



*a portrait of Kobayashi Issa,
drawn by Muramatsu Shunpo (1772 – 1858)*

KOBAYASHI ISSA

TWO HUNDRED SELECTED HAIKU

Introduction	iii
Chronology	ix
TWO HUNDRED SELECTED HAIKU	2
Notes	75
Further Reading and Links	77
Index	81

[The word **NOTE** in the text indicates a particular crux of translation, which is discussed further. Click on **NOTE** to be taken to the relevant discussion, and then on **RETURN** to come back to the translation.]

INTRODUCTION

In the early years of this web-site, I launched three inquiries into what was, for me, an imponderable yet fascinating question for any translator. How far was immersion in the source language being translated necessary to produce a persuasive translation in the target language? In other words, if I, as a native-born English speaker, were translating into English works from French, or Spanish, or Japanese, or Middle High German, or ancient Greek, how far would I need to live and breathe those languages in order to produce a convincing translation? Would such an immersion have to be total and unalloyed, a complete bi-lingualism, or might there be gradations (near-native fluency, excellent command, good knowledge, average skill) under which an effective rendering might be achieved? And if such gradations could exist between native fluency and average skill, how far down the scale below average skill could any translator ‘fall’ before the task became impossible? Could a translator have little or no knowledge of the source language, but still create a translation that was vibrant and telling?

The three works that explored and tested this last question to near-breaking point were Japanese and Chinese: Matsuo Bashō’s *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* (2004), Laozi’s *Daode jing* (2005), and a selection of 200 haiku by, again, Bashō (2008). The Introductions to these three translations addressed many of the specific literary issues that arose, and the tentative and provisional answers arrived at. Now, fifteen years later, very similar questions are faced again in this new translation of 200 haiku by Kobayashi Issa (1763–1827).

Together with his predecessors Bashō (1644–94) and Buson (1716–84), and his successor Shiki (1867–1902), Issa is widely acclaimed as one of the four greatest masters of haiku in Japanese literature. In a prodigious output of over 20,000 haiku, he celebrates the sanctity of the domestic, the ordinary, the commonplace: animals and birds and insects, household objects and routines, the weather, plants and flowers, the landscape,

human tears for time and mortality, yet also human smiles, in an accepting recognition of the gigantic comedy that is our lives. And all of these subjects are perceived and presented in a way that is understated, unrheterical, quiet, compassionate. Of all the four masters mentioned above, Issa is not only the most loved by his Japanese readers but also, perhaps, the most deserving of love.

The poetic form in which Issa celebrated his world – haiku – is widely known, yet its basic features are nonetheless worth summarising briefly. The haiku is a very short, extraordinarily condensed and concentrated poem, conventionally following a tripartite 5-7-5 syllabic pattern, and presenting a distilled moment of perception, very often of the natural world but sometimes also of domestic or personal life. The finest haiku capture things in the unique moment of their happening or being, celebrating their unequivocal ‘this-ness’. In Issa, haze hovers over a river at dawn, lamplight flickers in a stable, the sound of oars drifts away, fireflies soar in the mid-day heat, a man in white walks in the shade of a house: moments like these are captured, stilled, held frozen, immune both to easy symbolisation and to the flow of time. The reality of their presentness is absolute.

In translating such poems into what I hope is a vibrant and persuasive English, three features of Issa’s original text are worth exploring in a little detail.

syllabic rhythm

as mentioned above, the haiku that Issa wrote follow a 5-7-5 syllabic pattern, and a major question immediately arises whether this pattern can, or should, be reproduced in a translation into English. A considerable number of commentators have argued that it need not be, citing evidence from both the Japanese and the English language. In Japanese, ‘syllables’, or *on* meaning ‘sound’, are both shorter and more uniform than those in English; and the acoustic world evoked in many haiku has consequently a simpler, more regular sense of cadence because of the similarity of sound. A 5-7-5 syllabic pattern, moreover, is not native to English poetry. The metrical units most common in English verse are of either two or three syllables, with an overwhelming emphasis upon the two-syllabled iamb, a weak beat followed by a strong beat (~ ^). It is not easy to see, at first

sight, how such twos can be readily reconciled with the fives and sevens of the original.

Possibly because of these difficulties, as intimated above, few contemporary translators try to reproduce the exact 5-7-5 pattern in English. Some opt for 4-6-4 or 5-8-3 or 3-7-6, or any pattern where the second ‘line’ is longer than the first and third. Some do not worry even about relative length, making all three ‘lines’ the same, or indeed the second actually shorter than the other two. Such variations, however, have an arbitrary, even capricious air about them, as if the *form* in which Issa is writing is somehow marginal, rather than intrinsic, to what he is saying. To an acute ear, the 5-7-5 pattern can suggest several subtleties: a sense of poise and equilibrium in the repetition of the five syllables, a sense of disturbance as seven syllables interrupt that poise, seeming to thrust outwards and beyond, a sense of a held, breathless pause as the seventh of those syllables marks some kind of turning point or extremity (in Japanese, such a turning point is known as *kireji*, or a ‘cutting word’). It is in recognition of these rhythmic subtleties that the translation here retains the 5-7-5 syllabic pattern of Issa’s original. I have tried to sustain, rather than erode, the natural pulses of English in this syllabic fidelity; but only individual readers can judge with what success.

lineation

it is not always realised that, in Japanese script, Issa’s haiku are presented, not as three separate horizontal lines, but as one continuous vertical line, read from top to bottom. As a result, some translators have suggested, his haiku should not be set in multiple lines, because pre-modern Japanese poets had no concept of lineation as a poetic device. And yet, as one commentator has argued,

to insist that a haiku should be a one-line poem in English because the original Japanese poet had no sense of lineation is tantamount to insisting that no English grammatical article, such as ‘a’ or ‘the’, should be used in translating Japanese sentences because the Japanese language includes no concept of articles (Makoto Ueda, *Bashō and his Interpreters*)

Even in the single continuous line, moreover, Japanese readers are aware of the tripartite structuring embedded in it. It is for these reasons that I

have chosen to present Issa's haiku in three distinct lines, but in an indented and overlapping visual pattern, rather than a clean and straightforward justification at a left-hand margin. The difference in impact between the linear, almost military precision of

The one is talking.
The other's hands are sleeping.
The cold of the night.

and the more fluid suggestiveness of

the one is talking
the other's hands are sleeping...
the cold of the night

will be very apparent.

punctuation and capitalisation

In order to preserve the rhythmic flow and resonance of Issa's original, I have tried to punctuate as sparingly as possible, and then often with marks such as the dash (-) or ellipses (...), rather than the more widely used forms of comma, colon, semi-colon, full stop. Recognising the force of the *kireji* ('cutting word') mentioned above, some translators have relied upon the exclamation mark (!) to convey its impact; but this particular punctuation mark has generally seemed to me too rhetorical and melodramatic in its visual and emotional impact to be effective. The almost imperceptible pause of wonder that the *kireji* signals is better represented by understatement: - or ...

Similarly, the typographical device of capitalisation seems intrusive, directing response rather than allowing the resonance of the original to be heard. Beginning a haiku by Issa with a capital letter and ending it with a full stop subtly suggests that its perceptions are contained solely and authoritatively within the seventeen syllables of the poem. But in truth, Issa's haiku begin long before the first syllable is uttered, just as they sound long after the seventeenth syllable has been heard.

The two hundred haiku in this translation represent the tiniest proportion of the more than 20,000 that Issa wrote during his lifetime. Given such a prodigious output, it is scarcely surprising that

any number of them are rather unremarkable both in insight and in expression. But the ones selected here present rare qualities of stillness and wonder and understanding. Following the profound awareness in the haiku tradition of time, especially in the growth and decay of the natural world, the poems translated here are divided into the four seasons of spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Each poem is presented in a similar format:

its number in the sequence of two hundred

a Romanised version of the original Japanese characters (Romaji), with the three line divisions indicated by /

a completely literal rendering into English that follows the original ordering of the Japanese words exactly, with the three line divisions again indicated by /

the final translation into an idiomatic and persuasive English

the year of composition

A typical presentation therefore looks like this:

38

haru same ya / yabu ni fukaruru / sute-tegami
[spring gentle rain! / grove blow continuously / throw away letter]

in a light spring rain
a letter thrown away blows
through a grove of trees

1817

Occasionally, where it would aid understanding, references to places or events are briefly explained after the haiku in question. The word **NOTE** in a line indicates further discussion of a particular issue in translation, which can be accessed by clicking on **NOTE**.

INTRODUCTION

Like any translator of Issa, I owe thanks to those many predecessors who have done so much to pave the way, a number of whom are listed in the Further Reading and Links section. But I owe a particular debt to David Lanoue, of Xavier University of Louisiana, who has made the translation of Issa a lifetime's work. His website www.HaikuGuy.com has proved an indispensable resource, a searchable archive of 10,000 haiku by Issa, with commentary. I send my very best wishes for its completion.

