

The Narrow Road to Oku Okuno hosomichi おくのほそ道
奥の細道 from Spring to Autumn of 1689 (Genroku 2nd year)

Matuo Basho 松尾芭蕉 born in 1644, died in 1694

English version of the Haiku: cited from Donald L. Keene

Basho Haiku 1-20, chronological order, ed. by Geoff and Koki

Chinese version by K. Kawamura

Basho haiku 1



行春や 鳥啼魚の 目は泪

yu ku ha ru ya : yuku 行く passing away; haru 春 Spring

to ri na ki uwo no : tori 鳥 naki ; naku 啼 cry, weep ; uwo 魚 fish

me wa na mi da : me 目 eyes ; namida 涙 泪 tears

行春哉

鳥啼鳴

魚目泪

Spring is passing by!

Birds are weeping and the eyes

Of fish fill with tears.

Basho haiku 2



あらたふと 青葉若葉の 日の光

a ra to u to : ara 鼓舞 生氣 inspiring ; touto 畏敬 畏怖 awe

a o ba wa ka ba no : aoba 青葉 green leaves ; wakaba 若葉 young leaves

hi no hi ka ri : hi 日 sun , hikari 光 light

生氣満舞

青葉若葉

燦々日光

How awe-inspiring!

On the green leaves, the young leaves

The light of the sun.

Basho haiku 3



野を横に 馬牽（ひき）むけよ ほととぎす

no wo yo ko ni : no 野 meadows, fields ; yoko 横(断) across

u ma hi ki mu ke yo : uma 馬 horse; hiku 牽く 曳く、lead ; muku 向 face towards

ho to to gi su : hototogisu ほととぎす 不如帰 時鳥 杜鵑 nightingale

牧草地

馬牽向

不如帰

Lead the horse sideways

Across the meadows ----I hear

A nightingale.

Basho haiku 4



田一枚 植て立去る 柳かな

ta i chi ma i : ta field; ichimai 一枚 one whole

u e te ta chi sa ru : ueru 植, plant, put seed in the soul; tachsaru 立去 leave soon

ya na gi ka na : yanagi 柳 willow

田圃一枚

植立去了

西行柳蔭

They sowed a whole field,
And only then did I leave
Saigyô's willow tree.

Basho haiku 5



世の人の 見付ぬ花や 軒の栗

yo no hi to no : yonohito 世人 people in this world; yo 世 world; hito 人 people, man
mi tsu ke nu ha na ya : mitukenu 見付けぬ not notice, not find ; hana 花 flower, blossom
no ki no ku ri : noki 軒 eaves of the house; kuri 栗 chestnut, Castanea

俗世人
不得見
軒栗花

Blossoms unnoticed
By people of this world----
Chestnuts by the eaves.

Basho haiku 6



早苗とる 手もとや昔 しのぶ摺（ずり）

sa na e to ru : sanae 早苗 rice sprouts (for transplant); toru 取 移 take, remove
te mo to ya mu ka shi : temoto 手元 handling ; mukashi 昔 once, passed days
shi no bu zu ri : shinobu 偲 忍 recall, remember ; zuri 摺 stain grass colour with press

移早苗
手巧美
昔忍摺

Deft hands that now pluck
Seedings, once you used to press
Patterns from the stones.

Basho haiku 7



あやめ草 足に結ん 草鞋の緒

a ya me gu sa : ayamegusa 虹色草 iris blossoms

a shi ni mu su ban : ashi 足 feet; usuban 結 (I will) bind iris around my feet

wa ra ji no wo : waraji 草鞋 sandals ; wo 緒 cord, cord for my sandals

虹色草

我足結

草鞋緒

I will bind iris

Blossoms round my feet ----

Cords for my sandals!

Basho haiku 8



夏草や 兵（つはもの）どもが 夢の跡

na tsu ku sa ya : natsu 夏 summer; kusa 草 grass; ya 哉 exclamation

tsu wa mo no do mo ga: tsuwamono （勇）兵 soldiers , domo 達 plural form

yu me no a to : yume 夢 dream ; ato 跡 remains, ruins

夏草雑

兵士群

夢古跡

The summer grasses----

Of brave soldiers's dreams

The aftermath.

Basho haiku 9



まゆはきを 俤（おもかげ）にして 紅粉（べに）の花

ma yu ha ki wo : mayuhaki 眉掃 powder puff

o mo ka ge ni shi te : omokage 俤, 面影 looks, image

be ni no ha na : beni 紅粉 saffron ; hana 花 blossom, flower

用眉掃

写像俤

紅粉花

They make me recall

A lady' s powder puff----

These saffron blossoms .

Basho haiku 10



閑さや 岩にしみ入 蟬の声

shi zu ka sa ya : shizuka 閑 静 still, calm

I wa ni shi mi i ru : iwa 石 岩 stones, rock ; shimiiru 染入 sting into

Se mi no ko e : semi 蟬 locust ; koe 声 鳴 voice

閑静哉

染入岩

蟬の声

How still it is here ----

Stinging into the stones,

The locusts' trill.

