

ECCLECTIC SELECTION

300 years of Japanese poetry

三百年間の日本語詩

by Gregor Wilson



Japanese poems
in English and Scots,
accompanied by the original text.

Digital edition pre-publishing draft, 07/03/16.

書齋

与謝野晶子

唯だ一事の知りたさに
彼れを読み、其れを読み、
われ知らず夜を更かし、
取り散らす数数の書の
座を繞る古き巻。
客人よ、これを見たまへ、
秋の野の臥す猪の床の
萩の花とも。

Study/Reading Room
— Yosano Akiko



Searching for only one thing,
reading this, reading that,
up late unawares,
many scattered old volumes
surrounding my seat.
O guest, behold,
the bed of a boar in an
Autumn field,
as the hagi flowers.

Airtand oot ane thing,
readin this ane, readin yon,
unkenning o the passing nicht.
Aw they skailed auld bukes
aw roon ma chair.
Oh, my guest, tak tent o this –
like the hagi flooers aroon the
bed o a sleipand boar
in a hint-hairst haugh.

小林一茶
うまさうな雪がふうはりふうはりと



Guid enow til eat
snaw,
yird-drift, smore drift.

— Kobayashi Issa

林と思想

宮沢賢治

そら ね ごらん
むかふに霧にぬれてゐる
蕈^{きのこ}のかたちのちひさな林があるだらう
あすこのどこへ
わたしのかんがへが
ずるぶんはやく流れて行つて
みんな
溶け込んでゐるのだよ
こゝいらはふきの花でいつばいだ

Grove and Thoughts
— Miyazawa Kenji

There, see, behold.
Across from here, damp with mist,
is a small mushroom-shaped grove.
To that place
My thoughts
quickly flow,
all,
melting together.
Here, there are many fuki flowers.

六^むもと七^なもと立つ柳、
 冬^{ふゆ}は見えしか、一^{いち}列^{りゅう}の
 廃^{はい}墟^{きょ}に遺^{のこ}る柱^{ちゅう}廊^{らう}と。
 春^{はる}の光^{ひかり}に立つ柳、
 今日^{けふ}こそ見^みゆれ、美^{うつく}くしく、
 これは翡^ひ翠^{すい}の殿^{との}づくり。

Willow
 — Yosano Akiko

Six, seven willow trees
 in Winter, appear
 a line of columns, left from a ruin.
 Standing in the light of spring,
 should you look today – beautifully,
 they form a palace of jade.



Sax, seeven sauch trees
 in Winter, kythe
 as a mairch o columns amang forfaren biggins.
 Staundand in the licht o Voar
 and ye luke the day,
 they seem a bonny palas o jade-stanes.

秋風^{あきふう}に歩いて逃^はげる
 蛍^{ほたる}かな



In the autumn wind,
 walking their escape,
 fireflies.

In the back-hairst wind
 linkin tae win free
 lunt-flees.

— Kobayashi Issa

Wolf
— Kitahara
Hakushū

Wildness,
unresting.
A large moon,
full, bright.

How clear
Is the indigo night.
How splendid are
the depths of the mountains.

The grass and trees,
pushed over
by the violent,
tearing winds.

Restless,
also, sleepless,
harsh, are
the many gods.

Uncertain, winding,
the mountain river's
rapids
continue to roar.

真神、狼。
大口の
身は白し、
雪かとも
地に喚べば。
耳は裂け、
月にのみ、
直向ふ

Straight towards
the moon,
split to the ears,
howling.

With a body
as white as snow,
a great-mouthed
true god – wolf.

㊦

Royetnes,
unleining.
A heavy mune,
fu and bricht.

How cleir
is yon indit nicht?
How braw are yon
dark dens o the high bens?

荒魂
まどろまず。
大き月
満ちて、照りぬ。
何を澄む
夜の蒼ぞ。
とりよろふ
山の真洞。

草も木も
押し靡け、
疾く、野分
吹きすさむを。
安からず、
また、寝ねず、
千速振る
神ことごと。
たづたづし、
隈ふかし、
山河の
瀬に鳴りつつ。

The bent an the treis
hurled ower
by the camsteerie,
gurlin winds.

Unleining,
An aw, unsleepin,
dour, are
the mony gods.

Switherin, whimplin,
the ben's caud-watter
stricts
keep up their clatterin.

北原白秋

Keen, straucht-eened
till the mune
cleft till the lugs
yowtin.

Wi a corse
as white as the snaw,
a muckle-moued
leal god – wolf.

狼

緋目高

与謝野晶子

鉢のなかの
活いそ澣つな緋目高よ、
赤く焼けた釘で
なぜ、そんなに無駄に
水に孔あなを開あけるのか。
気の毒な先覚者よ、
革命は水の上に無い。

海雀

北原白秋

海雀うみすずめ、海雀うみすずめ、
銀の点てんく、海雀、
波なみゆりくればゆりあげて、
波なみひきゆけばかげ失うする、
海雀、海雀、
銀の点てんく、海雀。

Umisuzume

— Kitahara Hakushū

Umisuzume, umisuzume,
specks of silver, umisuzume,
as waves rise, they are lifted,
as waves fall, vanishing silhouettes,
umisuzume, umisuzume,
specks of silver, umisuzume.



