this bay

utagau na / ushio no hana mo / ura no haru

354

even the creepers:

their new leaves lovely

at the dilapidated house

mugura sae / wakaba wa yasashi / yabure ie

355

a skylark's singing,

and keeping to its rhythm,

a pheasant's cry

hibari naku / naka no hyōshi ya / kiji no koe

356

On a painting of someone drinking sake

no moon, no blossoms,

just drinking sake

all alone

tsuki hana mo / nakute sake nomu / hitori kana

357

Giving my grass hermitage to a family with daughters

a grass hut too

has a season of moving:

a doll's house

kusa no to mo / sumikawaru yo zo / hina no ie

358

young sweetfish

seeing off the whitefish:

departure

ayu no ko no / shirauo okuru / wakare kana

359

departing spring—

birds cry, in the fishes'
eyes are tears

yuku haru ya / tori naki uo no / me wa namida

360

Muro no Yashima

with threads of

heat waves it is interwoven:
the smoke

itoyū ni / musubitsukitaru / kemuri kana

361

the sun about to sink,

and the threading heat waves
departing

irikakaru / hi mo itoyū no / nagori kana

362

a village where no

bells ring: what, then,
of spring evenings?

kane tsukanu / sato wa nani o ka / haru no kure

363

Spending a lonely spring evening in a country cottage

the sunset bell too

cannot be heard:
spring evening

iriai no / kane mo kikoezu / haru no kure

SUMMER 1689

364

so holy:

green leaves, young leaves,
in sun's light

ara tōto / aoba wakaba no / hi no hikari

365

for a while

secluded at a waterfall—

start of the summer retreat

shibaraku wa / taki ni komoru ya / ge no hajime

366

In search of Suitō of Yoze in Nasu Province

a man carrying fodder:

I'll make him our guide

across this summer field

magusa ou / hito o shiori no / natsumo kana

367

Concerning the beautiful views at Master Shūa's residence

mountains too

move into the garden—

a summer parlor

yama mo niwa ni / ugokiiruru ya / natsuzashiki

368

A grass-thatched hut

less than five feet square:

regrettable indeed

to build even this—

if only there were no rains

*tateyoko no / goshaku ni taranu / kusa no to o /**musubu mo kuyashi / ame nakariseba*

I knew of this poem by Priest Butchō, but seeing the hut is far more stirring than only having heard of it. Deeply moved, my heart feels purified.

even woodpeckers

don't damage this hut:

summer grove

kitsutsuki mo / io wa yaburazu / natsu kodachi

369

rice fields and barley—
 and among them also
 summer's cuckoo

ta ya mugi ya / naka ni mo natsu no / hototogisu

370

in the summer mountains
 praying before the clogs:
 setting off

natsuyama ni / ashida o ogamu / kadode kana

371

On a painting of a crane and banana tree
 a crane cries—
 that shriek will surely tear
 the banana leaves

tsuru naku ya / sono koe ni bashō / yarenubeshi

372

The deputy of the mansion sent me off with a horse. The groom leading the way asked, "Could you please write me a poem card?" "Such a refined request," I thought.

across the plain,
 turn my horse over there!
 cuckoo

no o yoko ni / uma hikimuke yo / hototogisu

373

As two monks on a pilgrimage to see the Deep North, we visited Shinohara in Nasu, and then thought of hurrying to see the "Killing Rock" of Sesshōseki. But rain kept pouring down, so we decided to stop over here first.

falling from high above—
 at a Takaku lodging,
 cuckoo

ochikuru ya / takaku no shuku no / hototogisu

374

The Killing Stone

the stench of the stone—

the summer grass red,

the scorching dew

ishi no ka ya / natsugusa akaku / tsuyu atsushi

375

The “willow where the crystal stream flows” stands on a foot-path by a rice field in Ashino village. Several times the district official, someone named Kohō, had said “I’d love to show you the willow,” and I always had wondered where it might be. And now finally I stand in that willow’s shade.

a whole rice paddy

planted—I depart

from the willow

ta ichimai / uete tachisaru / yanagi kana

376

from the west? from the east?

above all in the rice sprouts

the sound of the wind

nishi ka higashi ka / mazu sanae ni mo / kaze no oto

377

Crossing the Shirakawa Barrier

the beginning of all art—

in the deep north

a rice-planting song

fūryū no / hajime ya oku no / tauenta

378

The Chinese written character “chestnut” consists of “tree” and “west,” so the chestnut tree is supposed to be related to the Buddha Amida’s Western Pureland. They say that throughout his life the Bodhistva Gyōgi used the wood of this tree for his staff and the pillars of his hut.

people of the world
 don't discern this blossom—
 chestnut by the eaves
yo no hito no / mitsukenu hana ya / noki no kuri

379

About five miles east of the post-town of Sukagawa is the Ishikawa Waterfall, which I've longed to see. At this time the water level had increased dramatically from the rains, and I was told it was impossible to cross.

summer rains:
 enough water to drown
 the waterfall
samidare wa / taki furiuzumu / mikasa kana

380

planting seedlings
 with the hands—ancient patterns
 from the fern of longing
sanae toru / temoto ya mukashi / shinobuzuri

381

satchel and sword, too,
 displayed for Fifth Month:
 carp streamers
oi mo tachi mo / satsuki ni kazare / kaminobori

382

the Takekuma Pine:
 show it to him,
 late-blooming cherries
takekuma no / matsu misemōse / osozakura

Kyohaku gave me this hokku as a farewell gift, so I wrote,
 since the cherries bloomed,
 I've longed to see this pine: two trunks
 after three month's passage
sakura yori / matsu wa futaki o / mitsukigoshi

383

Rainhat Island—

where is it this rainy month
 along muddy roads?

kasashima wa / izuko satsuki no / nukarimichi

384

I'll bind blue flags

around my feet:
 sandal cords

ayamegusa / ashi ni musuban / waraji no o

385

islands and islands—

shattered into a thousand pieces,
 summer's sea

shimajima ya / chiji ni kudakete / natsu no umi

386

At Takadachi in Ōshū Province

summer grass:

all that remains
 of warriors' dreams

natsugusa ya / tsuwamonodomo ga / yume no ato

387

all the summer rains:

have they left it untouched?
 Hall of Light

samidare no / furinokoshite ya / hikaridō

388

From Narugo Hot Springs we intended to head into Dewa Province across Shitomae Barrier. Few travelers use this road, so the border guards were deeply suspicious, and it was a long time before they allowed us to pass. When we made the crest of a high ridge, the sun was already down. We spotted a border guard's house and sought a night's lodging there. But then heavy rain and wind lashed us for three days, so we holed up in the mountains in a thoroughly cheerless place.

fleas, lice,
 a horse peeing
 by my pillow
nomi shirami / uma no shitosuru / makura moto

389
 making coolness
 my lodging:
 lying at ease
suzushisa o / waga yado ni shite / nemaru nari

390
 crawl out here!
 under the silkworm nursery,
 the croak of a toad
haiide yo / kaiya ga shita no / hiki no koe

391
 Seeing safflowers in bloom at Mogami
 eye-brow brushes
 come to mind:
 safflower blossoms
mayuhaki o / omokage ni shite / beni no hana

392
 stillness—
 sinking into the rocks,
 cicadas' cry
shizukasa ya / iwa ni shimiuru / semi no koe

393
 gathering all
 the summer rains, the swift
 Mogami River
samidare o / atsumete hayashi / mogamigawa

394

At the home of Fūryū

at this water's source

I would seek for an ice house:

willow tree

mizu no oku / himuro tazunuru / yanagi kana

395

At Seishin's house

the wind's fragrance

also suggests the south:

Mogami River

kaze no ka mo / minami ni chikashi / mogamigawa

396

so grateful—

perfumed with snow,

the South Valley

arigata ya / yuki o kaorasu / minamidani

397

coolness—

the crescent moon faint

over Black Feather Mountain

suzushisa ya / hono mikazuki no / haguoyama

398

cloud peaks,

how many have crumbled away:

Moon Mountain

kumo no mine / ikutsu kuzurete / tsuki no yama

399

at Yudono,

forbidden to speak,

my sleeves wet with tears

katararenu / yudono ni nurasu / tamoto kana

400

his jewel-like spirit—
 it returns to Mt. Haguro,
 moon of the law
sono tama ya / haguro ni kaesu / nori no tsuki

401

moon? blossoms?
 to such questions,
 just four sleepers snoring
tsuki ka hana ka / toedo shisui no / ibiki kana

402

10th day of Sixth Month, second year of Genroku, after a seven-day devotional retreat at Mt. Haguro:

surprising freshness—
 after departing the mountains of Dewa,
 the first eggplant
mezurashi ya / yama o ideha no / hatsunasubi

403

thrusting the hot sun
 into the sea:
 Mogami River
atsuki hi o / umi ni iretari / mogamigawa

404

Kisagata—
 in the rain, Xi Shi asleep,
 silk tree blossoms
kisagata ya / ame ni seishi ga / nebu no hana

405

The evening rain ended, a certain person of the area guided me by boat into Kisagata Bay.

clearing at evening—
 cooling off under the cherry flowers
 with blossoms on the waves
yūbare ya / sakura ni suzumu / nami no hana

406

the Shallows—

a crane with legs wet,
the sea cool

shiogoshi ya / tsuru hagi nurete / umi suzushi

407

Mount Atsumi—

all the way to Fuku Bay,
the evening cool

atsumiyama ya / fukuura kakete / yūsuzumi

AUTUMN 1689

408

the Seventh Month—

even the sixth night
is different

fumizuki ya / muika mo tsune no / yo ni wa nizu

409

Looking out toward Sado Island from a post town called Izu-
mozaki in Echigo

stormy sea—

stretching out over Sado,
Heaven's River

araumi ya / sado ni yokotau / amanogawa

410

At the home of Dr. Hosokawa Shunan

in your medicinal garden
which flowers should be
my night's pillow?

yakuran ni / izure no hana o / kusamakura

411

skewering sea breams
 with cool willow twigs—
 a fisherman's wife
kodai sasu / yanagi suzushi ya / ama ga tsuma

412

in the same house
 prostitutes, too, slept:
 bush clover and moon
hitotsuya ni / yūjo mo netari / hagi to tsuki

413

the scent of early rice—
 cutting through the fields, on the right,
 the Rough Shore Sea
wase no ka ya / wakeiru migi wa / arisoumi

414

so red, red,
 the sun relentless and yet
 autumn's wind
akaaka to / hi wa tsurenaku mo / aki no kaze

415

I was invited to a certain grass hut
 autumn is cool:
 let each hand set to peeling
 melons and eggplants
aki suzushi / tegoto ni muke ya / uri nasubi

416

A man named Isshō had become well-known for his devotion to the way of haikai, but last winter he died. His elder brother held a linked verse gathering as a memorial.

grave too move!
 my wailing voice:
 autumn wind
tsuka mo ugoke / waga naku koe wa / aki no kaze

417

At a place called Little Pine

a lovely name—

Little Pine, where the wind wafts
over bush clover and miscanthus

shiorashiki / na ya komatsu fuku / hagi susuki

418

At the house of Kansei

drenched passersby—

they too are captivating:
bush clover in rain

nurete yuku ya / hito mo okashiki / ame no hagi

419

so pitiful—

under the helmet,
a cricket

muzan ya na / kabuto no shita no / kirigirisu

420

Yamanaka—

no need to pluck chrysanthemums:
the fragrance of these springs

yamanaka ya / kiku wa taoranu / yu no nioi

421

peach tree,

don't let your leaves fall:
autumn wind

momo no ki no / sono ha chirasu na / aki no kaze

422

Fishing fires, one of the ten famous scenes of Yamanaka

by the fishing fires,

a bullhead—under the waves
choking in tears

isaribi ni / kajika ya nami no / shita musebi

423

leaving the hot-springs:
 tonight my skin
 will be cool

yu no nagori / koyoi wa hada no / samukaran

424

leaving the hot springs,
 looking back how many times —
 beneath the mist

yu no nagori / iku tabi miru ya / kiri no moto

425

from this day forth—
 the inscription washed away
 by dew on my hat

kyō yori ya / kakitsuke kesan / kasa no tsuyu

426

Visiting the Kannon temple at Nata

whiter than
 the stones of Stone Mountain:
 autumn's wind

ishiyama no / ishi yori shiroshi / aki no kaze

427

I would sweep the garden
 before departing: in the temple,
 falling willow leaves

niwa haite / idebaya tera ni / chiru yanagi

428

scribbled on,
 now the fan is torn up:
 memories at departure

mono kaite / ōgi hikisaku / nagori kana

429

I crossed the bridge at Asamutsu. The popular pronunciation is Asamuzu, but in the “Bridge” section of Sei Shonagon’s *Pillow Book*, it is written “Asamutsu.”

