

# Culturing Wildness: The Ecopoetry of the Satoyama

John Rippey

School of Human Cultures, Department of Intercultural Communications, Professor

## 1. Introduction

In a satoyama, human dwellings and agricultural activity clustered along a stream running through the center of the settlement, and these components were nestled in and supported by concentric rings of increasingly unmanaged nature. The patchwork mosaic of rice paddies, vegetable fields, orchards, groves, grasslands, and coppiced woodland merged into surrounding forests and mountains, accommodating a variety of nonhuman lives, both cultivated and uncultivated. Although the traditional, sustainable satoyama became largely obsolete over the course of the twentieth century with the advent of modern, industrial agriculture, as the characteristic environment of the Japanese countryside for millennia, it has strongly influenced understandings and attitudes toward nature in Japan into the present day.

The satoyama has often served as setting in Japanese poetry. In order to explore received orientations toward nature in Japan, this research examines works across the history of Japanese poetry which adopt the natural lives and elements of the satoyama, and human interactions with these, as subject matter. Much of the poetry of the satoyama expresses intimations of commonality and attempts to realize communalism with wild nonhuman nature. The poetry manifests virtually all of the characteristics of what has recently come to be referred to, in anglophonic ecological literary criticism contexts, as ecological poetry (ecopoetry).

## 2. Ecocritical Environment

One prompt for the current research is a perceived paucity of literary and humanities-based studies in the field of satoyama studies. A central assumption in the field is that human interface with the natural world does not represent, by definition, an environmentally harmful phenomenon; research explores sustainable practice in the satoyama, past, present, and future. While often multidisciplinary, satoyama research locates predominantly in the social and natural sciences. The

foundational three-volume (thus far) series generated by The Research Center for Satoyama Studies at Ryukoku University (Maruyama and Miyaura 2007, 2009; Ushio and Suzuki), for example, has included only a small handful of articles reflecting the arts and humanities. This situation is echoed across the vernacular scholarly work and reflected in prominent international research, as well, such as the comprehensive satoyama assessment generated by the United Nations University and the Japan Satoyama Satoumi Assessment (Duraiappah, et al.). In an environmentally focused field, the lack of extant research in arts and humanities paradigms arises as a concern and limitation because, as ecocritic Karen Thornber explains, “Literature’s regular and often blatant defiance of logic, precision, and unity enables it to grapple more insistently and penetratingly than most scientific discourse and conventional environmental rhetoric with the contradictory interactions among people and ecosystems” (Japanese 207-08).

Another prompt for the current research is a perceived incompleteness in current international anglophonic ecocritical characterizations of Japanese literature. Prominent recent studies severely question the widely held belief in a Japanese “love of nature” and the status of this ecophilia as a distinguishing trait of the culture and literature. The research characterizes Japanese orientations toward the natural world, in both the culture at large and the literature, as distinguished by a fundamental ambiguity (Thornber, *Environmental; Shirane, Japan*) rather than by love. Haruo Shirane, for example, suggests that the pervasiveness of what he calls “secondary nature” (representations of nature in the arts and culture more broadly, and including the satoyama itself) have inculcated a mistaken belief in harmonious coexistence with primary nature in Japan. The representations can serve to obscure the fact that the ecological record in both ancient times – the clearing of wilderness for rice cultivation to the point that little wilderness any longer exists – and the twentieth century is not good (*Japan*, 13-16, 218-19). Thornber, similarly,

points to a significant presence in the Japanese canon from the earliest era of works which celebrate notable human reshaping of land. She observes that, regrettably and tellingly, it is only in the twentieth century that explicit concerns and engagement with anthropogenic environmental degradation become relatively common in Japanese creative writing (Japanese, 208-09). While this research helpfully identifies gaps in popular beliefs and actual behavior, the categorizations appear to overlook large, relevant portions of the literature.

This current study hopes to compensate to some small degree for imbalances in the research in the field of satoyama studies, as well as in recent ecocritical characterizations of Japanese literature. The approach adopted was to review a large number of poems from the span of Japanese literature, gather those poetic works relevant to the satoyama, and identify and evaluate broad patterns and tendencies in this subset of poetry regarding orientations toward the natural world. A small sampling of the poems considered has been included or excerpted in the text of the article, with the originals provided in romanized form in the notes section to the degree that space allowed.

