

ECCLECTIC SELECTIONS

300 years of Japanese poetry

三百年間の日本語詩



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

Digital edition pre-publishing draft.

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

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.

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.

小林一茶
うまさうな雪がふうはりふうはりと

㊦

Good enough to eat,
snow,
a-drift, a -drift.

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.

六もと七もと立つ柳、
 冬は見えしか、一列の
 廃墟に遺る柱廊と。
 春の光に立つ柳、
 今日こそ見ゆれ、美しく、
 これは翡翠の殿づくり。

柳

与謝野晶子

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 小林一茶
 に歩いて逃げる螢かな

㊦

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
活くわつな緋目高よ、
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、
銀の点てん、海雀、
波なみひきゆけばゆりあげて、
波なみひきゆけばかげ失うする、
海雀、海雀、
銀の点てん、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
aboon 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、
 嚙曉たる拍子木の音、
 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 kashi/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 nights 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.

小林一茶

名月をとつてくれろと泣く子かな

㊦

Bring me
 the harvest moon,
 cries the child.

Fesh til me
 the hairst mune
 greets the bairn.

— Kobayashi Issa

Excluding haiku, original poem texts from Aozora Bunko.

Poems by Yosano Akiko,
Kitahara Hakushū,
Miyazawa Kenji,
and Kobayashi Issa.

English translations by Gregor Wilson,
with help from Yazaki Haruka
and Chiba Sakie.
Scots translations by Kaye McAlpine.

Latin text typeset in Linden Hill and M+ fonts, Japanese text in Yue Mincho Kana,
Hanamoyou Mincho and M+ fonts, using InkScape and other free software.



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Process:

Poems were selected by browsing available online texts, as well as books provided by my Japanese teacher at the time, Yazaki Haruka, who suggested a few of the poems that ended up being used. The selection was then narrowed down, and I began work on translating them into English, again with help and revision from Haruka. The selection was further narrowed with help from Chiba Sakie, my current Japanese teacher.

While selecting poems, I began work on a kana (Japanese syllabary) typeface in which to set the Japanese text, as there are few literature-suitable free Japanese typefaces. This was first roughly drafted on paper, then scanned onto computer and edited using the GNU Image Manipulation Program before being heavily refined and further modified in FontForge.

Once the poems had been selected I further refined the English translations before handing them, along with detailed explanation of the Japanese text, to Kaye McAlpine, who provided the Scots translation.

During this time, I found that, due to the restrictions of photopolymer printing, I would have to design or modify a set of kanji (Chinese Characters) to suit the production process, again due to lack of suitable existing typefaces. Using the free font Hanazono Mincho as a base, I designed over 180 kanji glyphs to typeset the poems.

Typesetting was done in Inkscape. For the Japanese text, along with my own designs, I used the M+ fonts for titles and furigana (pronunciation guides). For the English and Scots, the typeface Linden Hill, based on a design by Frederic Goudy, was used.