ONE HUNDRED BRIDGES, ONE HUNDRED TRADITIONS IN HAiku

Charles Trumbull

INTRODUCTION
This essay delineates significant differences between English-language, especially American, haiku and haiku made by poets in other languages and cultures. We also offer some suggestions as to why foreign-language haiku often seem to us so … well … foreign.

Consider the following haiku from the past few years. You may enjoy trying to guess where or in what haiku tradition they were written (the answers appear in an endnote).

1. Snow clad mountains shine,
   while interacting with moon;
   wolves on walk to dine!
2. Blue and dark blue
   encircle the whole island
   high tide is coming

3. a drunkard
   hides his watery eyes
   in the seawater
4. in the old temple
   it could be I prayed
   without knowing

These verses were selected to introduce our essay because they are representative of works from non-English haiku traditions. All are prize-winners or published in respected journals; however, we submit, they bear little resemblance to the kind of haiku usually published in English-language journals and honored in our contests.

Why is this so? Each country or language culture discovered haiku in a unique way, and this very fact goes a long way toward explaining the differences. After reviewing the progression of events that resulted in the “opening,” haiku-wise, of Japan to the West and the milestones in Anglo-American haiku history, we will treat the development of haiku in four key cultures, roughly in the chronological order of their discovery of haiku—Hispanic America, France, Russia, and Brazil—and point out some of the literary and historical peculiarities of each. Then we’ll try to draw it all together by suggesting that the sturdy bridge that was constructed by the likes of Harold Henderson, R.H. Blyth, and Alan Watts is by far not the only—and maybe not even the best—way of appreciating contemporary haiku.

BACKGROUND
The history of haiku in the English-speaking world has been well documented and need not be reexamined in great detail here. Early discoveries of haiku were made by British gentlemen scholars and other Westerners who had mastered the Japanese language. In 1877 the diplomat and scholar W.G. Aston published the first translations of haiku into English. Three years later, in 1880, Basil Hall Chamberlain, a British professor of Japanese in Tokyo, published Classical Poetry of the Japanese, and in 1888 A Handbook of Colloquial Japanese, which contains some haiku translations. The watershed publications, however, were Aston’s A History of Japanese Literature in 1899, a comprehensive treatment of Japanese literature that was widely read worldwide, and Chamberlain’s 1902 essay “Bashō and the Japanese Poetical Epigram,” the first works to discuss haiku in a language other than Japanese.

A second, concurrent Western opening to haiku and other Japanese verse forms was provided by exoticists and popularizers. The Greek-born American journalist Lafcadio Hearn began publishing his translations of haiku mixed with other colorful Japanese cultural materials in a series of popular books from 1899 to 1904. Yone Noguchi in the first years of the 1900s was writing Oriental-flavored poetry in English and urging Britons and American to try haiku. Like Noguchi, the Japanese-born Sadakichi Hartmann moved in top
American literary circles and was one of the first Americans to write haiku as well as translate the Japanese classics.¹⁰ Until the late 1930s, translations of classical Japanese haiku into English tended to be either scholarly or oriental-exotic. In the former category were Asatarō Miyamori’s collections published in Japan¹¹, in the latter were forgettable books by Clara Walsh, Olive Beaupre Miller, Curtis Hidden Page, and others.¹²

English-language poets were not much interested in haiku—it was an exotic curiosity for some of them but not much more. The imagist poets toyed with haiku. Ezra Pound and James Gould Fletcher familiarized themselves with Oriental verse forms in the early decades of the twentieth century (at the time poets in France and elsewhere were doing so as well), prompted largely by their fascination with image-based poetry and the images represented by the Chinese characters. Pound published his now famous “Métro” poem in 1913—but he refrained from calling it a haiku;¹³ Fletcher published a book with a few haiku translations in 1918.¹⁴ Amy Lowell was the only one of the imagists to go beyond the first step into haiku, however; she published a number of her haiku fantasies on Japanese themes, notably in her book What’s O’clock in 1925, the year of her death.¹⁵ A few original collections of haiku and other Japanese-style verse appeared as early as the 1930s, including those of Stella Knight Ruess (1930), Mary J.J. Wrinn (1935), and Paul Reps (1939),¹⁶ but original haiku penned by notable American or British poets were few and far between until after World War II.

The three students of literature who can be said to have established American (and British) haiku debuted starting in the late 1930s. New York–based scholar Harold G. Henderson completed his pioneering study The Bamboo Broom: An Introduction to Japanese Haiku, which included 154 translations, in 1934.¹⁷ Japanese American Kenneth Yasuda’s A Pepper-Pod: Translations of Classic and Modern Japanese Poems in Haiku Form, Together with Some Original Haiku Written in English—his doctoral dissertation—was published in 1947;¹⁸ this work grounds Japanese haiku solidly in literary theory but also contains translations of Japanese classics and some experimental English-language titled and rhymed haiku of his own.

Over a four-year period, 1949–52, Briton R.H. Blyth brought out his monumental four-volume Haiku, a collection of translations and discussion and the most influential work on haiku to date.¹⁹ The title of Blyth’s earlier book, Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics, showed his interest in Zen Buddhism and his belief that the themes he found in Japanese poetry were more universal than was commonly thought.²⁰ Note that these three pioneers of English-language haiku, like Aston and Chamberlain, were scholars, not poets. Apart from the handful of Yasuda’s haiku in his book, an even smaller handful of original haiku of Blyth’s that have surfaced in manuscript, and perhaps two dozen haiku published by Henderson under the pen name Taira in two haiku journals,²¹ none of them were known even marginally as poets.

In Blyth’s opinion (a viewpoint confirmed by Yasuda and Henderson), Zen was a key element in haiku, and it was largely this aspect that attracted American poets in the 1940s and ’50s. After World War II there is a new interest in Japan and things Japanese, including Oriental philosophy and religion. Works about Zen by D.T. Suzuki become widely popular, and Alan Watts published The Way of Zen in 1957.²² For the first time American poets actively took up haiku, closely studied the Japanese tradition, and ventured to write haiku of their own. These were, of course, the Beats and other “Second Wave” poets: names appearing beneath haiku in the 1950s, ’60s, and ’70s included Kenneth Rexroth, Gary Snyder, Allen Ginsburg, Jack Kerouac, Gregory Corso, Diane di Prima, and Philip Whalen.²³ Of all poetic “schools,” the Beats can be said to have delved most deeply into haiku and made the most use of haiku in their own work. They were not scholars, remember (although several were quite serious students of Oriental culture and literature). Perhaps it is not surprising that that they generally borrowed from classical Japanese haiku what they needed or wanted for their own writing and were quick to remind their readers that what they were composing were something other than true haiku. Accordingly, their works are often very unlike those that are now considered “mainstream” haiku:
Frying hotcakes in a dripping shelter
Fu Manchu
Queers Indian Reservation in the rain
Gregory Snyder

At 4:00 a.m. the two
middle-aged men
sleeping together hold hands
Allen Ginsberg

FALSE SENRYU

A cough
waits for the bus.
Philip Whalen

If the Beats did not wait for formal approval to write English-language haiku or a variation thereof, the scholars Henderson, Yasuda, and Blyth were more deliberate and debated the proposition thoroughly. All three concluded that it is possible to write haiku in languages other than Japanese. Yasuda’s 1947 book contains some of his own experiments in this vein; Blyth published original haiku by American James W. Hackett in the second volume of his History of Haiku (1964), while in the same year Henderson anointed the efforts of American Haiku magazine, the first publication devoted to haiku in English, and himself published his seminal work, Haiku in English, a year later. The early compositions in the American scholarly haiku tradition were closely modeled on the classics, keeping close to traditional Japanese “rules” on syllable count, use of a season word and a nature theme, a caesura dividing two concrete images, etc.—as had been explained by the haiku scholars. Titles and rhyme were also much in evidence, perhaps as a substitute for structural elements lost in translation from the Japanese:

POPPIES

Poppies on the hill
Pave a meadow as they spread
Down along the rill.

Kenneth Yasuda, A Pepper Pod (1947)

See empty shell of
lowly snail. It seems carved
from a piece of hail.

Frank Ankenbrand, Jr., American Haiku 1:1 (1963)

Lone whippoorwill call;
my spring love waited—till dark,
but that was all.

H.H. [Harold G. Henderson], American Haiku 1:1 (1963)
Moving slowly through
an old, abandoned beach house …
shadows of the moon.

*James W. Hackett, in Blyth, History of Haiku II (1964)*

Before turning to an examination of haiku in four other cultural traditions, let us recap what we have learned about the roots of the American haiku movement. First, our haiku tradition is heavily academic in origin and is based almost exclusively upon the translation of Japanese classics rather than the composition of original haiku in English. With the possible exception of the Beats, the interest in haiku by American poets whose main work lay outside Oriental forms (such as Pound), in the main was episodic and not sustained. This leads directly to the second point: by and large, traditional Western poetics and aesthetics have been rejected by mainstream haiku poets. Rather, Anglo-American haiku composition has been imitative of Japanese tradition in terms of form, poetics (e.g., imagery, juxtaposition, seasonality), aesthetics (favoring Japanese aesthetics over Western), etc. This manifests itself, third, in a tenacious dedication among English-language poets to rules for haiku composition (largely based, of course, upon Japanese precedents) and prevalence of normative judgments as to what can and cannot be considered haiku. The very asking of the question “can haiku be written in English?” that so vexed scholars including Henderson, Blyth, and Yasuda (and has not yet entirely been put to rest), confirms the introspection that has characterized American haiku. Fourth, American haiku has been suffused with Zen from the early part of the 20th century, largely owing to the influence of Blyth, Suzuki, Watts, and the Beats.