### 3. The Culture of Nature

#### Morning Rain

A slight rain comes, bathed in dawn light.  
I hear it among treetop leaves before mist  
Arrives. Soon it sprinkles the soil and,  
Windblown, follows clouds away. Deepened

Colors grace thatch homes for a moment.  
Flocks and herds of things wild glisten  
Faintly. Then the scent of musk opens across  
Half a mountain – and lingers on past noon.<sup>1</sup>

(Tu Fu, 712-70)

The work of the Chinese poet Tu Fu was greatly admired by many subsequent Japanese poets including Matsuo Bashō. The satoyama is believed to have come to Japan, along with rice farming, from China. “Morning Rain” illustrates many of the characteristics of subsequent

Japanese poetry. Prominent traits include human implication in larger natural processes; foregrounding of wild – autonomous, unmanaged, and elusive – nonhuman lives, natural elements and phenomenon; and a longing and only partially fulfilled desire for even greater physical and metaphysical confluence with these natural lives and processes. These concerns are felt and communicated in the context of human settlement and agricultural occupations. External scenes implicitly stand for internal human states. The following are examples of Japanese poetry which echo and extend, reformulate and improvise on, such content and themes: *In reaped fields / where quail cry / rice stubble puts up new shoots, / rays of a crescent moon / lighting them dimly*<sup>2</sup> (Saigyō, 1118-1190); *Distant wild ducks – / when washing the hoe, / the water undulates*<sup>3</sup> (Yosa Buson, 1716-83); *Behind my hut / from the earliest days / frogs sang of the primordial*.<sup>4</sup> (Kobayashi Issa, 1763-1827);

As I rustle my way between the ditch reeds  
With the forest and field my lovers  
Modestly folded green-coloured reports  
Find their way into my pockets  
As I walk the darker sector of the woods  
My elbows and trousers are smothered  
In imprints of crescent-moon lips<sup>5</sup>

(Miyazawa Kenji, 1896-1933)

The poetry of the satoyama assumes and asserts underlying confluence between humans and the larger natural world, the existence of a greater community which incorporates both human and nonhuman. The poetry posits the potential for personal realization of this generalized, impersonal assumed commonality. Poems, implicitly or explicitly, represent pursuit of interface with a larger reality and its representative nonhuman lives: *The beginning of autumn: / sea and emerald paddy / both the same green*.<sup>6</sup> (Matsuo Bashō, 1644-94); *One step outside the gate / and I too am a traveler / in the autumn evening*<sup>7</sup> (Yosa Buson, 1716-83); *dew settling – / when will I become / grasses or a tree?*<sup>8</sup> (Kobayashi Issa, 1763-1827). The poetry is one of appreciation and aspiration, of respectful and non-invasive interface, marked by seeking more than by realizing.

While the poetry asserts a commonality and sustained and sustaining potential for confluence, the wild lives are encountered most characteristically in the distances and horizons, physical or psychological margins, borders and folds beyond the immediate arenas of human activity. The wild lives reside on parallel planes to humans, physically, temporally, or psychologically. They may cross over or through human precincts, but they do not live under human jurisdiction. The wild lives and conditions are perceptible and palpable. Yet they most often remain out of reach and attainment, defying facile and full interface with humans. Since the wild lives are encountered within the greater satoyama, the human context and cultural artefacts, along with the seeking human speaker-witness, is always present as counterfoil to the wild life and its wildness: *a katydid / chirps from the sleeves / of a scarecrow*<sup>9</sup> (Kawai Chigetsu, 1632-1706); *Midfield, / attached to nothing, / the skylark singing*.<sup>10</sup> (Matsuo Bashō, 1644-1694); *In the distant hills / A patch where sunlight touches / The withered meadows*.<sup>11</sup> (Takahama Kyoshi, 1874-1959). The wild lives in the poetry of the satoyama can be diffident and elusive. They can also be oblivious to or unmoved by human needs and concerns, even emotional ones. The wild lives do not characteristically condescend to interaction with humans, particularly in response to a request or neediness, even to concerns of the human heart: *The morning glory also / turns out / not to be my friend*<sup>12</sup> (Matsuo Bashō, 1644-1694); *Mountainous clouds / what would you know about love affairs / turning into rain*<sup>13</sup> (Yosa Buson, 1716-83).