Tim Chilcott
October 2020

CHRONOLOGY

- 1763 born 15 June (in terms of the Western calendar), into a relatively prosperous farming family named Kobayashi, and is given the name Yatarô. His birthplace is a small mountain village, Kashiwabara, some 150 miles northwest of what is now Toyko.
- 1766 his mother, Kuni, dies when he is only three years old, an event from which he never fully recovers emotionally. Surviving evidence suggests a lonely and introverted childhood.
- 1769 starts at a school run by a local innkeeper, Nakamura, who is also known as a calligrapher and mathematician, as well as a teacher of Buddhist scripture. Soon shines as an outstanding pupil.
- 1770 his father remarries, and his new wife, Satsu, gives birth to a son, Senroku, two years later. Tensions begin to emerge between Yatarô and his new family.
- 1776 his much loved grandmother, Kana, also dies. He falls seriously ill with a fever.
- 1777 such is the domestic friction between him and his step-mother that he is sent away by his father to Edo, today's Tokyo. No record survives of his life and work there. For the next ten years, he effectively disappears.
- 1787 re-emerges as a member of a haiku school, led by the master Chikua, and adopts the penname Issa, meaning 'cup of tea'.
- 1790 Chikua dies.
- 1792 inspired by the example of the first great haiku master, Matsuo Bashô (1644-94), takes to the road on the first of a series of haiku-writing journeys as an itinerant *haikaishi*. Sets off on a journey to the island of Shikoku,

CHRONOLOGY

- travelling south to Ise, Nara, and Kyoto, and visiting the tomb of Bashō on the shore of Lake Biwa.
- 1793 travels on to Nagasaki.
- 1794 visits various places on the island of Kyūshū.
- 1795 visits the city of Matsuyama.
- 1796 on the island of Shikoku, attends a full moon party in Matsuyama.
- 1797 leaves Matsuyama in the spring,, and during the summer and autumn, stays at Fukuyama.
- 1798 returns to Edo (Tokyo), where he publishes his travel journals.
- 1799 travels through the central mountains to the coast of the Sea of Japan.
- 1801 revisits his home village to find his father dying from typhus, and composes *Diary of my Father's Death*. Promises to return and live in the family house, but is thwarted by his step-mother and step-brother. A long and bitter legal battle begins. During the next decade, establishes a growing reputation as a poet and teacher.
- 1813 finally returns to the now partitioned house in Kashiwabara.
- 1814 marries a local woman, Kiku, who is nearly 25 years his junior. Later in the year, returns to Edo to take formal leave of the literary world of the capital.
- 1816-23 four children are born, three sons and a daughter, but all die from disease or accident, including his much loved daughter Sato, who dies in 1819 of smallpox. Writes his major prose work, *Spring of my Life (Oraga haru)*, a *haibun* (haiku mixed with prose).
- 1823 his wife Kiku dies.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1824 marries for a second time, to a samurai's daughter called Yuki, but is divorced within three months. Suffers a stroke, losing his power of speech.
- 1826 marries his third wife, Yao, who is over thirty years younger.
- 1827 his house burns down in a fire that sweeps through the village of Kashiwabara. Moves into a small grain barn, where he dies early the next year, on 5 January 1828 in the Western calendar. His posthumous daughter, Yata, is born in the spring of that year.
- During his lifetime, he has composed some 20,000 haiku.

1

uguisu no / kuru kageboshi mo / mado no haru
[nightingale's / come shadow too / window of spring]

the nightingale comes
with his shadow coming too...
the window of spring

1820

SPRING

2

uguisu no / i na naki yô mo / kesa no haru
[nightingale's / here weeping more than mourning/ morning of spring]

the nightingale's song
brings more than crying and tears...
it brings spring's first dawn

1819

3

amadare no / ariake tsuki ya / kaeru kari
[eavesdrop from / dawn moon ! / leave wild geese]

the moon at first light
through these raindrops from the eaves...
the geese fly away

1803

SELECTED HAIKU

4

yoakete mo / oboro nari keru / sumida-gawa
 [dawn even / hazy to be still / Sumida river]

even at first light
 the haze is still hovering...
 Sumida river

1805

(The Sumida is a relatively short river that flows through Tokyo into Tokyo bay.)

5

fushigi nari / umareta ie de / kesa no haru
 [wonder it is / I was born house in / morning of spring]

it is amazing...
 in this house where I was born
 first morning of spring

[?]

6

shira tsuyu ni / kata sode samuki / asahi kana
 [white dew in / one sleeve cold / morning sun kana **NOTE**]

in the silver dew
 one sleeve is cold, the other
 in the morning sun...

1790s

4

SELECTED HAIKU

7

kagerô ni / shiki-i wo koeru / asahi kana
 [heat haze / threshold cross over / morning sun kana **NOTE**]

the heat shimmering...
 the morning sun now crosses
 over the threshold

1793

8

nete okite / ô-akubi shite / neko no koi
 [sleeping get up / yawning greatly / cat of love]

waking from his sleep
 with a mighty yawn the cat
 goes out to make love!

1817

9

ganjitsu ya / kurai uchi kara / neko no koi
 [New Year's Day! / dark inside time / cat of love]

it's New Year's Day and
 in the dark before the dawn
 the cat goes courting!

1825

5

10

hatsu niji ya / hidari mugi nishi / yuki no yama
 [first rainbow! / left side wheat west / snow(s) of mountain(s)]

the spring's first rainbow!
 from the wheat field on my left
 to the western snows

1824

11

uchi-tokuru / mare no hito yo ya / fugi no yuki
 [inside / rare of person night melting / Fugi of snow]

and melting in one
 amazing night for lovers...
 Mount Fuji's deep snow

1792

12

nano hana no / toppa zure nari / fugi no yama
 [yes flower field(s) / overcome gap as far as / Fugi of mountain]

yes fields of rape flowers
 as far as the eye can see...
 and then Mount Fugi

1812

13

haru no kaze / itsuka detearu / hiru no tsuki
 [spring of breeze / sometime be / noon of moon]

the breezes of spring...
 it has been there for some while
 the moon in daylight

1812

14

assari to / haru wa ki ai keru / asagi-zora
 [readily as / spring close to has / pale blue sky]

as simple as that...
 spring has finally arrived
 with an azure sky

1814

15

haru kaze ya / nomichi ni tsuzuku / asagi-gasa
 [spring breeze(s)! / field-path in make / light blue rainhat]

a breeze of the spring...
 across the field a line of
 light blue parasols

1826

16

haru kaze ya / haya kage tsukuru / kakitsubata
 [spring breeze(s)! / already shadow(s) make / rabbit-ear iris(es)]

a breeze of the spring...
 already casting shadows
 are the irises

1810

17

uso-uso to / ame furu naka wo / haru no chô
 [anxiously / rain fall in / spring of butterfly]

and so nervously
 as the raindrops are falling...
 a spring butterfly

1804

18

makura suru / kahina ni chô / netari keri
 [pillow make / lovely young butterfly / sleeping]

making a pillow
 of my arm a lovely young
 butterfly asleep...

1820

19

asagi chô / areba asagi no / sakura kana
 [pale-blue butterfly / is pale-blue / cherry blossom(s) **kana NOTE**]

when butterflies are
 the palest blue, palest blue
 are cherry blossoms

1821

20

ne narande / ko chô uto neko to / oshô kana
 [sleeping beside / little butterfly cat and / honourable man **kana NOTE**]

sleeping side by side
 a small butterfly, a cat,
 and a Buddhist priest

1821

21

te to todoku / yama no irihi ya / haru no chô
 [hand of reach / mountain of sunset! / spring of butterfly]

within my grasp now
 as sun sets on the mountain...
 a spring butterfly

1804

22

utsukushi ya / hibari no nakushi / ato no sora
 [beautiful ! / skylark in without / after in sky]

ah how beautiful
 the sky is after a lark
 has been singing there

1812

23

matsushima ya / kasumi wa kurete / naku hibari
 [matsushima! / mist turn dark / sing skylark]

the islands of pines...
 and the mist is turning dark
 as a skylark sings

1818

(Matsushima is a famously beautiful bay in Japan, dotted by over two hundred small islands covered in pine trees.)

24

matsushima no / ko sumi wa kurete / naku hibari
 [matsushima! / small turn dark / sing skylark]

the islands of pines...
 so tiny and growing dark
 as a skylark sings

1819

25

naku hibari / hito no kao kara / hi no kururu
 [sing skylark / person of face from empty / sun of setting]

as a skylark sings
 someone is blankly staring
 at the setting sun

1804

26

konrinzai / konu furi wo shite / kari ta chinu
 [never / come back as if saying and then / wild geese left]

'we'll never return'
 as if giving this message
 wild geese departed

1814

27

kaeru kari / umaya no ando / kasumu nari
 [returning geese / stable of lamp / misty is]

the wild geese fly north...
 in the stable the lamplight
 flickers in the mist

1803

28

naku na kari / dokko mo onaji / ukiyo zo ya
 [cry no geese / same always same / fleeting yes!]

wild geese hush your cry
 wherever you fly it's the same –
 the world is fleeting

[?]

29

su no tori no / kuchi aku hô ya / kure no kane
 [nest of bird of / mouth open direction ! / sunset of bell]

toward the open
 mouth of the bird in its nest...
 the sunset bell tolls

1804

30

shirotae no / sô shirotae no / ume no hana
 [white cloth of / honourable white of / plum of blossom]

as white as the cloth
 of a priest's whitest garment...
 these blossoms of plum

1804

31

shira-gumo no / sakura wo kururu / toyama kana
 [white cloud(s) / cherry blossom go through / nearby mountain what/how]

white clouds are creeping
 through the cherry blossoms now...
 close to the mountain **NOTE**

1792

32

taki keburî / sobade mitesae / hana no kumo
 [waterfall smoke / near even / blossom of cloud(s)]

even seen near to
 the spray from the waterfall
 a cloud of blossom

1814

33

kore dekoso / noboru kaiari / yama zakura
 [this for sure / climb / mountain cherry]

this is just the thing
 for which I have been climbing...
 the mountain cherry

1795

34

yu-zakura / kyô mo mukashi ni / nari ni keru
 [evening cherry blossom / today also olden-days in / is in continuing]

the evening cherry
 blossoms... and this day too now
 enters history

1810

35

furu ame ni / hitori nokori shi / hana no kage
 [falls rain here / alone remain he / bossom(s) of shadow(s)]

rain is falling now
 I remain alone among
 the shades of blossom

1804

36

ku no shaba ya / sakura ga sakeba / saita tote
 [world of pain ! / cherry blossoms bloom / because of the blooming]

this suffering world...
 when cherry blossoms bloom how
 much the worse it seems

1819

37

shiro mizu no / hata e nagarete / haru no tsuki
 [white water of / into flowing / spring of moon]

this silver water
 flowing into the garden...
 and the spring's own moon

1814

38

haru same ya / yabu ni fukaruru / sute-tegami
 [spring gentle rain! / grove blow continuously / throw away letter]

in a light spring rain
 a letter thrown away blows
 through a grove of trees

1817

39

haya sabishi / asagao maku to / yu hatake
 [already lonely / morning glory plant(ed) / field]

a seed already
 lonely, planted in the field
 of morning glory

[?]