**Hispanic America**

A haiku tradition almost as old as the Anglo-American one exists in Hispanic America, Mexico in particular. In this section we will trace the development of the Spanish-language haiku tradition in the New World (saving Brazil for a later discussion) and try to delineate the aspects of Spanish-language haiku that allow us to consider it a discrete tradition and differentiate it from Anglo-American haiku. All of Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Spanish-speaking areas of the Caribbean are culturally interlinked, and developments in one country quickly ripple to others in the region. There is a great deal of interaction among poets of all these countries, and even with Iberian Spain. The Hispanic haiku poets cannot be lumped together into a “school,” however—they are very much individualists. It is instructive to note that the poets there have never felt it necessary to gather themselves into a haiku organization, nor has there ever been a major haiku journal in Hispanic America.³⁰

In Latin America, as elsewhere in the West, the beginning of the twentieth century was period of great cultural upheaval. This was the heyday of modernism, as expressed locally by poets such as the Nicaraguan Rubén Darío and the Cuban José Martí. This movement sought to simplify the florid and convoluted lyrics of Spanish poetry of preceding generations. Their main influences were the French symbolists and later the imagists; among the interests of these poets were Oriental forms, largely because of their conciseness, rich imagery, and exoticism.

The Mexican poet José Juan Tablada is the seminal figure in Latin American haiku, and his life work forms a direct bridge to Japanese haiku. In the 1890s Tablada studied Oriental culture, notably the paintings of Hiroshige, and he traveled to Japan for several months in 1900. There he learned of haiku. He returned to Japan for two years, 1910–11, during which time he studied haiku as well. Like many others of Mexico’s cultural avant-garde, Tablada found it convenient to live outside his homeland, and he went to Paris in 1914 to continue his writing. In 1919 he brought out *Un día …: poemas sintéticos*, a collection of thirty-seven haiku dated and located “February–May 1919, La Esperanza, Colombia,” and published in Caracas, Venezuela.³¹ This was the first book of haiku in a Western language to appear in print commercially. Three years later, in New York, Tablada published *Un jarrō de flores*, a larger collection of
haiku written in Colombia, Venezuela, and Mexico in 1919–20, and his 1928 book La Feria contained a few *haijais* as well.

Tablada, a Modernist poet who steeped himself in Japanese literature and painting, was a direct bridge from Latin America to Japanese haiku in the era of Shiki. Nonetheless, his Japanese experience was only one source of inspiration for him, and it was mixed in with other influences—notably French literary developments—within a few years of his first visit to Japan. Moreover, Tablada picked and chose which aspects of Japanese haiku to utilize in his own work. As a result his work reads more like short Western Modernist poems than classical Japanese haiku:

**Kindergarten**

*En su jaula un pájaro cantó;*
—*¿Por qué los niños están libres*
*y nosotros no? …*

From its cage a bird sang:
How come the children are free
and we are not? …

In Tablada’s circles in Mexico, and soon in other countries, poets enthusiastically accepted the new ideas and wrote work after work in the haiku genre. Within five years of the appearance of *Un día …* Mexicans Rafael Lozano, Carlos Gutiérrez Cruz, José Rubén Romero, and Francisco Monterde published books of haiku, as did the Guatemalan Flavio Herrera. Jorge Carrera Andrade of Ecuador published his haiku-like *Microgramas* in Tokyo in 1940 (more about this presently). Rather quickly, then, haiku became an established form among Hispanic American poets, and they have produced a more or less steady flow of haiku from the 1920s to the present. There was enough activity by mid-century—about the time that North American poets began reading R.H. Blyth—to pull together an anthology of original haiku, *Primera antología de haikai hispano*, which was published in Mexico in 1952. Haiku activity continued throughout Central and South America and the Caribbean. The influence of Spanish-language haiku came even into the United States through its Hispanic underbelly: in 1971 Cuban American Ana Rosa Núñez published *Escamas del Caribe*, a collection of haiku, in Miami.  

Note that—unlike the situation north of the border—haiku in Hispanic America was almost entirely an activity of creative writers, poets who were writing haiku as one aspect of work that spanned many genres. There was no academic haiku tradition in Hispanic America until the second half of the twentieth century. At that time some big-name poets were attracted to haiku and some delved more deeply into classical Japanese haiku. In 1954 the Mexican Octavio Paz published his essay “Tres momentos de la literatura japonesa,” and three years later he released a Spanish translation (with Eikichi Hayashiya) of Bashō’s *Narrow Road to the Deep North*. In 1981 the Argentine Jorge Luis Borges included seventeen original haiku written in 5–7–5 format in his book, *La cifra*.

**Characteristics of Hispanic American Haiku**

The key difference between the haiku of José Juan Tablada and his followers on the one hand and those of the English-language disciples of Chamberlain, Blyth, Suzuki, and Henderson on the other is that Hispanic haiku was a phenomenon of poets, not scholars. There simply was no tradition of scholarly study of haiku in Spanish; apparently no major collection of translations of classical haiku into Spanish appeared until 1955. (Tablada translated 100 Japanese haiku in the early 1920s, but they were not published.) In essence, Tablada went to Japan, grabbed haiku, brought it back to Mexico, took what he liked about it, and discarded the rest. What he found appealing was haiku’s brevity (compared to the florid 19th century Spanish poetry), concreteness (descriptiveness of the landscape), and imagery. Tablada and the other Spanish-language poets applied the Japanese haiku form to their own physical and cultural environment; they made haiku a very Hispanic genre. What they ignored in the process were Japanese aesthetics, the idea of a haiku moment, seasonality, and internal comparison. What they added to the classical Japanese model was Western poetics
and aesthetics (metaphor, simile, personification, and sometimes rhyme) and a large quotient of imagination and subjectivity.

The first of the two Tablada haiku in the box on the facing page presents three metaphors one after another, nested in such a way that the reader’s vision focuses more closely with each line. Both haiku are titled, and the second of these examples—comprising a single sentence with rhyming first and third lines and other poetical use of words—is not understandable without reference to its title. Similarly, Herrera’s highly imaginative “Jellyfish” relies for understanding on the title as a “fourth line.” (Without its title, this haiku might be mistaken for a verse by a contemporary Japanese haikuist!) Other works, such as the microgramas of Carrera Andrade, are elaborated metaphors.

A large number of Hispanic haiku make social or political statements that often seem to fit comfortably in the Latin American revolutionary tradition. Such are, for example, the second of Benet-Castellón’s haiku, the first of Benedetti’s, and the sample of Torre’s work in the box. Subject matter for Hispanic haiku also includes a large dose of love themes more appropriate perhaps for the lyricism of tanka (for example Núñez’s haiku) and even eroticism (the second Benedetti).

Some interesting variations in the haiku form have emerged in Latin America, for example, the micrograma mentioned above. Norberto de la Torre picked up and developed the greguería, a form introduced in Spain in 1914 by the poet known as Ramón (Ramón Gómez de la Serna). Greguerías are essentially the “poetical epigrams” that Chamberlain wrote about.

By and large, the verses in this selection of Hispanic verse are really Western-style poems—beautiful, but not what we norteamericanos think of as haiku. The classical Japanese haiku has been pressed into the service of Hispanic poetry to an extent that leaves little of what we consider essential in our English-language haiku. To be fair, there was always an uneasiness among Spanish-language poets in calling their work “haiku” (or “haikai”); they were not comfortable with having their work considered side by side with the Japanese model. Tablada called his works poemas sintéticos (“synthetic poems”) or disociaciones líricas (“lyrical disassociations”). Andrade wrote his microgramas (“micrograms”), and Cuban Eduardo Benet y Castellón qualified his verses as haikais antillanos (“Antillean haikai”). As an aside, it is interesting to note that no single term for haiku has emerged in Latin America, and one can find them called (sometimes with an “s” added to make them plural) hokku, haiku, haikú, jakti or jaiku, jaikai, and other spellings.

Of the haiku presented here (always beware the author’s selection principles!) only those of the two superstar Hispanic poets, Borges and Paz, seem resonant and subjective in a way that would appeal as haiku to the Anglo-American reader.

A SELECTION OF HISPANIC AMERICAN HAIKU 36

JOSÉ JUAN TABLADA (1871–1945), Mexican writer, poet, and critic, a leading exponent of modernism. He emigrated to the U.S. in 1914.

LA LUNA

Es mar la noche negra; A sea is the black night
la nube es una concha, the cloud is a seashell
la luna es una perla … the moon is a pearl …

PECES VOLADORES

Al golpe del oro solar The sea’s glassy surface
Estalla en astillas bombarded by golden sunbeams
el vidrio del mar explodes into splinters!

THE MOON 37

FISH 38
FLAVIO HERRERA (1895–1978), Guatemalan novelist, short-story writer, essayist, and poet; he was especially influential as a haiku poet in the 1930s.

**LAS MEDUSAS**

Paracaidas de vidrio  
bajan llenas de rosas  
a un continente hundido.

**JELLYFISH**

glass parachutes  
full of roses coming down  
to a submerged continent

EDUARDO BENET Y CASTELLÓN (1878–1965), a major Cuban poet with some twenty-one books to his credit.40

**El colibrí**  
no aparta su helicóptero  
del alhelí.

**The hummingbird**  
doesn’t separate its helicopter  
from the violet.

**Patria los buenos**  
muermen por ti: los otros  
muermen por el gobierno.

**Fatherland the good**  
die for thee; the rest  
die for the government

JORGE CARRERA ANDRADE (1903–1978), a leading poet of Ecuador, who also served in diplomatic posts in Paris and San Francisco.

A micrograma.

**GOLONDRINA**

Ancla de plumas:  
Por los mares del cielo  
a tierra busca.

