

AMERICAN HAIKU



Vol. III, No. 2

1.50

80

AMERICAN HAIKU

Vol. III, No. 2



EDITOR IN CHARGE OF POETRY

Robert Spiess

POETRY EDITORS

Gustave Keyser

Ted-Larry Pebworth

EDITOR IN CHARGE OF PROSE

James Bull

AMERICAN HAIKU is published semi-annually by American Haiku, P. O. Box 73, Platteville, Wisconsin, 53818. Subscription rates—for one year (two issues): U. S. and Canada, \$3.00; Foreign, \$4.00. Manuscripts cannot be returned unless accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope. Copyright (c) 1965 by James Bull. Printed by -Platteville Journal.

INDEX

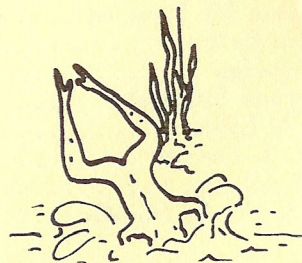
Author	Pages	Author	Pages
Hilda Aarons	16	Kathryn Hall	29
Phil Adams	16	Susanne Held	30
Frank Ankenbrand, Jr.	17	Clement Hoyt (Tohko)	6, 44
Margot Bollock	17-18	Evelyn Tooley Hunt	6, 30
Charline Hayes Brown	18	Aileen R. Jaffa	30
Sam Bryan	18	Foster Jewell	30
Betty Calvert	19-20	Robert N. Johnson	5, 31
Peggy Card	20	Thomas Johnston	56-60
Helen S. Chenoweth	21	Laura Jane Keister	31
William Howard Cohen	22	Walter H. Kerr	5, 31-32
Carrow De Vries	22	Eleanor Randolph Kevan	32
Magdalene M. Douglas	26	Gustave Keyser	34
Burnham Eaton	26	Anne Landauer	32-33
Lee Eldredge	26	Lloyd Frank Merrell	34
M. Virginia Eustace	27	Harvey L. Moody	35
Helen A. Evans	27	Barbara O. Moraw	35
William J. Feeney	27	Ted-Larry Pebworth ..	23-25, 45-48
Susan Forthman	28	Ethel Polinsky (Ethel Polline) ..	36
Travis S. Frosig (Ga-Go)	29	Phyllis Mahn Potter	36

INDEX

Author	Pages	Author	Pages
Marjory Bates Pratt	37-38	Saxon White Uberuaga	49
Anne Rutherford	39	Nicholas A. Virgilio	49-52
Charles Shaw	39-41	Mira Watha Walilko	52
Joy Shieman	41	Joyce W. Webb	52-53
Dorothy Cameron Smith	41	Lourine White	53
O M B Southard	42	Paul O. Williams	53-54
Robert Spiess	7-15	Adele Wirtz	55
Georgian Tashjian	43	B. N. Wyatt	4
Donald J. Tickner	43	Virginia Brady Young	55

NOTICE

In corresponding with AMERICAN
HAIKU, please use your zip code. It
is essential that we have it.



HAIKU PUBLISHERS' DIRECTORY

To our knowledge, the following editors regard original, previously unpublished English-language haiku as something more important than mere filler.

HAIKU HIGHLIGHTS AND OTHER SHORT POEMS. Jean Calkins, ed. Box 15, Kanona, N. Y. 14856. Monthly: 10c copy, \$1.00 year; renewals \$1.50 year.

PENMAN MAGAZINE. Barbara Fischer, ed. 133 W. 6th St., Deer Park, Long Island, N. Y. 11729. Bimonthly: 50c copy, \$2.00 year.

POETRY DIAL. Lourine White and Frances T. Brinkley, eds. 491 N. 6th

St., Piggott, Ark. Weekly newspaper column. Include biographical statement.

POETRY PENDULUM. Lourine White, ed. 491 N. 6th St., Piggott, Ark. Weekly newspaper column. Include biographical statement.

SONNET CINQUAIN TANKA HAIKU. Rhoda de Long Jewell, ed. El Rito, New Mexico. Quarterly: 25c copy, \$1.00 year.

Type haiku, one per page, on 8½ by 11 paper; include your name and address on each manuscript page; include stamped, self-addressed envelope for return.

Awards

The editors are pleased to present the following haiku, which have been judged to be the best subscriber-haiku submitted during the months listed. AMERICAN HAIKU cash awards were \$10.00 each. Please note: our printer requires six to eight weeks to produce the magazine; therefore, it is impossible that our awards listing match our publication date. Our next issue (scheduled for early June, 1966) will contain awards for Oct., 1966, through March, 1966. Thereafter, each issue will carry six award-winning haiku.

May

The heavens tremble
at the flick of my finger
in this still water.

—B. N. Wyatt

June

Where last week's flood
rested from its sea journey—
drying maps of mud.

—Walter H. Kerr

July

A spreading pine—
the boat is wandering
on its mooring line.

—Robert N. Johnson

August

A faded scarecrow
with bird dung on his shoulder
hides in the tall corn.

—Evelyn Tooley Hunt

September

Hair, in my comb's teeth,
the color of autumn wind—
this whole day is gray.

—Tohko

RHYTHM IN HAIKU

By Robert Spiess

Neither conventional regular meter nor typical free verse seems appropriate to the haiku aesthetic. However, haiku which are worthy of the name **poems** do have a verifiable rhythm—rather, two rhythms, specific and generic. (See Kenneth Yasuda's discussion of **vertical** and **horizontal** rhythms in *THE JAPANESE HAIKU*, pp. 79-106, *passim*).

The specific rhythm is individual to, or different for, each haiku. It devolves from the combination of accent (stress-unstress) and duration (sound-silence) in the sequence of syllables and words as they relate directly to the "action," content or ex-

perience of the haiku. Specific rhythm may flow from one line to another or its cadence may change within the haiku. It appeals mainly to our outer senses and is relatively amenable to analysis.