40

imasara ni / wakare tomo nashi / harugasumi
 [after so long / parting friend without / springtime haze]

to let my friend go
 and after so many years...
 the mists of the spring

1799

(an elegiac haiku by Issa on the death of his friend Ôkawa Ryûsa)

41

saraba saraba / no te no kakaru / kasumu kana
 [farewell farewell / of hand(s) seem / hazy kana **NOTE**]

ah good bye good bye
 as hands are waving, waving...
 gone into the mist

[?]

42

iriai wa / kawazu no me ni mo / namida kana
 [sunset! / frog(s) of look here too / tear(s) kana **NOTE**]

the sun is setting...
 and do tears now seem to shine
 in this frog's eyes too

1805

43

oboro yo ya / sake no nagareshi / taki no tsuki
 [hazy night! / sake flowing / waterfall of moon]

the night is hazy
 and as the wine is flowing
 waterfall and moon

1818

44

oboro-oboro / fumeba mizu nari / mayoi michi
 [hazy hazy / step on water is / lose way]

misty misty night
 stepping into the water
 I'm losing my way

1795

45

shirauo no / dotto umaruru / oboro kana
 [whitebait of / suddenly move skilful / hazy kana **NOTE**]

the darting whitebait
 are suddenly scooped aloft...
 the mists of the night

1808

46

oboro yo ya / amano ongaku / kikishi hito
 [hazy night! / heavenly music / learn through hearing person]

the mists of the night...
 the music of the heavens
 someone is listening

1819

47

haru no tsuki / sawaraba shizuku / tarinubeshi
 [spring of moon / if touch drop / enough should]

a moon of the spring
 were my finger to touch it
 I'm sure it would drip

1805

48

mata hitotsu / yama wo yaku nari / oboro nari
 [also another / mountain burn is / haze is]

another mountain
 and the dead grass set on fire...
 the haze is thickening

1805

49

kagerô ya / takigi no yama / no yukinadare
 [heat haze! / firewood of mountain / snow avalanche]

the heat shimmering...
 and on the mountain's firewood
 avalanche of snow

1825

50

kazagumo ya / yakeno no hi yori / hi no kururu
 [winds and clouds! / burnt fields of fire at / red of come]

ah the windblown clouds...
 the fires of burning fields now
 bring the setting sun

[?]

51

kaminari no / hikaru nake yori / haru no yuki
 [lightning of / shine inside from / spring of snow]

and from deep inside
 the lightning's blinding flash... there...!
 the spring snow falling

1822

52

yuku haru no / sora wa kuragari / tôge kana
[pass away spring of / sky darkness / mountain pass *kana* **NOTE**]

the spring is leaving
there is darkness in the sky
at the mountain pass

1806

53

yama yaki no / akari ni kudarû / yobune kana
[mountain night air of / lights go down the river / night boat *kana* **NOTE**]

dark mountain air and
lights floating down the river...
a boat in the night

1818

SUMMER

SELECTED HAIKU

54

akegata ya / awase wo tôsu / matsu no tsuki
 [dawn! / summer kimono let in / pine-tree of moon]

first light of dawn... through
 my summer kimono shines
 the moon in the pines

1812

55

ake yasuki / yami no kosumi no / yanagi kana
 [dawn early / dark in small corner / willow kana **NOTE**]

summer's early dawn...
 in a dark little corner
 there stands a willow

1810

56

chichi arite / akebono mitashi / aodabara
 [father live(d) / dawn fill / green rice field(s)]

were my father here
 the dawn would paint the rice fields
 in a brighter green

1801

(In terms of the traditional Japanese calendar, Issa's father died on the twentieth day of the fifth month – hence the placing of this haiku in the Summer section.)

SELECTED HAIKU

57

ame san tsubu / ten kara doyo / mimai kana
 [rain three drops / sky from get-well / letter, kana **NOTE**]

just three drops of rain...
 but might they be heaven's get-well
 card in all this heat

[?]

58

ao-zora no / yôna katabira / kitari keru
 [blue sky of / summer kimono / come]

like the bluest sky...
 this summer kimono that
 I've put around me

1812

59

yuki-guni no / yuki iwau hi ya / asagi-zora
 [snow country's / snow celebrate day ! / pale blue sky]

days to celebrate...
 ice down from the snow country
 and the pale blue sky

1812

(placed in this Summer section because the haiku is referring to the snow and ice brought down from the mountains to make cold refreshments on hot days.)

60

hakusan no / yuki kira-kira to / atsusa kana
 [Haku mountain's / snow sparkling when / heat kana **NOTE**]

on Haku mountain
 the snows still seem to sparkle
 in the summer heat

1819

(Mount Haku is a dormant volcano close to the western coast of Japan.)

61

shizukasa ya / kosui no soko no / kumo no mine
 [quietness ! /lake of bottom of / cloud(s) of ridge]

the utter stillness...
 in the depths of the lake... see...
 the peaks of the clouds

1792

62

hito no nasu / tsumiyori hikushi / kumo no mine
 [person of make / sin than lower / cloud(s) of ridge]

smaller than the sins
 of all we human beings...
 the peaks of the clouds

1826

63

ikite iru / bakari zo ware to / heshi [no] hana
 [someone going need / only really yourself and / cherry blossoms]

someone going away
 needs really just themselves and
 the cherry blossoms

1810

64

ishi-gawa ya / ariake tsuki to / hiyashi uri
 [stone(s) river ! / dawn moon and / cool melon]

stony river-bed...
 a moon at the break of day
 and melons cooling

1813

65

kaji no oto wa / mimi wo hanarezu / hoshi ko yoi
 [rudder of sound / ear (obj.) is apart / star(s) good night]

the sound of the oars
 now drifts away from my ears...
 and good stars tonight

1803

(the words 'good stars tonight' refer to the festival of Tabanata, when two celestial lovers, the stars Altair and Vega, who have been separated by the Milky Way, cross its expanse to be together again.)

66

katatsuburi / soro-soro nobore / fugi no yama
 [snail / slowly ascend / Fugi of mountain]

now little snail, just
 one step at a time creep up
 and climb... Mount Fugi!

1823

67

kogakure [no] / ie mappiru no / tobu hotaru
 [hidden behind trees / house broad daylight / jump firefly]

a house in deep shade
 in the fierce heat of mid-day
 the fireflies soaring...

1824

68

kyô no yo ya / shiroi katabira / shiroi-gasa
 [Kyoto of night ! / white summer kimono(s) / white hat(s)]

a Kyoto night...
 white summer kimonos and
 white umbrella hats

1819

26

69

natsu no yo ya / kawabe no tsuki / mo ima mikka
 [summer of night ! / riverbank of moon / face now three]

a night in summer...
 by the river the moon's face
 only three days old

1790s

70

natsu yama ya / hito ashi zutsu ni / umi miyuru
 [summer mountain ! / one foot at a time / sea view]

a summer mountain...
 and each step up is widening
 the sight of the sea

1803

71

natsu yama ni / arauta yôna / hi no de kana
 [summer mountain / wash seems / red of sunrise
kana **NOTE**]

seeming to wash clean
 the summer mountains the fire
 of the rising sun

1800

27

72

nedoko miru / hodo wa u no hana / tsuki yo kana
 [bedroom look / degree me get of blossom / moon night *kana* NOTE]

flower blossoms are
 enough to light my bedroom
 on a moonlit night

1819

73

netse tsukeshi / kono sentakuya / natsuno tsuki
 [child bed-sleep / now laundry / summer moon]

the child is asleep
 and now she can wash its clothes
 under the summer moon

[?]

74

ôbotaru / yurari-yurari to / to tori keri
 [big firefly / swaying / pass by]

a huge firefly... look!
 swaying ever so lightly
 comes fluttering by

1819

28

75

rokugatsu mo / sozoro ni samushi / toki no koe
 [sixth month / despite cold / time of voice]

the month is June and
 yet it's strange it feels so cold...
 time's bell is tolling

1823

76

sashi yanagi / hotaru tobu yo / to nari ni keri
 [between willow / firefly jump night and / after (p.t.)]

after the willow
 planted in spring come the nights
 of fireflies leaping

1811

77

satsuki ame / yoru no yamada no / hito no koe
 [fifth month rain / night of mountain of / person of voice(s)]

in the rain of May
 in a mountain field at night...
 voices of people

1790s

29

78

shiro-gasa ya / asagi no kasa ya / hiashi yama
 [white hats ! / pale-blue of parasols ! / eastern mountain(s)]

white umbrella hats
 below pale-blue parasols...
 the eastern mountains

1825

(the eastern mountains are the collective name for well over thirty mountains that rise
 between the city of Kyoto and Lake Biwa)

79

soko fumu na / yûbe hotaru no / itâtari
 [there tread on no / last night firefly of / was]

don't tread over there...
 last evening a firefly
 stepped in just that place

[?]

