

## Haiku as Creative Link

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10 years ago, in September 2000, we inaugurated the World haiku Association in the middle of Europe, Slovenia. The concept and the movement “World Haiku” therefore has a history of 10 years, which is not so long, neither so short.

In November 2004, we edited and published “World Haiku 2005 No. 1” (Nishida-shoten, Tokyo) after repeated trial and error. We continued to publish this multilingual annual publication through “World Haiku 2010 No. 6” (Shichigatsudo, Tokyo) in January 2010.

During these 10 years, we experienced numerous and unexpected stages in the process of creating “World Haiku”. Of course, one of the most remarkable results is World Haiku Festival Pécs 2010 which is being held now in this charming Hungarian city, one of European Capitals of Culture 2010. Last year, we co-organized the 20<sup>th</sup> Druskininkai Poetic Fall and the 5<sup>th</sup> World Haiku Association Conference 2009 in Vilnius and Druskinikai of Lithuania. Vilnius was thus the European Capital of Culture for World Haiku in 2009.

In addition to these successful international haiku events, at the end of the year 2009, the 1<sup>st</sup> European President to practice haiku, Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, announced his passion for haiku writing in Dutch. Not only did he publish his 1<sup>st</sup> haiku collection, but Mr. Rompuy is updating his blog dedicated to his haiku writing. Really haiku writing gets more accepted and more recognized by world-wide public each year, above all by Europeans.

Of course, we are much pleased with such international status of haiku becoming highly advanced.

Nevertheless, if we are promoting haiku not only as personal or social passion, but creative poetry, we need to verify quality, diversity and characteristics of haiku poems written in these 10 years.

On this glorious occasion of my workshop in Pécs, I would like to comment on some haiku poems selected for the 6 volumes we have published thus far: from “World Haiku 2005 No. 1” to “World Haiku 2010 No. 6”. Indeed these 6 volumes are the product of our blood, sweat and tears, so they may offer to haiku poets around the world useful suggestions to compose better haiku.

Even if haiku poem can be written without season words, most of haiku appeared in the 6 volumes of “World Haiku” were pastoral. We can enjoy various pastoral haiku pomes in our books.

I would mention as the first example a short poem came from Bulgaria, where our World Haiku Association held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference in 2005.

Dead shadows.  
The rice is growing.  
There comes the Universe.

Pepa Kondova, Bulgaria, "World Haiku 2005 No.1", p.35.

Though the writing way of Pepa Kondova is unsophisticated, fragmental and primitive, paradoxically the above haiku managed to become deeply poetic and cosmologic. In this haiku, the first line "Dead shadows" is quite striking. The haiku suggests that "Dead shadows" separated from "The rice" gives a vital energy to "The rice". Then "the Universe" comes to rice fields to unify separated things on the ground.

In other words, three keywords "shadow", "rice" and "universe" which are not connected tightly in our usual vocabulary can build up a verbal cosmos making our imagination quite active, making our soul more encouraged.

One haiku from an Asian country among the mountains is very evocative of unique rural landscape.

Gliding moon,  
in the pigeons' nest,  
a misty puzzle

Bam Dev Sharma, Nepal, "World Haiku 2006 No. 2" (Shichigatsudo, Tokyo, 2005), p.44.

The expression "a misty puzzle" informs us that the moon and the pigeons live, together surrounded by vapor, which suggests the environment is rich in water.

Sometimes I find the moon connected with the bird's nest in haiku poems, but the moon in this haiku by a Nepalese poet is moving in the nest. It's amazing. Moreover the last line "a misty puzzle" makes the whole haiku poetically expansive and enigmatic.

The following haiku born in Australia is extremely simple.

silent tree—  
the sky  
moves you

Grant Caldwell, Australia, "World Haiku 2007 No. 3" (Shichigatsudo, Tokyo, 2007), p.10.

In the haiku above, simple and brief words compose a verbal cosmos very attractive.

Three words “tree”, “sky” and “you” give birth to a verbal world full of pure sensations.

Pastoral by Japanese haiku poets may be more fantastic and more nuanced after many developments in Japanese haiku history.

影はみな祈りのしぐさ花菖蒲

Shadows  
all in praying posture,  
iris flowers

Takeo Nakamura, Japan, “World Haiku 2007 No. 3”, p.33.

ため息が集まっている春の雲

Sighs  
accumulated  
on a spring cloud

Bin Akio, Japan, “World Haiku 2008 No.4” (Shichigatsudo, Tokyo, 2008), p.7.

冬銀河蛇行の溪へ流れ込む

Winter galaxy  
flows into  
a serpentine valley

Yuji Matsumoto, Japan, “World Haiku 2008 No.4”, p.32.

鳥を入れ夕日を入れる雲は無敵

Birds enter,  
the evening sun enters—  
the invincible cloud

Sayumi Kamakura, Japan, “World Haiku 2009 No. 5” (Shichigatsudo, Tokyo, 2009), p.24.

飛魚の滞空時間星ふやす

Even more stars  
during the flight

of a flying fish

Yuiko Ichikawa, Japan, "World Haiku 2010 No.6", p.23.

All of these pastoral haiku are a harmonious fusion of the nature observed individually and delicately and the human sensations expressed intensively and secretly. For example, the first line "Sighs" in a haiku by Bin Akio is not a mere fictional metaphor, but depicts the nuanced atmosphere of a "spring cloud" as well as the delicate emotional state of the author.

In the cited haiku by Sayumi Kamakura, "the invincible cloud" is not only a weather phenomenon but a representation of her soul.

An innocent child can be an excellent haiku poet in any language. A haiku from Oceania demonstrates it.

Oceanic  
blue canvas  
diamond sky

Kiiroi Yumetobu, New Zealand, "World Haiku 2007 No.3", p. 64.

A young New Zealander finds a marvelous link between words "diamond" and "sky" to express nature as miraculous.

Thus we can remark that each excellent pastoral haiku poem gathered from different countries contains a new link between things in nature, and a new link between things and human being, too. These links newly found by haiku poets, links newly built up in haiku poems are our first fruits of "World Haiku". We can say that pastoral is still a significant basic of haiku writing.

Free from pastoral short poems, many poets write a haiku singing of human beings, of course including themselves.

Pain.  
In it  
the infinity

Alexandra Ivoylova, Bulgaria, "World Haiku 2005 No.1", p. 27.

This is one of the most impressive haiku for me in the 6 volumes of "World Haiku". The word "Pain" is charged with maximum substance when connected to "the infinity". In some successful haiku, a keyword is fully emphasized and focused on. This "Pain" is connected with our whole universe through "the infinity". The link between "pain" and the universe is found and fixed in a haiku poem.

Crystals of snow:  
Mind and body

Are not two

Jack Galmitz, USA, "World Haiku 2007 No.3", p. 16.

This is a crystallization of human desire for the mind and the body happily unified in one person. Haiku poems can crystallize human desire, will and hope, etc. A New Yorker poet found a secret link between snow and a man, a precious link between "Mind and body".

In nessun cielo  
è rinchiuso il volo  
di un gabbiano

No sky  
limits the flight  
of a seagull

Toni Piccini, Italy, "World Haiku 2007 No. 3", p.40.

As you imagine easily, "a seagull" in the haiku above suggests human being. An Italian haiku poet wrote a haiku of absolute freedom as limitless flight in the sky.

O teu corpo nu  
ao lado do meu corpo nu:  
música ou silêncio?

Your naked body  
beside my naked body:  
music of silence?

Casimiro de Brito, Portugal, "World Haiku 2008 No. 4", p.12.

A Portuguese poet of Eros listens to a "music of silence" sounding between two naked bodies. It's a great homage to physical existence of humanity. The poet discovered an invisible link between two naked bodies of lovers and expresses it as "music of silence".

Gaisma ir zobens  
Tā tevi nocērt līdz pašai  
Tavas tumsas saknei

Light is a sword  
That will cut you  
To your darkest roots

Leons Briedis, Latvia, "World Haiku 2010 No.6", p.13.

A Latvian poet is writing haiku like proverb filled with human wisdom. He says in his haiku that "Light" doesn't flash over the exterior of a man, but digs him deeply into the

darkest interior. Here an unexpected link between “Light” and “your darkest roots” is revealed by the poet’s keen insight.

Haiku poems from Africa opened a new dimension of our “World Haiku”.

Ten seasons

ten desperate seasons—

firstborn moon

Jerry S. Adesewo, Nigeria, “World Haiku 2006 No.2”, p.6.

The haiku by a Nigerian haiku poet tells us another climate totally different from that of the four seasons we are accustomed to and he expresses his love and hate for repeated seasons in his country. In spite of all, he found finally his mental link between himself and a hidden hope for living there, composing the third line “firstborn moon”.

Un autre citronnier

Dans un autre pays

Mes regards sont désirs

Another lemon tree

In another country

My gazes are desires

Mohammed Bennis, Morocco, “World Haiku 2007 No.3”, p.9.

A Moroccan poet illustrates a vast horizon of his own. He found a faraway link between himself and “Another lemon tree / In another country”. This Moroccan poet liked haiku poem with extraordinarily huge space and time.

the tallest waterfall

is thice the length

of my father’s shadow

Jacob Kobina Ayiah Mensah, Ghana, “World Haiku 2010 No.6”, p.10.

An apparent link between the waterfall and his father in a haiku by a Ghanian haiku poet is not so simple as we imagined. This is because his “father’s shadow” plays a vital role there. Perhaps the link may be based on traditional animistic cosmology, so the link is much more tighter and deeper.

At the end, I would pick up an experimental haiku composed in Hungary. Verbal adventure is a god friend of creative poetry.

tó jegén ... szűz – hó

... léksebben – jéghártyán ... kép ...

: SIRÁLYSZÁRNYTÖRÉS

On the ice of the lake ... *virgin – snow*  
... on the hole-wound – on the cat-ice ... image ...  
: WINGFAILURE OF GULLS

József Bíró, Hungary, “World Haiku 2010 No.6”, p.12.

This haiku making full use of typographical space consist of fragile and critical links between words. So haiku by József Bíró is a radical short poem of uncertain verbal link.

It is impossible to mention all of distinguished haiku compiled in the 6 volumes of “World Haiku”. Here I tried to center the poetical viewpoint on “link”. Link is not a stable relation, nor an existing combination, but a secret and potential bridge find out only when a haiku poet creates a genuine short poem called haiku. Creative links newly found by an excellent haiku poet bring you freely to the universe much more liberated than before.

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