**SWALLOW**

Anchor of feathers:  
In the seas of the sky  
it seeks the earth

OCTAVIO PAZ (1914–1998), Mexico’s most celebrated writer; laureate of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1990.42

**El día abre la mano**

**Three clouds**

**Y estas pocas palabras**

**And these few words**

JORGE LUIS BORGES (1899–1986) Argentina’s most celebrated writer who, however, never won the Nobel Prize.43

**La luna nueva**

**The new moon.**

**Ella también la mira**

**She too sees it**

**desde otra puerta.**

**from another doorway.**
MARIO Benedetti (1920–2009), Uruguayan journalist, novelist, and poet.⁴⁴

el preso sueña
algo que siempre tiene
forma de llave

the prisoner dreams
of something that always has
the shape of a key

en plena noche
si mis manos te llaman
tus pechos vienen

in the dark of night
if my hands call out for you
it’s your breasts that come

ANA ROSA NÚÑEZ (1926–1999), Cuban poet and translator who resettled in the U.S. in 1965 and worked as a librarian at the University of Miami.⁴⁵

Entrega la brisa al pino
su voz
como la aurora al ruiseñor.

To the pine the breeze passes
your voice
as the dawn to the nightingale.

NORBERTO DE LA TORRE GONZÁLEZ (b. 1947) is a professor at the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosí, Mexico.⁴⁶

La ciudad se
construye con ladrillos
de voces muertas.

The city is
built with bricks
of dead voices.

A greguería:

Quien juega con espejos corre el riesgo de perder su imagen.

He who plays with mirrors runs the risk of losing his image.

HUMBERTO SENEGAL (b. 1951) is a Colombian writer, poet, haiku poet, essayist, critic, editor, and educator. He specializes in Zen poetry and haiku.⁴⁷

Fluye el río
mientras en la red
el pez …

river
runs
free
while
in
the
net
fish …
Haiku arrived in France across two bridges: one that spanned the English Channel and the other, a narrower one, that led directly from Japan.

The end of the 19th century saw a great cultural upheaval in Europe, especially in France. Poets eagerly abandoned the strict metrical forms, ornate language, and romantic subject matter that had dominated poetry previously in favor of vers libre, "free verse," simple straightforward diction, and an interest in ancient European and exotic Oriental literatures. The vogue for East Asian culture that began in the 1880s, when the graphic arts spilled over into literature, and the terse, laconic, and unfussy character of Chinese and Japanese verses proved especially attractive. As early as 1884 Judith Gautier published Poèmes de la libellule, her adaptations of classical Japanese waka. In 1902 Henry-D. Davray published a translation of W.G. Aston’s A History of Japanese Literature, probably the first treatment of haiku in French, and Basil Hall Chamberlain’s essay “Basho and the Japanese Poetical Epigram,” was reviewed in 1903 by French scholar Claude Maître. These academic seeds of haiku fell on fertile poetic fields in France—unlike the situation in England and America.

The year 1903 saw the famous canal-boat trip during which Paul-Louis Couchoud, a professor of philosophy and doctor of medicine who had travelled to Japan and had been seduced by Japanese poetry and haiku, and two friends, Albert Poncin and André Faure, composed seventy-two haikai. These original works of theirs were compiled into a collection and published privately in 1905 as Au fil de l’eau. Although the edition was small—thirty copies—this represents the first book of haiku published in a Western language. One sample from this collection, by Couchoud:49

\begin{center}
\textit{Les joncs même tombent de sommeil, Je rôtit délicieusement.}
\textit{Midi.}
\end{center}

Even the bulrushes are ready to drop,
I’m roasting deliciously.
Midday.

A moderate level of interest in haiku continued in France through the remaining years of the first decade of the 20th century. Couchoud, haiku’s main proponent, published two articles titled “Les épigrammes lyriques du Japon.” This is the first dedicated discussion of haiku to appear in French. Note that Couchoud picked up Chamberlain’s terminology of the haiku as epigram. Other French poets who experimented with the exotic import from the Orient found themselves unable to resist the pull of Western prosody and aesthetics, however. In 1906 Fernand Gregh published “Quatrains à la façon des haïkai japonais” in rhymed seven-syllable quatrains, and in 1908 Albert de Neuville came out with “Haïkais et tankas, épigrammes à la japonaise” in rhymed free-verse quatrains.

Michel Revon’s Anthologie de la littérature japonaise des origines au XX siècle (1910) was the first full-length treatment of Japanese literature in French and the work most responsible for introducing Japanese poetry to a wide French readership. The anthology was also a sort of watershed between the early years of experimentation on the one side and a more serious, French-rooted utilization of the imported genre. The term “haiku” is used here for the first time (remember that the term in Japanese was scarcely a decade old at this time). The American scholar Earl Miner wrote that Revon’s anthology sounded the “death knell of pseudo Japanese verse’ in both French and English, making way for ‘true Japanese modes,’ imitations and adaptations first by French and later by British and American poets.”50

This new trend was evident in the work of Julien Vocance, who wrote haiku from the trenches of World War I. Here is one example from his Cent visions de guerre (1916):51
Gris fer, gris plomb, gris cendré,
Gris dans les coeurs résignés:
Relève des tranchées.
Iron gray, lead gray, ash gray,
Gray in hearts resigned:
Relieving the trenches.

Like all haiku that are purposefully written about something, this verse has a tone of telling rather than showing, but Vocance’s work was clearly Western in subject matter and a clear departure from the “birds and flowers” of standard Japanese haiku. French haikuist and scholar Bertrand Agostini writes that Vocance put an end to the age of exoticism.

In 1920 “Hai-kais,” a collection of verses by various poets, appeared in Nouvelle Revue Française. Couchoud’s and Vocance’s haiku were included, as were contributions from well-known, more mainstream poets such as Jean Paulhan, Paul Éluard, and Jean-Richard Bloch. Agostini marks this as the occasion when poets began paying serious attention to the form and an attempt to begin an indigenous school or movement. The haiku poets of the 1920s and ’30s still viewed haiku as a form of poetry, however, and were not entirely able to free themselves from Western lyricism and aesthetic values or poetic devices, notably rhyme. On the other hand, haiku values such as suggestiveness, concreteness, and terseness were successfully imported from Japan.

In 1923 a school of haiku emerged in the city of Rheims, centered on the poet René Maublanc and his journal Le Pample, that promoted haiku as a popular art form, to be practiced and enjoyed more widely than in the poetic circles of Paris. Despite this interesting development, the haiku of these poets do not seem to have been much different in provenance or application than those being done in the metropolis. Nonetheless, Maublanc published what seems to be the first bibliography and the first anthology (48 authors and 283 poems collected into 24 themes) of Western haiku, “Le Haikai français,” in Le Pample N° 10–11 (1923). A collection of his own haiku came out in 1924.52

Among the established poets in France who were influenced by haiku, one of the earliest was Paul Claudel, who had long been interested in Oriental culture and who was named ambassador to Japan in 1931. Claudel wrote verses that ranged from terse and beautiful elaborated images to something approaching concrete haiku that Agostini finds “show a rare sense of the Japanese way of perceiving the world”.53

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<td>chant</td>
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<td>sur mes j’essaie</td>
<td>On my I try</td>
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<td>sandales d’attraper</td>
<td>Wooden to catch</td>
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<td>de bois le premier flocon de neige</td>
<td>Sands the First snow flake</td>
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In 1935 a book of translations of Bashō and Issa, Georges Bonneau’s Le Haiku, was published in Paris,54 but from the mid-1930s to the end of World War II little haiku was done or studied in France. After the war the slender haiku tradition was rekindled, oddly enough, by an awareness of the work of the American Beat poets. Agostini, for example, is a scholar of American literature and a specialist on Jack Kerouac (who was, perhaps significantly, of French Canadian extraction). Here is one of Agostini’s haiku that shows this Beat influence:55

Ce matin d’octobre
Assis en zazen—
Même mon ombre est Bouddha

This October morning
sitting in zazen—
Even my shadow is Buddha

Thereafter, momentum was gained slowly in the French haiku movement. In 2003 the first French haiku organization, L’Association Française de Haiku, was formed by Dominique Chipot and Daniel Py. In the same year, a landmark Anthologie du haïku en France appeared, and shortly thereafter, a francophone haiku
journal, *Gong*, began publication.\textsuperscript{56} The anthology was broad in scope, aiming to review the history of haiku in France. Conveniently, it also included English translations. Chipot is reportedly preparing another anthology of French haiku similar to Maublanc’s, that is, organized along thematic lines.  

The box beginning on page 37 presents a sampling of modern-day haiku in French and from France. These are taken from the *Anthologie* unless otherwise noted.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF FRENCH HAIKU**

In comparison with the Mexican and Latin American tradition that we examined earlier, French haiku have both academic and poetic roots. Early in the history of European haiku, when Parisians were becoming fascinated by Oriental culture, translations into French of the key early-20th-century English-language studies of Japanese poetry and haiku kindled interest among poets in writing short verses of their own. Until very recently, native French haiku scholarship was scanty, and—as in Mexico and Latin America—it was the poets who advanced haiku as a literary genre. A mini-fashion for haiku lasted in the country until the mid-1930s, when such writing all but disappeared, to be reborn only in the 1960s.

What relationship, then, does French haiku today have to its Japanese forerunner, and how might we compare French verse to English-language haiku? In 2002 the French poet and scholar Georges Friedenkraft sought to delineate the differences between contemporary French haiku and the Japanese model, making the following points \textit{inter alia}.\textsuperscript{57}

- “since French language has little accentuation, authors have attempted to improve the rhythm by shortening verses, using rhyme, alliteration or other specific techniques”;
- “the seasonal word is not always present in French haiku”—even when a season word is present it is rarely used in the same way as a \textit{kigo} in Japanese haiku;
- “the ‘weight of being’ is no longer related to the enlightenment of Japanese Buddhism, but rather, to a non-religious existentialist stance.”

On the first point, Friedenkraft’s language seems to be a bit of an ex post facto apology. He ignores the fact that Japanese too has little accentuation. Both Japanese and French are rich in homophones such that rhyming becomes facile to the point of insipidness. It is true however that even in recent years French poets occasionally yield to a fondness for rhyme and alliteration (as in the Friedenkraft and Antonini examples in the selection). Recent proposals for the form of haiku in French include writing in a pattern of 2–3–2 “tonal accents”—apparently identical to the system of 2–3–2 “beats” that had been proposed by Blyth, Higgenson, and others for English-language haiku, and, for a tanka-like verse, “semantic units”—short word groups—in a 2–3–2–3–3 pattern and a twelve-foot monostich, or one-line verse of 12 feet, the classic French alexandrine.

Moreover, there had historically been little or no talk of Zen in French haiku scholarship. In this third point, Friedenkraft relates this “laicized” way to the ideas of Jean-Paul Sartre—the description in haiku of a “strong emotional moment.” This seems quite a bit different from the Anglo-American understanding of a “haiku moment.” It would be interesting to look more carefully at contemporary French haiku in the light of the ideas of Sartre, Derrida, Barthes, Bonnefoy, and other influential French thinkers of the 20th century,\textsuperscript{58} but let suffice for now the point that French poets have been searching for an alternative to Zen in contemporary haiku. Perhaps the ample haiku of Jaccottet and Coyaud in the box are representative of the results.

To sum up, although French poets and editors can claim a number of firsts for haiku in any Western language—first publication of a collection, first bibliography, first anthology—haiku remained relatively invisible in France during much of the 20th century. Nonetheless, the influence of the French on the development of world haiku should not be underestimated. Paris was the epicenter of the great modernist upheaval in arts and literature at the end of the 19th century, and what was happening in France—especially...
vers libre—was watched and imitated throughout Europe and the New World. Orientalism was one important aspect of modernism, and Japanese verse forms and aesthetics were a part—if only a small one—of that. Still, haiku poets in Mexico and Brazil, as well as Germany, the Balkans, Russia, and beyond, were taking their cue from poets in France.

**A Selection of French Haiku**

**CLOD’ARIA** (or Clod’aria; Suzanne Humbert-Droz; b. 1916), poet and translator; she was one of the few women active in French haiku.

Regretter les bêtises
qu’on a faites
et celles qu’on n’a pas faites!

Regretting the mistakes
you’ve made
and those you never made!

**PHILIPPE JACCOTTET** (b. 1925), Swiss-born French poet, author, and translator.

**SÉRÉNITÉ**

L’ombre qui est dans la lumière
pareille à une fumée bleue

SERENITY

The shadow that is in the light
is like blue smoke

**MAURICE COYAUD** (b. 1934), Asian language specialist; his first haiku book appeared in 1978.

L’oryctérope fouille
Du groin le sol aride
Namibie l’hiver

The aardvark
rummages the sterile earth
Winter in Namibia

**GEORGES FRIEDEKRAFFT** (Georges Chapouthier; b. 1945), research biologist and poet.

Le soleil lascif
a couvert ton corps d’été
d’un bain d’or massif

The lustful sunshine
has bathed your summer-drenched skin
in mosaic gold

**JEAN ANTONINI** (b. 1946) is a chemist who has been writing haiku for about twenty years.

Travail sur la page:
encore, blanc, ratures, copie, mots.
Vite, vite, va pister.

Work on the page:
ink, white, erasures, copy, words
Quick, quick, go and pee.

**DANIEL PY** (b. 1948), a professional musician who began writing haiku about 1999.

champs de pavots
à perte de vue
hommes en guerre

Poppy fields
For ever
Men at war

**PATRICK BLANCHE** (b. 1950), painter, poet, and translator; he has been writing haiku since 1972.
DOMINIQUE CHIPOT (b. 1958), an accountant in Seichamps and a major promoter of haiku in France.

plage d’hiver —
nos souvenirs de l’été
déjà effacés

winter beach
our summer memories
already erased

The title of the Anthologie du haïku en France intimates that not all the contents are in the French language, and in fact poets writing in Breton, Occitan, and Gallo are represented too; for example:

ALAIN KERVERN (b. 1945), a college professor of Japanese in Brittany.

Ennomp da vad
un enñor heñvel ouzh maen
buhez ennañ ataw

Always within us
a history, petrified,
that still breathes

THE TWISTED HAIKU BRIDGE TO RUSSIA

The haiku bridge to Russia is a crooked one, deformed by politics and communism as well as shaken by strong literary winds from France.

It seems almost a cliché to point it out, but geopolitics has played a major role in the evolution of haiku in Russia. In terms of geography, of the countries we are discussing in this essay, Russia is the nearest neighbor to Japan. In terms of politics, Russia has long harbored a strong, state-promoted concern with the Far East. This included not only diplomatic and military activity but also a vibrant linguistic and ethnographic tradition in Russian scholarship. Translations of Japanese poetry began appearing in the mid-1890s: Kitay i Yaponiya v ikh poezii (“China and Japan Through Their Poetry”; Saint Petersburg, 1896), Yaponskaya poezija (“Japanese Poetry”) in translations by Nikolay I. Pozdnyakov (Moscow, 1905), and Pesni sta poetov (“Verses of a Hundred Poets”; in translations by N. Novich (Saint Petersburg, 1905). A faculty of Japanese language was established at Saint Petersburg University as early as 1898, and a Russo-Japanese Society was formed in the capital in 1911 to promote trade. As both countries gained power and began to think in expansionist terms in the late 19th century, Japanese and Russian political and military interests began to clash in Manchuria and the Russian Far East, and this led to the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05.

Looked at from another geopolitical perspective, Russia occupies the vast space between Europe and the Far East and served as a two-way cultural conduit between the two. Russian poets and artists were quick to assimilate new trends from both directions and actively crossbreed them with their homegrown avant-garde discoveries. This proved especially productive insofar as Russia had always been not only the “shield between the Mongols and Europe,” but also an intermediary in their unceasing cultural exchange, half European, half Asian.  

In 1904 Japan attacked the Russian settlement at Port Arthur, the first shots of the Russo-Japanese War. In Russia the Trans-Siberian Railroad was being constructed (completed in 1916). Also in 1904, two years after the death of Masaoka Shiki, the Russian translation of Aston’s 1899 A History of Japanese Literature was published in Vladivostok, Russia’s great East-facing city. This might seem a trivial event, remote from Saint
Petersburg and Moscow, the centers of Russian cultural activity, but it was of great interest to prominent poets attuned to literary developments outside Russia. Valeriy Bryusov, the leading member of the Symbolist movement in poetry, reviewed Aston’s book in Vesy (“The Balance”), the journal he had recently taken over as editor, later in 1904.

On the domestic cultural front, the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century—the Silver Age in Russian literature—was a time of great ferment as ideas flowed in from Europe, particularly Paris. Especially important were the Russian Symbolists, who were influenced by the French Symbolists we mentioned earlier, and who included the poets Konstantin Balʹmont (1867–1942), Valeriy Bryusov (1873–1924), and Andrey Bely (1880–1934). For the Russians the most exciting poetic import from Paris was vers libre, “free verse,” which cast out fixed-length stanzas, traditional prosody, and rhyme. As was the case in England and France, the Russian poets of the day were extraordinarily curious about the writings of ancient and exotic lands. This was particularly true of Bryusov, who translated Latin and Armenian poetry in addition to works from French, English, and German.

So Russia’s introduction to haiku came through Europe as well as directly from Japan, with the European influences perhaps the more influential. This fact can be explained geopolitically too, since Russia and Japan continued to clash over weak China and for dominance of the eastern Pacific until after World War II and beyond. Throughout the emergence of original haiku written in Russian, the European provenance dominated, with the original Japanese haiku model often seeming to provide little more than a basic, novel format and a sense of exoticism and piquancy.

Following a series of reworkings—“versions,” as Cid Corman would have called them—of classic Japanese haiku, in 1913 Bryusov published a collection entitled “Japanese Tanka and Hai-kai,” which included this original haikai: 72

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Кто назвал любовь</th>
<th>Who named love?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Имя ей он мог бы дать</td>
<td>He could also have named it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is hardly a Japanese-informed haiku by any measure. In fact, from the start the Russian literati were more interested in tanka than haiku, apparently feeling more comfortable with the lyrical romanticism associated with the longer Japanese form. Here is an example from Bely, probably from the 1920s:73

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>жизнь</th>
<th>LIFE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Над травой мотылек—</td>
<td>Above the grass a moth—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Самолетный цветок…</td>
<td>An airborne flower…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Так и я: в ветер—смерть—</td>
<td>Such am I: into the wind—death—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Над собой—стебельком—</td>
<td>Above myself—on a stalk—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Пролечу мотыльком.</td>
<td>As a moth I fly by.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout the 1920s, scholars—notably N.I. Konrad of Leningrad University and his students—continued to translate Japanese works, mostly prose and tanka. Poets, such as the Futurist painter and poet David Burlyuk, continued to produce vers libre in haiku form using Western themes and moods. An example of his haiku is given in the box on page 45. Japanese poetry and culture was also enormously influential on the Russian creative intelligentsia in the 1920s and ’30s and afterwards. Pioneering film director Sergei Eisenstein, for example, learned Japanese, studied haiku, and incorporated haiku-like techniques in his films.74 Years later another prominent director, Andrey Tarkovsky, carefully studied the films of Akirō Kurasawa and wrote of “the image as a precise observation of life” as embodied in the haiku.75 Japanese ukiyo-e woodblock prints, kabuki, and no theater (first seen in Russia in the 1920s) had a profound effect on Russian artists and theatrical luminaries, notably Vsevolod Meyerhold.76
In the 1930s the Communist Party clampdown on cultural activities meant that interest in Japan was no longer acceptable. The Soviet Union and Japan clashed repeatedly in the Far East. The Socialist Realism poetry of the time was patriotically Russian in tone. This period of darkness lasted until Stalin’s death in 1953, after which some translations again began to appear. The heady days of the literary thaw in the 1960s saw a renewal of interest in international things that had long been proscribed, among them Oriental poetry and Zen Buddhism. Haiku scholar Yuriy Orlitsky writes, “After the thaw of the ’60s poets started to write haiku (they called them hokku) again. S. Bernstein, G. Sapgir, A. Kholin, Satunovsky (Russian minimalists) and Mikhail Finerman pioneered the new short verse movement including senryu and haiku-like images.” The feeling of the verses produced by these poets of Russia’s haiku renaissance, however, still revolved around the structure and themes of the earlier generation of Russian-language haiku poets. The sample haiku by Arvo Mets in the box might be an example.