Asamutsu—

on a moon-viewing journey
a dawn departure

asamutsu ya / tsukimi no tabi no / akebanare

430

Tamae

behold the moon!

while the reeds at Jewel Bay
are still uncut

tsukimi seyo / tamae no ashi o / karanu saki

431

Hina-ga-dake

tomorrow’s moon:

does it augur rain?
Hina-ga-dake

asu no tsuki / ame uranawan / hina-ga-dake

432

At Hyōchi Castle

is this the mountain

where Yoshinaka awoke?
a moon of sorrow

yoshinaka no / nezame no yama ka / tsuki kanashi

433

The sea of Kei

the eight scenes

of various provinces and now
the moon at Kei

kuniguni no / hakkei sara ni / kei no tsuki

434

1689, gazing at the moon in Tsuruga Bay, I visited Kei Shrine
and heard of the tradition of the Yugyō Abbots.

the moon so pure
 on the sand carried here
 by the Pilgrim Priests
tsuki kiyoshi / yugyō no moteru / suna no ue

435

Fifteenth night, and as the innkeeper had predicted, rain falls

harvest moon—
 the north country weather
 so uncertain
meigetsu ya / hokkoku biyori / sadamenaki

436

On the same night, the innkeeper told us a story. “There’s a
temple bell deep in the sea. Once the provincial governor sent
divers to search for it. And they found it, but it was upside
down, so there was no way they could pull it up.”

where’s the moon?
 the temple bell sunk
 to the bottom of the sea
tsuki izuku / kane wa shizumeru / umi no soko

437

At the beach

not just the moon:
 because of rain, even *sumō*
 has been called off
tsuki nomi ka / ame ni sumō mo / nakarikeri

438

At the harbor

the ancient name
 “Deer Antler” so lovely:
 the autumn moon
furuki na no / tsunuga ya koishi / aki no tsuki

439

loneliness—

superior even than Suma,
autumn on this beach

sabishisa ya / suma ni kachitaru / hama no aki

440

between the waves—

mingling with tiny shells,
bits of bush clover blossoms

nami no ma ya / kogai ni majiru / hagi no chiri

441

Drawn to Color Beach

drop your little petals,
bush clover, on the little shells:
our little cup

kohagi chire / masubo no kogai / kosakazuki

442

still not a butterfly

as autumn deepens:
a rape-worm

kochō ni mo / narade aki furu / namushi kana

443

When I open my door, to the west there is the mountain called
Ibuki. There are no blossoms; there is no snow. Only the self-
sufficient grandeur of the mountain.

just as it is—

not even needing the moon:
Mt. Ibuki

sonomama yo / tsuki mo tanomaji / ibukiyama

444

Written impromptu at Mr. Josui's villa

peacefully secluded here,

I would love to pick fruit

and the grains of grass

komoriite / ko no mi kusa no mi / hirowabaya

445

bloom quickly,

the ninth is near:

chrysanthemum blossoms

hayaku sake / kunichi mo chikashi / kiku no hana

446

A certain Sogyū, who lives in Seki, visited me at my lodging in Ōgaki. The blossoms Sōgi referred to in "White Wisteria Slope" were fragrant, just as when he wrote of them.

wisteria beans:

I'll make them my poetry

with the blossoms gone

fuji no mi wa / haikai ni sen / hana no ato

447

At Bokuin's villa

hermitage—

moon, chrysanthemums,

and an acre of rice

kakurega ya / tsuki to kiku to ni / ta san-tan

448

For a painting

Saigyō's sandals:

hang them as well

with the pine's dew

saigyō no / waraji mo kakare / matsu no tsuyu

449

like a clam from its shell,
 setting off for Futami:
 departing autumn

hamaguri no / futami ni wakare / yuku aki zo

450

I stayed over at the house of Yūgen in the Ise Province. His wife was in complete accord with the wishes of her husband, faithful in every way, and she soothed a traveler's weary heart. When Akechi fell into poverty, his wife cut her hair so she could prepare a renga gathering. Recalling now her selfless nature,

moon, be lonely—

I want to tell of
 Akechi's wife

tsuki sabi yo / akechi ga tsuma no / hanashi sen

451

The Inner Shrine had already been moved, but I worshipped at the Outer Shrine during its Ritual of Renewal.

for holiness,

everyone's been shoving each other:
 the Shrine Renewal

tōtosa ni / mina oshianu / gosengū

452

At a place called Nakamura in Ise Province

autumn winds:

now the graveyard of Ise
 is even more desolate

aki no kaze / ise no hakahara / nao sugoshi

453

Futami

Saigyō's inkstone?

I pick it up — dew
 on the concave rock

suzuri ka to / hirou ya kuboki / ishi no tsuyu

454

Shuei-in

entering the gate:

by the sago palm,
 an orchid's fragrance

mon ni ireba / sotetsu ni ran no / nioi kana

455

transforming itself

every single day:
 a cotton rose

edaburi no / higoto ni kawaru / fuyō kana

WINTER 1689-90

456

first winter shower:

even the monkey seems to want
 a little straw coat

hatsushigure / saru mo komino o / hoshigenari

457

for the people in this house

send down winter showers
 no matter the cold

hitobito o / shigure yo yado wa / samukutomo

458

mushroom gathering—

in danger of getting drenched in
 a cold evening shower

takegari ya / abunaki koto ni / yūshigure

459

winter garden—

the moon too a thread:
 an insect's song

fuyuniwa ya / tsuki mo ito naru / mushi no gin

460

on a folding screen
 a mountain is painted:
 winter seclusion

byōbu ni wa / yama o egaite / fuyugomori

461

Playing with children in the hills
 in the first snow
 let's make beards
 from rabbit fur

hatsuyuki ni / usagi no kawa / hige tsukure

462

First day of eleventh month, second year of Genroku, for a
 linked verse at Ryōbon's house

hey kids!
 let's run around
 in the hail!

iza kodomo / hashiri arikan / tamaarare

463

Visiting the Southern Capital, I yearned for the eventual build-
 ing of the Buddha Hall

first snow—
 for the Great Buddha, when
 will the columns be raised?

hatsuyuki ya / itsu daibutsu no / hashiradate

464

Song on a journey

off to the mountain castle
 of Ide, hiring a palanquin:
 early winter showers

yamashiro e / ide no kago karu / shigure kana

465

were they walking
 around Chōshō's grave too?
 bowl beating
chōshō no / haka mo meguru ka / hachitataki

466

With many people visiting my grass hut in Zeze,
 if it hails
 I'll cook and serve
 wicker-caught whitebait
arare seba / ajiro no hio o / nite dasan

467

why does it head
 to the market at year's-end?
 a flying crow
nani ni kono / shiwasu no ichi ni / yuku karasu

SPRING 1690

468

Greeting the New Year near the capital
 the man wearing
 a straw mat, who is he?
 blossoms of spring
komo o kite / tarebito imasu / hana no haru

469

With a person heading to Zeze
 let's go see
 the Festival of the Otter:
 deep in the hills of Seta
kawauso no / matsuri mite koyo / seda no oku

470

a bush warbler

drops its hat:

camellia blossom

uguisu no / kasa otoshitaru / tsubaki kana

471

In my home village, having sown seeds of the three vegetables in
my brother's garden

spring rain—

just beginning to sprout,

eggplant seedlings

harusame ya / futaba ni moyuru / nasubidane

472

this tiny seed

I do not belittle:

red pepper

kono tane to / omoikonasaji / tōgarashi

473

Catching my interest in the mountains of Iga during the year of
the horse,

seed potatoes—

with cherries blooming,

the vegetable seller on his rounds

taneimo ya / hana no sakari ni / uriariku

474

At Mr. Kōboku's

pine-filled berms

and blossoms – a manor built

deep in the forest

dote no matsu / hana ya kobukaki / tonozukuri

475

Blossom viewing

beneath a tree,
 both soup and fish salad:
 cherry blossoms!

ki no moto ni / shiru mo namasu mo / sakura kana

476

so fitting—

 bean-flour rice balls
 while blossom hunting

niawashi ya / mame no komeshi ni / sakuragari

477

heat waves—

 the saiko's threadlike leaves
 in a thin haze

kagerō ya / saiko no ito no / usugumori

478

butterfly wings:

 how many times fluttering
 over the wall's roof

chō no ha no / ikutabi koyuru / hei no yane

479

It is said that long ago Hanagaki Village in Iga was made imperial land to protect the double blossom cherry trees of Nara.

the whole village:

 are they all descendants
 of the blossom guards?

hitosato wa / mina hanamori no / shison ka ya

480

“it eats snakes”—

 hearing this, how ghastly
 the call of the pheasant

hebi kuu to / kikeba osoroshi / kiji no koe

481

An Account of Pure Washed Hall

from the four directions,
 blossoms are blowing in:
 waves of the grebe

shihō yori / hana fukiirete / nio no nami

482

Gazing upon the lake, lamenting the passage of spring

spring departs:
 with those of Ōmi
 I join the lament

yuku haru o / ōmi no hito to / oshimikeru

483

the solitary nun
 aloof in her straw hut:
 white azalea

hitori ama / waraya sugenashi / shirotsutsuji

SUMMER 1690

484

Staying over at Seta, I worshiped at Ishiyama temple at dawn
 and saw the Genji room there.

daybreak:
 in the lingering lavender
 a cuckoo calls

akebono wa / mada murasaki ni / hototogisu

485

Moving into the Unreal Dwelling behind Ishiyama Temple

for now I'll rely
 on the pasania tree:
 summer grove

mazu tanomu / shū no ki mo ari / natsu kodachi

486

you're the butterfly
 I'm Zhuangzi's
 dreaming heart
kimi ya chō / ware ya sōji ga / yumegokoro

487

summer grass—
 before you come,
 I'll hunt out the snakes
natsugusa ya / ware sakidachite / hebi karan

488

neither to evening
 nor morning does it belong:
 melon blossom
yūbe ni mo / asa ni mo tsukazu / uri no hana

489

the sun's path—
 hollyhocks turn with it
 in summer rains
hi no michi ya / aoi katamuku / satsukiamae

490

fragrant orange—
 when? in what field?
 cuckoo
tachibana ya / itsu no no naka no / hototogisu

491

Firefly viewing at Seta
 firefly viewing—
 the boatman is drunk,
 the boat unsteady
hotarumi ya / sendō yōte / obotsukana

492

in the capital,
 yet longing for the capital—
 cuckoo

kyō nite mo / kyō natsukashi ya / hototogisu

493

“The evening cool at riverside, Fourth Avenue,” they call it. From early Sixth Month with its evening moon to the moon at dawn just past mid-month, people line up along the river in platforms drinking sake and feasting as they party all night long. Women wrapped in showy sashes, men sporting fashionably long coats, with monks and old folks intermingling, even apprentices to coopers and blacksmiths, everyone carefree and leisurely, singing up a storm. Yes, indeed, life in the capital!

river breeze—

 wearing pale persimmon robes,
 the evening cool

kawakaze ya / usugaki kitaru / yūsuzumi

494

A recluse named Tōko from the Naniwa area came to meet this untalented teacher.

don’t take after me:

 cut in two,
 a musk melon

ware ni niru na / futatsu ni wareshi / makuwauri

495

my hut:

 that the mosquitoes are small
 is all I can offer

waga yado wa / ka no chiisaki o / chisō kana

496

The fleeting transience of life

soon to die,

yet no sign of it:

a cicada's cry

yagate shinu / keshiki wa miezu / semi no koe

AUTUMN 1690

497

On Tanabata

do not peek

even through silk tree leaves:

the stars' light

nebu no ki no / hagoshi mo itoe / hoshi no kage

498

At a thatched hut by Kiso Yoshinaka's grave, my heart was drawn to the cemetery

Festival of Spirits:

today too at the crematorium

smoke rises

tamamatsuri / kyō mo yakiba no / kemuri kana

499

dragonfly—

unable to hold on

to the grass blade

tonbō ya / toritsuki kaneshi / kusa no ue

500

wild boars too

are blown along:

autumn windstorm

inoshishi mo / tomo ni fukaruru / nowaki kana

501

Unchiku, a monk in Kyoto, painted a picture—perhaps a self-portrait—of a monk with his face turned away. He asked me to write a legend on it, so I wrote: You are over sixty, and I nearly fifty. Together in a dream, we present the forms of dreams. Here I add the words of one asleep:

turn this way,

I too am lonely:

autumn evening

kochira muke / ware mo sabishiki / aki no kure

502

plucking out white hairs—

under the pillow,

a cricket

shiraga nuku / makura no shita ya / kirigirisu

503

harvest moon—

children lined up along

the temple veranda

meigetsu ya / chigotachi narabu / dō no en

504

harvest moon—

turning toward the sea,

the Seven Komachis

meigetsu ya / umi ni mukaeba / nana komachi

505

Moonviewing at an old temple

moonviewing—

in the room not a single

beautiful face

tsukimi suru / za ni utsukushiki / kao mo nashi

506

At our first linked verse party at Masahide's house

the moon about to rise—
 everyone with hands on knees
 in the room

tsuki shiro ya / hiza ni te o oku / yoi no yado

507

by a paulownia tree,
 a quail is crying
 inside the garden wall

kiri no ki ni / uzura naku naru / hei no uchi

508

A virtuous monk once said, "Superficial Zen is the root of grave flaws," and I appreciate his words.