80

sou ninaru / kono utsukushi ya / keshi no hana
 [monk becoming / this lovely ! / poppy of flower]

holy man to be
 this child is so beautiful...
 flowers of poppies

1821

30

81

suzukaze no / magari kunette / kitari keru
 [cool breeze of / bend loosely / is arriving]

ah that cool cool breeze
 that curves and bends so loosely
 now blows on my face

1815

82

suzushisa ya / yo mizu no kakaru / ido no oto
 [coolness ! / night water of take / water well of sound]

the air is so cool...
 water is drawn from the well
 at night... ah the sound...

1823

83

kado-guchi ni / yu wo makichirasu / yûsuzumi
 [gate at / hot water scattering / evening cool]

by the gate splashing
 this hot water all around...
 the cool of evening

1823

31

84

yoigoshi no / cha mizu akari ya / katatsuburi
 [overnight of / tea water glow ! / snail]

left out overnight
 a glimmer of tea water...
 and a snail arrives

1804

85

kakurega ya / tsuki sasazu to mo / waku shimizu
 [refuge ! / moon shine with not / gushing spring water]

a secluded house...
 no moonlight but pure water
 is gushing all round

1804

86

taikaiwo tede / sukuitsutsu / yūsuzumi
 [ocean hand / scoop / cool of evening]

the sea the great sea
 scooping it up in its hand...
 the cool of evening

1818

32

87

taki keburu / tamoto ni hairu / awase kana
 [waterfall smoke / sleeve enters / summer kimono *kana* **NOTE**]

the waterfall's mist
 seems to drift into these sleeves...
 my summer kimono

1813

88

ya-kage yuku / hito no shirosa ya / natsu no tsuki
 [house shadow go / man of white! /summer of moon]

the man is in white
 walking in the house's shade...
 the moon of summer

1790s

89

yo no tsmaru / tōge mo sagari / tsuki yoπ kana
 [night of calm / mountain-pass decline / moon world *kana* **NOTE**]

the night is calm and
 setting on the mountain pass
 the world of the moon

1811

33

90

yudachi ya / hadaka de norishi / hadaka uma
[water sprinkling ! / naked on get on / naked horse]

sprinkling of water...
and I am riding naked
on a naked horse

1825

(the 'sprinkling of water' could refer to a light rainfall or, more probably, to the Shinto ritual of sprinkling water on worshippers as an act of purification. Hence the 'nakedness' that is felt after such a cleansing ceremony.)

91

yūgure ya / ima ureru kusa wo / tobu hotaru
[evening ! / now sell grass (obj.) / fly fireflies]

the evening falls...
the grass has just been sold and
fireflies flit to it

1812

AUTUMN

92

mugi aki ya / kowo oinagara / iwashi uri
 [wheat autumn ! / child carry-on-back / sardines sells]

the wheat is ripening...
 with a baby on her back
 she sells her sardines

[?]

93

aki kaze ya / hotoke ni chikaki / toshi no hodo
 [autumn wind ! / deceased nearer / year at more]

the wind of autumn...
 and death draws ever closer
 with each passing year

1808

(a reference to his grandmother's death when he was fourteen. She had brought him up,
 and the event devastated him.)

94

aki kaze ya / hyoro-hyoro yama no / kagebôshi
 [autumn wind ! / tremble-tremble mountain of / shadow almost]

in the autumn wind...
 the shadow of the mountain
 is almost trembling

1814

36

95

aki kaze ya / mushiritagarishi / akai hana
 [autumn wind ! / pull up wanted to / red flower(s)]

the winds of autumn...
 and the scarlet flowers still there
 that she loved to pick

1819

(an allusion to the death of his much-loved daughter, Sato, composed scarcely a month
 after she died)

96

aki kaze ya / tani mukau yuku / kagebôshi
 [autumn wind ! / valley face go / shadows almost]

the wind of autumn...
 on the other side of the
 valley's cliff my shadow

1817

97

aki no kaze / issa kokoro ni / omou yô
 [autumn of wind / Issa heart-mind / having thoughts seem]

with the autumn wind
 the heart and mind of Issa
 seem to stir again

1825

37

98

aki no kaze / ware wa mairu wa / dono jigoku
[autumn of wind / I visit shrine / which hell]

the winds of autumn...
the grave I'm travelling towards
which hell will it be

1804

99

aki no ten / ko tori hitotsu no / hirogarinu
[autumn of sky / little bird one for / widening]

the skies of autumn
are stretching out into space
for one tiny bird **NOTE**

1808

100

aki no yama / hitotsu hitotsu ni / yûbe kana
[autumn in mountain(s) / one one / evening kana **NOTE**]

the autumn mountains
and upon each one of them
the evening now falls

1805

101

ao-zora ni / yubi de ji wo kaku / aki no kure
[blue sky in / finger with letter write / autumn at dusk]

in the clear blue sky
writing this with a finger...
'the dusk of autumn'

1814

102

ariake ya / mado kara ogamu / zenkôji
[dawn ! / window from worship / Zenko-temple]

dawn moon in autumn... **NOTE**
and from a window worship
at Zenko Temple

1816

103

dono hoshi no / shita ga waga ya / aki no kaze
[which star of / beneath my house ! / autumn of wind]

under which star then
is the place that I call home...
the winds of autumn

1806

SELECTED HAIKU

104

fue fuku ya / sude no yozamu ga / hajimaru to
 [flute blows ! / bare hand of cold night / begins and]

a flute is playing...
 and the bare hand of the night's
 coldness starts to bite

1815

105

furu ame ya / shiohi mot sui ni / kure no kane
 [falls rain ! / low-tide also last here / sunset's bell]

the rain is falling...
 the low-tide shell gatherers
 hear the sunset's bell

1804

106

furu kane ya / kasumeru koe mo / muzu kashiki
 [old bell ! / touch-lightly voice(s) also / intending announce-meals]

an old temple bell
 and voices calling meals all
 muffled far away

1812

40

SELECTED HAIKU

107

furusato wa / kumo no saki nari / aki no kure
 [native place ! / cloud(s) of end is / autumn's sunset]

my home village is
 far beyond those endless clouds...
 an autumn sunset

1827

108

furusato ya / yoru mo sawa[ru]mo / bara no hana
 [native place ! / draw near more touch-feel more / rose of blossom]

the closer I come
 to my home the more I feel
 the thorns of the rose

1810

109

hanashi suru / ippou wanete / yosamu kana
 [talk to do / one hands peaceful / night cold *kana* **NOTE**]

the one is talking
 the other's hands are sleeping...
 the cold of the night

1817

41

110

higurashi ya / tsui-tsui hoshi no / deru yô ni
[cicada ! / there-there star(s) of / appear night there]

a cicada chirrs...
there! and there! the stars of the night
begin to twinkle

1815

111

hitori-zutsu / mina sari ni keru / aki no kaze
[alone apiece / all after past / autumn of wind]

and so one by one
everyone has gone away...
the wind of autumn

1803

112

shini-gami ni / yori-nokosarete / aki no kure
[god death of / go over / autumn of dusk]

so the god of death
has now passed me by again...
this dusk in autumn

1819

113

hito tsuu no / mizu miteiru ya / aki no kure
[one of / water seeing ! / autumn's night]

and one cormorant
is watching now the water...
an autumn's evening

1803

114

hiya mizu ni / susuri kondaru / ama no gawa
[cold water / sip stars / sky of river]

in this cold water
I am sipping down the stars
of the Milky Way

1820

115

hitori na / wa waga hoshi naran / ama [no] kawa
[alone ! / me my star must / river of heaven]

that one by itself
must be my very own star...
the river of heaven

1802

(a reference to a popular belief that upon birth, each person is assigned a corres-ponding star in the heavens. The phrase 'river of heaven' refers to the Milky Way.)

116

hoshi nisae / aibe tsuri kuwa / ari ni keru
 [star(s) even / love bitter change also / be now]

even with the stars
 the bitter separations
 of love come to pass

1823

117

hota no hi ya / ito toru mado no / kagebōshi
 [kindling of fire / thread take window / shadow]

a fire of kindling...
 her shadow in the window
 is pulling at thread

1792

118

kazanari ni / tsue wo tsuki yo no / kagashi kana
 [decorate / cane moon night of / scarecrow kana **NOTE**]

and in the moonlight
 a scarecrow, a walking stick
 his decoration

1821

119

kiso yama ni / nagare iri keru / ama no gawa
 [Kiso Mount / stream entering / sky of river]

about Mount Kiso
 flow all the streaming stars of
 the Milky Way

1818

(the Kiso mountain range, its highest point reaching nearly 3000 metres/9700 feet, is known as the Central Alps of Japan.)

120

meigetsu no / aru ga ue ni mo / tamabi kana
 [harvest moon of / be above also / fireworks kana **NOTE**]

what could out-dazzle
 the harvest moon? could it be
 fireworks high up there?

1819

121

ishi-gawa wa / garari inazuma / sarari kana
 [stone river / suddenly lightning / flash I wonder]

Stone River's shallow
 waters lit up by sudden
 flashes of lightning

1819

122

meigetsu no / kokoro ni nareba / yo no akeru
 [harvest moon of / heart becomes / night of dawn]

the harvest moon... and
 when my heart begins to stir
 night turns into dawn

1798

123

meigetsu ya / matsu nai shima mo / atama kazu
 [harvest moon ! / pine-tree(s) have not island(s) also / head number]

harvest moon... even
 islands without any pines
 can be counted too

1815

(a haiku composed at Matsushima, a famously beautiful bay of Japan known for its pine islands)

124

mi no ue no / kane to shiritsutsu / yūgasumi
 [oneself of over of / bell knowing / evening mist]

knowing the tolling
 bell that rings our life away...
 the mists of evening

1820

125

mizuumi no / torori to kasumu / yo nari keri
 [water sea of / sleepy into grow hazy / evening is]

and now the lake is
 slowly lost in haze and mist
 as evening falls

[?]