Generic rhythm, on the other hand, is fundamentally the same for the great majority of haiku: a rhythm which is inherent in the haiku as a form, as a poem, as a concept;—or better, as a form-poem-concept (one word, one comprehensive idea). Although it is measurable in terms of three lines divided 5-7-5 syllables, generic rhythm appeals not so much to outer senses as to an inner sense,

what one might call a subliminal sixth sense of "rightness." Consequently, it is not as easy to analyze as might first appear from a mere syllable count.

Discovered centuries ago by the Japanese, the 5-7-5 syllabic division (or generic rhythm) is the ideal proportion for the durational value of the haiku—that is, the time it takes to speak seventeen syllables, or one normal breath's extent (Yasuda, p. 31). To define it by analogy, one might liken generic rhythm to the diurnal flooding and ebbing tides on which the various kinds of waves (specific rhythm) exist and change daily or even hourly; or to the musical tonality upon which the melodic line moves; or to the matrix within which specific rhythmic structure is cast. It is, then, a universal rhythm upon which or within which every manner of specific

rhythm or cadence may freely move and play.

In the following haiku, for example, the end-stopped lines "dramatize" the 5-7-5 generic rhythm:

One breaker crashes;
as the next draws up, a lull—
and sandpiper-cries.
—O M B Southard
(AH, I, 1: 50)

If we read it aloud, we are conscious of a deliberate, generic rhythm-proportion within the seventeen-syllable durational value of the poem.

The generic rhythm need not be as "definite" as in Southard's haiku, for a poet might utilize an extended measure. Nevertheless, the generic proportion must be present and must feel "right", as in Nash Basom's

Heavy morning mist
shrouds dim rows of gray
tombstones,
each its own grave's ghost.
(AH, I, 1: 12)

In the next haiku, there are wide differences from the previous two in mood, action and external form;—yet the generic rhythm is present—although it is neither as “bold” as in the first, nor as “extended” as in the second:

Moonlight tiptoed past
the sleeping baby's cradle;
“S-s-sh.”
—Eloise Barksdale
(AH, II, 2: 14)

Although one cannot fully commend this haiku, it does illustrate the fact that the 5-7-5 generic rhythm need not

derive from strict syllabic count only; that is, the “felt length” of a line may be important. Thus, in the haiku above, the last line can be felt as having two long counts for the actual syllable and about three counts of “felt silence” after it.

But this kind of variation is difficult if not downright dangerous, as another example will demonstrate:

Scarecrow-magician . . .
out of his coat . . .
a bat!
—Nicholas A. Virgilio
(AH, I, 2: 45)

Here we have not so much a variation as a lack of 5-7-5 generic rhythm. The specific rhythm is quite appropriate to the content, perhaps, but after reading this “haiku” aloud, I have a let-down

feeling; somehow, I feel that I have been short-changed, in proportion as the piece does not measure up to the all-important 5-7-5 generic rhythm.

I am convinced that the "prose-effect" of so many English translations of Japanese haiku is due in large measure to the translators' inability to carry over the 5-7-5 generic rhythm. And by extension, I am convinced that that is why many writers of English haiku (who have formed almost all their concept of English-language haiku on translations of Japanese haiku) fail to write haiku that are poetry.

Yet, as the following pieces illustrate, mere 5-7-5 syllabic count does not automatically produce a felt generic rhythm. These selections possess qualities, especially phrasing, which do

not allow the potentially present generic rhythm to materialize:

All day the snow played
over sooty roofs and one
small grave—newly made.
—Maude Ludington Cain
(AH, I, 2: 15)

Grove to grove, the hoots
of owls; along the Milky
Way—the dark places.
—O M B Southard
(AH, III, 1: 43)

Again it draws me
from the edge of sleep . . . this
white tide of moonlight!
—Alice C. McBride
(AH, III, 1: 38)

Externally, these semi-haiku are 5-7-5, but they are not proportionally 5-7-5. Because they lack the generic rhythm of haiku, I find it somewhat difficult

to know how to read them. If read according to line-form, they sound so awkward that the "sense-emotion" is lost or destroyed; if read according to punctuation and "sense-content" they sound like couplets, or inharmonious three-liners, or short quatrains—or what have you. None of the readings—by line-form, by punctuation, or by "sense-content"—gives a pleasing rhythmical feeling or effect.

Although I stress 5-7-5 generic rhythm, because I believe it is fundamental and necessary to haiku as a form of poetry, I realize that there are genuine haiku that do not possess this rhythm; however, they are not numerous, as it requires a master to create them—one already versed and accomplished in employing the 5-7-5 rhythm. Furthermore, such variants are just that—**variants**—created within the generic tradition.

Only a most imperceptive student would maintain that the 5-7-5 generic rhythm is too "limited" as a poetic form. For, as we have seen, the possibilities are not rigidly bound in mere syllable count: the first three haiku cited in this essay demonstrate that one can employ at least three generic measures—definite, extended or shortened—and yet retain the proportionate "feel" of generic rhythm. Furthermore, the possibilities for variation in **specific** rhythm are almost without bounds.

For example, in the first haiku cited, O M B Southard's

One breaker crashes;
as the next draws up, a lull—
and sandpiper-cries.

the specific rhythm accurately follows

the action—or rather, is simultaneous with the action—of the haiku. The auditory cadence of the words is in concord with the haiku's visual and auditory movement as well as its visual and auditory rest. And this concord exists **within** the generic matrix of 5-7-5.

The specific rhythm begins with a stressed monosyllable which should be slightly prolonged, immediately followed by another stressed syllable. This informs us that the first part of the "event" (i.e., the experience) as we come upon it—as it comes upon us—is already developed. The sequential stress-unstress rhythm of "breaker crashes" gives the visual-auditory-psychological "feeling" of the tumbling large wave—and remember how a huge comber takes time to crash: it does not happen quickly; it is almost in

slow motion, the wave successively falling over and over itself;—thus the need for prolonging the image through the use of two words succeeding each other in their falling rhythm of stress-unstress.