Sea speugie, sea speugie,
O smitch o siller, sea speugie.
As jaws heize up, they heize up,
As the jaws pu oot, blinkin scarras.
sea speugie, sea speugie,
O smitch o siller, sea speugie..

Himedaka

— Yosano Akiko



Within a bowl,
Darting himedaka,
why, so futilely,
Like red-hot nails,
do you carve tunnels
through the water?
O, pitiful pioneer,
there is no revolution
above the surface.

Intill a bowl,
skeetling himedaka,
whyfore dae ye, knotles lyke,
as a wee het airn gleed,
lingle sworls
through the watter?
Ach, puir pioneer
there's nae revolution
abooun the watter-line.

風ふく夜なかに
 夜まはりの拍子木の音、
 唯だ二片の木なれど、
 檜の木の堅くして、
 年経つつ、
 手ずれ、膏じみ、
 心から重たく、
 二つ触れては澄み入り、
 嚙喰たる拍子木の音、
 如何に夜まはりの心も
 みづから打ち
 みづから聴きて楽しからん。

拍子木

与謝野晶子

Hyōshigi
 — Yosano Akiko

On nights when the wind blows
 the sound of the night-watchman's clackers,
 though only two shards of wood,
 the hardness of evergreen oak,
 hand-worn and grease-stained
 through the years' passing,
 heavily, from within,
 at their meeting, the clear,
 resounding sound of clackers,
 and how the night-watchman's heart
 itself beats,
 itself is glad to listen.

They nichts when the wind blows
 the stoun o the keepar's ricketies,
 aa but it is twa skelfs o wude,
 the teuch-heirtit aye-green aik,
 palm-weirit an creash-smaddit
 though aa the turn o the yearis,
 hevilie, frae inby,
 at their gaitherin, the cleire,
 stounand sound of the rickities,
 and how the night-keepar's ain heirt
 itsel stouns,
 itsel is blythe tae tak tent.

名月をとつてくれろと泣く子かな
 小林一茶

Bring me
 the harvest moon,
 cries the child.

Fesh til me
 the hairst mune
 greets the bairn.

— Kobayashi Issa

Project Goal

My original commitment was to publish a book of Japanese poetry translations, completing almost every step of the publication process myself, from selecting the works, translating them from – at times, quite archaic – Japanese, typesetting and then printing a limited run of hand-bound, hand-printed books using photopolymer plates. Kaye McApline offered to provide a Scots translation to build upon the original aim, and I further expanded the scope when I found that there are no suitable freely-available Japanese typefaces, making two original typefaces. One of these typefaces, Yue Mincho Kana, is a significant piece of work that I will publish separately.

At every step, my aim has been to use source material, tools and techniques freely available to everyone, including software and fonts.

Along the Way

I created a long list of source poems by reading many online texts at Aozora Bunko (the Japanese equivalent to Project Gutenberg), as well as paper copies provided to me to by Yazaki Haruka. Following her suggestions, I began to translate some of this list, with her help and later the help of Chiba Sakie. I created detailed grammatical notes on each Japanese poem I had translated in order to provide Kaye with context for the Scots translation.

I began work on a kana (Japanese Syllabary) typeface in which to set the Japanese text, as there are almost no free Japanese typefaces suitable for a multi-lingual literary layout. I scanned rough paper sketches of the glyphs and then edited them using The Gimp image editor, then refined each kana character in FontForge to create an OpenType font file useable on any computer.

I scanned rough paper sketches of the glyphs and then edited them using The Gimp image editor, then refined each kana character in FontForge to create an OpenType font file useable on any computer.

End Result, and Future

During this time, I learned more about the photopolymer printing process and discovered that, for technical reasons, no available kanji (Chinese characters as used in Japanese) typeface would suit the publication. Using the free font Hanazono Mincho as a base, I designed over 180 kanji glyphs to typeset the poems.

You are reading the end result – a digital version of the booklet.

Glossary

Fuki	Japanese butterbur.
Himedaka	Japanese rice fish.
Hyōshigi	Japanese equivalent of castinets.
Umisuzume	Japanese murrelet.

References

Excluding the haiku, original poem texts are from from Aozora Bunko.
<http://www.aozora.gr.jp/>

Yosano Akiko — 1878 – 1942
<http://www.aozora.gr.jp/cards/000885/card2557.html>

Kitahara Hakushū — 1885 – 1942
<http://www.aozora.gr.jp/cards/000106/card49618.html>
<http://www.aozora.gr.jp/cards/000106/card52353.html>

Miyazawa Kenji — 1896 – 1933
<http://www.aozora.gr.jp/cards/000081/card1058.html>

Kobayashi Issa — 1763 – 1827
<http://www.h3.dion.ne.jp/~urutora/issa.htm>

English translations by Gregor Wilson.
Scots translations by Kaye McAlpine.

Typefaces used.

Latin text – Linden Hill
M+ fonts

Japanese – Yue Mincho Kana
Hanamoyou Mincho
M+ fonts.

This draft is version 01.
2016 03 07



Gregor Wilson
italicstripe@yahoo.co.uk



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL