

A Report on 10th World Haiku Association Conference: 20th Anniversary

Ban'ya Natsuishi Japan

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Inaugurated in Tolmin, Slovenia in September 2000, World Haiku Association held its 10th World Haiku Association Conference in the center of Tokyo, from September 13 to 15, 2019, sponsored by Arts Council Tokyo, Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture. The World Conference is organized around the world every two years. Up to the present, Slovenia, Japan, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Colombia, and Italy hosted the meetings. The theme of the conference was "World Haiku Conference: Haiku Future / Haiku World", for not limiting the participants to the member of World Haiku Association. Further, as the association marked 20 years anniversary, the meeting had another theme: "Haiku: its regional and global characteristics".

214 participants from 15 countries took part in the conference. I would like to list some features of the conference below.

1. Almost all participants had opportunities to recite their haiku for three times in three days.
2. Official languages were English and Japanese.
3. In addition to the above the official languages, haiku has been recited in Russian, Tajik, Nepali, Italian, Mongolian, Arabic, Chinese, German, Bulgarian, Portuguese, French, and Hungarian. In total, 14 languages were used to recite haiku that composed a huge symphony. Further, Latin was used at a haiku translation workshop, which made 15 languages were used to create a passionate swirl.
4. Asia was focused this time because the venue was in Japan. We set up haiku sessions in Mongolian, Chinese, and Nepali. Further, we had haiku poets from Tajikistan and Malaysia participated for the first time.
5. Arabic haiku session covering Asia and North Africa was set up for the first time.
6. Casual sessions were organized for participants to feel easy to join in, such as Japanese-English Bilingual Basho Haiku Cards Show, Workshop on making bilingual haiku, Haiku Recitation Workshop.
7. In honor of the participation of Abdulkareem Kasid (renowned Iraqi poet), the Iraqi ambassador to Japan and two diplomats from Arab countries joined us at the welcome party prior to the conference.

The above features of the conference illustrated people around the world make steady progress in making haiku, as shown in "World Haiku 2019: No.16" (Natsuishi Ban'ya, edited by World Haiku Association, Coal Sack Publishing Company). The haiku collection was published in March 2019, containing haiku composed by 174 people from 51 countries, in 39 languages.

Welcome Party was organized at DE NIERO Kanda restaurant on September 13. Prof. Tadao Shimomiya (professor emeritus at Gakushuin University) gave a speech titled: Goethe and World Literature. He quoted the following lines from Goethe's poem:

Wer den Dichter will verstehen,
Muss in Dichters Lande gehen.

To understand poetry, you must go to the land of poems,
To understand the poet, you must go to the land of the poet.

His speech led us to have a good grounding in making the meeting genuine and superior. Kosai Hori (modern artist) pointed

out that nobody can imagine haiku's advancement around the world today, and haiku will be the babel of voices to overcome the language barrier.

September 14, 2019

Ban'ya Natsuishi made a keynote address titled: Reflections on Twenty Years of World Haiku. The main points are below.

1. English is a prominent common language in world haiku, but it is not limited to. The principle is multilingualism that respect every language.
2. Seasonal word is not mandatory. Because every poet embraces different kind of seasons, so they have a choice for not using it.
3. The basic haiku style is free verse in three lines. We must accept that the fixed form of verse is a part of a large variety of poetry.
4. Essentially, world haiku does not adhere to seasonal word or style. It is the international and primitive dynamism exemplified by the number "3", such as three lines and three verses.

In European Haiku Session, two university professors; prof. Judit Vihar (Hungary), and prof. Giovanni Borriello (Italy) who have deep interests in haiku, talked their considerable insight of haiku's history in Europe.

In Chinese Haiku Session, Hideki Ishikura serving as a moderator, Zheng Min Qin, Wang Yan, and Xu Yiping talked from the poets' point of view, about Chinese haiku's variety and possibility which is not limiting to Hanpai.

In Mongolian Haiku Session, Rikido Tomikawa, Ts. Tsolmon, Khukhkhad Bukhmand, and B. Uzemee recited their haiku accompanied with a horsehead fiddle performance. Their performance showed us the emergence of Mongolian Haiku as one of the new types of poetry in the 21st century. World Mongolian Haiku Group published a haiku collection together with World Haiku Association, and organized haiku contest and other events.