While the wild lives do not deliberately undermine the earthly efforts of humans, they are patently uninterested and uninvolved in these practical matters. They live in the world of affairs but are not part of it: *Come, come, I say: / But the firefly / Goes on his way*.<sup>14</sup> (Uejima Onitsura, 1661-1738); *beans are stolen / from right under his legs – / the scarecrow*<sup>15</sup> (Yokoi Yayu, 1702-1783); *A whole cloud of azaleas – / a surprise / in the middle of a wheat field*<sup>16</sup> (Yosa Buson, 1716-83). The non-human lives inhabiting the poetry are admirably self-regulating and self-determining. They can also carry out their contrary and non-colluding activities in domestic settings with a carefree feeling and playfulness – which

translates to delight in the recounting and which can be infectious to the speakers of the poems: *I release fireflies / inside my mosquito net / oh joy!*<sup>17</sup> (Yosa Buson, 1716-83).

In fact, to draw a distinction between wild and domesticated lives is to pose a binary opposition which the poetry does not tend to support. For one, wildness itself is governed, possessing an inherent and palpably sensed if inscrutable reason. For another, domesticated or cultured lives can manifest a wildness and resonance in the poetry similar to those exhibited by unmanaged lives. It is not possible to draw a qualitative line between wild lives and managed or cultivated lives. Sometimes a poem takes up a cultivated life or agricultural “product” and admires its integrity and intrinsic qualities: *Biting deep within / the pungent radish: / autumn wind*<sup>18</sup> (Matsuo Bashō, 1644-94); *A purple so deep / it’s almost black – / the grapes*<sup>19</sup> (Masaoka Shiki, 1867-1902). By implication or suggestion, every life form possesses a wild integrity and cannot help doing so. The same impulses exist in relatively self-managed or autonomous lives and controlled ones, whether manifest or latent.

Wildness infuses humans and human activities, regardless of occupation, station, or circumstances, in some of the poetry of the satoyama, as well. We can find, in the poetry, equivalencies drawn between peripatetic poets and rooted agricultural work: *on a journey though the world, / tilling a small field, / back and forth*<sup>20</sup> (Matsuo Bashō, 1644-1694). Agriculture and forestry work can be implicated in larger forces and phenomenon: *When the axe strikes, / a surprising fragrance – / winter trees*.<sup>21</sup> (Yosa Buson, 1716-83). Farmwork itself can be portrayed as spiritual discipline and even religious experience:

I am the transmigrating puritan  
Working the resplendent fields after the rain  
Sniffing fresh humus mixed with the ooze  
Of pale waxy sap from severed roots  
The clouds swim and pitch, rushing their  
directions  
Each leaf of the pear tree boasts its own exquisite  
veins  
The complete landscape of tree and sky is  
contained

In the lenses of droplets on the short fruit-tree branches<sup>22</sup>

(Miyazawa Kenji, 1896-1933)

To the speakers of the poetry of the satoyama – on principle and occasionally in utterance – the level planes, simple geometry, and lighter greens of plush, trimmed rice paddies, clear and light and open to the sky, can offer the same opportunities as portals to an enfolding wildness beyond the self as do the natural contours, fractals, three-dimensions and darker greens of elevated mountain forests.

Nonetheless, it is more common for actual agricultural work in the poetry of the satoyama to be downplayed than exalted. Although a satoyama was a humanly shaped environment in close physical working interface with wild natural lives and elements, representing a physical articulation of the very metaphysical confluence sought by poetic speakers, agricultural activities are characteristically backgrounded in the poetry. While, farming, farmers, and rural-based human life are not infrequently taken up in the poetry, depictions can often feel done with arguably less intensity, depth, and poetic ingenuity than is turned to wild, nonhuman lives, and take on more of a stock quality than the wilder images do: *Winter rain: / A farmhouse piled with firewood, / A light in the window.*<sup>23</sup> (Nozawa Bonchō, c.1640-1714); *flowing “hiya-hiya” / into the paddies – / clear waters*<sup>24</sup> (Yokoi Yayu (1702-83); *Autumn hills: / Here and there / Smoke rising.*<sup>25</sup> (Katō Gyōdai, 1732-92).