The mid- to late 1990s saw the flowering of Russian-language haiku. Contemporary English- and European-language norms became much more in evidence, and Russian haiku began to shed its close association with the vers libre of earlier decades. With the cooperation of the Japanese embassy in Moscow, the First Russian Haiku Contest was held in 1998. Some 12,000 entries were received in the half year devoted to submissions, and a number of prominent literary figures, poets, and haikuists were enlisted as judges. The winning haiku—see the sampler—was by Marina Hagen.77 Clearly, Hagen is writing from a different tradition than the Symbolist poets of the ’teens and ’twenties. Her repetition of the word “shadow” and the subject matter recall the lighthearted style of Issa.

In 2000 the annual Triton: Russian Almanac of Haiku Poetry began publication with Dmitriy Kuz’m’in, a prominent literary figure and gay-rights activist, as editor. The compendium, modeled on the “thick” literary journals popular in Russia, lasted for four issues.78

Soviet Russian haiku was introduced to the West by Aleksey Andreyev, a graduate student from Novgorod who was studying at West Virginia University and was very active during the salad days of Internet haiku. On the Web he published a book and an influential essay about haiku.79 Back in Russia in 1997, Andreyev started a haiku Web site, Lyagushatnik (“Froggy”).80 Our sampler contains one of his own haiku, selected as best of issue 11 of Lyagushatnik in 2002. The juxtaposition and imagery of Andreyev’s haiku such as this seem very American in genesis.

A phenomenon related to Russians visiting abroad is Russians who have emigrated to the West. The diaspora has always been a great source of literary innovation for Russians, and so it is with haiku. Much excellent work is being generated in Russian among Russian émigrés in America—the names of Zhanna Rader, Origa (Olga Hooper), and Natalia and Igor Rudychev come readily to mind. In the box we give a sample haiku by Zinovy Vayman, who writes in Russian and English as well as Hebrew.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF RUSSIAN HAIKU**

On the basis of these examples, what can be said about the poetics and aesthetics of Russian haiku? In “Flowers from Another’s Garden,” perhaps the most succinct overview of haiku in Russia to date, Orlitisky never mentions seasonality, juxtaposition of images, or Japanese aesthetics such as yugen, sabi, and wabi—all mainstays of English-language haiku theory and practice. Further, capturing “one momentary impression or experience”—i.e., the haiku moment—was noted by Orlitisky as important in the work of only one “now completely forgotten” poet, Viktor Mazurin. Rather Orlitisky expends his ink detailing the various adaptations by Russian poets of the Japanese syllabic structure (also not stopping to compare the different values of Japanese and Russian syllables). He also writes at some length about the movement away from structured renderings of Japanese haiku in translation as well as abandoning 5–7–5 structure in original Russian haiku and deals with the influences of Western-originated literary trends on Japanese tanka and haiku. Orlitisky does, however, include an interesting aside about the use of enjambment, a popular device in Russian vers libre, in haiku, comparing the effect to kakekotoba, “pivot words,” in Japanese short verse.

Orlitisky views Russian haiku as something of a grand synthesis of East and West:
In contemporary Russian poetry one finds “minimalist” _vers libre_, absolutely free from the formal tradition of Japanese verse: in V. Burich, K. Dzhangirov, V. Kupriyanov, A. Mets, A. Makarov-Krotkov, A. Sokolov, S. Shatalov, and others, who may compose not only in three or five lines but also in two, four, six, etc. The genetic kinship of these free-verse poems with the Japanese tradition may not always be evident. Often they are oriented not toward the Japanese poetic tradition but toward the European prose tradition: aphorisms, maxims, parables. Very often in the miniatures of European and “Eurasian” orientations the Russian, Japanese, and European are interwoven into a complex skein comprising a new creation that does not lend itself to rational “deciphering.” Still, in many cases it is possible to establish the Japanese core, primarily thanks to the checklist of images.

So, although there may be a new trend that would bring Russian-language haiku closer in concept and execution to the English model (such as Bagautdinov’s in the sampler), most contemporary Russian haiku have been quite unlike those in English for the reason that Russians hew closely to their European traditions. Although Russian haiku history can be said to have begun with an English classic—Aston’s history—it unfolded without benefit of Henderson, Blyth, and Yasuda. The key influence came from France and the _vers libre_ poets. Witness the examples in the box by Valeriy Krestova and German Lukyanov. Both haiku seem to be more “poetical epigrams” à la Chamberlain than what we in America would consider well-wrought haiku.

**A SELECTION OF RUSSIAN HAiku**

**DAVID BURLYUK** (1882–1967), a futurist painter and _vers libre_ poet.

Стая над городом,  
будто мысль незнакомая,  
пришедшая в душу внезапу.  
Over the city a flock,  
as if an unknown thought,  
suddenly having come to.

**VLADIMIR BURICH** (1932–1994), editor, translator, and _vers libre_ poet.

Ночь  
Я лежу на спине  
и смотрю в потолок  
с ушами полными слез  
night  
I lie on my back  
And look at the ceiling  
Ears full of tears

**ARVO METS** (1937–1997), poet, translator, and _vers libre_ poet.

Легко ранить  
звуком баяна,  
уголком желтого листа.  
It’s easy to wound  
with a concertina’s sound,  
with the corner of a yellow paper.

**VLADIMIR GERTSIK** (1948– ), a mathematical physicist from Moscow.

Лодку качает.  
Голубая стрекоза  
Висит над водой.  
The boat rocks.  
A blue dragonfly  
Hovers over the water
DMITRY KUDRYA (1955— ), Turkmenistan-born Moscow poet, trained in medicine.

в хрустальную вазу
воды из ручья налей—
продли мученье цветов
into the crystal vase
pour some water from a brook—
prolong the flowers’ torment

VALERIYA KRESTOVA, a poet from Saint Petersburg.

Троллейбус,
Единственное насекомое
в городе,
шевелит железными усами.
Trolleybus,
The only insect in town
moves its iron whiskers.

GERMAN LUKYANOV (1936— ), a prominent jazz trumpeter and bandleader.

Юноши!
Не верьте старицам,
что жизнь коротка.
Youngsters!
Don’t believe the old-timers
that life is short.

MARINA HAGEN (1974— ), a computer programmer from Chelyabinsk. This haiku was first-place-winner in the 1st All-Russian Haiku Competition (1998).

в тени ветвей
скачет
tень воробья
in the branch’s shadow
skipping
the sparrow’s shadow

ALEKSEY V. ANDREYEV (1971— ), a scientist from Novgorod.

весенние мечты
гора хрустали под каждой
волочной трубой
spring dreams
a mountain of crystal beneath
every drainpipe

ZINOVY VAYMAN, an engineer, born in Moscow and now living in Boston.

лепной потолок
адвокаты, мой и ее
dружат уже
ornate ceiling
my lawyer, her lawyer
already friends

MARCEL BAGAULTDINOV’s haiku was a winner in the 2nd All-Russian Haiku Competition (2009).

так невысок
на могиле альпиниста
холмик земли
such a small mound of earth
on the grave
of the mountaineer
The Haiku Bridge to Brazil

The haiku bridge to Brazil was a dual span. In addition to the importation of ideas about haiku from Europe, there was, unlike any of the other countries we have examined so far, a vigorous native Japanese haiku tradition dating to the early years of the 1900s.

In Brazil a Japanese tradition in haiku—or haicai as it is usually called there—predates the influx of Western influences. Explorers from Portugal, of which Brazil was a colony, were the first Europeans to visit Japan, in 1543, and in 1604 João Rodrigues, a Portuguese Jesuit priest, was the first to describe haikai and renga to the West. Brazil has the largest Japanese population in the Western hemisphere—1.5 million (the United States has 1.2 million). Emigration to Brazil began after the U.S. made its immigration policies radically more restrictive; the first Japanese immigrants arrived in Brazil in 1908. Among them was at least one accomplished haiku poet, Uetsuka Shuhei (1876–1935, haigo Hyōkotsu). He was said to have written this haiku in that year upon debarking in the port of Santos.

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{karetaki o miigetet tsukinu imisen} \\
A nau imigrante chegando: vê-se lá no alto \\
a cascata seca
\end{align*} \]

Most of the Japanese immigrants worked on the sugar and coffee plantations. There they established their own social organizations, including haiku clubs. Nenpuku (the haigo of Satō Kenjirō, 1898–1979), who emigrated with his family to Brazil in 1927 and settled at the Alliança camp northeast of São Paulo, was one such pioneer. A haiku master, disciple of Takahama Kyoshi, and from 1934 a member of Kyoshi’s Hotogisu group, Nenpuku began writing a haiku column for the newspaper \( Nogyō no Bunajiru \) (“Brazilian Agriculture”) as early as 1933 and later contributed columns to other newspapers. He founded a journal, \( Kōkage \) (“Tree Shade”), to promote traditional-style Japanese-language haiku in 1948 and continued publishing it uninterrupted until his death. Also in 1948 he published \( Bunajiru haikushū \) (“Brazilian Haiku Collection”), an anthology of 2,000 Japanese Brazilian haiku dating from as early as 1933. This was followed in 1952 by an anthology of haiku from the contributors to his column in \( Jornal Paulista \) (“São Paulo Journal”) titled \( Paiurista haikushū \) (“São Paulo Haiku Collection”). The first collection of his own work, \( Nenpuku kushū \) (Haiku of Nenpuku”), came out in the following year; it was followed by a second volume in 1961. In 1979, the year of his death, Nenpuku published \( Kōkage zatsuei shū \) (“Selected Haiku from Kōkage”), which included this one:

\[ \begin{align*}
norizome o ou ko segare no hadaka uma
\end{align*} \]

Primeira montaria do ano— First ride of the year—
Meu filho corre atrás My son runs behind a horse
Do cavalo sem arreios. without a harness.