lightning,
 yet unenlightened:
 so admirable

inazuma ni / satoranu hito no / tattosa yo

509

At Katada

a sick goose
 falling in the night's cold:
 sleep on a journey

byōgan no / yosamu ni ochite / tabine kana

510

a fisher's hut:
 mingling with small shrimp,
 crickets

ama no ya wa / koebi ni majiru / itodo kana

511

At Shōzui Temple in Katada

sipping morning tea,
 the monk is peaceful:
 chrysanthemum blossoms
asacha nomu / sō shizukanari / kiku no hana

512

I spent a number of days in Awazu, where there was a man who
 loved the tea ceremony. He gathered chrysanthemum flowers
 from a nearby beach and invited me to tea.

a butterfly too comes
 to sip the vinegar:
 chrysanthemum salad
chō mo kite / su o suu kiku no / namasu kana

WINTER 1690–91

513

On the road to my hometown

early winter showers—
 enough to blacken the fields’
 freshcut stubble
shigururu ya / ta no arakabu no / kuromu hodo

514

a cricket

crying forgetfully:
 the brazier
kirigirisu / wasurene ni naku / kotatsu kana

515

Recalling days of old

frost has come,
 but a wild pink blossom
 on the wooden brazier
shimo no nochi / nadeshiko sakeru / bioke kana

516

winter winds—

cheeks swollen in pain,
someone's face

kogarashi ya / hohobare itamu / hito no kao

517

On a journey

first snow—

the color of the knapsack
of a wandering priest

hatsuyuki ya / hijiri kozō no / oi no iro

518

Traveling the Shinano Road

snow falling—

miscanthus for the shrine hut
still uncut

yuki chiru ya / hoya no susuki no / karinokoshi

519

plovers rising:

as early evening deepens,
winds storm down Mt. Hiei

chidori tachi / fukeyuku shoya no / hiei oroshi

520

A journey

year-end house cleaning:

through the cedar trees,
a windstorm

suhaki wa / sugi no ki no ma no / arashi kana

521

A poetry gathering to see the year off

for half a day,

companions to the gods—
seeing the year off

hanjitsu wa / kami o tomo ni ya / toshiwasure

522

Sojourning in the capital, every night I heard the melancholy
 sound of a pilgrim beating his bowl while seeking alms.

dried salmon and also

a Kūya pilgrim's emaciation:

the depths of winter

karazake mo / kūya no yase mo / kan no uchi

523

hold for a moment

the sound of slicing soybeans:

bowl beating

natto kiru / oto shibashi mate / hachitataki

524

flying down

on the stones of Stone Mountain:

hail storm

ishiyama no / ishi ni tabashiru / arare kana

525

usually hateful,

yet the crow too

in this dawn snow

higoro nikuki / karasu mo yuki no / ashita kana

526

At Ōtsu

on low hills too:

a mountain windstorm swirling

the tree leaves

sanshaku no / yama mo arashi no / ko no ha kana

527

on Hira and Mikami

snow mantles across the peaks:

a bridge of snowy egrets

hira mikami / yuki sashiwatase / sagi no hashi

528

Responding to a request from Jōkō Ajiyari:

Ah, admirable, admirable! The bamboo hat is admirable. The straw coat is admirable. What kind of person bestows this to us, what person makes such a painting, this vision from a thousand years, appearing right here? Now with this form, the spirit too appears. The coat so admirable, the hat so admirable.

so admirable—

even on a day without snow,
straw coat and bamboo hat

tōtosa ya / yuki furanu hi mo / mino to kasa

529

hidden

in the late winter waters:
a diving grebe

kakurekeri / shiwasu no umi no / kaitsuburi

530

At Otokuni's new house

buying a house,
and lending it to me:
seeing the year off

hito ni ie o / kawasete ware wa / toshiwasure

SPRING 1691

531

Kiso's character:

sprouting strongly through the snow,
the spring grass

kiso no jō / yuki ya haenuku / haru no kusa

532

At Otokuni's house

plum blossoms and fresh greens
at the Mariko stopover
and that yam porridge

ume wakana / mariko no shuku no / tororojiru

533

Early spring in the mountains of Iga
 mountain village
 and the New Year's dancers are late:
 plum blossoms
yamazato wa / manzai ososhi / ume no hana

534

moonrise gathering—
 carrying a plum branch,
 a novice mountain ascetic
tsukimachi ya / ume katageyuku / koyamabushi

535

so lazy—
 finally roused from bed:
 spring rain
bushōsa ya / kakiokosareshi / haru no ame

536

emaciated
 by love and barley?
 the lady cat
mugimeshi ni / yatsururu koi ka / neko no tsuma

537

year upon year—
 fertilizing the cherry trees:
 blossom dust
toshidoshi ya / sakura o koyasu / hana no chiri

538

drinking it all up,
 let's make it into a flower vase:
 the four liter wine barrel
nomiakete / hanaike ni sen / nishōdaru

539

for a moment
 it hangs above the blossoms:
 the night's moon
shibaraku wa / hana no ue naru / tsukiyo kana

540

old and infirm—
 my teeth bite sand
 in the dried seaweed
otoroi ya / ha ni kuiateshi / nori no suna

541

a mountain rose—
 I should stick it in my hat
 just like a branch
yamabuki ya / kasa ni sasubeki / eda no nari

542

On a picture
 mountain roses—
 when tea ovens at Uji
 are so fragrant
yamabuki ya / uji no hoiro no / niou toki

543

a night of darkness—
 having lost its nest,
 a plover crying out
yami no yo ya / su o madowashite / naku chidori

SUMMER 1691

544

grievous junctures—
 the human fate of becoming
 a bamboo shoot
uki fushi ya / take no ko to naru / hito no hate

545

Arashiyama's

bamboo grove so dense—
the wind threading through*arashiyama / yabu no shigeri ya / kaze no suji*

546

citron blossoms—

let's recall the olden days:
the food preparing room.*yu no hana ya / mukashi shinoban / ryōri no ma*

547

cuckoo:

filtering through the vast bamboo grove
the moon's light*hototogisu / ōtakeyabu o / moru tsukiyo*

548

sunk in sorrow,

make me feel loneliness:
mountain cuckoo*uki ware o / sabishigarase yo / kankodori*

549

clapping hands,

and dawnlight in the echo:
summer moon*te o uteba / kodama ni akuru / natsu no tsuki*

550

bamboo shoots—

and my childhood
sketches of them*take no ko ya / osanaki toki no / e no susabi*

551

ears of barley—

tinted in the tears
of crying skylarks*mugi no ho ya / namida ni somete / naku hibari*

552

day by day
 the barley reddens toward ripeness:
 singing skylarks
hitohi hitohi / mugi akaramite / naku hibari

553

devoid of talent,
 I wish only to sleep:
 raucous warblers
nō nashi no / nemutashi ware o / gyōgyōshi

554

Regretting tomorrow's departure from the Villa of Fallen Per-
 simmons, I walked around gazing at all the rooms from back to
 front.

summer rains—
 poem cards peeled off,
 their traces on the wall
samidare ya / shikishi hegitaru / kabe no ato

555

wrapping rice dumplings:
 with one hand she puts back
 her fallen hair
chimaki yū / katate ni hasamu / hitaigami

556

Sixth Month:
 the burning heat of someone
 suffering from flu
minazuki wa / fukubyō yami no / atsusa kana

AUTUMN 1691

557

Early Autumn

early autumn—

the rolled up mosquito net
now a bedcover

hatsuaki ya / tatami nagara no / kaya no yogi

558

a begonia,

the color of watermelon blossoms,
in full bloom

shukaidō / suika no iro ni / sakinikeri

559

autumn's wind blowing

and yet how green
the chestnut burs

akikaze no / fukedomo aoshi / kuri no iga

560

seedhead of the reed—

seized by demons
of the Rashōmon gate

ogi no ho ya / kashira o tsukamu / rashōmon

561

in the cowshed,

the dusky sound of mosquitoes:
lingering summer heat

ushibeya ni / ka no koe kuraki / zansho kana

562

Thinking of constructing a hut, Kukū asked for a poem on a
painting of Kenkō.

the color of autumn:

not even a pot
of rice-bran mash

aki no iro / nukamiso tsubo mo / nakarikeri

563

loneliness—

dangling from a nail,
a cricket

sabishisa ya / kugi ni kaketaru / kirigirisu

564

The night of the fifteenth

friends who've given rice:
tonight they're my guest
at moonviewing

yone kururu / tomo o koyoi no / tsuki no kyaku

565

Harvest moon

Mii Temple,

I'd love to knock on its gate:
tonight's moon

miidera no / mon tatakabaya / kyō no tsuki

566

At Katada, on the night of the 16th

open the lock

let the moon shine in—
Floating Temple

jō akete / tsuki sashireyo / ukimidō

567

how easily it rose

and now it hesitates,
the moon in clouds

yasuyasu to / idete izayou / tsuki no kumo

568

sixteenth night moon—

just enough time to boil shrimp
in the night's darkness

izayoi ya / ebi niru hodo no / yoi no yami

569

harvest moon:

though it's a second time . . .

this moon at Seta

meigetsu wa / futatsu sugite mo / seta no tsuki

570

rice-field sparrows

in the tea fields—

their refuge

ina suzume / chanokibatake ya / nigedokoro

571

the hawk's eyes

have darkened now:

calling quail

taka no me mo / ima ya kurenu to / naku uzura

572

At the home of Sanshi in Tatsugaoka

gaze at the buckwheat, too,

and make them envious:

bushclover in the fields

soba mo mite / kenarigaraseyo / nora no hagi

573

grass-thatched hut—

as day darkens I'm given

chrysanthemum wine

kusa no to ya / higurete kureshi / kiku no sake

574

along the bridge beam

endures the fern of recollection:

farewell moon

hashigeta no / shinobu wa tsuki no / nagori kana

575

nine times awakened
 yet it's still the moon
 before dawn

kokono tabi / okite mo tsuki no / nanatsu kana

576

mushroom—
 a leaf from an unknown tree
 sticking to it

matsudake ya / shiranu ko no ha no / hebaritsuku

577

beneath the noodles
 building up the fire:
 the night's cold

nyūmen no / shita takitatsuru / yosamu kana

578

autumn wind—
 a paulownia tree being blown,
 now frost on the ivy

akikaze ya / kiri ni ugokite / tsuta no shimo

579

rice threshing,
 an old woman's good fortune:
 chrysanthemum blossom

ine koki no / uba mo medetasbi / kiku no hana

WINTER 1691–92

580

Fourth year of Genroku, Tenth Month, staying over at Mr. Riyū's place at Menshō Temple. It has been a hundred years since this temple was moved here from the village of Hirata. As it says in the record of contributions for the temple, "Bamboo and trees grow densely, and the earth and rocks are aged with moss." A truly venerable grove, deeply moving in its aura of great age.

the ambience
 of a hundred years: this garden's
 fallen leaves
momotose no / keshiki o niwa no / ochiba kana

581
 so very precious:
 are they tinting my tears?
 falling crimson leaves
tōtogaru / namida ya somete / chiru momiji

582
 Words in praise of this garden
 finely-crafted,
 now the garden is enlivened:
 early winter shower
tsukurinasu / niwa o isamuru / shigure kana

583
 deep-rooted leeks
 washed pure white:
 so cold
nebuka shiroku / araiagetaru / samusa kana

584
 Enjoying myself at Sensen's house
 time to time
 gazing on Mt. Ibuki:
 winter seclusion
oriori ni / ibuki o mite wa / fuyugomori

585
 An impromptu verse at Mr. Kōsetsu's villa
 has the withering wind
 added some color?
 a bloom out of season
kogarashi ni / nioi ya tsukeshi / kaeribana

586

narcissus—
 and the white paper screen,
 reflecting each other
suisen ya / shiroki shōji no / tomoutsuri

587

its color
 whiter than the peach:
 narcissus bloom
sono nioi / momo yori shiroshi / suisenka

588

At Suganuma's house
 weary of the capital,
 ah this cold whipping wind—
 winter dwelling
kyō ni akite / kono kogarashi ya / fuyuzumai

589

At Kōgetsu's house
 awaiting the snow,
 the faces of the wine lovers—
 lightning flash
yuki o matsu / jōgo no kao ya / inabikari

590

winter winds blow
 the rocks sharpened
 among the cedars
kogarashi ni / iwa fukitogaru / sugima kana

591

I worshiped at the Hōrai temple in the province of Mikawa.
 Back on the road, my old illness cropped up, and I spent a night
 at an inn at the foot of the mountain.

praying for a warm bed,
 it has now appeared:
 sleep along the journey
yogi hitotsu / inori idashite / tabine kana

592

As early winter showers fell desolately, I sought a night's lodging. I dried my wet clothes by the hearth fire and scooped water to my mouth. The master of the inn treated me with kindness, comforting for a while the troubles of the journey. As the day ended, I laid down under the lamp, took out my ink and brush set, and started to write. Noticing this, he earnestly asked for a poem to remember our one moment of meeting.

putting up at an inn
 I am asked my name:
 early winter showers
yado karite / na o nanorasuru / shigure kana

593

With no settled place in this world, for the last six or seven years I've spent my nights on the road, suffering many illnesses. Unable to forget dear friends and disciples of many years, I finally made my way back to the Musashi Plain. Day after day they have come visit my poor hut, and I offer this verse in reply:

somehow
 still alive—snow on
 withered miscanthus
tomokakumo / narade ya yuki no / kareobana

594

the gods gone
 everything desolate among
 the dead leaves
rusu no ma ni / aretaru kami no / ochiba kana

595

arrowroot leaves
 with their face exposed:
 morning frost
kuzu no ha no / omote misekeri / kesa no shimo

596

geese clamoring
 on rice fields at Toba—
 frigid rain
kari sawagu / toba no tazura ya / kan no ame

597

fishes, birds,
 their heart we do not know:
 seeing the year off
uo tori no / kokoro wa shirazu / toshiwasure

SPRING 1692

598

a spring unseen:
 on the back of a mirror,
 plum blossoms
bito mo minu / haru ya kagami no / ura no ume

599

so enviable:
 far north of the floating world,
 mountain cherry blossoms
urayamashi / ukiyo no kita no / yamazakura

600

bush warbler—
 pooping on the rice cake
 at the edge of the veranda
uguisu ya / mochi ni funsuru / en no saki

601

Parting gift for one heading east
 know my heart:
 with a blossom,
 a begging bowl
kono kokoro / suiseyo hana ni / goki ichigu

602

cats in love:

when it's over, from the bedroom
 a hazy moon

neko no koi / yamu toki neya no / oborozuki

603

Sauntering

counting them as I pass:

house after house,
 the plums and willows

kazoekinu / yashiki yashiki no / ume yanagi

604

“Rich in moon and blossoms”: at my hut there are a peach and
 cherry tree; for my disciples there are Kikaku and Ransetsu.

in my two hands,

peach and cherry blossoms—
 and mugwort rice-cake

ryō no te ni / momo to sakura ya / kusa no mochi

SUMMER 1692

605

The first anniversary of Fuboku's death: a linked verse gathering

the sound of a

cuckoo singing—
 an old inkstone box

hototogisu / naku ne ya furuki / suzuribako

606

cuckoo cries—

five-foot spears
 of blue flags

hototogisu / naku ya goshaku no / ayamegusa

607

Sixth Month—

though there is sea bream,
 this pickled whale meat

minazuki ya / tai wa aredomo / shiokujira

608

on the Chinese gable,

the setting sun . . . growing faint:
 evening cool

kara hafu no / irihi ya usuki / yūsuzumi

AUTUMN 1692

609

On the subject of wildflowers of the fields

they make me forget

the heat of summer's pinks:
 wildflowers of the fields

nadeshiko no / atsusa wasururu / nokiku kana

610

under the crescent moon

the earth is shrouded with mist:
 buckwheat blossoms

mikazuki ni / chi wa oboro nari / soba no hana

611

Words on transplanting banana trees

banana leaves

will hang by the pillars:
 moon over the hut

bashō-ba o / hashira ni kaken / io no tsuki

612

harvest moon—

swelling up to my gate,
 the cresting tide

meigetsu ya / mon ni sashikuru / shiogashira

613

Evening party at Fukagawa

green was just right

and yet now it's a

a red pepper

aokute mo / arubeki mono o / tōgarashi

614

Near the end of the Fukagawa river, the moon shining into a boat at a place called "Five Pines"

upriver and

now downriver—

moon's companion

kawakami to / kono kawashimo ya / tsuki no tomo

615

Enjoying the Onagizawa with Tōkei

traveling with autumn

I would go all the way to

Komatsu River

aki ni soute / yukabaya sue wa / komatsugawa

616

autumn departs

yet something holds promise—

green tangerines

yuku aki no / nao tanomosbi ya / aomikan

WINTER 1692–93

617

For a linked verse gathering at Kyoriku's cottage, 3rd day of Tenth Month, fifth year of Genroku

just today,

let's all be old:

first winter shower

kyō bakari / hito mo toshiyore / hatsushigure

618

opening the hearth—
 the aging plasterer
 with sideburns of frost
robiraki ya / sakan oiyuku / bin no shimo

619

salted sea breams,
 their gums too are cold:
 the fish store
shiodai no / haguki mo samushi / uo no tana

620

sweeping the garden,
 the snow forgotten:
 a broom
niwa hakite / yuki o wasururu / habaki kana

621

banked charcoal—
 against the wall,
 the guest's shadow
uzumibi ya / kabe ni wa kyaku no / kagebōshi

622

into my moon and flower
 folly, I'll drive a needle:
 start of deep winter
tsuki hana no / gu ni hari taten / kan no iri

623

my heart
 so oddly at ease:
 Twelfth Month
nakanaka ni / kokoro okashiki / shiwasu kana

SPRING 1693

624

New Year's Day

year after year—

the monkey wearing
a monkey's mask

toshidoshi ya / saru ni kisetaru / saru no men

625

slowly spring

is taking shape:
moon and plum

haru mo yaya / keshiki totonou / tsuki to ume

626

On a portrait of Master Shrimp

a whitefish—

opening its black eyes
in the net of the Law

shirauo ya / kuroki me o aku / nori no ami

627

On an propitious day in Second Month, Zekitsu had his head shaven and entered medical school, and I offered him my congratulations.

on this First Horse Day,

a fox must have shaved
your head

hatsu uma ni / kitsune no sorishi / atama kana

628

Words of farewell to monk Sengin

a crane's black

robe of feathers—
clouds of blossoms

tsuru no ke no / kuroki koromo ya / hana no kumo

SUMMER 1693

629

cuckoo:

its call stretching out
across the water

hototogisu / koe yokotau ya / mizu no ue

630

going beyond even

the art of wind and moon:
peony blossoms

fūgetsu no / zai mo hanare yo / fukamigusa

631

As Kyoriku sets off on the Kiso Road

emulate the heart

of a wayfarer:
pasania blossoms

tabibito no / kokoro ni mo niyo / shii no hana

632

learn from the journey

of a sorrowing wayfarer:
flies of Kiso

uki hito no / tabi ni mo narae / kiso no hae

633

moonflower—

sticking my drunken face
out the window

yūgao ya / yōte kao dasu / mado no ana

634

children!

noonflowers have bloomed,
and I'll peel a melon

kodomora yo / hirugao sakinu / uri mukan

AUTUMN 1693

635

Komachi's poem

with flooding waters

the stars too sleep on their journey—

upon a rock

takamizu ni / hoshi mo tabine ya / iwa no ue

636

without dropping

its bright white dew,

a bush clover sways

shiratsuyu mo / kobosanu hagi no / uneri kana

637

first mushroom—

just a few days into the season,

autumn dew

hatsutake ya / mada hikazu henu / aki no tsuyu

638

Autumn, the sixth year of Genroku: wearied of people, I locked
my gate.

morning glories—

locked during daytime,

my fence gate

asagao ya / hiru wa jō orosu / mon no kaki

639

When I had shut my gate in Fukagawa

morning glories—

even they, too, are not

my friend

asagao ya / kore mo mata waga / tomo narazu

640

fish stench:

on top of waterweed
dace entrails

namagusashi / konagi ga ue no / hae no wata

641

sixteenth night moon—

ever so slightly
the darkening begins

izayoi wa / wazuka ni yami no / hajime kana

642

Lamenting the death of Matsukura Ranran

in autumn's wind,

sadly broken,
a mulberry staff

akikaze ni / orete kanashiki / kuwa no tsue

643

3rd day of Ninth Month, visiting his grave

have you seen it?—

on the seventh night, over your grave,
the third-day moon

mishi ya sono / nanuka wa haka no / mika no tsuki

644

Mourning Tōjun

the moon has set;

all that remains is
the four corners of his desk

iru tsuki no / ato wa tsukue no / yosumi kana

645

chrysanthemums blooming—

in a stonemason's yard
amid the stones

kiku no hana / saku ya ishiya no / ishi no ai

WINTER 1693–94

646

on the gold screen
 a pine of great age—
 winter seclusion

kinbyō no / matsu no furusa yo / fuyugomori

647

Sixth year of Genroku, 9th day of the first month of winter, visiting Sodō's chrysanthemum garden. The Chrysanthemum Festival is held today, the 9th day of the Tenth Month, because in Ninth Month the chrysanthemums had not yet budded. As a Chinese poem says, "The Chrysanthemum Festival is any time they are in bloom," and it's not unprecedented for the Festival to be postponed. So though it's winter, we're encouraged to write poems on the autumn chrysanthemum.

chrysanthemum fragrance—
 in the garden, the sole
 of a worn-out sandal

kiku no ka ya / niwa ni kiretaru / kutsu no soko

648

winter chrysanthemums—
 rice bran spilling over them
 from a nearby hand mill

kangiku ya / konuka no kakaru / usu no hata

649

winter chrysanthemum—
 heating sweet wine
 in front of the window

kangiku ya / amazake tsukuru / mado no saki

650

wrapped warm
 in its feather robe,
 the duck's feet

kegoromo ni / tsutsumite nukushi / kamo no ashi

651

On the topic of harvesting radishes

up in the saddle

sits a little boy—

radish harvest

kuratsubo ni / kobōzu noru ya / daikonhiki

652

When the huge bridge over Fukagawa River was half completed

first snow—

coating the bridge

under construction

hatsuyuki ya / kakekakaritaru / hashi no ue

653

Eating vegetable roots, I talked all day with samurai

a samurai gathering:

pungent as a radish is

their talk

mononofu no / daikon nigaki / hanashi kana

654

20th of Tenth Month, an impromptu verse at Fukagawa

the pathos of

the birdseller's geese:

Festival of Ebisu

furiuri no / gan aware nari / ebisukō

655

Ebisu Festival:

vinegar salesman decked out

in formal wear

ebisukō / suuri ni hakama / kisenikeri

656

The *Shin-Ryōgoku* Bridge being completed,
 everyone heads off,
 grateful for the bridge:
 frosted roadway
mina idete / hashi o itadaku / shimoji kana

657

still alive
 all frozen into one:
 sea slugs
ikinagara / hitotsu ni kōru / namako kana

658

year-end housecleaning:
 hanging his own shelf,
 a carpenter
susuhaki wa / ono ga tana tsuru / daiku kana

659

and also a night
 a thief came calling:
 year's end
nusubito ni / ōta yo mo ari / toshi no kure

SPRING 1694

660

decorations of the immortals:
 I'd love to hear from Ise
 the first news of the year
hōrai ni / kikabaya ise no / hatsudayori

661

in the plum's fragrance,
 suddenly the sun—
 mountain path
ume ga ka ni / notto hi no deru / yamaji kana

662

as if touching
 a boil, willow branches
 bending
haremono ni / sawaru yanagi no / shinae kana

663

bush warbler—
 behind the willow,
 in front of the grove
uguisu ya / yanagi no ushiro / yabu no mae

664

in the plum's fragrance
 the single term "the past"
 holds such pathos
ume ga ka ni / mukashi no ichiji / aware nari

665

Buddha's Nirvana Day —
 wrinkled hands together,
 the sound of the rosaries
nehane ya / shiwade awasuru / juzu no oto

666

forty or fifty feet
 in the sky, raindrops
 in the willow
hakkuken / sora de ame furu / yanagi kana

667

spring rain—
 dripping down the wasp's nest
 from the leaking roof
harusame ya / hachi no su tsutau / yane no mori

668

a green willow
 drooping into mud:
 low tide

aoyagi no / doro ni shidaruru / shiohi kana

669

spring rain—
 mugwort spreading out
 among the roadside grass

harusame ya / yomogi o nobasu / kusa no michi

SUMMER 1694

670

Sent to Tōrin in his new house (words for my own painting)

this dew isn't cold—
 the nectar of a
 peony blossom

samukaranu / tsuyu ya botan no / hana no mitsu

671

hidden in the bushes,
 do the tea-pickers too hear it?
 cuckoo

kogakurete / chatsumi mo kiku ya / hototogisu

672

deutzia—
 over it, dark, a willow
 bending back

unohana ya / kuraki yanagi no / oyobigoshi

673

hydrangea—
 and a thicket as a little garden
 for the cottage

ajisai ya / yabu o koniwa no / betsuzashiki

674

Seventh year of Genroku, Fifth Month, I set off from Edo, and
for those who saw me off, these words:

ears of barley
 clutched for support:
 bidding farewell
muji no ho o / chikara ni tsukamu / wakare kana

675

especially when
 it comes into view—
 Fuji in Fifth Month
me ni kakaru / toki ya kotosara / satsuki fuji

676

bush warbler—
 in a grove of bamboo shoots
 singing its old age
uguisu ya / take no koyabu ni / oi o naku

677

summer rains—
 a silkworm ill
 in the mulberry field
samidare ya / kaiko wazurau / kuwa no hata

678

Entering Suruga Province
Suruga road—
 orange blossoms too
 have the scent of tea
surugaji ya / hanatachibana mo / cha no nioi

679

summer rains:
 blow that sky down,
 Ōi River
samidare no / sora fukiotose / ōigawa

680

At Nagoya in Owari

on a journey through the world,
 tilling a small field,
 back and forth

yo o tabi ni / shiro kaku oda no / yukimodori

681

When Yasui was building a hermitage

for coolness

this Hida craftsman
 has the blueprint

suzushisa o / hida no takumi ga / sashizu kana

682

Stopping over at the house of the hermit Yamada

“the water rail calls there”

people say, and so
 staying over at Saya

kuina naku to / hito no ieba ya / sayadomari

683

coolness—

naturally, the branches
 of a wild pine

suzushisa ya / suguni nomatsu no / eda no nari

684

having carried brushwood,

the horse returns—
 wine casks for rice-planting

shiba tsukeshi / uma no modori ya / taedaru

685

At Yamei's house

coolness

portrayed in painting:
 bamboos of Saga

suzushisa o / e ni utsushikeri / saga no take

686

clear cascade stream—
 has its water been drawn up
 for these jelly noodles?
kiyotaki no / mizu kumasete ya / tokoroten

687

Sixth Month—
 the clouds laid out on its peak,
 Windstorm Mountain.
rokugatsu ya / mine ni kumo oku / arashiyama

688

clear cascade stream —
 falling into the waves,
 green pine needles
kiyotaki ya / nami ni chirikomu / aomatsuba

689

in morning dew,
 dirty and cool,
 a mud-smearred melon
asatsuyu ni / yogorete suzushi / uri no tsuchi

690

At Kyokusui's house
 summer night—
 at dawn, scattered leftovers
 of chilled food
natsu no yo ya / kuzurete akeshi / hiyashimono

691

While at Kyokusui's house, we chose the poetic topic "farm life."

fanning the rice,
 his wife prepares a special treat—
 the cool of evening
meshi augu / kaka ga chisō ya / yūsuzumi

692

plates and bowls too
 faint in twilight:
 evening cool

sarabachi mo / honoka ni yami no / yoisuzumi

693

Seventh year of Genroku, 21st day of Sixth Month, at
 Bokusetsu's hut in Ōtsu

as autumn approaches
 our hearts are drawn together—
 a four-and-a-half mat room

aki chikaki / kokoro no yoru ya / yojōhan

AUTUMN 1694

694

At Honma Shume's house, hanging on the back wall of a Nō stage, is a portrait of skeletons playing flute and drum. Is human life any different than the sporting of skeletons? Zhuangzi used a skull for his pillow and didn't distinguish dream from reality—truly, this evokes the character of our lives.

lightning—

through the face,
 miscanthus plumes

inazuma ya / kao no tokoro ga / susuki no ho

695

so cool:

feet against a wall
 in a midday nap

hiyahiya to / kabe o fumaete / hirune kana

696

a narrow path,
 wire grass blossoms
 filled with dew

michi hososhi / sumotorigusa no / hana no tsuyu

697

At Yadō's house

tanabata—

autumn is truly here
as night begins

tanabata ya / aki o sadamuru / yo no hajime

698

While I was in Ōtsu in the summer of seventh year of Genroku,
my elder brother wrote to invite me to return home for the Bon
Festival.

the whole family

white-haired, leaning on canes:
a graveyard visit

ie wa mina / tsue ni shiraga no / haka mairi

699

Upon hearing that the nun Jutei had died

do not think

you did not count:
Festival of Spirits

kazu naranu / mi to na omoiso / tamamatsuri

700

lightning—

into the darkness
a night-heron's cry

inazuma ya / yami no kata yuku / goi no koe

701

the color of the wind—

planted wild,
the garden in autumn

kazairo ya / shidoro ni ueshi / niwa no aki

702

a village grown old:

no house without
a persimmon tree

sato furite / kaki no ki motanu / ie mo nashi

703

winter melons—

all of them now

with changed faces

tōgan ya / tagai ni kawaru / kao no nari

704

under the harvest moon,

mist at the foot of the mountains

haze over the rice paddies

meigetsu ni / fumoto no kiri ya / ta no kumori

705

seeming to be

blossoms of the harvest moon:

cotton field

meigetsu no / hana ka to miete / watabatake

706

cockscombs—

with geese arriving,

now deeper crimson

keitō ya / kari no kuru toki / nao akashi

707

may the hokku that come

be unlike our faces:

first cherry blossoms

kao ni ninu / hokku mo ideyo / hatsuzakura

708

new rice-straw

is appearing . . . with

early winter showers

shimwara no / desomete hayaki / shigure kana

709

I was visited by Tojū of Ise at my mountain hermitage

I'll serve buckwheat
 while they're blossoming:
 mountain path

soba wa mada / hana de motenasu / yamaji kana

710

departing autumn—
 with their hands outspread,
 chestnut burs

yuku aki ya / te o hirogetaru / kuri no iga

711

crying “beeeee” . . . ,
 the lingering sound so sad:
 night deer

bii to naku / shirigoe kanashi / yoru no shika

712

chrysanthemums'
 fragrance — in Nara, many
 ancient Buddhas

kiku no ka ya / nara ni wa furuki / hotoketachi

713

At Dark Pass

in the scent of chrysanthemums,
 climbing through the dark
 at festival time

kiku no ka ni / kuragari noboru / sekku kana

714

penetrating even
 the lair of a wild boar—
 cricket's cry

inoshishi no / toko ni mo iru ya / kirigirsu

715

On the 13th, while visiting the Sumiyoshi market

buying a measuring box

I then changed my mind:

moonviewing

masu kōte / funbetsu kawaru / tsukimi kana

716

At Kiryū's house

autumn already passing:

in the cold drizzle

a waning moon

aki mo haya / baratsuku ame ni / tsuki no nari

717

On the 21st of Ninth Month, at Shioe Shayō's house

autumn's night

has been struck and shattered:

a genial conversation

aki no yo o / uchikuzushitaru / hanashi kana

718

My thoughts

this road—

with no one on it,

autumn dusk

kono michi ya / yuku hito nashi ni / aki no kure

719

wind in the pines—

swirling round the eaves

as autumn ends

matsukaze ya / noki o megutte / aki kurenu

720

Thoughts on a journey

this autumn:

why do I feel so old?

into the clouds, a bird

kono aki wa / nande toshiyoru / kumo ni tori

721

white chrysanthemum:

gazing closely,

not a speck of dust

shiragiku no / me ni tatete miru / chiri mo nashi

722

At Keishi's house, with the topic "Accompanying a boy under the moon"

the moon is clear—

accompanying my boy lover

frightened by a fox

tsuki sumu ya / kitsune kowagaru / chigo no tomo

723

deepening autumn:

the man next door,

what does he do?

aki fukaki / tonari wa nani o / suru hito zo

WINTER 1694

724

Written during illness

ill on a journey:

my dreams roam round

over withered fields

tabi ni yande / yume wa kareno o / kakemeguru

NOTES

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

1. Kawabata, Yasunari, *Snow Country*, trans. Edward G. Seidensticker (New York: Berkley, 1960). I have altered slightly Seidensticker's translation, in which the image of Heaven's River is rendered "the Milky Way."
2. For terms such as *haikai* and *hokku*, see comments later in this introduction and the glossary.
3. Kenneth Rexroth, *A Hundred Poems from the Japanese* (New York: New Directions, 1964); Cid Corman and Kamaike Susumu, *Back Roads to Far Towns: Bashō's Okuno-hosomichi* (New York: Mushinsha, 1968); Sam Hamill, *Bashō's Ghost* (Seattle: Broken Moon, 1989); Robert Hass, *The Essential Haiku: Versions of Bashō, Buson, and Shiki* (Hopewell, NJ: Ecco Press, 1994).
4. See John Elder, *Following the Brush: An American Encounter with Classical Japanese Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), and *Imagining the Earth: Poetry and the Vision of Nature* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985); Gretel Ehrlich, *Islands, The Universe, Home* (New York: Penguin, 1991).
5. Cor van den Heuvel, ed., *The Haiku Anthology: English Language Haiku by Contemporary American and Canadian Poets* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999); Bruce Ross, ed., *Journey to the Interior: American Versions of Haibun* (Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle, 1998).

6. Makoto Ueda's *Matsuo Bashō* (New York: Twayne, 1970) remains a useful introduction to his life and writings, and his *Bashō and His Interpreters: Selected Hokku with Commentary* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), a translation of 255 of Bashō's hokku along selected Japanese commentaries, is invaluable. Haruo Shirane, *Traces of Dreams: Landscape, Cultural Memory, and the Poetry of Bashō* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), provides a learned discussion of some of the cultural traditions at work in Bashō's writings. Peipei Qiu's detailed analyses of the Daoist influence on Bashō is illuminating.
7. For a helpful introduction to waka, see Earl Miner, *An Introduction to Japanese Court Poetry* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968).
8. See Earl Miner, *Japanese Linked Poetry: An Account with Translations of Renga and Haikai Sequences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), and Hiroaki Sato, *One Hundred Frogs: From Renga to Haiku to English* (New York: Weatherhill, 1983).
9. Very occasionally there are "miscellaneous" hokku, with no season word. In renga, while other stanzas may or may not have a season word, in the opening hokku it is required. And also very occasionally a poet might write a poem about a season other than the current one.
10. For a discussion of Shiki's impact on our understanding of haiku, see Shirane, *Traces of Dreams*.
11. For a discussion of the religious significance of the communal dimension of renga, see Gary Ebersole, "The Buddhist Ritual Use of Linked Poetry in Medieval Japan," *Eastern Buddhist* 16 (1983): 50–71.
12. Most translators of Bashō's poetry have left out the title or headnote. Ueda, *Bashō and His Interpreters*, and Shirane, *Traces of Dreams*, are notable exceptions. See Shirane, *Traces of Dreams*, 160–184, for a valuable discussion of greeting poems.
13. For a helpful discussion of poetic essences, see Shirane, *Traces of Dreams*.

14. For an application of this literary approach to Chinese poetry, see James J. Y. Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975).
15. For a fuller discussion of this idea, see the introduction to the companion volume of this book, *Bashō's Journey: The Literary Prose of Matsuo Bashō*.
16. In some cases, it was difficult or impossible for me to find out the genus and species, and in others experts give different names. One can dream of a “field guide” to Japanese literature, which would include a thorough scientific and cultural description of plants and animals, with not only photographs but also recordings of the sounds of nature (e.g., bird songs, pine wind) that are so important to the literature.
17. For Bashō's principle of the unchanging and the ever-changing, see Shirane, *Traces of Dreams*, 263–269. For a discussion of Bashō's stylistic development, see Ueda, *Matsuo Bashō*.
18. For a discussion of the effect of cutting words, see Shirane, *Traces of Dreams*, 82–115.
19. Probably the only bird we commonly do this with is the owl.