126

naderareni / kitarishi shikaka / okaninaku
 [to be petted / come deer / hill-calling]

so have they come now
 to be stroked? the deer who are
 calling from the hill

1804

127

naka naka ni / hito to umarete / aki no kure
 [remarkable **NOTE** / human being to be born / autumn of sunset]

what a wondrous thing
 to have been born a being...
 autumn is ending

1811

128

naki-haha ya / umi miru tabi ni / miru tabi ni
 [weep mother ! / sea see time each / see time each]

dead mother I weep
 for you as I watch the sea...
 each time I watch it

1812

129

naku na mushi / wakaruru koi wa / hoshi ni sae
 [cry don't insect(s) / part love(rs) / star(s) even

ah insects, don't cry...
 for even among the stars
 lovers soon must part

1822

(an allusion to the festival of Tabanata, when two celestial lovers, the stars Altair and Vega, who have been separated by the Milky Way, cross its expanse to be together again.)

130

nikoniko / joukigennari / futa tsuboshi
 [with a smile / in high spirits / two stars]

with a beaming smile
 in high and gleeful spirits
 two stars shine away

1825

131

nishi yama ya / onore ga noru wa / dono kasumi
 [western mountain(s) ! / I am carried / which mist]

oh western mountains...
 when I am scattered abroad
 which mist will I ride?

1813

(an allusion to a hoped-for rebirth in Amida Buddha's Western Paradise. A number of Buddhist paintings depict Amida surrounded by saints riding clouds of mist.)

132

okuribi no / akari saki nari / sumida-gawa
 [bonfire of / light future be / Sumida river]

lit by the bright light
 of a bonfire for the dead...
 Sumida River

1815

133

okuribi ya / ima ni warera mo / ano tori
 [bonfire(s) ! / soon us also / that way]

bonfires for the dead...
 soon enough they'll be burning
 too for all of us

1827

134

okuribi ya / taku mane shite mo / aki [no] tsuyu
 [bonfire(s) ! / burn imitate to not one / autumn [of] dew]

like the dead's bonfires
 burning down to nothingness...
 the dew of autumn

1812

135

ô ganeni / bikutomosenu ya / hasu no tsuyu
 [big bell / retaining composure ! / lotus of dew]

and quite unperturbed
 by the sound of a great bell...
 dew on lotus flowers

1821

136

oya-zato wa / mienaku narite / aki no kaze
 [parent habitation / be in sight not / autumn of wind]

my own home village
 I can't see it any more...
 the winds of autumn

1825

137

ôyuki ya / ore ga ma ue no / ama no gawa
 [big snow ! / me just above / sky of river]

what a huge snowfall...
 I scan the sky above and
 see the Milky Way

1813

138

sato no hi no / furumeka shitaru / tsuki yo kana
 [village of fire(s) ! / age-old being / moon night *kana* **NOTE**]

fires of the village
 have burned since ancient times... the
 moon lights up the night

1805

139

shini kane to / kiku sae nora no / kasumi kana
 [death bell and / hear even field of / haze *kana* **NOTE**]

is it a death bell
 that can now be heard across
 fields of haze and mist

1811

140

shira ishi no / shiroki kokoro no / tsukimi kana
 [white stone of / white heart of / viewing the moon *kana* **NOTE**]

into the white rock's
 whitest heart... and I sit here
 gazing at the moon

1803

(an allusion to a classical Chinese poem, *Yang zhi shui*, the opening lines of which evoke a white rock drilling down into turbulent waters below)

141

shiranami ni / yoru wa modoru ka / tōgasumi
 [whitecaps / evening returns ? / far mist]

in white-crested waves
 do you come back, far-off mist,
 at evening time

1792

142

samui hodo / kasuba nurashite / tōro kana
 [cold almost / blades of grass soak / lantern(s) *kana* **NOTE**]

it is getting cold
 the grass is wet and soaking...
 lanterns for the dead

1805

143

nemuri samete / yagi no shizuku / kiku yo kana
 [sleep waking / willow of dripping / hear night *kana* **NOTE**]

awakened from sleep...
 the drip-dripping through the night
 of the willow tree

[?]

144

shizukasa ya / toyama no hanabi / mizu wo tobu
 [quiet ! / nearby mountain of fireworks / water jump]

the utter silence...
 then mountain fireworks cascade
 down into water

[?]

145

sode kara mo / kiri tachi-noboru / yamaji kana
 [sleeve from even / fog rise up / mountain road *kana* **NOTE**]

even from my sleeves
 the fog appears to rise up
 on this mountain path

1813

146

sumi no hi ni / tsuki ochi karasu / naki ni keru
 [charcoal of fire / moon come down crow / cry-caw]

by the charcoal fire
 after the moon has gone down
 the crows start cawing

1822

147

sumi no hi ya / yowai no heru mo / nu tori
 [charcoal of fire ! / age of passing / that like]

dying charcoal fire...
 dwindling into one's old age
 is not unlike that

1820

148

tenohira ni / ai some konde / yosamu kana
 [palm of hand / blue dyeing / cold night **kana NOTE**]

dyeing both my hands
 with the blue of indigo...
 so cold is the night

1817

149

tôyama ga / medamani utsuru / tonbo kana
 [distant mountain(s) / eye(s) reflected / dragonfly **kana NOTE**]

the far-off mountains
 are reflected in the eyes
 of a dragonfly

1820

150

tsune ni utsu / rin nari nagara / aki no kaze
 [always striking / bell ringing while / autumn of wind]

a bell is clanging
 and keeps on clanging, clanging...
 the wind of autumn

1825

151

tsuyu chiru ya / jigoku no tane wo / kyô mo maku
 [dew fall ! / hell of seed(s) / today scatter]

the dew dissolving...
 and seeds of hell are scattered
 here again today

1814

152

tsuyu no tama / hitotsu hitotsu ni / farusato ari
 [dew of beads / one one / am home]

the beads of dewdrops...
 in each single one of them
 I see my home

[?]

153

tsuyu no tama / tsumande mitaru / warabe kana
 [dew of beads / pick up trying / child *kana* **NOTE**]

trying to pick up
 the beads of every dewdrop...
 ah this little child

1819

154

tsuyu no yo no / tsuyu no naka ite / kenka kana
 [dew of world of / dew of inside at / quarrel *kana* **NOTE**]

amid the dewdrops
 of this dewdrop world... still time
 to pick a quarrel

1810

(a probable allusion to the inheritance dispute that Issa had with his half-brother and stepmother)

155

tsuyu no yo wa / tsuyu no yo nagara / sari nagara
 [dew of world / dew of world only / pass but yet]

this world of dew is
 only a world of dew
 and yet... oh and yet...

1819

(a renowned haiku on the death of his young daughter, Sato)

156

utsukushi ya / shoji no ana no / ama no gawa
 [beautiful ! / paper door of hole in / sky of river]

how lovely it is...
 through the torn paper window
 the river of heaven

1813

157

waga hoshi wa / doko ni tabine ya / ama no gawa
 [my star / where overnight stay ! / sky of river]

so where will my star
 find its bed for the night... ah
 the river of heaven

1803

158

waga io ya / kawazu shote kara / oi wo naku
 [my house ! / frog(s) beginning from / old age weep]

from the beginning
 the frogs round my house have sung
 'we are growing old'

1811

159

waga ueshi / matsu mo oikeri / aki no kure
 [I-me planted / pine tree also aged / autumn of end]

even the pine tree
 that I planted now grows old...
 the autumn's ending

1803

160

ware wo miru / sugata mo miete / usu-gasumi
 [me look at / shape be in sight / thin mist]

that shape's watching me
 just as I am watching it
 through the pale thin mist

1822

161

yama momiji / ihiri wo sora e / kaesu kana
 [mountain's autumn colours / setting sun sky / send back *kana* **NOTE**]

the mountain's red leaves
 reflect the setting sun back
 into the heavens **NOTE**

1792

162

yokagura ya / takibi no naka e / chiru momiji
 [night Shinto dance ! / bonfire(s) of into / fall autumn leaves]

Shinto dance at night...
 and into the bonfires fall
 the red autumn leaves

1815

163

ariake ya / tsuki yori maruki / sute kôri
[dawn ! / moon as round / throw-away ice]

look, the dawn is here...
I toss away the ice that's
as round as the moon

1813

WINTER

164

fue pii-pii / tsue mo kachi=kachi / fuyu no tsuki
[flute trills / cane also click-clack / winter of moon]

a toy flute trilling
and then a cane click-clacking...
the moon of winter

1816

165

hatsu yuki ya / toaru kokage no / kagura-bue
[first snow ! / certain shade of tree / music]

the first snow has come...
and in the shade of a tree
a Shinto flute plays

1813

166

fundoshi ni / wakizashi sashite / fuyu no tsuki
 [underwear there ! / short-sword latching on to / winter of moon]

and with a dagger
 worn hidden in a loincloth...
 the moon of winter

1816

167

gokuraku no / michi ga chikayoru / samu[sa] kana
 [paradise of / road approaches / coldness kana **NOTE**]

coming closer is
 the road to my paradise...
 but the winter cold

1822

168

io no yo wa / shinsoku samushi / shin-shin to
 [hut of night ! / swift cold / body-pierces]

a night in the hut...
 the cold pierces so swiftly
 to the very bone

1817

169

shin-shin to / shinsoku samushi / shin bôzu
 [body-pierces / swift cold / cold priest]

piercing so quickly
 cold runs to the very bone
 of the shivering priest

1817

170

kane no koe / mizutori no koe / yo wa kuraki
 [bell of voice / waterfowl of voice / night dark]

the sound of a bell
 a cry from the waterbirds...
 and the night darkens

[?]