There is now a pause in the relative movement of the event-experience, symbolized by the semicolon. The second line, beginning with two unstressed monosyllables, continues or "picks up" the movement by linking with the unstressed last syllable of the first line, helping us to realize that although there is sequence of physical motion in this haiku, nonetheless all the discrete elements of the haiku actually are combining to give us a single, complete experience—a significant moment of time, of our life on earth.

The stress on "next" follows, with a

greater stress on the long syllable "draws", followed by a third stressed monosyllable, "up." Thus, in the second line, we begin with two unstressed monosyllables, followed by a moderately stressed semi-long monosyllable, and a fully stressed long monosyllable—all capped by a stressed short monosyllable: the actual rhythm of the gathering and completion of a huge wave.

The rhythm perfectly continues with the comma and the unstressed short "a" followed by the not quite fully stressed semi-long but expressive monosyllable, "lull", and a dash. Again, recall how there is, or certainly seems to be, a pause when a wave has reached its moment of perfection—a pause that is visual and auditory rest, from the motion and sound of the preceding wave and from the building up of the present wave. At this moment

we are suspended with the wave between the sea and sky, between earth and heaven. And now it is, in this moment of pure silence, that the plaintive, high calls of the sandpipers both break the silence and are one with it.

The last line expresses this by starting with an unstressed monosyllable: a stressed syllable would be inappropriate—too abrupt and too strong to indicate the way in which the thin cries of these shore-birds reach us—for though they are sounds, the cries are yet a part of the silence. The hyphen linking "sandpipers" and "cries" shows that the cries are **there**, inherent in the event, not that the sandpipers start to cry at that particular moment. Expressive of the shorter cries of sandpipers, the hyphen also suggests that the rhythm of the last line is somewhat quicker than the rhythm of the first

line, which is marked by the slower crashing of the breaker.

Note also how the last word of the poem remains stressed as is, if I recall correctly, the cry of a sandpiper—not very much falling off in tone as in the calls of many birds. And the alliteration of “cries” and “crashes” should not be overlooked, for it again suggests the unity of the event by emphasizing the similarity that there is sound in a crashing wave and sound in a sandpiper’s cry; the difference in the rhythm of the words emphasizes the contrast in the **quality** of the two sounds.

Now let us consider the specific rhythm which exists within the extended generic measure of Nash Basom’s

Heavy morning mist
shrouds dim rows of gray
tombstones,
each its own grave’s ghost.

In achieving his mood, the author utilizes a remarkable specific rhythm: the initial syllable of each line is stressed; eleven of the fourteen words are monosyllabic; thirteen of the seven-teen syllables are stressed or at least semi-stressed, and in addition one of the unstressed (the “ing”) is relatively long. Although there is practically no “active action” in this haiku, it is thanks to the combination of the elements of specific rhythm that we “feel” the mist—matter-of-fact, somber, enveloping.

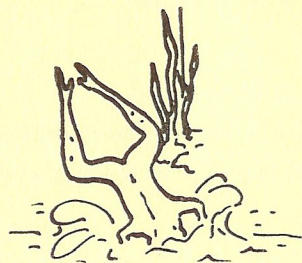
If one is still convinced that the haiku form is “confining,” let him read aloud Gustave Keyser’s

The flat stone I shy
goes zip skipping on the pond
playing dragonfly.
(AH, I, 2: 26)

If the reader's ear does not tell him that here we have both definite 5-7-5 generic rhythm and definite specific rhythm, he is lost;—for both rhythms are undeniably felt, and felt simultaneously. Furthermore, both rhythms are appropriate to the subject matter—the limitation of the generic; the freedom of the specific; the unity with the content: perfect rhythmic form. Anyone who has ever skipped a stone and also watched a dragonfly will not only relive both of these experiences through this haiku, but in the unity of the two separate experiences he will also discover a new experience that is greater than the sum of the other two—and everafter, a dragonfly will be present in every stone he skips, and a skipping stone in the movements of each dragonfly he sees.

In summary, perhaps it might be said that the specific rhythm of a haiku

can be likened to the personality of an individual, the generic rhythm to the life-force of man himself: no man is truly human without both—specific personality which exists within and simultaneous with generic life-force; no haiku is truly poetry without both—specific rhythm which exists within and simultaneous with generic rhythm.



6, 7 by Hilda Aarons

6—

The leaf fell slowly
coloring the air yellow,
for just a moment.

7—

Carrying football
guitar and tennis racquet,
our son goes to college.

8, 9 by Phil Adams

8—

Having disobeyed,
my son deserves the spanking
that makes his mother cry.

9—

After the sun dies,
dark sky cups the molded dunes:
the heat runs over.

Ghosts of fireflies . . .
swirling snowflakes around
my lantern posts.

—Frank Ankenbrand, Jr.



11 - 14 by Margot Bollock

11—

I had forgotten
how the fireworks light up
the idle flowers.

12—

Automobiles swerve
dodging a plump jaywalker—
dancing tumbleweed.

13—

A caterpillar
must have held a banquet here—
a lacework of leaves.

In the autumn mist
above the silver bayou
tall cypress trees rust.

—Charline Hayes Brown

14—

Watching busy ants,
my clumsy shadow covers
their entire world.

Cedars in the wind
bend with trailing chimney smoke
beckoning from home.

—Sam Bryan

17 - 22 by Betty Calvert

17—

Brazen is the sky:

heat waves shimmer through the dust
and the tree toad's cry.

18—

The chick a dee clings

to a bowed sunflower head
prizing out a seed.

19—

Taking many sips

dragon flies dip and hover
over the still pool.

20—

A blue lizard suns

on a moss encrusted stone
—but now a twig snaps!

21—

Quarreling sparrows
contend for their squatters rights,
in the martin's house.

22—

Icy fog-spun lace
hangs in frozen filigree
on the chain link fence.