In Nepali Haiku Session, Ram Kumar Panday (Nepal's honorary poet and leading haiku poet), together with Prakash Poudel, and Krishna Bajgai showed the published haiku collection to the audience, and proudly described their haiku culture became active and well-recognized in Nepal.

In Arabic Haiku Session, Sameh Derouich (Morocco) and Abdulkareem Kasid (leading Iraqi poet) described the history and the current status of Arabic haiku. Further, they directly pointed out the challenges set for Arabic haiku. In addition, 11th World Haiku Association Conference is called to be held in Morocco, 2021, as Mr. Derouich serves as Executive Committee Chairman.

September 15, 2019

The first half was academic talks and the latter half was entertaining sessions.

Toyomi Iwawaki-Riebel (resident in Germany) had a talk titled: German Philosophy and Haiku. She described haiku contains a miraculous contradiction that capture the metaphysical depth as a momentary image. Further, Nietzsche's work had a note to announce the upcoming of haiku element. Rilke and Brecht started German haiku movements in 1930s. It is about to overcome the fundamental contradiction the world embraces.

Eric Selland (American poet and translator living in Japan) gave a talk titled: The Influence of Haiku on American Modernist Poetry.

In the beginning of 20th century, Ezra Pound began transforming the style of American poetry, at that time the style was quite descriptive. He incorporated haiku-like, fragmental expression into American poetry. Further William Carlos Williams added more simplified expression in word choice. The Objectivists unconsciously follow the trend to develop American modern poetry. Modern American poetry has several layers of influence from haiku in its roots.

We had a session from a unique perspective. Yoshiko Fukuda gave us a short talk titled: Haiku and I-JI-ME (Haiku and

bullying), based on her teaching experience in a high school and a university. She told making haiku gave the isolated youth a self-healing, also it served to bridge the emotional gap between the poet and the others.

The final session was given by two Americans living in Japan, which gave us the final addition to the diverse programs of 10th World Haiku Association Conference. Scott Watson discussed with his translation as an example. Edward Levinson made comments on his work of photo-haiku collaboration, showing his own work on the screen.

The latter entertaining part was Basho's haiku cards contest. I would like to simply note the winner was not Japanese, it was Judit Vihar (Hungary), a prominent academic in Japanese language and Japanese literature.

In the end of the day, the winners were announced at the award ceremony of the 3rd World Haiku Association Haiku Contest. Seven international judges selected three haiku from the submitted 208 verses of haiku, 70 pieces from 19 countries.

1st place

清水 滋生(日本) Jisei Shimizu (Japan)

滴りをたどればジェームス・ディーンの青空

Following

the drops of water

as far as James Dean's blue sky

2nd Place

乾 佐伎 (日本) Saki Inui (Japan)

うららかや山手線は自己研磨

Lovely weather

the Yamanote line

polishing itself

3rd Place

ステファヌ・ダムール (カナダ) Stephane D'Amour (Canada)

Mori Tower dances

with the depths of the earth

The engineer drinks tea.

地球の深さで／森タワー踊る／エンジニアお茶飲む

To commemorate 10th World Haiku Association Conference, two haiku anthologies were published and distributed to the all participants for free. One was "World Haiku Conference Anthology 2019" (Edited by Ban'ya Natsuishi, World Haiku Association, 2019). The other was "World Mongolian Haiku—commemorative haiku collection for 10th World Haiku Association Conference" (Rikido Tomikawa as a chief editor, 2019). The two books offered reference to haiku recitation throughout the meeting. I would like to excerpt some haiku from the first anthology.

バフティヤール・アミニ (タジキスタン・ドイツ)

Bakhtiyar Amini (Tajikistan & Germany)

лагерь беженцев

готовят в одной кастрюле

свинину и говядину

refugee camp/cooking in one pan/pork and beef

難民キャンプ／フライパン一つで料理／豚肉と牛肉

クリシュナ・バジガイ (ネパール・英国)

Krishna Bajgai (Nepal & UK)

हिउँको टोपी

ध्यानमग्न पहाड

नदीको हल्ला ।

hat of snow / on the meditating hills / river makes noises

瞑想の丘に / 雪の帽子 / 川は鳴る

アンジェリーナ・ボン (マレーシア)

Angelina Bong (Malaysia)

Call of the hornbills

ripen the red berries on

the welcoming tree

犀鳥たちの声 / 歓迎の木に / 赤い実を実らす

サメ・ダルウイッシュ (モロッコ)

Sameh Derouich (Morocco)

حصوات الوادي،

لَمْ يَصْقَلْهَا

سوى حنان الماء.