Labor and laborers in the poetry of the satoyama tend to be presented from the comfortable perspective of the non-laboring observer: *Cool and fresh; / Dawn-cut grass carried / Through the gate.*<sup>26</sup> (Nozawa Bonchō, c.1640-1714); *Hikone peasants / sing of the young water-shield leaves / while harvesting them.*<sup>27</sup> (Yosa Buson, 1716-83). Poetic speakers appear irresistibly drawn to diminutive and winged wild lives encountered in the margins and at the borders of the rural setting and communal activities, identifying readily and empathetically with these lives. By contrast, human protagonists engaged in group cultivating activities in the middle of the fields attract the poets' eyes less often and capture their poetic fancy less exuberantly: *Girls planting paddy / only their*

*song / free of the mud*<sup>28</sup> (Konishi Raizan, 1654-1716). One outcome is that, in order to gain the grounded experiences and complementary perspectives on nature of residents and workers in the satoyama, we need to look to other sources than canonical poetry set in the satoyama.

In its depiction of the destructive potential of human activity, as well, the poetry of the satoyama can represent implicit and explicit cultural critique. The wild natural elements, processes, and forces depicted in the poetry of the satoyama possess autonomy, integrity and are part of the larger reality. However, the wild lives and elements are also vulnerable to harm from humans. They are susceptible to accidental or deliberate injury from humans and human activity and require consideration and considerate treatment: *The well-rope has been / captured by morning-glories – / I'll borrow water.*<sup>29</sup> (Kaga no Chiyo, 1703-1775). It is not uncommon for poetry set in rural environments to express pathos and lament for the weak and powerless, to communicate awareness of and resistance to, through expressions of regret or irony, the environmental insensitivity and the negative ecological impacts of human activities. Insensitive and callous attitudes and actions toward natural lives are portrayed as leading to a decrease in well-being of humans: *As the great old trees / are marked for felling, / the birds build their new spring nests*<sup>30</sup> (Kobayashi Issa, 1763-1827); *They've cut down the willow – / the kingfishers / don't come anymore*<sup>31</sup> (Masaoka Shiki, 1867-1902);

Dark, melancholy day.

The sun is low over the roofs of the row of houses.

The trees in the wood have been sparsely felled.

How, how to change my thoughts?

On this road I rebel against and will not travel,

The new trees have all been felled.<sup>32</sup>

(Hagiwara Sakutarō, 1886-1942)

The characteristics and patterns in the nature orientation of the Japanese poetry of the satoyama introduced thus far generally hold across centuries and eras. The satoyama, the representative environment of the Japanese countryside, has commonly been inducted as poetic setting. By contrast, the Japanese poetry of

the twentieth and twenty-first centuries recedes from the satoyama. With prominent and notable exceptions, dramatically fewer modern and contemporary Japanese poetic works take up satoyama environments and natural lives encountered there. When the satoyama is referenced in modern and contemporary poetry, it can be done in an oblique manner, juxtaposed in its absence and loss. Human culture, development accompanied by environmental degradation, seems to have overwhelmed nature. Traditional poetic forms, perhaps felt to be less equipped to deal with contemporary problems and complexity, have been abandoned for unruly forms. Poems which do reference (formerly) rural environments and natural elements can communicate regret, a sense of decentering, self-censuring, resignation and even despair: *River in summer: / The end of a red iron chain / Soaks in the water.*<sup>33</sup> (Yamaguchi Seishi, 1901-1994) ;

At Tsukuda Ferry, my daughter said  
The water's clean like the seashore we went to in  
summer"  
Not at all. Take a look.  
Near the stern of the river steamer tied there  
You can see the garbage build-up, swayed by the  
river  
It's always been that way  
(From now on, I'll speak to my heart so my  
daughter will not hear)  
The water is dark and rather stagnant beneath a  
chill and rainy sky  
Its twisting and turning like a large sewer is a sign  
the river is old<sup>34</sup>  
(Yoshimoto Takaaki, 1924-2012)

Opening the window, I can see the mountain I've  
been looking at for sixty years  
The afternoon sun is falling on the ridgeline  
As for the way to read its name  
Whether I call it Takatsunagi-yama  
Or Yōkei-zan, the mountain doesn't give a damn  
But the words themselves seem ill at ease  
That's because I know nothing about the mountain  
Never been enveloped in mists there, never bitten  
by a snake

Always just gazing at it.<sup>35</sup>

(Tanikawa Shuntarō, b.1931)

The poetry of the twentieth century is consistent with the poetry of earlier eras in its attention to and valuation of natural lives and its estimation of larger nature – even and especially in its absence – as well as in its environmental sensitivity and its ecological awareness. Speakers recognize that humans reside within larger, interconnected natural systems, even if they debilitate, violate, or ignore those systems. Speakers convey a desire for the improbable return to greater interface and symbiosis with larger nature. The qualities endow the poetry a tacit biocentrism.