23, 24 by Peggy Card

23—

Sea of Tranquility
invaded by space ships
ponders a new name.

24—

Shattering silence:
no children's voices . . .
and a full cookie jar.

25 - 28 by Helen S. Chenoweth

25—

Echo, re-echo
accents the chant of bull-frogs—
the still of evening.

26—

Clouds of mosquitoes
cavorting in summer's dusk—
curfew of moonlight.

27—

An old patchwork quilt—
broom and small hands make a tent
an architect dreams.

28—

All New England
in a glass of wild grape jelly
and a clambake.

29, 30 by William Howard Cohen

29—

Falling mountain stream—
over the ancient sea shale
waters flow again.

30—

The sticks on the ridge
are still untouched with green,
but the whole sky blossoms.



The red sun kindles
a crackling of tinted birds,
waking the garden.

—Carrow De Vries

WEAK VERBS IN HAIKU

By Ted-Larry Pebworth

Many haiku are rendered ineffective by weak verbs. I am not speaking of grammatically weak verbs (those that regularly form the past tenses and past participles by the addition of -ed, -d, or -t to the stem word), but of verbs that do not do any work or pull any weight. For the writer of haiku, the weakest verb in the English language is, paradoxically, the most irregular (or strong) verb grammatically—the verb “to be.”

“To be” implies only existence: it does not act; it seldom has weight; it is often vague. The following haiku, for example, illustrates the lengths to which one can carry vagueness through use of forms of the verb “to be”:

now & now & now . . .
not then it was (or will be),
but while the moon shines.

—Warren F. O'Rourke
(AH, II, 1: 48)

Ignoring the near meaninglessness of the cliché, “while the moon shines”, one might argue that in this piece the author attempts to capture the instantaneousness of a certain phenomenon. But what phenomenon? We have no idea;—and “it was (or will be)” offer no aid.

Mere being is rarely interesting and seldom informative in haiku. Consider

There is a car parked down
in the bushes with two heads in it.
Spring is there . . .

—Ahmad Azarmi
(AH, I, 1: 10)

In this eighteen-syllable variant, the author wastes four syllables, two at the beginning and two at the end, without really telling us anything. The same is true of such a "to be" pattern as that used in

Black against silver—
a snowy winter twilight
though April is here.

—Judson Crews
(AH, II, 2: 28)

Of course "April is here" and "Spring is there." Where else would they be, if not in the poem? A form as short as haiku affords little room to set the

stage, and the author can ill afford to waste space in cliché statement of setting. Consider

Though autumn is here
chrysanthemums and new moon
are both one to me.

—David M. Keller
(AH, II, 1: 39)

True, an author must hint to the reader what he is to see and what mood he is to evoke, but he wastes valuable room when he indulges in needless preliminaries and useless statements of "being"—statements which, in themselves, convey no meaning, carry no weight.

It is important to remember, however, that not all instances of forms of the verb "to be" are needless or useless. It is possible that the mood of a haiku can be colored by their presence

or absence. Consider two haiku by John S. Haney:

Wild geese are flying
an e e cummings structure
in the morning sky.
(AH, III, 1: 33)

Seagulls invisible—
their voices uttering
the mood of the mist.
(AH, III, 1: 11)

Of the "to be" haiku cited thus far, Haney's first is the only one which demonstrates any real sense of action. It is true that the chief verb form is not the auxiliary, "are", but the participle, "flying." However, had Haney omitted "are", the action would have been frozen in photograph fashion. The auxiliary "are" gives us a sense of immediate and continuing action. It is not a question of having added "are" in

order to fill out a five-syllable line (as is the case in many haiku); it is a question of carefully chosen verb form, for in the second haiku, a 6-6-5 variant, Haney omits the auxiliary. Had he said "their voices are uttering", he would have given the picture an animation quite out of keeping with the mood of the haiku.

It should be apparent that "to be" is one of the most dangerous verbs available to the haiku poet. Dangerous, because statements which utilize its forms are often cliché, vague, weightless. Rarely can it be used to advantage in any of its forms. Rarely does it seem the inevitable choice, as it does so seem in the following haiku:

For the circus clown
summer is the long season
of his painted smile.
—Adele Watson Wirtz
(AH, III, 1:12)

32, 33 by Magdalene M. Douglas

32—

Scratching in leaf mold,
the mushroom hunter insists
they grew as he passed.

33—

Snowflakes and snowbirds . . .
the oak's arthritic fingers
lattice the cold moon.

Early bird robin
in dewy grass, cocks an eye,
tugs . . . the sun comes up.

—Burnham Eaton

Summer dusk watches
through a white cat's yellow eyes
and the white daisy.

—Lee Eldredge

36, 37 by M. Virginia Eustace

36—

Lifting and dipping:
gulls' wings, tying together
gray sky, gray water.

Dropped from frost-black stems,
raked with the rubbish . . . asters . . .
still stubbornly blue.

—Helen A. Evans

37—

House into jackstraws—
an old woman with a cane
hooks one for her fire.

In ruined Uxmal,
custodian iguanas
frown on turistas.

—William J. Feeney

40 - 42 by Susan Forthman

40—

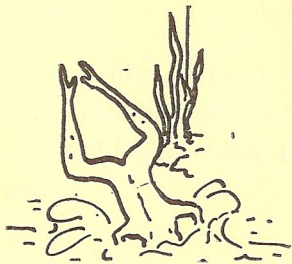
The obstetrician
buys himself a little green
fertility god.

42—

Buying day-old bread,
skim milk and marked-down
produce—
I too am a snob.

41—

Is it fully spring?
Like a heap of yellow snow,
that forsythia!



43 - 45 by Ga - Go

43—

Spring casts her shadow—
mauve over distant birch woods;
on hedges, faintly green.

44—

Restless swifts darting—
serene, the tall magnolia
blooms over tiled roofs.

45—

At the headland,
ring plovers over the surf
in their swift spring dance.