171

shigururu ya / yami no zuboshi wo / kari no naku
 [rain winter ! / darkness of bull's-eye / wild goose of crying]

through the winter rain
 towards the heart of darkness...
 the wild geese honking

1812

172

kita shigure / hi wo taku kao no / kinakusaki
 [north shower of rain / fire burn face of / burning smell]

a cold northern rain...
 the face of the fire-starter
 has a burning smell

1803

173

otoroe ya / hota orikaneru / hizagashira
 [weakening / kindling breaking not / kneecaps]

old and enfeebled...
 unable to break firewood
 over my knees

[?]

174

mappiru no / kusa ni furu nari / tabira yuki
 [broad daylight of / grass fall be / light snow]

on to the grasses
 at high noon there falls down now
 a dusting of snow

1803

175

kore ga maa / tsui no sumika ka / yuki go shaku
 [this just / die of house / snow five feet]

so is this the house
 where I will die... and under
 now five feet of snow

1812

(viewed as Issa's death verse, this haiku was etched on his gravestone)

176

samu-zora no / dokode toshiyoru / tabi kojiki
 [cold sky of / where so grow old / travel beggar]

a cold winter sky...
 and where will this wandering
 beggar now grow old

1824

177

tada o[re]ba / oru tote yuki no / furi ni keru
 [only to be / be even snow of / snowfall]

so just by being
 I continue to exist...
 the snow falling down

1805

178

tarai kara / tarai ni utsuru / chimpunkan
 [tub from / tub to reflecting / not understandable]

cleaned up when you're born
 cleaned up when you die... what a
 nonsense it all is

1827

(Issa's last poem, found under the pillow of his death-bed. The references are, of course, to the washing of a new-born child and the final washing of a corpse.)

179

tenugui no / nejit tama mano / koari kana
 [hand towel of / wrung pile just / freeze kana NOTE]

look... a hand towel
 its pile wrung out and twisted
 and now frozen stiff

1823

180

tôyama ni / nobi ga tsuita zo / hatsu shigure
 [nearby mountain(s) / fire arrive ! / first drizzle]

the brush fires set
 alight the nearby mountains...
 first rain of winter

1820

181

tsugi no ma no / andon de neru / yozamu kana
 [next of room of / lantern by go-to-bed / night cold kana NOTE]

by the lamplight of
 the next room I fall asleep...
 the night is so cold

[?]

182

umi oto wa / hei no kita nari / noru no yuki
 [sea sound ! / fence of north ring / night of snow]

the sound of the waves
 crashing down north of the wall...
 there will be night snow

1803

183

waga sato no / kane ya kikiran / yuki no soko
 [my village of / bell ! heard / snow of bottom-there]

my village bell rings...
 perhaps I can hear it now
 from deep in the snow

1813

184

yamadera ya / yuki no soko naru / kane no koe
 [mountain temple ! / snow of bottom-there sound / bell of voice]

a mountain temple...
 from deep beneath the snow sounds
 the voice of a bell

1790

185

yama ni yuki / furu tote mimi no / nari ni keru
 [mountain snow / fall even-if ear(s) of / ring]

the snow has fallen
 on the mountain and my ears
 have begun to ring

1814

186

yamazato ya / yozamu [no] yoi no / arukizuki
 [mountain village ! / cold night [of] / late evening of night-walker]

a mountain village...
 it's a cold night for one who
 loves to walk at night

1806

187

yami no yo no / hatsu yuki rashi ya / bon no kubo
 [dark of night / of first snow seem ! / on neck]

in the dark of night
 the first snowflakes so it seems
 fall upon my neck

1818

188

yase-zune ya / arashi kogarashi / mika no tsuki
 [thin legs ! / storm cold-winty-wind / three-day of moon]

these thin legs of mine...
 cold and stormy winter's wind
 and a sickle moon

1815

189

yoru no yuki / damatte tôru / hito mo ari
 [night of snow / to-be-silent take/ person-people mourning are]

a night of the snow...
 and silently people are
 passing in mourning

1805

190

yûgure ya / kasumu nake yori / mujô-gane
 [evening ! / hazy inside from / passing though]

and from deep inside
 the evening mist the bell of
 life still passing now

1810

191

yo no waka wa / jigoku no ue no / hanami kana
 [world of among I-we / hell of roof of / flowers kana **NOTE**]

through all this wide world
 we walk on the roof of hell
 gazing at flowers

1812

192

waranbe wa / magane ni shitaru / kôri kana
 [child ! / spectacles turn-make-into / ice kana **NOTE**]

look! a tiny child
 who's using this ice to make
 into spectacles

1822

193

yûkaze ya / yashiro no tsurara / hi no utsuru
 [night wind ! / shrine of icicles / light of reflecting]

a night of the wind...
 the icicles in the shrine
 reflect the lights of prayer

1792

194

yuki no michi / kata kata tokete / yami ni keru
 [snow of road / one (of a pair) melt / darkness]

it's a snowy road
 and on one side it melts down
 into a darkness

1819

195

yû yama ya / itsu made samui / kaze no fuku
 [evening mountain ! / how-long until cold / wind of blow]

ah evening mountain...
 how long will it take to pass
 this cold wind's blast

1799

196

utsukushi ya / toshi kurekirishi / yoru no sora
 [beauty ! / year come-to-an-end / night of sky]

ah how beautiful...
 the year's last moment... gone...
 but the night sky... there...

1825

197

ôtoshi ya / waga shinidoko no / kane mo naru
 [conclusion ! / my death-place / bell mourning sound]

the end of the year...
 and the bell of my death place
 is tolling as well

1805

198

furu yuki no / nake mo haru kaze / fuki ni keru
 [fell snow ! / while also spring breeze / unexpected]

the snow is falling
 yet through it there still whispers
 a breath of the spring

1818

199

hiiragi ni / chotto haru tatsu / tsuki yo kana
 [holly bush / a-little spring rise / moon night kana **NOTE**]

in a holly bush
 a touch of spring is visible...
 on this moonlit night

1816

200

haikai wo / mamorase tamae / yuki-botoke
 haikai / protect please / snow-Buddha

haiku poetry...
 I beg you to protect it
 my Buddha of snow

1815

(Issa's plea that haiku and, by extension, poetry in general be kept safe from whatever may harm or diminish it is a fitting conclusion to this translation.)

NOTES

The following notes address particular ‘knots’ of translation or other points of interest in translating Issa’s Japanese into English. Numerals indicate the position of the haiku in the sequence above.

6 and *passim*,

kana

the word *kana* concludes no fewer than 34 of the haiku in this selection, and is a Japanese particle of considerable subtlety. Its effect is to introduce a sense of wondering, or questioning, or relative uncertainty, into the situation or scene being described. For first-person utterances, the nearest equivalent might be ‘I wonder’, or ‘I suppose’, or indeed a question: ‘should I?’, ‘could I?’, ‘might I?’ and so forth. It follows that there is no single word in English that can consistently convey the resonance of the word in Japanese. Here, its inflections are sometimes suggested by words like ‘seems’ or ‘appears’, sometimes by main verbs being omitted, or by present participles taking the place of main verbs, or by conditional tenses, or by typographical devices such as ellipses (...). All of these features signal a subtle hesitancy of tone and perception, which is what *kana* conveys in Issa’s original text. **RETURN**

31

toyama / close to the mountain

there is a debate whether *toyama* is the name of a specific mountain, or whether the word denotes any mountain located near a village. A further ambiguity is whether the white clouds are creeping through the cherry blossom that is close to the mountain, or whether the mountain itself is creeping through the blossom in a white cloud. Any translation is at best tentative. **RETURN**

99

hirogarinu / stretching out

there is an ambiguity here about whether *hirogarinu* refers to the little bird or to the sky. An initial, natural response would be that it is the bird that stretches out its wings as it takes off in flight. But the commentator Shinji Ogawa prefers to apply the word to the autumn sky itself. Behind the haiku, he argues, lies a Japanese concept that the autumn sky is vaster

than the skies of other seasons. Here, it is widening out in supportive freedom to even a tiny bird. **RETURN**

102**ariake / dawn moon in autumn**

ariake literally means 'dawn', but is to be understood here as a shortened form of *ariakezuki* = 'a full moon at dawn'. In the seasonal reference system underpinning haiku, the full moon suggests autumn. **RETURN**

127**naka naka ni / remarkable**

one of the most enigmatic of all Issa's haiku, because of the ambiguity of the phrase *naka naka ni*. The words can either connote something 'quite remarkable', 'excellent', 'wonderful', or from the root meaning of *naka* = middle, connote something 'average', 'so-so', 'fair to middling'. Much depends upon the tone of voice that is heard. Is it celebratory, deeply ironic, or baldly matter-of-fact? I have chosen the word 'wondrous' at the positive end of this spectrum, though even that term could be read in ironic tones. **RETURN**

161**ihiri wo sora e kaesu / reflect the setting sun back into the heavens**

literally, Issa says that the autumn foliage 'sends back the setting sun to the sky.' One reading could be that the red leaves on the mountain retain the intensity of sunset, and make it look as if the sun is setting once again. Another could be that the sun is setting *behind* the mountain, and that the translucence of the red leaves makes them seem to be on fire. A third – the reading adopted here – has the leaves reflecting the rays of the evening sun back into the sky, which is why the sky glows so red.

RETURN

FURTHER READING AND LINKS

The literature concerned with Issa's work, in both printed and on-line form, is very considerable indeed, and of necessity, the following bibliography focuses exclusively upon material that is central to the issue of translating his works into English. Several of the translators and commentators below, however, have written about other important aspects of Issa's life and work.

Japanese text

Kyōikukai Shinano (ed.) *Issa zenshū*, 9 vols. Nagano: Shinano mainichi shinbunsha, 1976-80.

Translations into English

Robert Bly *Ten Poems of Issa*. Moose Lake, Minn.: Robert Bly, 1969.