#### 4.The Nature of Culture

Anthropocentric elements are yoked to the biocentrism of the poetry of the satoyama. A poem set in a satoyama does not represent the literal and lyrical recordings of an environmentally conscious writer in conscientious and unconditioned individual interface with, and implicit advocacy for, wild and pristine nonhuman nature (putting aside the important but difficult question of the degree to which such positioning would be, in general terms, humanly possible). One cultural influence on the poetry of the satoyama involves the agrarian environment. A traditional satoyama was an ecosystem created by humans and incorporating human participants in its functioning. The continuity of the environment depended on human intervention in and purposeful shaping and harnessing of natural processes, including the selective and discriminating treatment of nonhuman lives.

Another level of cultural mediation of the uptake of nature in the poetry of the satoyama involves the selection and profiling of the natural elements, plants, and animals which occur in the poetry. While there is a trend over time toward greater inclusiveness in the nonhuman lives and elements taken up in the poetry of the satoyama, and even though there is a great deal of individual variation among writers, we nonetheless encounter a preponderance of specific winged and diminutive creatures and flowering plants across the poetry. We engage relatively fewer carnivorous mammals, birds

of prey, rodents, fungi, common grasses, and so on – even those varieties which we would reasonably expect to have proliferated in and around a satoyama. While some life forms are embraced and celebrated in the poetry of the satoyama, others are overlooked and under-represented. Poets wrote within the observed constraints and conditions of a literary tradition, and less as our contemporary conception of naturalists.

A final and related cultural shaping of the treatment of wild nature in the poetry of the satoyama is the strong conditioning that natural referents and their environments have been subject to in the Japanese literary tradition. Poetic diction, including the names of plants, animals, and natural elements, is inherited in a particularly thick wrap of associations, implications, and meanings. Natural referents have long been encultured or domesticated. Virtually any Japanese poem taking up wildlife will be strongly informed and mediated by precedent poems and a long tradition of poetic conventions and traditions, including well-known poetic forms. The desired wildness in poetry inhabits a cultural space.

Shirane elucidates the influence of received poetic practices and conventions on the uptake of nonhuman lives and natural environments in Japanese poetry, in general, and the way in which a poetry-based “culture of the four seasons” evolved over time in Japan, in which natural words and their associations were codified and systematized.<sup>36</sup> Shirane suggests that the pervasive influence of received literary culture on the uptake of nature in Japanese poetry finds clear illustration in the provenance of the famous Bashō frog poem of 1686: *an old pond . . . / a frog leaps in, / the sound of water*.<sup>37</sup> To a contemporary sensibility, the poem appears to be the literal and lyric account of individual interface with nature. The “old pond” is commonly read as an unfrequented retaining pond, and the poem conveys a state of quiet, meditative loneliness. However, as Bashō was highly aware, the frog had been admired in poetry for its singing and beautiful, plaintive voice, beginning with the Man'yōshū in 759, and over the centuries had become a seasonal word for spring, associated with clear mountain streams and the bright yellow flowers of the globeflower (*yamabuki*). Bashō responded to the established conventions by deliberately overturning them

– during a group linked verse session and against the objections of a disciple – and in the process extended the range of the frog referent.<sup>38</sup>