The valley's stones, / Were not polished / Except by water's love.

谷間の石 / 磨かれない / 水の愛以外では

古田 嘉彦 (日本)

Yoshihiko Furuta (Japan)

路面電車ロウソクともすのが切符

Burning a candle / is your ticket / on the streetcar

ティム・ガーディナー (英国)

Tim Gardiner (UK)

ice skating

a young foal

finds its feet

アイススケート / 仔馬 / 自分の脚を見つける

石倉 秀樹 (日本)

Hideki Ishikura (Japan)

風馬吃花走天下

風は馬花を喰らいて天下ゆく

The wind like a horse / runs under the heaven / eating flowers

岩脇リーベル 豊美 (日本・ドイツ)

Toyomi Iwawaki-Riebel (Japan & Germany)

冷蔵庫の意味忘れてたり翡翠置く

Die Bedeutung des Kühlschranks / vergessen und / die Jade hineingelegt

Forgetting the purpose / of a refrigerator / we place a piece of jade inside

鎌倉 佐弓 (日本)

Sayumi Kamakura (Japan)

草いきれ道なきことを楽しめと

Strong smell of grass／for enjoying／without the way

アブドゥルカリーム・カシッド (イラク・英国)

Abdulkareem Kasid (Iraq & UK)

المدينة ثملة

بطيخ أصفر

يتجول

The city is tipsy／Yellow melons／Wander about

都市はほろ酔い／黄色いメロン／さまよう

水崎 野里子 (日本)

Noriko Mizusaki (Japan)

われもまた歩みてゆくかダビンチの影

Also do I walk on／With you after Da Vinci／The lady: smile rich

長嶺 千晶 (日本)

Chiaki Nagamine (Japan)

装飾の金翳りなき受難節

The golden decors／Shining bright with no tarnish／In fasting of Lent

夏石 番矢 (日本)

Ban'ya Natsuishi (Japan)

雑種犬セシウムまみれで神を待つ

Covered with cesium／a mongrel dog／awaiting a god

ラム・クマール・パンデー (ネパール)

Ram Kumar Pnaday (Nepal)

Each Friday

a tower falls

to fill up empty ocean

毎金曜日／からの大洋満たそうと／塔が倒れる

エリック・セランド (米国・日本)

Eric Selland (US & Japan)

Baroque journey to the bookstore

And return:

Blank expressions on train

書店へのバロックの旅／そして帰路／電車の中のボケの顔

ズラトカ・ティメノヴァ (ブルガリア・ポルトガル)

Zlatla Tomenova (Bulgaria & Portugal)

пустиня

чувам вятъра

в пясъчните гънки

désert／j'entends le vent／dans les plis de sable

deserto／ouço o vento／nas rugas de areia

砂漠／砂の襞に／風を聴く

Ts・ツオルモン (内モンゴル)

Ts. Tsolmon (Inner Mongolia)



真つ黒な大蛇みどりの魂吸い込んで茂みへ
Absorbing a green spirit/a jet black big snake/advancing to the bush

マリア・ラウラ・ヴァレンテ (イタリア)
Maria Laura Valente (Italy)

cactus in fiore...
l'insostenibile bellezza
dei miei peccati
blooming cactus.../the unbearable beauty/of my sins
花咲くサボテン/わが罪の/耐え難い美しさ

ユディット・ヴィハル (ハンガリー)
Judit Vihar (Hungary)
Velem veszekszel?
Olyan vagy most, mint virág
szirmai nélkül
You quarrel with me –/now you are like a flower/without petals
あなたと喧嘩/いまあなたは/花びらのない花のよう

王 岩 (中国)
Wang Yang (China)
乱れ髪ほのかに匂ふ御み 瀧なり
娥眉雲髻亂，飛瀑暗香盈。
Disheveled hair/its fragrant aroma/like a waterfall

I excerpted more haiku than I expected. Simply because the contributed haiku poems to the contest were so varied and excellent. Unfortunately, I could not include many other haiku here for lack of space.

11th and 12th World Haiku Association Conferences are scheduled to be held in Morocco in 2021, and Inner Mongolia in 2023, respectively. Haiku is going to be more valuable modern poetry worldwide.