R.H. Blyth *Haiku*. 4 vols. Tokyo: Hokuseido, 1949-52.

_____ *A History of Haiku*. 2 vols. Hokuseido, 1964.

Faubion Bowers *The Classic Tradition of Haiku: an Anthology*. Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 1996.

Steven D. Carter *Traditional Japanese Poetry: an Anthology*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991.

Cid Corman *Born of a Dream: 50 Haiku by Bashō, Buson, Taigi, Issa, Shiki*. Frankfort, Ky.: Gnomon Press, 1988.

Matthew Gollub *Cool Melons – Turn to Frogs: the Life and Poems of Issa*. New York: Lee and Low Books, 1998.

FURTHER READING AND LINKS

- Sam Hamill *The Spring of my Life, and Selected Haiku.* Boston and London: Shambhala Publications, 1997.
- Robert Hass *The Essential Haiku: Versions of Bashō, Buson & Issa.* New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994 [republished Tarsset, Northumberland: Blookaxe Books, 2013].
- Harold G. Henderson *An Introduction to Haiku.* Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1958.
- William J. Higginson *The Haiku Handbook.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985.
- Adam L. Kern *The Penguin Book of Haiku.* Penguin Classics, 2018.
- David G. Lanoue *Issa: Cup-of-Tea Poems.* Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1991.
- _____ *Issa's Best: a Translator's Selection of Master Haiku.* New Orleans: HaikuGuy.com, 2012.
- _____ *A Taste of Issa: Haiku.* New Orleans: Haikuguy.com, 2019.
- _____ *The Haiku of Kobayashi Issa,* at www.HaikuGuy.com [a searchable web archive of 10,000 haiku by Issa with commentary].
- Lewis Mackenzie *Autumn Wind Haiku: Selected Poems.* London: John Murray, 1957. [republished as *The Autumn Wind.* Toyko and New York, 1984].
- Yuzuru Miura *Classic Haiku: a Master's Selection.* Rutland, VT and Toyko, Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1991.

FURTHER READING AND LINKS

- Takafumi Saito, and William R. Nelson *1020 Haiku in Translation: the Heart of Basho, Buson and Issa.* North Charleston, South Carolina: BookSurge LLC, 2006.
- Nanao Sakaki *Inch by Inch: 45 Haiku by Issa.* Albuquerque: La Alameda Press, 1999.
- Hiroaki Sato, and Burton Watson *From the Country of Eight Islands: an Anthology of Japanese Poetry.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981.
- Lucien Stryk *The Dumpling Field: Haiku of Issa.* Athens, Ohio: Swallow Press/Ohio University Press, 1991.
- C.K. Williams *The Lark, the Thrush, and the Starling: Poems from Issa.* Providence, R.I.: Buring Deck Press, 1983.
- Nobuyuki Yuasa *The Year of My Life: a Translation of Issa's Oraga Haru.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960.

Commentaries in English

- David G. Lanoue *Write like Issa: a Haiku How-to.* New Orleans, HaikuGuy.com, 2017.
- Makoto Ueda *Dew on the Grass: The Life and Poetry of Kobayashi Issa.* Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004.

INDEX

The following list presents the two hundred haiku in this translation in their Romaji alphabetical order, with their date of composition, the season they evoke, and their position in the sequence. Square brackets indicate a tentative ascription.

	DATE	SEASON	POSITION
akegata ya awase wo tôsu matsu no tsuki	1812	SUMMER	54
ake yasuki yami no kosumi no yanagi kana	1810	SUMMER	55
aki kaze ya hotoke ni chikaki toshi no hodo	1808	AUTUMN	93
aki kaze ya hyoro-hyoro yama no kagebôsi	1814	AUTUMN	94
aki kaze ya mushiritagarishi akai hana	1819	AUTUMN	95
aki kaze ya tani mukau yuku kagebôshi	1817	AUTUMN	96
aki no kaze issa kokoro ni omou yô	1825	AUTUMN	97
aki no kaze ware wa mairu wa dono jigoku	1804	AUTUMN	98
aki no ten ko tori hitotsu no hirogarinu	1808	AUTUMN	99
aki no yama hitotsu hitotsu ni yûbe kana	1805	AUTUMN	100
amadare no ariake tsuki ya kaeru kari	1803	SPRING	3
ame san tsubu ten kara doyô mimai kana	[?]	SUMMER	57
ao-zora ni yubi de ji wo kaku aki no kure	1814	AUTUMN	101
ao-zora no yôna katabira kitari keru	1812	SUMMER	58
ariake ya mado kara ogamu zenkôji	1816	AUTUMN	102
ariake ya tsuki yori maruki sute kôri	1813	WINTER	163
asagi chô areba asagi no sakura kana	1821	[SPRING]	19
assari to haru wa ki ni keru asagir-zora	1814	SPRING	14
chichi arite akebono mitashi aodabara	1801	[SUMMER]	56
dono hoshi no shita ga waga ya zo aki no kaze	1806	AUTUMN	103
fue fuke ya sude no yozamu ga hajimaru to	1815	[AUTUMN]	104
fue pii-pii tsue mo kachi-kachi fuyu no tsuki	1816	WINTER	164
fundoshi ni wakizashi fuyu no tsuki	1816	WINTER	166
furu ame ni hitori nokori shi hana no kage	1804	[SPRING]	35
furu ame ya shiohi mot sui ni kure no kane	1804	[AUTUMN]	105
furu kane ya kasumeru koe mo muzu kashiki	1812	[AUTUMN]	106
furusato ya yoru mo sawa[ru]mo bara no hana	1810	[AUTUMN]	108
furusato wa kumo no saki nari aki no kure	1827	AUTUMN	107
furuyuki no naka mo haru kaze fukinikeri	1818	WINTER	198
fushigi nari umareta ie de kesa no haru	[?]	SPRING	5

ganjitsu ya kurai uchi kara neko no koi	1825	[SPRING]	9
gokurako no michi ga chikayoru samu[sa] kana	1822	WINTER	167
haikai wo mamorase tamae yuki-botoke	1815	[WINTER]	200
hakusan no yuki kira-kira to atsusa kana	1819	SUMMER	60
hanashi suru ippou wanete yosamu kana	1817	AUTUMN	109
haru kaze ya haya kage tsukuru kakitsubata	1810	SPRING	16
haru kaze ya nomichi no tsuzuku asagi-gasa	1826	SPRING	15
haru no kaze itsuka detearu hirunotsuki	1812	SPRING	13
haru no tsuki sawaraba shizuku tarinubeshi	1805	SPRING	47
haru same ya yabu ni fukaruru sute-tegami	1817	SPRING	38
hatsu niiji ya hidari mugi nishi yuki no yama	1824	SPRING	10
hatsu yuki ya toaru kokage no kagura-bue	1813	WINTER	165
haya sabishi asagao maku to yu hatake	[?]	[SPRING]	39
higurashi ya tsui-tsui hoshi no deru yô ni	1815	AUTUMN	110
hiiragi ni chotto haru tatsu tsuki yo kana	1816	WINTER	199
hito no nasu tsumiyori hikushi kumo no mine	1826	SUMMER	62
hitori no wa waga hoshi naran ama [no] kawa	1802	[AUTUMN]	115
hitori-zutsu mina sari ni keru aki no kaze	1803	AUTUMN	111
hito tsuu no mizu miteiru ya aki no kure	1803	AUTUMN	113
hiya mizu ni susuri kondaru ama no gawa	1820	AUTUMN	114
hoshi nisae aibe tsuri kuwa ari ni keru	1823	AUTUMN	116
hota no hi ya ito toru mado no kagebôshi	1792	[AUTUMN]	117
ikite iru bakari zo ware to heshi [no] hana	1810	SUMMER	63
imasara ni wakare tomonashi harugasumi	1799	SPRING	40
io no yow a shinsoku samushi shin-shin to	1817	WINTER	168
iriai wa kawazu no me ni mo namida kana	1805	[SPRING]	42
ishi-gawa ya ariake tsuki to hiyashi uri	1813	SUMMER	64
ishi-gawa wa garari inazuma sarari kana	1819	[AUTUMN]	121
kado-guchi ni yu wo makichirasu yûsuzumi	1823	[SUMMER]	83
kaeru kari umaya no ando kasumu nari	1803	SPRING	27
kagerô ni shiki-i wo koeru asahi kana	1793	SPRING	7
kagerô ya takigi no yama no yukinadare	1825	SPRING	49
kaji no oto wa mimi wo hanarezu hoshi ko yoi	1803	[SUMMER]	65
kakurega ya tsuki sasazu to mo waku shimizu	1804	[SUMMER]	85
kaminari no hikaru naka yori haru no yuki	1822	SPRING	51
kane no koe mizutori no koe yo wa kuraki	[?]	WINTER	170
katatsuburi sorosoro nobore fugi no yama	1823	SUMMER	66
kazagumo ya yakeno no hi yori hi no kururu	[?]	SPRING	50
kazanari ni tsue wo tsuki yo no kagashi kana	1821	AUTUMN	118
kiso yama ya nagare iri keru ama no gawa	1818	AUTUMN	119
kita shigure hi wo taku kao no kinakusaki	1803	WINTER	172
kogakure [no] ie mappiru no tobu hotaru	1824	SUMMER	67
konrinzai konu furi wo shite kari ta chinu	1814	SPRING	26
kore dekoso noboru kaiari yamazakura	1795	SPRING	33
kore ga maa tsui no sumika ka yuki go shaku	1812	WINTER	175
ku no shaba ya sakura ga sakeba saita tote	1819	SPRING	36