NOTES TO THE HOKKU

The season of the hokku is followed by the season word(s). One asterisk indicates the image is discussed in the section “Major Nature Images in Bashō's Hokku.” Also see the glossary for images related to the moon (tsuki) and blossoms (hana*), which are used so frequently, I have not included an asterisk. Two asterisks indicate that the term is discussed in the glossary.*

1662 to 1669

- 1 spring ? came / year ? gone / second-to-last-day
 - Winter: Second-To-Last Day. 1662–63 (29th of Twelfth Month; February 7). Bashō's first dated hokku. Among the oddities of the lunar calendar, spring occasionally starts one or two days before the lunar New Year. The verse alludes to several poems. One is by Ariwara

Motokawa (888–953): “During the old year / spring has come. / The remaining days: / should we call them / last year / or this year?” (*toshi no uchi ni / haru wa ki ni keru / hitotose o / kozo to ya iwamu / kotoshi to ya iwamu*). Another is in *The Tales of Ise* (10th c.): “Did you come / or did I go? / I can’t remember / was it dream or reality? / was I asleep or awake?” (*kimi ya koshi / ware ya yukiken / omōezu / yume ka utsutsu ka / nete ka samete ka*).

- 2 moon ! guide / this-way to please-enter / journey ’s lodging
 - Autumn: moon. 1663. The hokku alludes to a line from the Nō play *Tengu on Mount Kurama* where the blossoms are the guide.
- 3 old-lady-cherry / bloom ! old-age ’s / memories
 - Spring: old-lady cherry blossom (*sakura**). 1664. This type of cherry blooms before the leaves appear. The poem can be read as “blooming in old age is memorable,” or “blooming in old age recalls her prime.” The poem refers to a Nō play in which an old samurai states that dying in battle will be memorable.
- 4 Kyoto as-for / ninety-nine-thousand crowd ’s / blossom-viewing !
 - Spring: blossoms viewing. 1666. The capital of Kyoto was said to have ninety-eight thousand households.
- 5 blossom as-for poor ’s / eye to also appear / demon thistle
 - Spring: blossoms; demon thistle. 1666. Demons were thought to be invisible. The demon thistle has thorns and a scarlet blossom.
- 6 iris / resemble ! resemble / water ’s image
 - Summer: iris (*kakitsubata**). 1666. A parody of a line in the Nō play *Blue Flag Iris* (*Kakitsubata*): “they look just alike, the *kakitsubata* and *ayame*.”
- 7 autumn-wind ’s / door’s opening ! / piercing-voice
 - Autumn: autumn wind (*akikaze**). 1666. Bashō uses word-play to suggest the sharpness of the wind and the voice: *yari* means both “sliding” (door) and “spear”; *kuchi* means both “opening” and “mouth.”
- 8 withered bent ! / world as-for upside-down ’s / snow ’s bamboo
 - Winter: snow. 1666–67. *Yo* means “joint” (of bamboo) as well as “world.”

- 9 withering-frost in / bloom as-for depression 's / blossom field !
 • Winter: withered by frost. 1666–67.
- 10 blossom 's face / at timid do ! / hazy-moon
 • Spring: hazy moon; blossoms. 1667.
- 11 blossoms at not-open / grieve ! my 's / poem-bag
 • Spring: blossoms. 1667. *Akanu* means both “not open” and “not be tired of.” “Poem-bag” was for carrying manuscripts of verse. An earlier version has the more conventional *ware* for *kochi*.
- 12 waves 's blossom as / snow also ? water 's / returning-flower
 • Winter: out-of-season blossoms, snow. 1668–69. *Nami no hana* refers to white wave caps. *Kaeribana*, literally “returning flower,” is a flower that blooms after its normal season.

1670–79

- 13 cloud as separate / friend ! ! goose 's / living-separation
 • Spring: departing geese (*kari no wakare**). 1672. Bashō wrote this for his friend Jō Magodayū before Bashō departed for Edo. *Kari* means both “goose” and “temporary.” The first line has been read also as “separated by clouds” or “beyond the clouds.”
- 14 hangover / thing ? blossom <nom.> / is interval
 • Spring: blossoms. 1673–79.
- 15 acupuncturist ! / shoulder into needle hit / cast-off-robe
 • Autumn: pounding clothes (implied). 1675. The hokku parodies the classical poetic topic of a country woman pounding a fulling block, in this case a “Chinese robe,” another meaning of *karakoromo*.
- 16 Musashi Plain ! / one-inch extent 's / deer 's voice
 • Autumn: voice of the deer (*shika**). 1675. Musashi Plain, extending north and west of Tokyo, is the largest in Japan.
- 17 scales ! / Kyoto Edo equal-weigh / thousand-generation 's spring
 • Spring: spring. 1676. Kyoto was the old imperial capital, and Edo (Tokyo) the new capital of the Tokugawa shogunate.

- 18 life is / scanty 's hat 's / under coolness
- Summer: cool (*suzumi**). 1676. Written during a journey to his hometown. Bashō finds cool shade only under his traveler's hat, rather than while resting under trees. The hokku alludes to a waka by Saigyō (1118–90): “Did I ever think / I would pass this way again, / so many years now gone by? / It's been such a long life / Saya-between-the-Hills” (*toshi takete / mata koyubeshi to / omoiki ya / inochi narikeri / saya-no-naka yama*).
- 19 summer 's moon / Goyu from leaving / Akasaka !
- Summer: summer moon. 1676. Goyu and Akasaka were two post towns very close to each other on the famous highway from Edo to Kyoto. The summer night, and thus the moon's passage, is considered very brief.
- 20 Fuji 's wind ! / fan in carry / Edo souvenir
- Summer: fan. 1676. Bashō is on his way from Edo to his hometown. The fan implies summer heat, and a cool wind from Mt. Fuji, near Edo, would be welcome indeed.
- 21 cat 's wife / cook-stove 's crumble from / come-and-go
- Spring: cats in love. 1677. Refers to a story in the *Tales of Ise* about Ariwara no Narihira (825–80) who visits his lover by going over a crumbled wall. A typical Danrin** parody of classical literature.
- 22 summer-rains ! / dragon-candle offer / city-guard
- Summer: summer rains (*samidare**). 1677. Mirages of light that sometimes appeared out on the ocean were thought to come from dragons offering candles to the gods of the sea. City watchmen lit lanterns in the night.
- 23 tree <acc.> cut / cut-end see ! / today 's moon
- Autumn: tonight's moon. 1677.
- 24 go cloud ! / dog 's run-urine / scattered-winter-showers
- Winter: scattered winter showers (*shigure**). 1677–78. An earlier version has for the second line “a dog running and barking” (*inu no nigeboe*).
- 25 frost <acc.> wear / wind <acc.> spread-sleep 's / abandoned-child !
- Winter: frost. 1677–78. This hokku alludes to a waka by Fujiwara no Yoshitsune (1169–1206): “Crickets

- cry— / in the frosty night / on a frigid mat / I will spread out a sleeve / and sleep alone” (*kirigirisu / naku ya shi-moyo no / samushiro ni / koromo kata shiki / hotori ka mo nen*). An earlier version has for the second line “spreading out a sleeve” (*komoro kata shiku*).
- 26 oh anything ! is-not ! / yesterday as-for passing / blowfish
 • Winter: blowfish. 1677–78. Blowfish soup is delicious but can be deadly.
- 27 consul too / is-prostrate / lord ’s spring
 • Spring: spring. 1678. Every year the Dutch consul in Nagasaki paid a formal visit to the shōgun in Edo.
- 28 rain ’s day ! / world’s autumn <acc.> / Sakaichō
 • Autumn: autumn. 1678. Sakaichō, literally “boundary city,” was a lively entertainment area of Edo, set off from the dreary city outside its boundaries.
- 29 Hollander also / blossom for come / horse on saddle
 • Spring: blossoms. 1679. See notes to hokku 28. The hokku alludes to an earlier waka by Minamoto Yoritama (1104–1180): “When the flowers bloom, / please let me know,” / I said to the forest ranger, / and now he comes. / Saddle my horse! (*hana sakaba / tsugemu to iishi / yamazato no / tsukai wa kitari / uma ni kura oke*).
- 30 blue-sea ’s / wave rice-wine smell / today ’s moon
 • Autumn: tonight’s moon. 1679. *Tsuki* can mean “wine cup” as well as “moon.”
- 31 look-around / gaze see / Suma ’s autumn
 • Autumn: autumn. 1679.
- 32 morning ’s snow / onion <acc.> garden ’s / mark !
 • Winter: morning snow; onion. 1679–80. In classical waka, *shiori* refers to breaking branches to mark a trail.
- 33 ah spring spring / is-large ! / <quote> etc.
 • Spring: spring. 1680.

Autumn 1680

- 34 spider what <quote> / sound <acc.> what <quote> cry / autumn ’s wind
 • Autumn: autumn wind (*akikaze**). 1680. The poem plays off of a passage in the *Pillow Book* (1002?) of Sei

Shōnagon (966?–1025?) in which the bagworm was said to make a faint plaintive cry of *chichiyo chichiyo* (“father! father!”).

- 35 flower rose-of-sharon / naked child 's / spray-of-flower !
- Autumn: rose of sharon (*mukuge**). 1680. The hokku alludes to a waka by Yamabe Akahito (fl. 724–737): “The splendid courtiers / in their leisure: / all day long / they play at dressing their hair / with cherry blossoms” (*momoshiki no / ōmiyabito wa / itoma are ya / sakura kazashite / kyō mo kurashitsu*).
- 36 night secretly / insect as-for moonlight 's / chestnut <acc.> dig
- Autumn: moonlight; chestnut (*kuri**). 1680. It is the night of the 13th of Ninth Month, the “later harvest moon,” which is also called the “Chestnut Moon.” The poem gives a haikai twist to a line from a Chinese poem by Fu Wen, “Night rain secretly burrows into the moss on the rocks,” while creating an unusual connection between a chestnut and the moon.
- 37 fool ponder to / hell also this ! / autumn 's evening
- Autumn: autumn evening (*aki no kure**). 1680. The first line was used by scholars commenting on classical texts.
- 38 withered branch on / crow <subj.> has-landed / autumn 's evening
- Autumn: autumn evening (*aki no kure**). 1681 (Third Month; April-May). One of Bashō's most famous poems, which is said to have initiated his mature style. Two paintings illustrating this poem have one crow, but an earlier painting of an earlier version of the hokku has seven crows (*karasu**) in a large tree and twenty in the air. (The earlier version uses a different verbal ending: *tomaritaru*.) *Aki no kure* can be interpreted as evening in autumn and as evening of autumn: late autumn.

Winter 1680–81

- 39 where winter-shower / umbrella <acc.> hand in carrying / return monk
- Winter: winter showers (*shigure**). 1680–81. The hokku alludes to a prose poem by the Chinese poet Chang Tu:

“The vast reach of misty rain begins to clear, and a heron appears, standing on the winter shore. Far off where the fog ends, a monk returns to a temple in the dusk.”

- 40 brushwood 's door in / tea <acc.> tree-leaves rake / wind-storm !
- Winter: raking tree leaves. 1680–81. Written soon after he moved into the *Bashō-an* hut on the outskirts of Edo. In the haibun “The Brushwood Gate.”
- 41 oar 's voice waves <acc.> hitting / bowels freeze / night ! tears
- Winter: frozen. 1680–81. Written during a period when Bashō's poetry was turning away from his earlier, more superficial style toward the depth and melancholy of Chinese verse. It is in “broken meter,” with the first line having ten syllables instead of five, with the cutting word *ya* placed in an usual way that breaks up the last line. In the haibun “Old Beggar” and “Words on a Cold Night.”
- 42 snow 's morning / alone dried-salmon <acc.> / eat able
- Winter: snow; dried salmon. 1680–81. The headnote refers to a statement by the Chinese Sung philosopher Wang Xinmin: “One who can get by chewing vegetable roots can achieve a hundred things.”
- 43 rock wither / water wilt ! / winter also is-not
- Winter: winter. 1680–81. This hokku shows Bashō's transition from Danrin** to a “Chinese style”: there is a haikai twist of expectation of what withers and wilts, but deep melancholy rather than wit is the motive.

Spring 1681–83

- 44 arise arise / my friend into make / sleep butterfly
- Spring: butterfly (*chō**). 1681–83? An earlier version has the headnote “Drinking Alone” and a last line of “drunken butterfly” (*you kochō*).
- 45 butterfly ! butterfly ! / China's haikai / will-ask
- Spring: butterfly (*chō**). 1681–1683. Another version reads: “of China's haikai / I would ask of you: / fluttering butterfly” (*morokoshi no / haikai towan / tobu kochō*).

Summer 1681–83

- 46 snow 's within as-for / noon-face not-wither / sunlight !
 • Summer: noonflower (*hirugao**). 1681–83. Draws on a passage from the *A Zen Forest: Sayings of the Masters*, a popular Zen phrase book, in which enlightenment is compared to the resilience of the banana (*bashō**) plant in snow and the plum blossom in full sun.
- 47 noon-face at / rice pound cool / pathos is
 • Summer: noonflower (*hirugao**); cool (*suzumi**). 1681–83? An earlier version has “rest” (*yasumu*) instead of cool.
- 48 cuckoo / now as-for haikai-master / is-not world !
 • Summer: cuckoo (*hototogisu**). 1681–83. Poetry pales before the beauty of the cuckoo's song, and poets fall silent. Danrin** style humorous exaggeration.

Autumn 1681–83

- 49 white chrysanthemum ! white chrysanthemum ! / shame long-hair ! / long-hair !
 • Autumn: white chrysanthemum (*kiku**). 1681–83. A playful use of an expression from the Chinese Daoist text *Zhuangzi*, attributed to Zhuangzi (Chuang Tzu, ca. 300 B.C.E.): “If your life is long, your shames are many.” The long and narrow petals of the chrysanthemum recall white hair, as does the flower's long blossoming season. The rhythm of this hokku is a highly unusual, said to be 10–7–5.

Winter 1681–83

- 50 black-forest / what <quote> say although / morning 's snow
 • Winter: morning of snow. 1681–83.

Spring 1681

- 51 water-weed in swarm / whitefish ! if-take / will-surely-disappear
 • Spring: whitefish (*shirauo**). 1681. The poem gives a haikai twist to the conventional image of dew vanishing from one's hand.

- 52 bashō plant / first hate reed 's / two-leaves !
- Spring: bud of a reed (*ogi**). 1681. His disciple Rika (dates unknown) offered a banana plant as a gift for his hut, but the *ogi* reeds common in that swampy area competed with it. The banana plant flourished, however, and not long after, his hut and the poet himself were called by the name of this plant.

Summer 1681

- 53 cuckoo / invite ? barley 's / flock miscanthus
- Summer: cuckoo (*hototogisu**), barley (*mugi**). 1681. The hokku gives a haikai twist to a conventional image of being beckoned by miscanthus (*susuki**) plumes in the wind.
- 54 fifth-month-rain in / crane 's leg / short become
- Summer: summer rains (*samidare**). 1681. The hokku plays off a passage from the *Zhuangzi*: “A wild duck’s legs are short, but it would grieve if they were lengthened. A crane’s (*tsuru**) legs are long, but it would bemoan having them shortened.” Syllable rhythm is 5-5-7.
- 55 folly in dark / bramble <acc.> grab / firefly !
- Summer: firefly (*hotaru**). 1681. An example of a Danrin** style allegorical hokku, in this case referring to the darkness of greed and being blindly absorbed in one’s goals.
- 56 evening-face <nom.> / white night 's outhouse on / candle hold
- Summer: moonflower (*yūgao**). 1681. The hokku gives a haikai twist to a passage from *Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari*, ca. 1000) in which Prince Genji reads a poem from Lady Yūgao by torchlight.

Autumn 1681

- 57 aesthetic-poverty live / moon-gazer 's / Nara-gruel song
- Autumn: moon. 1681. *Wabi*** refers to an aesthetic poverty, in which austerity and loneliness cultivate artistic and spiritual sensitivity. *Sumu* means both “to dwell”

and “to be clear.” Moongazer is a fictional name for a recluse. The particular drinking song here refers to a porridge of beans, chestnuts, and so forth, cooked with tea, the kind of simple meal associated with a *wabi* recluse. In the haibun “Live Austere.”

- 58 banana windstorm doing / tub in rain <acc.> / hear night !
- Autumn: windstorm (*nowaki**). 1681. Interpretations differ about whether the tub is outside (to wash hands? to catch rainwater?) or inside (suggesting a leak). The broad leaves of the banana (*bashō**) plant flap in the wind and tear easily, and they are a traditional image of impermanence. In the haibun “Sleeping Alone in a Grass Hut.”

Winter 1681–82

- 59 poor-temple 's / kettle frost in cry / voice is-cold
- Winter: frost; cold. 1681–82 (Twelfth Month). In haibun “Old Beggar.”
- 60 ice bitter / rat 's throat <acc.> / moisten
- Winter: frozen. 1682, late Twelfth Month. Bashō had to buy water because the water by his hut was unsuitable for drinking. The hokku is based on a passage from the *Zhuangzi*: “A sewer rat drinks from a river, just enough to quench his thirst.” In the haibun “Old Beggar.”
- 61 ending-ending / rice-cake <acc.> echo 's / austere-sleep !
- Winter: rice-cake making. 1681–82 (late Twelfth Month). Rice-cakes were made for the upcoming New Year’s celebration. In the haibun “Old Beggar.”

Autumn 1682

- 62 morning-glory with / I as-for meal eat / man !
- Autumn: morning glory (*asagao**). 1682. Takarai Kikaku (1661–1707), one of Bashō’s disciples, wrote the hokku: “as for me: / inside a grass gate, / a firefly eats nettles” (*kusa no to ni / ware wa tade kū / hotaru kana*). This was based on a proverb, “some insects eat nettles,”

roughly “every one to his own taste, and some prefer what seems bitter.”

- 63 three-day-moon ! / morning-glory ’s evening / swell-seem
- Autumn: crescent moon. 1682. A morning glory bud is narrow and before the sun rises, when the crescent moon is up, it begins to swell.
- 64 beard-wind <acc.> blowing / late-autumn grieve as-for / he <nom.> who
- Autumn: late autumn. 1682. The poem draws on a line from Chinese poet Du Fu: “Leaning on a staff of chenopod, lamenting the world: who is he?” The rhythm of the poem is 8–8–4 syllables, closer to Chinese-style verse.
- 65 world in pass-time also / especially Sōgi / shelter !
- Miscellaneous (no season word). 1682 (mid-Sixth Month; August). *Furu* means both “pass time” and “rain.” The poem concludes the haibun “Under a Rain-hat,” which associates him with Chinese and Japanese wayfaring poets who also wore such a hat. Bashō’s hokku draws on a verse by the renga master Sōgi (1421–1502): “In a world of rain / life is like a temporary shelter / from a wintry shower” (*yo ni furu mo / sarani shigure no / yadori kana*). Sōgi’s poem in turn alludes to an earlier poem by Lady Sanuki (1141?–1217?): “Life in this world / is suffering / yet over this cedar house / the first winter showers / pass so easily” (*yo ni furu mo / kurushiki mono o / maki no ya ni / yasuku mo suguru / hatsu-shigure*). Note that there is a difference of only one word between Bashō’s verse and Sōgi’s.

Winter 1682–83

- 66 bed-clothes as-for heavy / Wu in snow <acc.> / see perhaps
- Winter: bedclothes; snow. 1682–83. The hokku plays on lines from the Chinese poet Ko Shi: “My hat is heavy with the snows from the sky of Wu; / my shoes are fragrant with the blossoms from the land of Chu.”

Spring 1683

- 67 first-day ! / when-think lonely / autumn 's evening
 • Spring: first day. 1683.
- 68 bush-warbler <acc.> spirit as sleep ? / lovely-willow
 • Spring: willow (*yanagi**), bush warbler (*uguisu**). 1683.
 The poem alludes to the famous story in the *Zhuangzi* where Zhuangzi dreams he is a butterfly, but when he awakes, he wonders if he is in fact a butterfly dreaming that he is Zhuangzi. In addition, it was popular belief that the spirit of a person could leave the body when it was asleep.

Summer 1683

- 69 cuckoo / sixth-month as-for plum 's / blossom bloomed
 • Summer: cuckoo (*hototogisu**). 1683. As plum (*ume**) blossoms are signs of the beginning of spring, the cuckoo's song is considered the harbinger of summer, and poets often wait impatiently for its first call.
- 70 horse clip-clop / me <acc.> painting in see / summer-moor !
 • Summer: summer moor. 1683. *Bokuboku* is an onomatopoeia for the sound of horse's hoofs. Commentators differ whether the scene is one of tranquillity or of frustration at the horse's slow pace. There are four earlier versions, three with different meanings from the final one: "a summer horse ambling, / I see myself in a painting: / dense growth" (*kaba bokuboku / ware o e ni miru / shigeri kana*); "a summer horse ambling, / I feel as if I see myself / in a painting" (*kaba bokuboku / ware o e ni miru / kokoro kana*); "a summer horse trudges, / I feel as if I see myself / in a painting" (*kaba no chikō / ware o e ni miru / kokoro kana*). The second of these has a headnote "Composed with difficulty on the road to a place called Gunnai in Kai Province." In the haibun "Praise for Painting of 'Summer Moor,'" which is a response to a painting of a monk-like figure on horse-back, who the painter identifies as Bashō.

Winter 1683–84

- 71 hail listen ! / this self as-for before 's / old-oak
 • Winter: hail. 1683–84. The oak holds its withered leaves through the winter.

Spring 1684–87

- 72 bell disappear / flower 's scent as-for strike / evening !
 • Spring: fragrance of blossoms. 1684–87.
- 73 curiosity ! / not-smell grass on / settle butterfly
 • Spring: butterfly (*chō**). 1684–87. One of several poems in which Bashō highlights—and implicitly praises—something in nature that lacks or ignores conventional beauty.

Summer 1684–87

- 74 scoop from / quickly teeth in echo / spring !
 • Summer: spring (source of water). 1684–87.

Autumn 1684–87

- 75 voice is-clear / northern-stars to echo / fulling-block
 • Autumn: fulling block (*kinuta**). 1684–87. The Northern Stars are what we call the “Big Dipper.” Based on the Chinese verse by Liu Yuanshu: “Across the Northern Stars, wild geese fly; / beneath the moon of the southern tower, winter clothes are fulfilled.”
- 76 world 's inside as-for / harvest time ? / grass 's hut
 • Autumn: harvest. 1684–87.
- 77 pass-a-night-on-a-journey / my poems <acc.> know ! /
 autumn 's wind
 • Autumn: autumn wind (*akikaze**). 1684–87. In the haibun “Introduction to a Scroll of *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*,” in which Bashō disparages his first travel journal.

Spring 1684–94

- 78 fall blossoms ! / bird also surprised / koto 's dust
 • Spring: falling blossoms. 1684–94. Music's power was said to be able to make dust move, and the second line echoes a passage in *The Tale of Genji*. Written on a

- painting of a koto, a classical stringed instrument.
- 79 bloom-disordered / peach 's among from / first cherry-blossoms
 • Spring: first cherry blossom (*sakura**); peach (*momo**). 1684–94.
- 80 spring 's night as-for / cherry-blossoms onto opening / it has closed
 • Spring: spring night; cherry blossom (*sakura**). 1684–94.
- 81 sparrow-child with / voice call-exchange / mice 's nest
 • Spring: young sparrows (*suzume**). 1684–94.
- 82 Saigyō / 's hut also may-be / blossom 's garden
 • Spring: blossoms. 1684–94. A greeting poem for Naitō Rosen (1655–1733), a haikai poet and patron.
- 83 bat also / come-out floating-world 's / blossom among bird
 • Spring: blossoms. 1684–94.
- 84 spring-rain ! / straw-raincoat blow-back / river willow
 • Spring: spring rain (*harusame**); river willow (*yanagi**). 1684–94.
- 85 plum 's scent with / carry-back / cold !
 • Spring: plum (*ume**). 1684–94. Here the fragrance of plums recalls winter's cold.
- 86 butterfly bird 's / restless rise ! / blossom 's cloud
 • Spring: butterfly (*chō**); clouds of blossoms. 1684–94.
- 87 child to weary <quote> / say person to as-for / blossom also is-not
 • Spring: blossoms. 1684–94.
- 88 world in bloom / blossom to also nembutsu / speak
 • Spring: blossoms. 1684–94. Amida is the popular Buddha of infinite compassion, and the *nembutsu* is the term for the chant “*namu Amida Butsu*” (hail Amida Buddha), a common form of worship.
- 89 this mallet <nom.> / past camellia ? / plum 's tree ?
 • Spring: camellia (*tsubaki**); plum (*ume**). 1684–94. The mallet first was used for fulling clothes by rural women, but now has become a flower vase treasured by the nobility. In the haibun “Praise for the Mallet,” in which Bashō remarks that the uncertain and shifting fate of this

piece of wood is shared by the poor and wealthy alike, a fact that should undercut both resentment and smugness.