Muezzin of the dawn,
the song sparrow lifts his throat;
dark the valley lies.

—Kathryn Hall

Winter dominates
until the callow sparrow
shakes the pine branch green.

—Susanne Held

The first day of spring . . .
with voices sweet as thrushes,
the toads are singing.

—Evelyn Tooley Hunt

Shadow of the hawk
casts a river of stillness
over small grass-dwellers.

—Aileen R. Jaffa

These gentle wind bells
shoulder aside the thunder
of rumbling traffic.

—Foster Jewell

Did cormorants

stand watch for all the waves
that cut these rocks?

—Robert N. Johnson

Has the North Pole slipped?

The snow has already been
falling forever.

—Laura Jane Keister

53 - 55 by Walter H. Kerr

53—

Sunlight whipped by wind
leaps from lake water, catching
my downcast eyes.

54—

Through the tree's shade
goes—like a narrow ghost—
the shadow of a bird.

55—

Vines, busy with grapes,
squeeze, from a ferment of sun,
those drunken, winged shapes.

Ripe tobacco field:

a boy walks amid the leaves,
smoking a cob pipe.

—Eleanor Randolph Kevan

57 - 61 by Anne Landauer

57—

With spit and a rub
my small daughter squeaks her way
through the alphabet.

58—

All these little Pans
piping on their recorders
in our moon-mad age.

59—

Charcoal black on white:
two ungainly crows courting
on spring-softened snow.



60—

In sudden silence,
children at crossroads line up
to board the school bus.

61—

A click in the dark . . .
a **tick** . . . then **tack** . . . in the grill:
the cold comes early.

BOOKS RECEIVED

DARK EARTH. Joyce W. Webb.
(Wells Printing Co.: Madison, Wis.,
1965, \$1.00).

This book of poems includes 57 haiku grouped under seasonal and topical titles. Mrs. Webb displays a good grasp of technical principles, yet her haiku are uneven in realization. Some are effectively spontaneous, others are too mechanical and contrived (but this is something which could be said of any haiku collection). Among the more successful haiku are those in "Westbound", a haibun-esque group related to a journey from Chicago to San

Francisco. The titles of the individual haiku serve as a prose commentary on the subject under consideration, as well as markers which note her progress across country. In "Westbound", Mrs. Webb has effectively maintained both the sequential relationship and the individuality of the haiku, always a major problem in experiments with haiku sequences. DARK EARTH is available through the author, Mrs. Joyce W. Webb, 53 South Midvale Blvd., Madison, Wis., 53705, at \$1.00.

Reviewed by Gustave Keyser

The first white glimmer
of dawn is not a secret
for sparrows to keep.

—Lloyd Frank Merrell

63, 64 by Harvey L. Moody

63—

Day has begun now.

The butcher on the corner
has swept his sidewalk.

64—

The aging woman

leaves the vineyard at day's end
and turns toward shadows.

65, 66 by Barbara O. Moraw

65—

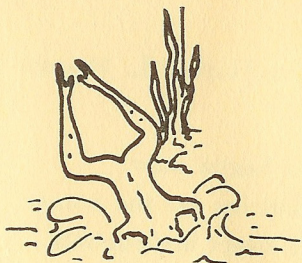
Red-winged blackbird swings,
bobbing in the wind, cheers for—
farmer's roadside weeds!

66—

Dripping faces pause
while meadow larks thrill builders
with boat-launching theme!

Then we made bean-bags
and threw them down from the roof
on their dreaming heads.

—Ethel Polline



68, 69 by Phyllis Mahn Potter

68—

In shivery notes
the winter cardinal sings
his morning matins.

69—

Morning-glories try
to squeeze the last drops of water
from my old pump.

70 - 77 by Marjory Bates Pratt

70—

Spider's web at dawn
brushes my face—I'm earliest
through the woodland path.

72—

He lies in the grass
and feels the kite above him
tugging at the string.

71—

The century plant
has bloomed—and who will watch it
when it blooms again?

73—

Sweet smoke from bonfires
drifts along the village street.
A last apple falls.

74—

One extra moment
I held the bird, felt its warmth,
then opened my hands.

75—

Not a breath of air—
only a water bug mars
the pine's reflection.

76—

The flowering cherry
has its own charm but obscures
my view of the hills.

77—

Athene's small owl
is there, perched on a column
in ruined Ephesus.

78, 79 by Anne Rutherford

78—

Between high-rises
closing in on every side
one gold-tipped mountain.

80 - 86 by Charles Shaw

80—

A cloud of seagulls
tears the air to smithereens,
screeching their hunger.

79—

Small mud-covered shoes
tossed behind the kitchen stove—
winter melts quickly.

81—

The bones of winter
rattle through December's chill.
The Old Year passes.

82—

On a sunlit floor
shadows of leafy branches
make moving pictures.

83—

I flip a flat stone
across a small pond—
and only one bounce!

84—

With one hefty gulp
the late evening fog swallows
the little village.

85—

Into the river
the willows dip green fingers.
Day dissolves in dusk.

36—

A cloud breaks in two
and suddenly two islands
float across the blue.



Geese from gun-metal sea
wedge open the rose dawn,
creating new day.

—Joy Shieman

The fisher-boy dreamed
he would catch a whale, but smiled
pulling in sunfish.

—Dorothy Cameron Smith

89 - 91 by O M B Southard

89—

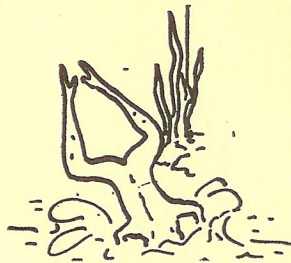
In the windy grove
whack! whack! the battling bamboos
are at it again!

90—

The water deepens—
following the dark canoe
a pair of muskrats.

91—

Stranded jellyfish;
here, running along the beach,
come the sandpipers.



92 - 94 by Georgian Tashjian

92—

This lady-slipper—
of course the town cobbler found
it—
the first one of spring.

94—

Blowing on a stem
he laughs as his breath—and
dreams—
reach a far meadow.

93—

The gulls climb and glide
on the mounting updraught
of my admiration.

Such persistence!
All night the ping of water
dripping in the sink.

—Donald J. Tickner

96 - 99 by Tohko

96—

In that empty house,
with broken windows rattling,
a door slams and slams.

97—

Leaves moil in the yard,
reveal an eyeless doll's head . . .
slowly conceal it.

98—

Wind-mad newspaper,
beating bars of fence pickets,
makes an insane sound.

99—

You can see through it:
that shape of a cicada,
haunting the bare tree.

CLICHES IN HAIKU

By Ted-Larry Pebworth

One of the major stumbling blocks to originality and excitement in haiku is the cliché, which, for purposes of this essay, we can divide into cliché statement and stock image.

It is true that haiku are often matter-of-fact;—on the surface of things, almost “flat” in their presentation. At first appearance, such seems to be the case with the following piece:

Lone red-winged blackbird
riding a reed in high tide—
billowing clouds.
—Nicholas A. Virgilio
(AH, III, 1: 48)

The flatness of the pictographic pre-

sentation is not, in itself, bad; but the expression, “billowing clouds”, is a cliché statement, and its juxtaposition with a “Lone” bird (at that, a “red-winged blackbird”) is a stock image—a standard approach with many haiku writers who want to force a graphic contrast. Such is not the case with

The gathering clouds—
now gone . . . gone are the stars
that fell into the sea.
—John S. Haney
(AH, I, 2: 23)

The first line, “The gathering clouds”, is a conventional enough expression,

but it escapes cliché, possibly because the emphasis is not upon the clouds, but upon the stars which have slowly disappeared. To argue that in one experience the clouds billow and that in the other they gather is beside the point: there is simply no excitement in the very active billow; there is excitement in the slow moving gather. There is no excitement in the forced juxtaposition of objects in the first; there is excitement in the natural grouping of the second.

Two more haiku should illustrate the handling of a conventional subject, clouds, in a unique, exciting manner:

Black cloud overhead
grows beyond the farthest blue,
then spills its burden.

—Eve Smith
(AH, I, 1: 46)

On the lake the breeze
dies away; once more the hills
rest upon the clouds.
—O M B Southard
(AH, I, 1: 52)

These two haiku vary in merit, but neither relies upon cliché statement or stock image for its effect.

It should be apparent that **conventional subject** is not taboo in haiku. The danger lies in **cliché statement** and **stock treatment** of the image. Consider

Come, my beloved,
let us watch the silver moon
bathe the black mountain.
—Robert C. Steensma
(AH, I, 1: 53)

Here we have a love poem—and stock treatment at that; lovers observe the

forced contrast of silver moon and black mountain. In that the piece sounds like the introduction to a love song in an operetta, it is trite and theatrical. Although it is, perhaps, more natural, a similar trite theatricality is demonstrated by

In the night—
mating of the coyote
and the silver moon.
—Melvin Buffington
(AH, I, 2: 15)

True, one finds it difficult to envision the coyote howling at anything other than a silver moon; yet, when else does he howl but "In the night"? Situation and silver moon render the piece trite and theatrical;—stock treatment, neither original nor exciting. And as poetry, haiku must be an original and exciting use of language.

By original, I do not mean that a

haiku, to be good, must say something never before said; on the contrary, it may say something that has been said often before, but it must say it in an original way. By exciting, I do not mean that a haiku must stir the reader as violently as would a chorus of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." A haiku may very well be quiet. But it must excite the reader—even in a quiet way—enough so that its experience becomes a part of him and is not sloughed off as soon as he reads the next one.

To illustrate that a conventional subject, moon, can be treated in an exciting and original manner, let us consider.

In the mud puddle
disfiguring my back yard
lives a small, shy moon.
—Tohko
(AH, I, 2: 41)

The "shy" moon constitutes a delicate use of language, but certainly not a trite use. Consider that the event must take place at night, though night is not mentioned; consider too that the reflection is probably silver, though silver is not mentioned. Although the

moon is a conventional subject for haiku, and although moon and mud puddle are conventional objects in haiku, they are expressed neither in cliché statement nor in stock image. The language of the haiku is original and exciting; it is poetry.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: Some correspondents have asked why the haiku published in the same and in subsequent issues of AMERICAN HAIKU do not always reflect the theories advanced in the articles which are printed in a given issue of the magazine. Three poetry editors vote on all haiku published in each issue. With each issue, two of the editors are new to our editorial board—this to assure continuity, on the one hand, and to insure that no one group unduly restrict the development of an American haiku, on the other. The editors of one issue may or may not agree with one another or with the editors of another issue, as to what constitutes the best approach to haiku. They may or may not agree with the various theories advanced in the articles. In choosing haiku, they work for a consensus, through majority vote. Furthermore, all editors of AMERICAN HAIKU are concerned with the problem of producing a magazine. They must select what they honestly believe to be the best of what they receive. In doing so, they are sometimes required to select that which they as critics, editors, and poets would reject in their own work.—J. Bull

Lost sleep is not missed . . .
kittens want to play at dawn,
laughter shakes my bed.

—Saxon White Uberuaga

In the autumn fields . . .
learning to be ignorant:
becoming a child.

—Nicholas A. Virgilio

102 - 112 by Nicholas A. Virgilio

102—

The yellow moon . . .
stashed in the rippling river:
stacking doubloons.

103—

In the river—
the autumn moon buries its rhyme
beneath a cloud.

104—

Beside the pagoda,
a pine matches eave for eave:
the crescent moon.

105—

A vineyard . . .
lacy leaves sifting sunlight:
a tiny freckled face.

106—

An old schooner aground . . .
timbers creak on a swell:
a gull's cry.