Basho haiku 11



五月雨（さみだれ）を あつめて早し 最上川

sa mi da re wo : samidare 五月雨（さみだれ）rain (雨) in May (五月)

a tsu me te ha ya shi : atsumete→atsumeru 集める gather ; hayai 早 速 fast, swift

mo ga mi ga wa : Mogamigawa 最上川 name of the river

五月雨

集早流

最上川

Gathering seawards

The summer rains, how swift it is!

Mogami River.

Basho haiku 12



雲の峰 幾(いく)つ崩れて 月の山

ku mo no mi ne ; kumo 雲 clouds ; mine 峰 peak, top
i ku tsu ku zu re te ; ikutsu 幾許 how many ; kuzureru 崩壊 crumble into, collapse away
tsu ki no ya ma ; tsuki 月 moon ; yama 山 mountain

雲層峰
幾許崩
月明山

The peaks of clouds
Have crumbled into fragments----
The moonlit mountain!

Bashou haiku 13



象潟や 雨に西施が ねぶの花

ki sa ka ta ya : kisakata 象潟 beautiful seaside town (proper name)
a me ni se i shi ga : ame 雨 rain ; Seishi 西施 beautiful Chinese lady (name)
ne bu no ha na : nebu 合歓 (ねぶ) wet Mimosa Acacia ; hana 花 flower

象潟哉
雨西施
合歓花

Kisakata----
Seishi sleeping in the rain,
Wet mimosa blossoms.

Basho haiku 14



荒海や 佐渡によこたふ 天河

a ra u mi ya : araumi 荒海 sea of violent waves

sa do ni yo ko ta u : Sado 佐渡 name of an island ; yokotau よこたふ laying, floating

a ma no ga wa : amnogawa 天の川 天河 Milky Way

荒海暴嵐

佐渡横臥

天河銀乳

Turbulent the sea -----

Across to Sado stretches

The Milky Way.

Basho haiku 15



早稲（わせ）の香や 分入右は 有磯海

wa se no ka ya : wase 早稲 early-ripening rice (field) ; ka 香 smell , flavour

wa ke i ru mi gi wa : wakeiru 分け入る walk through ; migi 右 right

a ri so u mi : arisoumi 有磯海 proper name of a part of the Japan sea ; umi 海 sea

芳香早稲

分入向右

眺有磯海

Sweet-smelling rice fields !

To our right as we push through,

The Ariso Sea.

Basho haiku 16



あかあかと 日は難面(つれなく)も 秋の風

A ka a ka to : aka 赤 red

Hi wa tsu re na ku mo : hi 日, 太陽 sun ; tsurenai 難面 heartless, unkind, without pity

A ki no ka ze : aki 秋 autumn ; kaze 風 wind

赤色灼

難面陽

秋風微

Redy, redy

The sun shines heartlessly, but

The wind is autumnal.

Basho haiku 17



石山の 石より白し 秋の風

i shi ya ma no : ishi 石 stone ; yama 山 mountain ;

i shi yo ri shi ro shi : shiroi 白い white

a ki no ka ze : aki 秋 autumn ; kaze 風 wind

石山色

石更白

秋の風

Whiter, whiter than

The stones of Stone Mountain----

The autumnal wind.

Basho haiku 18



月清し 遊行のもてる 砂の上

tu ki ki yo shi : tuki 月 moon ; kiyoshi 清明 clear

yu gyoh no mo te ru : yugyoh 遊行 pilgrim-priest ; moteru→motsu 持つ bring , have

su na no u e : suna 砂 sand ; ue 上 on, over

月清明

遊行運

砂上寺

How pure the moonlight
On the sand before the shrine
Brought by Pilgrim-Priests.

Basho haiku 19



寂（さび）しさや 須磨（すま）にかちたる 浜の秋

sa bi shi sa ya : sabishi 寂し lonely ;

su ma ni ka chi ta ru : Suma 須磨 region of fine landscape scenery; kachi 勝ち more

ha ma no a ki : hama 浜 beach ; aki 秋 autumn

静寂深

比須磨

浜辺秋

How lonely it is!

Even lonelier than Suma,

Autumn at this beach.

Basho haiku 20



蛤の 二見(ふたみ)にわかれ 行秋ぞ

ha ma gu ri no : hamaguri 蛤 clam

fu ta mi ni wa ka re : Futami 二見 name of a town ; wakare 別 leave for

yu ku a ki zo : yuku 行 passing by, go away ; aki 秋 autumn

如 蛤

二見離別

行秋

Dividing like clam

And shell, I leave for Futami---

Autumn is passing by.

Geoff selected 20 Haiku from the book of Basho : The Narrow Road to Oku,
and Koki edited chronologically . May 2012

Begining of our poetic life.