kyô no yo ya shiroi katabira shiroi-gasa	1819	SUMMER	68
makura suru kaina ni chô netari keru	1820	SPRING	18
mappiru no kusa ni furu nari tabira yuki	1803	WINTER	174
mata hitotsu yama wo yaku nari oboro nari	1805	SPRING	48
matsushima ya kasumi wa kurete naku hibari	1818	SPRING	23
matsushima no ko sumi wa kurete naku hibari	1819	SPRING	24
meigetsu no aru ga ue ni mo tamabi kana	1819	AUTUMN	120
meigetsu no kokoro ni nareba yo no akeru	1798	AUTUMN	122
meigetsu ya matsu nai shima moa tam kazu	1815	AUTUMN	123
mi no ue no kane to mo shiritsutsu yûgasami	1820	AUTUMN	124
mizuumi no torori to kasumu yo nari keru	[?]	[AUTUMN]	125
mugi aki ya kowo oinagara iwashi uri	[?]	[AUTUMN]	92
naderareni hitarishi shikaka okaninaku	1804	AUTUMN	126
naka naka ni hito to umarete aki no kure	1811	AUTUMN	127
naki-haha ya umi miru tabi ni miru tabi ni	1812	[AUTUMN]	128
naku hibari hito no kao kara hi no kururu	1804	SPRING	25
naku na kari dokko mo onaji ukiyo zo ya	[?]	SPRING	28
naku na mushi wakaruru koi wa hoshi ni sae	1822	AUTUMN	129
nano hana no toppa zure nari fugi no yama	1812	SPRING	12
natsu no yo ya kawabe no tsuki mo ima mikka	1790s	SUMMER	69
natsu yama ya hito ashi zutsu ni umi miyuru	1803	SUMMER	70
natsu yama ni aranta yôna hi no de kana	1800	SUMMER	71
nedoko miru hodo wa u no hana tsuki yo kana	1819	SUMMER	72
nemuri samete yagi no shizuku kiku yo kana	[?]	[AUTUMN]	143
ne narande ko chô uto neko to oshô kana	1821	SPRING	20
netse sukeshi kono snetakuya natsuno tsuki	[?]	SUMMER	73
nete okite ô-akubi shite neko no koi	[?]	SPRING	8
nikoniko joukigennari futa tsuboshi	1825	AUTUMN	130
nishi yama ya onore ga noru wa dono kasumi	1813	[AUTUMN]	131
oboro-oboro fumeba mizu nari mayoi michi	1793	SPRING	44
oboro yo ya amano ongaku kikishi hito	1819	SPRING	46
okuribi no akari saki nari sumida-gawa	1815	AUTUMN	132
okuribi ya ima ni warera moa no tori	1827	AUTUMN	133
okuribi ya taku mane shite mo aki [no] tsuyu	1812	AUTUMN	134
ôbotaru yurari yurari to tôrikeri	1819	SUMMER	74
ô ganeni bikutomosenu ya hasu no tsuyu	1821	AUTUMN	135
otoroe ya hota orikaneru hizagashira	[?]	WINTER	173
ôtoshi ya waga shinidoko no kane mo naru	1805	WINTER	197
oya-zato wa mienaku narite aki no kaze	1825	AUTUMN	136
ôyuki ya ore ga ma ue no ama no gawa	1813	AUTUMN	137
rokugatsu mo sozoro ni samushi toki no koe	1823	SUMMER	75
samui hodo kusaba nurashite tôro kana	1805	AUTUMN	142
samu-zora no dokode toshiyoru tabi kojiki	1824	WINTER	176
saraba saraba no te no kakaru kasumu kana	[?]	SPRING	41

INDEX

sashi yanagi hotaru tobu yo to nari ni keru	1811	SUMMER	76
sato no hi no furumekashitaru tsuki yo kana	1805	[AUTUMN]	138
satsuki ame yoru no yamada no hito no koe	1790s	SUMMER	77
shigururu ya yami no zuboshi wo kari no naku	1812	WINTER	171
shini-gami ni yori no kosarete aki no kure	1819	AUTUMN	112
shin-shin to skinsoko samushi shin bôzu	1817	WINTER	169
shira-gumo no sakura wo kuguru toyama kana	1792	SPRING	31
shira ishi no shiroki kokoro no tsukimi kana	1803	[AUTUMN]	140
shiranami ni yoru wa modoru ka tógasumi	1792	[AUTUMN]	141
shira tsuyu ni kata sode samuki asahi kana	1790s	[SPRING]	6
shirauo no dotto umaruru oboro kana	1808	SPRING	45
shiro-gasa ya asagi no kasa ya higashi yama	1825	SUMMER	78
shiro mizu no hata e nagarete haru no tsuki	1814	SPRING	37
shirotae no sô shirotae no ume no hana	1804	SPRING	30
shizukasa ya kosui no soko no kumo no mine	1792	SUMMER	61
shizukasa ya toyama no hanabi mizu wo tobu	[?]	AUTUMN	144
sode kara mo kiri tachi-noboru yamaji kana	1813	AUTUMN	145
soko fumu na yûbe hotaru no itâtari	1821	SUMMER	79
sou ninaru kono utsukushi ya keshi no hana	1821	SUMMER	80
sumi no hi ni tsuki ochi karasu naki ni keru	1822	[AUTUMN]	146
sumi no hi ya yowai no heru mo no tori	1820	[AUTUMN]	147
su no tori no kuchiaku hô ya kure no kane	1804	[SPRING]	29
suzukaze no magari kunette kitari keru	1815	SUMMER	81
suzushisa ya yo mizu no kakaru ido no oto	1823	[SUMMER]	82
tada o[re]ba oru tote yuki no furi ni keru	1805	WINTER	177
taikaiwo tede sukuitsatsu yûsuzumi	1818	SUMMER	86
taki keburu sobade mitesae hananokumo	1814	SPRING	32
taki keburu tamato ni hairu awase kana	1813	SUMMER	87
tarai kara tarai ni utsuru chaimpungan	1827	WINTER	178
tenohira ni ai some konde yozamu kana	1817	AUTUMN	148
te to todoku yama no irihi ya haru no chô	1804	SPRING	21
tenugui no nejit tama mano koari kana	1823	WINTER	179
tôyama ga medamani utsuru tonbo kana	1820	AUTUMN	149
tôyama ni nobi ga tsuita zo hatsu shigure	1820	WINTER	180
tsugi no ma no andon de neru yozamu kana	[?]	WINTER	181
tsune ni utsu rin nari nagara aki no kaze	1825	AUTUMN	150
tsuyu chiru ya jigoku no tane wo kyo mo maku	1814	AUTUMN	151
tsuyu no tama hitotsu hitotsu ni furusato ari	[?]	AUTUMN	152
tsuyu no tama tsumande mitaru warabekana	1819	AUTUMN	153
tsuyu no yo no tsuyu no naka nite kenka kana	[?]	AUTUMN	154
tsuyu no yo wa tsuyu no yo nagara sari nagara	1819	AUTUMN	155
uchi-tokuru mare no hito yo ya fuji no yuki	1792	[SPRING]	11
uguisu no i na naki yô mo kesa no haru	1819	SPRING	2
uguisu no kuru kageboshi mom ado no haru	1820	SPRING	1
umi oto wa hei no kita nari yoru no yuki	1803	WINTER	182
uso-uso to ame furu naka wo haru no chô	1804	SPRING	17
utsukushi ya hibari no nakushi ato no sora	1812	SPRING	22

INDEX

utsukushi ya shoji no ana no ama no gawa	1813	AUTUMN	156
utsukushi ya toshi kurekirishi yoru no sora	1825	WINTER	196
waga hoshi wa doko ni tabine ya ama no gawa	1803	AUTUMN	157
waga io ya kawazu shote kara oi wo naku	1811	[AUTUMN]	158
waga sato no kane ya kikuran yuki no soko	1813	WINTER	183
waga ueshi matsu mo oikeri aki no kure	1803	AUTUMN	159
warenbe wa megane ni shitaru kôri kana	1822	WINTER	192
ware wo miru sugata mo miete usu-gasumi	1822	[AUTUMN]	160
ya-kage yuku hito no shirosa ya natsu no tsuki	1790s	SUMMER	88
yamadera ya yuki no soko naru kane no koe	1790	WINTER	184
yama momiji irihi wo sora e kaesu kana	1792	AUTUMN	161
yama ni yuki furu tote mimi no nari ni keru	1814	[WINTER]	184
yamazato ya yozamu [no] yoi no arukizuki	1806	[WINTER]	186
yama yaki no akari ni kudaru yobune kana	1818	[SPRING]	53
yami no yo no hatsu yuki rashi ya bon no kubo	1818	WINTER	187
yase-zune ya arashi kogarashi mika no tsuki	1815	WINTER	188
yoakete mo oboro nari keru sumida-gawa	1805	SPRING	4
yoigoshi no cha mizu akari ya katatsuburi	1804	[SUMMER]	84
yokagura ya takibi no naka e chiru momiji	1815	AUTUMN	162
yo no naka wa jigoku no ue no hanami kana	1812	WINTER	191
yo no tsmaru tôte mo sagary tsuki yo kana	1811	SUMMER	89
yoru no yuki damatte tôru hito mo ari	1805	WINTER	189
yudachi ya hadaka de norishi hadaka uma	1825	SUMMER	90
yûgure ya ima ureru kusa wo tobu hotaru	1812	SUMMER	91
yûgure ya kasumu naka yori mujô-gane	1810	[WINTER]	190
yûkaze ya yashiro no tsurara hi no utsuru	1792	WINTER	193
yuki-guni no yuki iwaw hi ya asagi-zora	1812	SUMMER	59
yuki no michi kata kata tokete yami ni keru	1819	WINTER	194
yuku haru no sora wa kuragari tôte kana	1806	SPRING	52
yû yama ya itsu made samui kaze no fuku	1799	[WINTER]	195
yu-zakura kyô mo mukashi ni nari ni keru	[?]	SPRING	34