The yoking of wild nature and human culture in the traditional, literal satoyama is part and parcel of its environmental and ecological qualities. In parallel fashion, the extension of poetic precedent into new and unprecedented elements is central to the poetics of the poetry of the satoyama. A poem set in a satoyama departs from a base in familiar forms of human culture to seek return to a more inclusive and encompassing realm beyond. To remain snugly within received cultural parameters and established associations would be to utilize wild lives only as natural resources for cultural production. Conversely, to reject any language conventions or practices would be to cut oneself off from the human community. In the poetry, wild nature is nurturing of human culture, and that human culture accommodates wild nature. The poetry of the satoyama suggests a symbiotic relationship between the two. Wild nature “delivers” and brings the culture closer: *Now that the geese have gone / the rice paddies in front of my door / seem far away*.<sup>39</sup> (Yosa Buson, 1716-83) By the same token, culture serves as a vehicle for conveying and sharing wild nature. Nature and culture are expressive collaborators with a common spirit and a potential for harmony. The poetry of the satoyama enacts the ecology of the satoyama, at times, even self-consciously or reflexively: *A frog has all the time in the world / on a square page / of rice seedlings*.<sup>40</sup> (Yosa Buson, 1716-83).

This conception of a fundamentally symbiotic and integrated relationship between wild nature and human culture represents, at once, both the enabling and the limiting quality of the poetry. If we could consider the symbiotic relationship between poetry and wild lives as representative and symbolic of the larger, overall relationship between human culture and nature, we would be in a felicitous situation. Regrettably, the symbiosis holds only for non-physical relationships with nature, such as those established in literary and other arts. The conception assumes an existing balance between nature and culture. It locates in a happy, received middle ground, the ecotone between thriving human culture and wild natural lives. It does not suggest approaches



to tuing or contraceptive measures when the balance is threatened or lost.

The beauty of the poetic metaphysics pales when it is applied to practical human activities in the world. Material human culture, contemporary observers feel increasingly acutely, is patently not compatible or symbiotic with the material well-being of natural elements and wild natural lives. Received culture involves exclusionary practices, defensive measures against undesired influences of natural others and elements, and unilateral violence made possible by power imbalances. Perhaps the knowledge or intimation of this disjuncture, in an agricultural context and far before what we call the contemporary crisis of nature, was one factor inducing poets to gloss over agricultural activity in the satoyama, as well as many of the workaday realities of the human communities in which they stayed. The sense of a disjuncture between human culture and nature is also likely to be a primary source of the disillusionment in twentieth-century post-satoyama Japanese poetry.

## Conclusion

My dream always returned  
 To a lonely village at the foot of a mountain;  
 Wind sighing over the knot-grass,  
 Skylark singing and singing,  
 To a forest path in quiet noon,  
 In the blue sky, sun shining clear<sup>41</sup>  
 (Tachihara Michizō, 1914-39)

Anthologists Ann Fisher-Wirth and Laura-Gray Street propose a set of predominant characteristics of ecopoetry in the contemporary North American context: abundant uptake of nature, a role for interaction with nonhuman nature as serving to reveal an aspect of the meaning of life, environmental sensitivity and awareness, a biocentric perspective, including acknowledgment of interrelatedness and attendant decentering of the human self, and the enactment of ecology (xxvii-xxx). The poetry of the satoyama exhibits all of the characteristics, most notably enacting the ecology of the human-implicated satoyama. In the poetry, as in the satoyama itself, unprecedented encounters with wild lives and

elements take place in a humanly shaped environment. The poetry of the satoyama, like the satoyama itself, possesses cultural specificity, and potential universality, as well; it may prove to be a helpful lens through which to ecocritically interpret the literature of other cultural traditions.

In the poetry of the satoyama, humans sense an unrealized underlying unity with the natural world, along with an immediate reality of separateness. Indefatigably and inimitably, human speakers yearn for confluence with a larger natural reason, a confluence seemingly available through and beyond empathetic projection into absorptive scenes and wild natural lives and elements. Nonetheless, the potential confluence is realized only in the most partial of degrees. Human ecophilia is a largely unrequited one; the persistent gap between imagined nature and lived nature proves compelling and motivating. In the yearning after wildness, fleeting moments of insight and the intimations felt in resonant scenes are all that is allowed, and such faint affirmations are just enough to sustain the search.

The poetry of the satoyama expresses un consummated love of nature. It also embeds a deep ambiguity in its depiction of the human relationship with the natural world. One qualification of the environmentalism of the poetry is that direct interface with natural lives is mediated by the strong influence and ongoing presence of the poetic tradition. The conditioned quality of the literary tradition can be distancing from actual, experienced nature (while at the same time it can spur to clearer observation, wider embrace, and greater intimacy).

More problematically, the poetry of the satoyama declines candid consideration of the actual potential for confluence of material human culture and larger nature. In the poetry, the palpable and respectful love of wild lives and elements in their wildness is intimately linked to human metaphysical aspiration. The love of nature in the poetry is less explicitly and convincingly linked to physical ecology and material human culture. A disinclination to come to terms with material human culture in the poetry is most visible in the ambivalent uptake of agricultural activity. Even in the context of the traditional, sustainable satoyama, the physical

relationship between human culture and larger nature garners relatively less rigorous attention and articulation than individual metaphysical confluence with larger nature does.

Perhaps this avoidance was a response, at some level of consciousness, to the realization that received material human culture is, in many ways, fundamentally incompatible with the larger living nature which supports it. Establishing a symbiotic physical relationship with nature, one which involves as full a range of natural lives and enabling human interactions with them as possible, would presumably require reorientation and redirection of all aspects of culture, including metaphysics, poetics, and poetry. It is intriguing to speculate on the shapes of potential new practices; the problem is deeply rooted and systematic.

## Notes

1. Trans. Hinton 87.
2. *Uzura naku karita no hitsuji oi idete honoka ni terasu mikazuki no kage*. Trans. Watson, *Saigyō*, 150.
3. *Kamo tōku kuwa sosogu mizu no uneri kana*. Trans. Addiss 104.
4. *Waga io ya kawazu shote kara oi wo naku*. Trans. Aitken 138.
5. From “Ippongino” (*Ippongino*). Trans. Pulvers 38.
6. *Hatsuaki ya umi mo aota no hitorimidori*. Trans. Bownas and Thwaite 106.
7. *Mon o izureba ware mo yukuhito aki no kure*. Trans. Merwin 150.
8. *Oku tsuyu ya ware wa kusaki ni itsu naran*. Trans. Addiss 260.
9. *Kirigirisu naku ya kakashi no sode no uchi*. Trans. Addiss 136.
10. *Haranaka ya mono ni mo tsukazu naku hibari*. Trans. Hass 20.
11. *Tōyama ni hi no ataritaru kareno kana*. Trans. Keene, *Dawn*, 113.
12. *Asagao ya kore mo mata waga tomo narazu*. Trans. Hass 51.
13. *Ame to naru koi wa shiranu na kumo no mine*. Trans. Merwin 118.
14. *Koi koi to iedo hotaru ga tonde yuku*. Trans. Bownas and Thwaite 111.
15. *Ashimoto no mame nusumaruru kakashi kana*. Trans. Addiss 149.
16. *Tsutsuji-no ya aranu tokoro ni mugi batake*. Trans. Merwin 43.
17. *Kaya no uchi ni hotaru hanashite aa raku ya*. Trans. Merwin 81.
18. *Mi ni shimite daikon karashi aki no kaze*. Trans. Barnhill 82.
19. *Kuroki made ni murasaki fukaki budō kana*. Trans. Watson, *Masaoka Shiki*, 89.
20. *Yo o tabi ni shiro kaku oda no yukimodori*. Trans. Barnhill 148.
21. *Ono irete ka ni odoroku ya fuyu kodachi*. Trans. Addiss 198.
22. From “Burning Desire’s Past” (*Kako Jouen*). Trans. Pulvers 81.
23. *Suzushisa ya asakusa mon ni hakobi komi*. Trans. Bownas and Thwaite 109.
24. *Hiya-hiya to ta ni hashirikomu shimizu kana*. Trans. Addiss 148.
25. *Aki no yama tokoro dokoro ni kemuri tatsu*. Trans. Bownas and Thwaite 115.
26. *Shigururu ya kuroki tsumu ya no mado akari*. Trans. Bownas and Thwaite 109.
27. *Saijun o utau hikone no soufu kana*. Trans. Merwin 92.
28. *Saotome ya yogorenu mono wa uta bakari*. Trans. Bownas and Thwaite 110.
29. *Asagao ni tsurube torarete moraimizu*. Trans. Keene, *World*, 340.
30. *Kiru ki tomo shirade ya tori no su wo tsukuru*. Trans. Hamill 132.
31. *Yanagi kitte kawasemi tsui ni kozu narinu*. Trans. Watson, *Masaoka Shiki*, 86.
32. From “Koide New Highway, (*Koide Shindou*)”. Trans. Keene, *Dawn*, 274.
33. *Natsu no kawa akaki tessa no hashi hitaru*. Trans. Keene, *Dawn*, 149.
34. From “At Tsukuda Ferry” (*Tsukuda Watashi de*). Trans. McCarthy 48.
35. From “Mt. Yōkei” (*Yōkeizan*). Trans. McCarthy 94.
36. Shirane, *Japan*.
37. *Furuike ya kawazu tobikomu mizu no oto*. Trans. Shirane, *Traces*, 13.
38. Shirane, *Traces*, especially 13-17.
39. *Kari yukite kadota mo tooku omowaruru*. Trans. Merwin 30.



40. *Nawashiro no shikishi ni asobu kawazu kana*. Trans. Merwin 40.
41. From “Afterthoughts” (*Nochi no Omoi ni*). Trans. Bownas and Thwaite 214-15.

## Works Cited

- Addiss, Stephen. *The Art of Haiku: Its History through Poems and Paintings by Japanese Masters*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2012
- Aitken, Robert. *The River of Heaven: The Haiku of Bashō, Buson, Issa, and Shiki*. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2011
- Barnhill, David Landis. *Bashō's Haiku: Selected Poems of Matsuo Bashō*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press: 2004
- Bownas, Geoffrey and Anthony Thwaite, eds. and trans. *The Penguin Book of Japanese Verse: From the Earliest Times to the Present*. London: Penguin Classics, 2009
- Duraiappah, Anantha Kumar, Koji Nakamura, Kazuhiko Takeuchi, Masataka Watanabe, and Maiko Nishi, eds. *Satoyama-Satoumi Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes of Japan*. Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2012
- Fisher-Wirth, Ann and Laura-Gray Street, eds. *The Ecopoetry Anthology*. San Antonio, TX: Trinity University Press, 2013
- Hamill, Sam, trans. *The Spring of My Life and Selected Haiku by Kobayashi Issa*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1997
- Hinton, David, trans. *The Selected Poems of Tu Fu*. New York: New Directions, 1989.
- Keene, Donald. *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era – Poetry, Drama, Criticism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999
- Keene, Donald. *World within Walls: Japanese Literature of the Pre-Modern Era 1600-1867*. New York: Grove Press, 1976
- Maruyama, Tokuji and Tomiyasu Miyaura, eds. *Satoyamagaku no Manazashi: “Mori no Aru Daigaku” kara*. Kyoto: Showado, 2009
- Maruyama, Tokuji and Tomiyasu Miyaura, eds. *Satoyamagaku no Susume: “Bunka to Shite no Shizen” Saisei ni Mukete*. Kyoto: Showado, 2007
- McCarthy, Paul, trans. *101 Modern Japanese Poems*. London: Thames River Press, 2012
- Merwin, W.S. and Takako Lento, trans. *The Collected Haiku of Yosa Buson*. Port Townsend, WA: Copper Canyon Press, 2013
- Pulvers, Roger, trans. *Miyazawa Kenji: Strong in the Rain, Selected Poems*. Tarsset: Bloodaxe Books, 2007
- Rexroth, Kenneth and Ikuko Atsumi, trans. *Women Poets of Japan*. New York: New Directions Books, 1977
- Shirane, Haruo. *Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons: Nature, Literature, and the Arts*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013
- Shirane, Haruo. *Traces of Dreams: Landscape, Cultural Memory, and the Poetry of Bashō*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007
- Thornber, Karen. Environmental Crises and East Asian Literatures: Uncertain Presents and Futures. In Westling, Louise, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Literature and the Environment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014
- Thornber, Karen. Japanese Literature and Environmental Crises. In Miller, Ian Jared, Julia Adeney Thomas, and Brett L. Walker, eds., *Japan at Nature's Edge: The Environmental Context of a Global Power*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2013
- Ushio, Hiroya and Takuya Suzuki, eds. *Satoyama no Gabanansu: Satoyamagaku no Hiraku Chihei*. Kyoto: Shoyoshobo, 2012
- Watson, Burton, trans. *Saigyō: Poems of a Mountain Home*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991
- Watson, Burton, trans. *Masaoka Shiki: Selected Poems*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997