107—

A buzzing horsefly . . .
here . . . there—into a cicada shell:
the autumn wind.

109—

A potbellied monk . . .
shouldering the last melon:
the autumn moon.

111—

The farmhouse cellar . . .
cobwebs sifting autumn mist:
the smell of apples.

108—

The old shed's broken window . . .
a cobweb bellies in the breeze:
the misty moon.

110—

Autumn twilight:
the scarecrow stands by the boy
left out of the game.

112—

After the rain,
a mantis on the clothesline . . .
hanging a cloud out to dry.

The fat old poet
speaks beauty-laden love-words.
I shut my eyes tight.

—Mira Watha Walilko

114 - 116 by Joyce W. Webb

114—

The raging blizzard
makes an alien country
of our home town streets.

115—

Com-poz and No-doz
are advertised for quick sale
at the same counter.

116—

The maple murmurs
ritual over the graves
of Brother Masons.

Inside the screened porch,
our cat tenses to challenge—
a mockingbird jeers.

—Lourine White

118 - 122 by Paul O. Williams

118—

Like loud fishermen
the redwings in the cattails
wind their ratchet wheels.

119—

House or mandolin?
My lamp within the sound box,
June bugs strum the screens.

120—

Walking on the track
a bent woman bears a world
shaped like a coal sack.

121—

The hummingbird stands
still in the air, cocks his head,
looking for his wings.

122—

The loggers have gone.
Now, among the high grasses,
locusts saw down stumps.



123, 124 by Adele Wirtz

123—

Swan boats in Boston,
summer morning, girl of six,
coin gripped in small fist.

125, 126 by Virginia Brady Young

125—

So many thousands
of snowfalls. Where I live, it is
the way of things.

124—

The calendar says
September begins autumn,
but cicadas drone.

126—

My neighbor's house
half painted, and groups of people
coming to his door.

INSIGHT AND AWARENESS IN SENRYU AND HAIKU

By Thomas Johnston

Because form is no help in distinguishing between haiku and senryu, we must turn for our answer to what Clement Hoyt has called the "internal differences" (AH, I, 2: 2). In maintaining that haiku is intuitive and that senryu is intellectual (3), Hoyt is correct, I believe. But I do not believe that intuition or intellection are so much a matter of subject matter as they are of method. Specifically, I believe that the chief difference between the two forms of poetry lies in the area of internal tension—resolved, and therefore intellectual, in senryu; unresolved, and therefore intuitive, in haiku.

But before demonstrating this essential difference, it will be helpful to dis-

cuss **tension** as a basic quality of Western poetry.

From times as early as the epic poet Homer, the structure of poetry has been a structure built upon **tension**. In the ODYSSEY, BOWWOLF, EL CID, and other epic poems, the tension is between antagonist and protagonist, building plot or episodes of increasing importance. In narrative poetry the tension usually takes its shape in conflict, and it is nearly always resolved, finally. Tension is less obvious in other forms of poetry, but it is nevertheless essential. The very form of the sonnet, Italian or English, implies the tension implicit in question and answer, problem and solution. Often in lyrics, such

as Wordsworth's "Solitary Reaper" and Bryant's "To a Waterfowl," the tension of the poem is between confrontation of experience and consequence of experience. The elegy is a poem of lamentation and praise, and in it those two aspects play in tension, one against the other, until there is a resolution with praise overcoming lamentation, as in Milton's LYCIDAS. No less is the ode built upon tension; consider the struggle between life and death in Shelley's piece on the west wind. Western poetry is built upon tension, which is usually resolved.

Now let us examine how tension exists and works in senryu and haiku.

Haiku and senryu are constructs of language, and as such the words in each are symbols which show relationships among things. In a senryu, the relationship of words builds a tension among the objects of the poem—a re-

lationship that is readily defined and resolved, either through wit, or humor, or some other intellectual process. Consider the following poem:

The boy by the gate
is waiting for me. The tulips
are early this year.

—Juliet M. Baran
(AH, I, 1: 10)

The seasonal reference in a haiku is usually one of the elements in the poem's unresolved tension. In Baran's poem, that is not the case. Rather, the early budding tulips of Spring help us to understand **why** the boy is waiting. This is obviously a love poem, a poem about an interpersonal, social relationship. It is senryu. The sudden recognition of meaning, arrived at through the working of the mind (often at a subconscious level), is usually called in-

sight, and it gives brief pleasure. Because senryu deal with interpersonal, social relationships that are already known to the reader, in the same or similar context, the mind recognizes and resolves the tension.

Haiku, on the other hand, is immensely different. In haiku, as in senryu and, as we have seen, in other poetry, the objects in the poem are represented in tension. But the relationships established in haiku are unlike those established in senryu, inasmuch as the tension among the objects of the poem is not easily resolved, if it is ever resolved. Consider the following poem:

Bases full, one out,
tying run is at the plate.
My son eats popcorn.
—William J. Feeney
(AH, II, 2: 35)

Dealing with an interpersonal, social relationship as it does, it appears to be senryu; nevertheless, it is haiku. The tension in the poem is among the father, the son, the baseball game, and the son's eating popcorn. These elements in the poem are in unresolved tension. They are related, but how? It is possible, of course, for the reader to rewrite the poem and explain how its elements are related, but he is then dealing with a different poem. Without rewriting the poem, we cannot know if the son is eating popcorn with disinterested lassitude, with studied contemplation of the game, or with a frenzied, vicarious participation in the game. As the tensions are unresolved, the poem is haiku.

It should be apparent that haiku is unlike senryu, in that it does not communicate a meaning; rather, it creates an awareness. We do not read a haiku

and suddenly understand it—if we do, it is not a haiku. This is partly because haiku does not so much define a relationship among things as it makes us aware that such a relationship (very often a unique relationship) exists. The tension in haiku is not resolved. The aim of haiku is not communication of the same kind as found in senryu and Western poetry. The aim of haiku is to bring into our ken an awareness, previously not sensed by us, of relationships among things.