Throughout the 1930s Ichighe Kozo (1894–1945), the Japanese consul in São Paulo and haiku poet (haigo Gyosetsu), was active in promoting haiku among the Japanese population in Brazil, notably in the haiku study group led by Kimura Keiseki (1867–1938) in São Paulo. The Japanese haiku groups and publications continued their activities into the 1960s and ’70s, although a declining interest in the language and culture of Japan was already becoming evident among second-generation Japanese Brazilians.

Simultaneously, a different haiku tradition—quite separate from the Japanese experience—was developing among Portuguese-speaking Brazilians. Cristina Rocha, who has studied Zen in Brazil, states without amplification that “haiku arrived in Brazil first in French translations and subsequently English ones through the diaries of European travelers,” but, as we pointed out above, it seems more likely that the first haiku on Brazilian soil were written in Japanese. Still it is true that the dominant literary influence in post-colonial Brazil came from France and, to a lesser extent, Portugal. In 1919 the poet and writer Afrânio
Peixoto discovered haiku in the works of the Frenchman Paul-Louis Couchoud and offered a definition of *haikai* in the introduction to his book *Trouvés populaires brasilieras* (“Brazilian Popular Folksongs”):

The Japanese have a basic art form, simpler even than our *trouva* [folksong], the *haikai*, a word we Westerners do not know how to translate except with emphasis, the lyric epigram. It comprises short tercets, verses of five, seven, and five feet, in all, seventeen syllables. Into these molds, however, they pour emotions, images, comparisons, suggestions, sighs, desires, dreams … of inexpressible enchantment.  

Peixoto characterized *haikai* as a folk art to be distinguished from high-culture poetry. His indebtedness to the French haiku poets (and beyond, to the English gentlemen-scholars) is evident. In the same early work Peixoto makes reference to Couchoud’s *Sages et poètes d’Asie* (1918). The observation that haiku is written in tercets of five, seven, and five feet is part of this legacy. Here, and again in 1928 in an article in the journal *Excelsior* titled “O haikai japonês ou epigrama lírico,” he perpetuates Chamberlain’s term “lyric epigram” as a definition of haiku. Just as Henderson and Blyth would do in the decades to come, Peixoto speculated about the possibility of composing haiku in Portuguese: “Haikais in Brazil? Why not? Just like persimmons from Barbacena or Nagasaki.” Peixoto was likely the first Brazilian to write haiku in Portuguese. Poems such as “Comparison” in the box on page 51 reveal how the poet has studied Moritake’s butterfly haiku; in fact, it is that poem that is offered as a Japanese model for Brazilian haiku much as Bashō’s “old pond” has been for Americans.  

H. Masuda Goga’s history of haiku in Brazil mentions a number of European and North American poets and scholars whose influence was felt in Brazil: Wenceslau de Moraes (a writer of orientalia and exotica—Goga likens him to Lafcadio Hearn—and was supposedly the first to translate a haiku into Portuguese), Basil Hall Chamberlain, Harold G. Henderson, Kenneth Yasuda, Edward Seidensticker, Yone Noguchi, Paul-Louis Couchoud, Georges Bonneau, Kuni Matsuo (a Buddhist scholar who also translated Kikaku into French in 1927), and Asatarō Miyamori, as well as literary figures prominent in the postwar years, including René Sieffert, Donald Keene, and Octavio Paz.

The second pioneer of Portuguese-language haiku in Brazil was Guillerme de Almeida, a lawyer, film critic, poet in the French Parnassian tradition, and translator of Baudelaire and Sophocles. He composed tightly executed poems, often of a patriotic nature. His involvement in the revolutionary movement earned him a year of exile in Portugal. Almeida discovered haiku in 1936 upon making the acquaintance of Japanese Consul Ichige Kozo. Much like José Juan Tablada and other Hispanic American poets we examined earlier, Almeida was attracted by the brevity, succinctness, and color of the Japanese haiku, but he felt the need to select formal aspects that he liked, discard others, and add his personal poetic imperatives to the Japanese original. In particular, Almeida advocated strict adherence to a 5-7-5 syllabic structure, and he developed a strict rhyme scheme, which, despite its restrictiveness (or perhaps because of it) proved very popular among Brazilians for decades. We’ll look more closely at this style presently.

Two other milestones in European Brazilian haiku from the 1930s are the publication in 1933 of Waldomiro Siqueira, Júnior’s *Hai-kuai*, the first book in Brazil dedicated entirely to haiku, and the appearance in 1939 of Jorge Fonseca Júnior’s *Roteiro lírico*. Fonseca, who among leading European Brazilian haikuists was perhaps best informed about Japanese haiku, captures the spirit of the time in his introduction, “In sum, all the haiku in the first part of this book always, intentionally, demonstrate, in a more or less accentuated or complete way, a Portuguese-Brazilian motif related to our fauna, our flora, our nature generally.” He was also the first Portuguese-speaking Brazilian to promote the use of seasonal words, *kigo*, in his work, especially after 1940, when he took part in a haiku delegation visit to Japan and met Kyoshi.

Another development out of the European tradition was concrete poetry, including concrete haiku, which was perhaps more important in Brazil that in any other haiku-writing culture, including America. From the mid-1950s the names Augusto de Campos, Haroldo de Campos, Déci Pignatari, and Pedro Xisto merit mention.

The Japanese and European haiku traditions in Brazil remained separate but equal for the first decades of the 20th century. The divide was regrettable but understandable in the context of the cultural stratification in the country. Rocha writes that “Japanese immigrants and descendants would have been a source of knowledge of haiku for non-Japanese Brazilians if the latter had sought them out.”
The two schools began to converge in the late 1930s, however. The key figures in the merger were Fonseca and, even more, a Japanese Brazilian, H. Masuda Goga. Born Masuda Hidekazu in Kagawa prefecture, Japan, in 1911, he emigrated to Brazil in 1929 and was naturalized in 1962. He trained in a commercial college in Osaka and worked initially on the coffee plantations. For many years he served as an official of the Cotia Agricultural Cooperative Beneficial Society. After World War II, he joined the staff of *Jornal Paulista*, of which he eventually became editor in chief. He was also a correspondent for *Mainichi shinbun* from 1953 to 1963. He studied haiku under Nenpuku in 1935, taking the haigo Goga (meaning “Ganges River”), and began his own inquiries into Brazilian haiku shortly thereafter. While acquiring a reputation among the Japanese community, he maintained his ties with metropolitan Japan and was a disciple of Kyoshi and a contributor to the traditionalist journal *Yuki* (“Snow”) edited by Kôka Muramatsu. He participated in the journal *Kôkage*, and in the late 1980s he was an active member of three haiku groups.

Goga assisted Nenpuku in his mission to spread haiku among the Brazilian Japanese, but he also befriended the European Brazilian poets. Goga published his first haiku in Portuguese in 1943; heretofore he had written only in Japanese. He exchanged ideas with the most prominent Portuguese-language haiku poets, notably Fonseca and Almeida, about the composition of haiku in Portuguese but based on the Japanese model. Following the first national meeting of haiku poets in Brazil in 1986, the Grêmio Haicai Ipê (“Ipê Haiku Group”—*ipê* is the flowering trumpet tree) was formed in 1987 in São Paulo by Goga, poet Roberto Saito, and journalist Francisco Handa specifically to advance the composition of Portuguese-language haiku in the traditional Japanese style. Goga’s work *Burajiru no haicai* (1986) was published in Tokyo and translated into Portuguese by José Yamashiro in 1988 under the title *O haicai no Brasil*. This work gives an overview of the origin and development of haiku in Brazil. Goga’s other projects to the advancement of haiku in Brazil include the publication of two *sajiki* titled *Natureza—berço do haicai; kigologia e antologia* (1996, with Teruko Oda) and *Haicai: a poesia do kigô* (1995) and co-editing a Latin American haiku compendium, *Antologia do haicai latino-americano/Antologia de haikus latinoamericanos* (1993). Goga was also interested in linked verse and founded the groups Burajiru Renku Kenkyûkai (“Brazilian Renku Study Group”) in 1984 to study and write renku in Japanese, and Grêmio Kaleidoscópio (“Kaleidoscope Study Group”) in 1994 for Portuguese-language renku. In 1999 Goga finished his social life in São Paulo and moved to the country in Minas Gerais state to lead a life of tranquility and write haiku. In 2004, at age 93, he was honored with the Masaoka Shiki International Haiku Prize for his life’s work. He died four years later.

**CHARACTERIZING BRAZILIAN HAIKU**

The Brazilian haiku model established by Goga, Fonseca, and others has continued steadily to flourish throughout the country. The Ipê Haiku Group undoubtedly remains the leader in Brazilian haiku, but numerous local clubs and even different schools have also emerged, and the Brazilian scene is, excepting English-language haiku, the most active in the world—so vibrant that it is difficult to characterize simply.

Recent articles on haiku in Brazil¹⁰¹ have identified four or five different styles. The “Japanese” style pertains to the early period of haiku written in Japanese by Nenpuku, Goga, and other immigrants. Work by the Japanese Brazilians has been squarely in Kyoshi’s Hototogisu tradition of Japanese haiku.¹⁰² One finds a strong sense of form and seasonality (*yuki teikei*) and dedication to descriptive (*shasei*) haiku about natural scenes (albeit using Brazilian flora and fauna), traditions that still inform most Brazilian haiku. Structurally and content-wise, many of these verses seem similar to American haiku, especially its early years—e.g., the example by Nenpuku in the sidebar on page 51. His haiku are *yuki teikei—5–7–5* syllabic structure with a seasonal word—both in Japanese and Portuguese (and almost so in our English translation) and has two strong images juxtaposed for resonance and meaning. Note the last line of the haiku in the sidebar—in Japanese *kareno kana*—which evokes Bashô’s famous death poem and provides a sense of seasonality as well as context for this haiku.

A second trend has been called by writer José Marins the “Kolody” style, after Helena Kolody who, in 1941, included three haiku in her book *Passagem interior* (and thereby becoming the first woman to publish a haiku in Brazil). Hallmarks of this style are the use of titles, adherence to Japanese haiku metrics (i.e., 5–7–5 syllables), and the employment of Western-style poetic language, including rhyme, metaphor, and personification. Beyond experiments in the haiku form, the same sort of Western poetical admixtures that we saw earlier in French-, Spanish-, and Russian-language haiku are likely to be found as well in early
Portuguese-language haiku, e.g. (see the box), the social consciousness evident in Waldomiro Siqueira, Júnior’s “Natal” or the didacticism and florid personifications of, say, Fanny Luiza Dupré, in her “Arcada … tristonha!” This all sounds very close to the sort of work being done by amateur poets in North America before the imposition of the Henderson/Yasuda/Blyth standards or, indeed, the work of non-English-language haiku poets from the outset.

The third style, which Marins calls “Guilhermine,” is that introduced by Guilherme de Almeida, involving a set of strict rules for his haiku. In 1937 Almeida published an essay, “Os meus haïcais,” in the magazine O Estado de S. Paulo, in which he laid out his ideas of haiku, which—à la Peixoto—included a tercet of 5–7–5 syllables, titles, rhyming first and third lines, and an internal rhyme of the second and seventh syllables of the second line. Although he was learning haiku from Japanese as well as European sources, Almeida’s style diverged significantly from the Japanese original, in effect replacing Japanese rules with Portuguese rules—much as some early English-language translators and haiku poets replaced 5–7–5 structure in Japanese haiku with iambic pentameter couplets or quatrains and added titles and rhyme. Despite Almeida’s seeming strictness, his works were very well received by the Japanese, and he had an enormous influence on the course of haiku in his homeland. Almeida’s 1947 book Poesia vária is so influential that he is often considered the founder of a separate school of Brazilian haiku—see the sample haiku of his in the sidebar. Almeida was one of the founders and leaders of the Aliança Cultural Brasil-Japão in São Paulo, a center for Japanese Brazilian cultural activities. His haiku, as well as that of Fonseca, in the box are written in the Guilhermine style.

In the 1980s some poets, notably Millor Fernandes (b. 1924) and Paulo Leminski (1944–1989), began writing what has been called “free haiku”—a fourth style. Characteristics of this style are abandonment of 5–7–5 metrics, a loosening of close devotion to nature as subject matter, and use of Western poetic tropes (especially metaphor), rhyme, and wordplay. Above all, the free-haiku poets sought what they called haimi (sabor do haïca—“the taste of haiku”). Their down-to-earth, unfussy style attracted a large following and can be said to have revitalized haiku in Brazil in the 1980s. Leminski was influenced by the concrete poets and published a popular biography of Bashô. He was an autodidact who learned French and Japanese on his own and, in addition to his translations and prolific writings, was an outspoken social critic, proponent of Zen, and counterculture activist in the 1960s. All of these characteristics have shown up in other haiku traditions as well, though usually in different mixtures and proportions.

Finally, fifth, is the style that Marins calls “traditional,” or the type of haiku that is associated with the Ipê Haiku Group. Braiding together the Japanese and European threads, writers in the traditional style produce haiku in Portuguese that are steeped in nature, especially the Brazilian landscape, and rely heavily on kigo to link the haiku to a definite season of the year. In form, traditional-style haiku tend toward the 5–7–5-syllable structure, though not slavishly so and certainly not requiring a Guilhermine syllabic and rhyme scheme. The merging of the trends and the emergence of the “traditional” style in Brazil—essentially writing yuki teikei—style haiku in Portuguese—has brought haiku much closer to the classical Japanese model.

In a recent article Brazilian poet Rosa Clementó3 sums up the status of haiku in her homeland in terms that will be understandable to anyone familiar with the American experience:

 Brazilians are currently surrounded by, but have not yet completely surrendered to globalization and external influences affecting haiku. Most Brazilian haiku writers believe that writing in 5–7–5 syllables is a must, and it’s very common to find writers who concentrate on this haiku feature alone. Portuguese words are sometimes long, allowing inclusion of extra syllables with relatively little effort. But this is not always true. Sometimes, the writer struggles to find a single word to complete five or seven syllables, simply so that his or her haiku can have the right number. For this reason we can find haiku with words that add nothing but syllables, which just weakens the impact of the haiku. It is still common to find Brazilian haiku using metaphors, similes and anthropomorphisms. Some literary commentary favors the use of these characteristics, while other commentary instructs the reader to avoid these practices. This certainly confuses Brazilian readers and writers. Brazilian writers study the old Masters, who occasionally used anthropomorphism or metaphors for impact. They ask, if Issa, Basho, Buson, Shiki wrote that way, why can’t they do the same? The answers are often unconvincing.
Here is a case of Brazilian poets measuring their work against the Japanese masters—in exactly the same way that occurred in the early years of the English-language haiku movement—and persists in many quarters to this day.

Haiku in Brazil today is vibrant and growing. In addition to the central Ipê Haiku Group in São Paulo, study groups have been formed in the states of São Paulo, Paraná, Amazonas, and elsewhere. The Grêmio Haicai Araúcária, in Bandeirantes, Paraná state, focuses on haiku for children and young adults. Ipê’s publishing program has been little less than astounding, and Brazilians were pioneers in online haiku activity, led by two Web sites established in 1996: Caqui (i.e. the Japanese kaki = persimmon; <http://www.kakinet.com>), a treasure trove of information about haiku in Brazil and the world, and Paulo Franchetti’s HaiKai-L, <http://www.kakinet.com/lista>, an interactive discussion forum based at Unicamp (State University of Campinas), where he is a distinguished professor. The editor of both the Caqui and HaiKai-L Web sites is Edson Kenji Iura. There are several haiku contests in Brazil, and in 2010 the 22nd national meeting “Encontro Brasileiro de Haicai” was held in São Paulo.

**A Selection of Brazilian Haiku**

**NENPUKU** (Satô Kenjirô, 1898–1979), a member of Kyoshi’s *Hototogisu* group from 1922; emigrated to Brazil in 1927; the pioneer of Japanese Brazilian haiku.107

\[
\text{**kisha e kite** kashi akanaeru kareno kana}
\]

Em volta do trem
Vendedores de doces —
O campo seco.

All around the train
sweet-sellers are gathering —
The withered field.

**AFRÂNIO PEIXOTO** (1876–1947), physician and professor; credited with introducing haiku from French sources to Brazil.108

**COMPARAÇÃO**

Um aeroplano
Em busca de combustível …
Oh! é um mosquito.

**COMPARISON**

An aeroplane
In search of fuel …
Oh! It’s a mosquito.

**GUILHERME DE ALMEIDA** (1890–1969), a prominent lawyer, poet, and translator, who developed his own highly structured style of haiku.109

**NOTURNO**

Na cidade, a lua:
a jóia branca que bòia
na lama da rua.

In the town, smiles greet
moonlight: it floats so white
down the muddy street.

**JORGE FONSECA, JÚNIOR** (1912–1985), a lawyer, journalist, and teacher of Portuguese; one of the first Portuguese-speaking Brazilians to abandon rhyme and specifically Brazilian themes.110

**Nesta catedral,**
**quando arde o sol, toda tarde,**
**sangra este vitral …**

At cathedral Mass
as solar heat blazes, beats
bleeding of stained glass …
WALDOMIRO SIQUEIRA, JÚNIOR (1912— ), a musicologist and important early figure in haiku.\textsuperscript{111}

\textit{Natal} \hspace{2cm} \textit{Christmas}

\textit{Sapatos vazios …} \hspace{2cm} \textit{Empty shoes …}
\textit{Não podia compreender} \hspace{2cm} \textit{He couldn’t understand it}
\textit{O pobre orfáozinho.} \hspace{2cm} \textit{The poor little orphan}

FANNY LUIZA DUPRÉ (1911–1996). Trade union administrator.\textsuperscript{112}

\textit{Arcada … tristonha!} \hspace{2cm} \textit{Arcade … melancholy!}
\textit{A palmeira solitária,} \hspace{2cm} \textit{The solitary palm tree,}
\textit{soluçando ao vento …} \hspace{2cm} \textit{sobbing to the wind …}

PEDRO XISTO (1901–1987). Poet known especially for his concrete poems.\textsuperscript{113}

\textit{olhas em meus olhos} \hspace{2cm} \textit{you look into my eyes}
\textit{e não vê senão a ti} \hspace{2cm} \textit{and see nothing else but you}
\textit{— a múltilpa a minima} \hspace{2cm} \textit{— the multiple, the minimum}

GOGA (Hidekazu Masuda; 1911–2008). Haikuist in Japanese before he began writing in Portuguese as well; cofounder of the Ipê Haiku Group.\textsuperscript{114}

\textit{Num cantinho escuro} \hspace{2cm} \textit{In a dark corner}
\textit{da grande cadeia histórica,} \hspace{2cm} \textit{of the great historic prison}
\textit{um canto de grilo.} \hspace{2cm} \textit{a cricket’s song}

HELENA KOLODY (1912–2004), a teacher from Curitiba, Paraná state.\textsuperscript{115}

\textit{ARCO-IRIS} \hspace{2cm} \textit{RAINBOW}

\textit{Arco-iris no céu.} \hspace{2cm} \textit{Rainbow in the sky}
\textit{Está sorrindo o menino} \hspace{2cm} \textit{The boy who was just crying}
\textit{que há pouco chorou.} \hspace{2cm} \textit{is now all smiles}

PAULO LEMINSKI (1944–1989). Translator, poet, and social activist from Curitiba, Paraná state.\textsuperscript{116}