Summer 1684–94

- 90 not-rain yet / bamboo plant day as-for / raincoat and rainhat
 • Summer: bamboo planting day. 1684–94. 13th day of Fifth Month was traditionally the day to plant bamboo. An earlier version has the cutting word *ya* instead of *wa*.
- 91 this hut as-for / water-rail even not-know / door !
 • Summer: water rail (*kuina**). 1684–94. In the haibun, “An Account of Kosen’s Residence,” where Bashō praises the rustic simplicity and remoteness of his host’s house. A greeting poem for his host.
- 92 hydrangea / summer-kimono time ’s / light-blue
 • Summer: hydrangea (*ajisai**); summer clothes. 1684–94.
- 93 squid seller ’s / voice indistinguishable / cuckoo
 • Summer: cuckoo (*hototogisu**), squid. 1684–94.
- 94 rain occasionally / think thing is-not / rice-sprouts !
 • Summer: rice sprouts. 1684–94. “Awaiting the dawn” refers to a custom of inviting a friend over to stay up all night and view the dawn on certain propitious days on the First, Ninth, or in this case Fifth Month.

Autumn 1684–94

- 95 brushwood ’s door’s / moon ! as-it-is / Amidabō
 • Autumn: moon. 1684–94. An earlier version has “grass hut” (*kusa no to*) instead of “brushwood hut.” This is the haibun “Amidabō.”
- 96 worthy ’s / that ! windstorm ’s / after ’s chrysanthemum
 • Autumn: windstorm (*nowaki**); chrysanthemum (*kiku**). 1684–94. Another version, with *mo* (“also”) instead of *no* in the first line, appears on a painting by Bashō of chrysanthemums and bamboo.
- 97 hackberry ’s fruit fall / gray-starling ’s wing-sound ! / morning windstorm
 • Autumn: fruit of the hackberry; gray starling. 1684–94. The hackberry, or *enoki* (*Celtis sinensis* var. *japonica*), has round red-brown fruit in late autumn. Gray

Starlings, or *mukudori* (*Sturnus cineraceus*), favor the fruits. They are found in large flocks, and their sudden winging up startles the morning calm like a windstorm.

- 98 Japanese-lantern-plant as-for / fruit also leaf also shell
also / autumn-foliage !
- Autumn: Japanese lantern plant; autumn foliage. 1684–94. The plant, also known as bladder cherry, is the perennial *Physalis alkekengi*. The “shell” refers to the red calyx that covers the fruit.
- 99 chrysanthemum 's dew / fall when-pick-up / brood-bud !
- Autumn: chrysanthemum (*kiku**); dew (*tsuyu**). 1684–94. A brood bud forms on an axil and when it is ripe, it falls and can propagate a new plant. Another example of Bashō looking closely at the details of nature.
- 100 my hut as-for / square 's light <acc.> / window 's moon
- Autumn: moon. 1684–94.
- 101 something speak-when / lips are-cold / autumn 's wind
- Autumn: autumn wind (*akikaze**). 1688–94. The motto is based on a Chinese proverb.
- 102 what eating / small-house as-for autumn 's / willow shade
- Autumn: autumn. 1684–94.
- 103 this temple as-for / garden full 's / banana !
- Autumn: banana (*bashō**). 1684–94.
- 104 mushroom ! / worn extent as-for / pine 's appearance
- Autumn: mushroom. 1684–94. The Japanese word for this mushroom literally means “pine mushroom.”
- 105 monkey-showman as-for / monkey 's small-jacket <acc.> / fulling-block !
- Autumn: fulling block (*kinuta**). 1684–94.

Winter 1684–94

- 106 night throughout ? / bamboo freeze / morning 's frost
- Winter: frost; freezing. 1684–94.
- 107 discretion 's / bottom strike / year 's end
- Winter: year's end. 1684–94. A discretion bag was supposed to be a bag with excuses and other means of dealing with year-end debts.

- 108 winter-wind ! / bamboo in hide / become-quiet
 • Winter: winter wind (*kogarashi**). 1684–94.
- 109 chrysanthemum 's after / turnip 's other / again is-not
 • Winter: radish. 1684–94. The sophisticated chrysanthemum (*kiku**) is replaced by the lowly radish.
- 110 sleeve 's color / is-dirty cold / dark gray
 • Winter: cold. 1684–94. Senka was a disciple in Edo.
- 111 Kanō-Motonobu / source pathos / year 's end
 • Winter: year's end. 1684–94. *Kohōgen* was Kanō Motonobu, a principal painter in the famous Kanō school of painting. Bashō discovered a great painting at an end of the year sale, perhaps a family whose wealth had disappeared and in desperation was selling off great art in order to deal with debts.

Miscellaneous 1684–94

- 112 moon flower 's / this ! truth 's / master
 • Miscellaneous (no definitive season word). 1684–88 (1685?). In the haibun “Praise for a Painting of Three Sages,” which was written on a portrait of the renga poet Sōgi and the haikai poets Yamazaki Sōkan (16th century) and Arakida Moritake (1473–1549). The portrait was painted by Bashō's disciple Morikawa Kyoriku (1656–1715).
- 113 desirable ! / bag 's within 's / moon and blossom
 • Miscellaneous: no season word. 1684–94. Hotei is the round-bellied god of good fortune. The term “moon and blossoms” implies both the natural world as a whole and poetry about nature.
- 114 Musashino-fields ! / touch thing is-not / you 's hat
 • Miscellaneous. 1684–94.

Spring 1684

- 115 spring begin ! / new-year old / rice five-shō
 • Spring: spring begins; New Year. 1684 (probably New Year's day: February 16). Bashō's disciples helped support him by giving rice. Two earlier versions have different first lines: “so fitting” (*niawashi ya*) and “I'm rich” (*ware tomeri*).

Summer 1684

- 116 pine-wind 's / falling-leaves ? water 's / sound is-cool
 • Summer: cool (*suzumi**). 1684?

Autumn 1684

- 117 bones-exposed-in-a-field <acc.> / heart into wind 's / penetrate body !
 • Autumn: piercing my body. 1684. This is the opening hokku in Bashō's first travel journal, *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*, as he imagines himself dying by the roadside.
- 118 autumn ten years / on-the-contrary Edo <acc.> / point old-home
 • Autumn: autumn. 1684. On his departure from Edo in *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*. His hometown was Ueno, but he had been living in Edo for over twelve years.
- 119 mist-rain / Fuji <acc.> not-see day ! / interesting
 • Autumn: mist (*kiri**). 1684. In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*, where Bashō was crossing a mountain pass at Hakone Barrier, famous for its view of Mt. Fuji.
- 120 cloud mist 's / short-time hundred-scenes <acc.> / exhaust
 • Autumn: mist (*kiri**). 1684. In the haibun "On Mount Fuji." The haibun associates Mt. Fuji with two mythical peaks in Daoist lore. The final verb of the hokku, literally "to exhaust," was often used in Chinese aesthetics to refer to bringing something to completion and fulfillment.
- 121 monkey <acc.> listen / abandoned-child to autumn 's / wind how
 • Autumn: autumn wind (*akikaze**). 1684. In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*. Early in his first travel journal, Bashō meets a baby abandoned by the roadside. He mourns for the baby, ponders the cause of its situation, declares "this is from heaven," and then continues on his own journey, which was designed to expose himself to life's impermanence. (For a discussion of this poem, see Barnhill, "Impermanence, Fate, and the Journey.") It was a tradition in Chinese poetry to listen to the sad cries of monkeys.

- 122 roadside 's / rose-of-sharon as-for horse by / eaten
- Autumn: rose of sharon (*mukuge**). 1684. The blossoms of the rose of sharon withers after only one day—and in this poem it does not even last that long. According to an unsubstantiated legend, Bashō told the Zen master Butchō, who had disapproved of poetry, that haikai was simply what happens here and now. Butchō pointed to the rose of sharon and asked for a hokku, and Bashō composed this verse. The Zen master was deeply impressed. In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*.
- 123 horse on sleep / lingering-dream moon distant / tea 's fire
- Autumn: moon. 1684. Du Mu was a Chinese Tang poet. Bashō refers to his poem “My whip dangling, I trust the horse, / Riding miles without cockcrow. / In the woods I drowse in dream; / leaves fly about, and I am startled awake.” In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field* and the haibun “Dozing on My Horse.”
- 124 last-night-of-month moon is-not / thousand-year 's *sugi*
<acc.> / hold windstorm
- Autumn: moon. 1684. Bashō draws on a poem by Saigyō: “Entering deeply, / searching out the depths / of the pathway of the gods: / high above, over all, / a mountain peak with pine wind” (*fukaku irite / kamiji no oku o / tazunureba / mata ue mo naki / mine no matsukaze*). In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*.
- 125 potato wash women / Saigyō if-be / poem write
- Autumn: washing potatoes. 1684. Waka is the classical five-line verse form used by Saigyō. This hokku has been interpreted three main ways: “if I (Bashō) were Saigyō, I’d write a waka”; “if Saigyō were here, he would write a waka”; and “if Saigyō were here, the women would write a waka.” In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*.
- 126 orchid 's fragrance ! / butterfly 's wings to / incense do
- Autumn: orchid. 1684. In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*. Butterfly (*chō*) by itself is a spring season word.
- 127 ivy plant / bamboo four-or-five stalks 's / windstorm
- Autumn: ivy (*tsuta**). 1684 (late Eighth Month; October). A greeting poem for the haikai master Roboku

(1628–1706) of Ise. In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*.

- 128 hand in if-take / will-disappear tears ! hot / autumn 's frost
- Autumn: autumn frost. 1684 (8th of Eighth Month; October 16). In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*, when Bashō has returned to his home village and been given the white hair of his recently deceased mother. The passage in the journal refers to the legend of Urashima, who rescued a turtle, who in gratitude took Urashima to the Dragon Palace. He spent some time there and was given a treasure box, which he was warned not to open. When he returned home he found that everything had changed, and when he opened the box, instantly he became an old man with white hair.
- 129 cotton bow ! / lute by console / bamboo 's interior
- Autumn: cotton-beating bow. 1684. The bow was used to make soft cotton yarn, and made a sound that resembled a lute. In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field* and the haibun “Deep in Bamboo.”
- 130 monk morning-glory / how-many die-return / Buddhist-law 's pine
- Autumn: monrning glory (*asagao**). 1684. The passage refers to a story in the *Zhuangzi* in which an ancient tree is so huge that oxen can hide behind it. In the *Zhuangzi*, the tree lives long because it is useless—thus proving the usefulness of uselessness. Bashō turns the story into a Buddhist one. In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*.
- 131 winter not-know / hut ! hulling-rice / sound hail
- Autumn: hulling rice. 1684. In the haibun “The Sound of Hulling Rice,” where Bashō praises a man in a mountain village for going to unusual lengths to ensure the comfort of his mother at all times.
- 132 fulling-block hit / me to make-hear ! / temple 's wife
- Autumn: fulling block (*kinuta**). 1684 (mid-Ninth Month; October). Bashō was in Yoshino, rich in poetic and religious traditions. Clothes were pounded on a fulling block to clean and soften them, and in the poetic tradition the sound was associated with loneliness. The fulling block was not commonly used in Bashō's time,

but he wishes to hear its sound in order to feel deeply what was considered the essential nature of Yoshino in autumn. There is an allusion to a waka by Fujiwara Masatsune (1170–1221): “At Yoshino / the mountain wind / deepens into the night, / and in the old village / a fulling block is struck” (*miyoshino no / yama no akikaze / sayo fukete / furusato samuku / koromo utsumari*). In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field* and the haibun “Preface to ‘beat the fulling block.’”

- 133 dew drip drip / trial as floating-world / would-that-I-could wash
- Autumn: dew (*tsuyu**). 1684. Bashō alludes to a waka attributed at that time to Saigyō: “Trickling down, / pure spring water falls / over the mossy rocks, / not enough to draw up / for this hermit life” (*tokutoku to / otsuru iwama no / koke shimizu / kumihosu hodo mo / naki sumai kana*). In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*. Bashō repeats the phrase *tokutoku* three times in this passage.
- 134 imperial-tomb years pass / remember as-for what <acc.> / remembrance-grass
- Autumn: fern of longing (*shinobugusa**). 1684. In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*.
- 135 Yoshitomo ’s / heart to resembles / autumn ’s wind
- Autumn: autumn wind (*akikaze**). 1684. During the Hōgen Disturbance of 1156, Yoshitomo (1123–60) fought and killed his father, Tameyoshi, the leader of the powerful Minamoto clan. Two years later, he was defeated in the Heiji Disturbance and fled to Owari Province, experiencing the cold loneliness that autumn wind suggests. Yoshitomo was assassinated in Owari, and soon after Tokiwa, his mistress, was murdered, perhaps by robbers. Arakida Moritake, a Shinto priest at the Ise Shrine, was one of the founders of haikai poetry. In *Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field*.
- 136 autumn-wind ! / bamboo-thicket also farm-fields also / Fuwa ’s Barrier
- Autumn: autumn wind (*akikaze**). 1684 (late Ninth Month; October-November). Fuwa Barrier was located