And the kinds of awareness haiku creates are many. Consider this well-known haiku:

Searching on the wind,
the hawk's cry
is the shape of its beak.
—J. W. Hackett
(AH, I, 1: 6)

The principal tension is between the **shape** of the hawk's beak and the hawk's cry, or **sound**. This haiku brings into our ken an awareness of a relationship between shape and sound. Clearly, shape is not sound, but what is their relationship? The tension of the haiku is not resolved.

In the following haiku, the tension derives from setting—that is, from the bridge, the positions of the people (and possibly, reflections), and their movement:

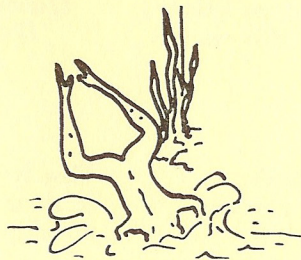
Down from the bridge rail,
floating from under the bridge,
strangers exchange stares.
—Tohko
(AH, I, 2: 40)

This haiku shows how a unique **encounter** is altered by **setting**. The relationship between encounter and setting

is not defined. The poem makes us aware of a relationship, but does not tell us exactly what the relationship is. We do not know if the situation evokes surprise, delight, or what. The tension in the poem is not resolved.

In conclusion, the structure of haiku poetry, like the structure of senryu and most Western poetry, is built upon tension. But unlike senryu and most Western poetry, the tension in haiku poetry

is not resolved. Senryu, through resolution of tension, defines relationships among things. Haiku, by defying resolution of tension, creates an awareness of relationships among things. Senryu communicates meaning through ideas; haiku communicates an awareness of meaning. Haiku does not communicate the meaning itself. In this context, senryu is poetry of intelligence, haiku poetry of being; senryu is poetry of insight, haiku poetry of awareness.



A BOOKSHELF FOR THE HAIKU POET AND READER

AMERICAN HAIKU. Box 73, Platteville, Wis., 53818.

Vol. I, No. 1 (1963) and Vol. I, No. 2 (1963); Vol. II, No. 1 (1964) and Vol. II, No. 2 (1964); Vol. III, No. 1 (1965) and Vol. III, No. 2 (1965). Price per single copy of each No.: U. S. and Canada, \$1.50; Foreign, \$2.00. Make check or M. O. payable to AMERICAN HAIKU.

Ankenbrand, Frank, Jr. PLUM BLOSSOM SCROLLS. Windward Press: Audubon, N. J., 1962 (\$2.65).

Blyth, R. H. HAIKU. 4 vols. Hokuseido Press: Tokyo, 1949-1952. (\$4.75 per vol.)

Blyth, R. H. HISTORY OF HAIKU. 2 vols. Hokuseido Press: Tokyo, 1963-1964 (\$6.00 per vol.).

Blyth, R. H. SENRYU: JAPANESE SATIRICAL VERSE. Hokuseido Press: Tokyo, 1960 (Out of print).

Brandt, Harry A. THE JAPANESE-AMERICAN HAIKU TOURNA-MENTS. Vantage Press: New York, 1960 (\$2.50).

Bryan, Sam. SPINDRIFT. Wells Printing Co.: Madison, Wis., 1964. (Available through Sam Bryan, 2230 Keyes Ave., Madison, Wis., at \$1.00).

Hackett, J. W. HAIKU POETRY.
Hokuseido Press: Tokyo, 1964
(\$1.25).

Hammarskjold, Dag. MARKINGS.
Tr. by Leif Sjoberg and W. H.
Auden. Knoph: New York, 1964
(\$4.95).

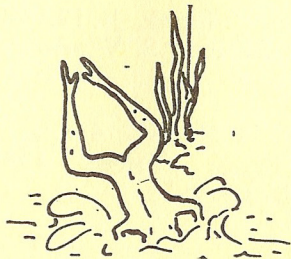
Henderson, Harold G. AN INTRO-
DUCTION TO HAIKU. Double-
day: Garden City, N. Y., 1958
(\$1.45).

Ichikawa, Sanki, ed. HAIKAI AND
HAIKU. Nippon Gakujutsu Shin-
kokai (Japan Society for the Pro-
motion of Science): Tokyo, 1958
(\$5.00).

Issa. THE YEAR OF MY LIFE. Tr.
by Nobuyuki Yuasa. University of
California Press: Berkeley, 1960
(\$1.25).

Webb, Joyce W. DARK EARTH.
Wells Printing Co.: Madison, Wis.,
1965. (Available through Joyce
Webb, 53 S. Midvale Blvd., Madi-
son, Wis., at \$1.00).

Yasuda, Kenneth. THE JAPANESE
HAIKU: ITS ESSENTIAL NA-
TURE, HISTORY, AND POSSI-
BILITIES IN ENGLISH, WITH SE-
LECTED EXAMPLES. Charles E.
Tuttle Co.: Rutland, Vermont,
1956 (\$5.00).



AMERICAN HAIKU

- - - Invites Manuscripts

Manuscripts to be considered for publication and awards in AMERICAN HAIKU may be accepted from individual subscribers only; they must be original and previously unpublished. Haiku should be typed one to a page and accompanied by stamped, self-addressed return envelope. AMERICAN HAIKU makes **monthly** subscriber-haiku awards: one \$10 award each month of the year, for the best single haiku submitted during that month.

AMERICAN HAIKU
Box 73
Platteville, Wisconsin
53818

SUBSCRIPTIONS:—
\$3.00 Yearly—U. S. and Canada
\$4.00 Yearly—Foreign

American Haiku

3.2, 1965

PDF edition by
Randy & Shirley Brooks

Copyright © 2018 Gayle Bull



The Foundry Books
105 Commerce St.
Mineral Point, WI 53565

info@foundrybooks.com

Brooks Books
6 Madera Court
Taylorville, IL 62568

www.brooksbookshaiku.com
brooksbooks@gmail.com