\textit{relógio parado} \hspace{2cm} \textit{stopped clock}
\textit{o ouvido ouve} \hspace{2cm} \textit{the ear hears}
\textit{o tic tac passado} \hspace{2cm} \textit{the old tick tock}

FRANCISCO HANDA (1955— ). Editor of the Japanese Brazilian magazine \textit{Portal} and a cofounder of the Ipê Haiku Group.\textsuperscript{117}

\textit{Dentro da favela} \hspace{2cm} \textit{Inside the slum}
\textit{por uma única fresta} \hspace{2cm} \textit{through a single slit}
\textit{o céu ilumina-se} \hspace{2cm} \textit{light from the sky}
Guin Ga (Douglas Eden Broetto; 1938– ). Sailor, anthropologist, and public administrator from Niterói, Rio de Janeiro state.\textsuperscript{118}

\begin{quote}
Na réstia de sol,  
sobre o branco do açúcar,  
zum-zum de abelhas …
\end{quote}

In a sunbeam,  
over the sugar’s whiteness,  
the buzz-buzz of bees

Aníbal Beça (1946–2009). Journalist, playwright, composer, and writer from Manaus, Amazonas state.\textsuperscript{119}

\begin{quote}
De repente  
as moscas pela casa —  
dia nublado
\end{quote}

Suddenly  
the house fills with flies  
cloudy day

CONCLUSIONS

Haiku was exported from Japan to the rest of the world across diverse bridges that led in different directions to different countries. Various cultures and literary traditions found different aspects of haiku to admire and emulate. As a result, the haiku written in different corners the world today are very heterogeneous.

British gentlemen scholars were the first Westerners to pay serious attention to the Japanese haiku. A strong tradition of translation and scholarship began in the last decades of the 19th century and extended through R.H. Blyth’s work in the 1940s. Just before World War II and in the postwar period, American scholars joined in as well, and these men laid the foundation for a vigorous amateur haiku tradition. In postwar period there was a strong infusion of Zen into haiku, notably owing to Blyth and among the Beat poets. Still, the first half-century of haiku writing and studies in English—the foundation years—were primarily the province of scholars, not poets.

The pattern of discovery of haiku was different in other cultures. In Mexico, for example, a few poets, notably José Juan Tablada, showed curiosity about Oriental culture and literature. Haiku was quickly adopted by Latin American poets, who found in it useful devices for meeting their poetic needs. The French discovered haiku in the late 19th century as part of a general interest in the Orient and non-Western poetic forms, and, like the Mexican poets, were quick to try writing haiku in their own language. The influence of the early French haiku poets was profound and extended to the Latin Americans, Russians, and many other cultures. Russian avant-garde poets were immediately intrigued with French vers libre, and state-supported interest in Oriental studies and ethnography encouraged translation of scholarly work on Japanese verse.

Soviet ideology and politics retarded the development of all aspects of culture, including haiku. Brazil’s experience was unique in that haiku was directly imported by Japanese immigrants and ties with the metropolitan Japanese haiku establishment continued for decades. Simultaneously, knowledge of haiku was being imported alongside other literary trends from Europe by the Portuguese-speaking Brazilian intelligentsia, and a vibrant Portuguese-language haiku tradition ensued. The two trends merged in 1930s and ’40s.

What was actually adopted from Japanese haiku by each of these cultures? The Latin American, French, and Russian poets eagerly accepted the brevity and simplicity of the haiku form and the central importance in haiku of the image. This was a welcome change from the heavy, ornate, and stylized writing of the previous decades in Europe and the Americas. Focus on the image (or symbol) soon became part of the literary Zeitgeist and informed the avant-garde poetry throughout the West in the first decades of the 20th century, whether it was the free verse in France and Russia or the Imagism in the English-speaking countries. The Russians were especially taken with vers libre and considered haiku and tanka a subgenre of free verse. Elsewhere—for example Tablada in Mexico—found that the succinctness of haiku fit perfectly with modernist ideals.

From Japanese haiku, all the cultures we have examined accepted as normal a three-line, 5–7–5—syllable structure for haiku in the West—the form introduced by W.G. Aston. Early definitions of haiku in
all Western languages nearly all fashioned these formal imperatives into a definition of haiku, and most poets sought to imitate the 5–7–5 structure when writing in their own languages. The 5–7–5 syllabic requirement is more problematic for the Romance and Slavic languages than even for English, yet poets in these languages generally clung tenaciously to the quasi-Japanese haiku structure.

Seasonality, which is central to traditional Japanese haiku, was never an issue in Hispanic America, France, or Russia, though it was so in Brazil, initially in the Japanese Brazilian tradition and later also among those who composed haiku in Portuguese. Indeed, season words—kigo—have remained extremely important in all Brazilian haiku, much more so than anywhere else outside Japan. Haiku in the Ípê Haiku Group’s books are typically arranged by season, and this very active group has issued a Brazilian saijiki to explain and foster the use of season words appropriate to Brazil.120 One might speculate that the interest in seasonality in Brazil evolved from Kyoshi’s yuki teikei dictates, to which the principal Japanese Brazilian hatjin adhered. The fact that both Japanese- and Portuguese-language poets focused intently on Brazilian flora and fauna, plus the inversion of seasons in the Southern Hemisphere, surely intensified the concern with kigo in haiku. Even in Brazil, however, we found none of the agonizing that American haiku specialists have gone through over the suitability of Japanese seasons to non-Japanese climes, e.g., whether cherry-blossom time in Kyoto is comparable to the conditions in Guadalajara or Saint Petersburg.

The third major requirement of traditional Japanese haiku—after form and seasonality—is kire, a cutting of the haiku for the purpose of juxtaposition and internal comparison of images. Juxtaposition has historically been essential to English-language haiku but has been a non-issue in haiku composition elsewhere in the West—though again, Brazilian haiku often provide exceptions. In the sample European and Hispanic American haiku we presented above, time and again we see the poets passing over opportunities to create tension or resonance in their work in favor of felicitous or witty language, Western-style aesthetics, and didacticism in choice of subject matter.

In the English-language haiku tradition, from the early translations of R.H. Blyth and Harold Stewart through the Beat poets and more recent translations by Lucien Stryk and others, Zen has been the handmaiden of haiku. Aside from a certain curiosity about Zen and an occasional exception, such as the Colombian Humberto Senegal, Zen and the spiritual aspect of haiku is not an issue in the Hispanic, Russian, or Brazilian traditions. In France the deep-rooted anticlericalism waves aside Zen in haiku and other literary genres and—at least in the ideas of some theoreticians—seeks to replace it with homegrown French existentialism or humanism. Many haikuis around the world, including Japan, have now abandoned some or all aspects of yuki teikei and shasei, often calling their novelty “free haiku,” but aspects such as Zen and Western poetics were not what replaced them.

Significantly, we found no mention in any of our readings of sabi, wabi, karume, yugen, aware, etc. These traditional Japanese aesthetic principles have always been a major concern of American and British haikuis, who often argue in favor of mainly replacing Western aesthetics with Japanese in English-language haiku poetry. All European-based haiku traditions—including our own—have struggled with the question of how much Western poetry to admit into haiku. Answers diverge: the aesthetics prized in continental European and Latin American haiku today are largely Western in origin, whereas English-language haiku largely remains faithful to the definitions of Japanese haiku as codified by the early scholars and translators. What is most important for Hispanic American, French, Russian, and Portuguese-speaking Brazilian poets is the strength of the image, the impact of the idea, and/or the beauty of the language. These poets often make use of titles, rhyme, metaphor, and so forth. This contrasts sharply with most current English-language haiku, which still bear the imprint of the early scholars’ findings and a long-time devotion to a classical Japanese model. It is difficult to conclude that these trends are growing together, and only time will tell whether a truly “global haiku” is even possible.

NOTES:
1. Earlier versions of this paper were read at the Haiku North America Conference, Winston-Salem, N.C., Aug. 18, 2007, and serialized in Modern Haiku 41.2 (summer 2010)—42.1 (winter—spring 2011). Thanks to David G. Lanoue for his helpful comments.
8. Lafcadio Hearn, Exotics and Retrospective (Boston: Little, Brown, 1898); In Ghostly Japan (Little, Brown, 1899); Shadowings (Little, Brown, 1900); Japanese Miscellany (Little, Brown, 1901); and Kwaidan (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1904).

Another prominent writer of the 1950s, Richard Wright, discovered haiku independently and also penned a large number in the last years of his life (he died in 1960), but he had no influence on other writers of haiku because he was living in isolation France and his haiku were not published until two decades later and not collected for yet another twenty years. See the Richard Wright Reader, ed. Ellen Wright and Michel Fabre (New York: Harper & Row, 1978) and Richard Wright, Haiku: This Other World, ed. Yoshinobu Hakutani and Robert L. Tener (New York: Arcade Publishers, 1998).

27. Shôsôn, Pepper-Pod.
30. A possible exception to this statement is the existence of a Colonial Haiku Association founded by Humberto [now Umberto] Senegal. We have not been able to determine the size or range of this group or whether it is still active. Similarly, we are aware of three Hispanic American publications that include haiku and other poetry: Poesia libre: revista de poesía, published by the Ministry of Culture in Managua, Nicaragua, from about 1980; Senegal’s Kanona: arte y literatura, published in Calarcá, Colombia, from 1985, and his Néhínya: Haiku, a trifold sheet published approximately monthly from about 1990.
34. The earliest book-length Spanish-language study of haiku that I have been able to identify appeared in 1972: Fernando Rodríguez Izquierdo, El haiku japonés: historia y traducción: evolución y triunfo del haikai, breve poema sensitivo (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1972). It was reprinted in 1994.
36. Translations by C. Trumbull unless noted.
42. Cicada 1:2 (1977); translator unknown.
44. Mario Benedetti, Rincón de haikus, 2nd ed. (Madrid: Alfaguara, 1999) numbers 143 and 40.
46. The haiku and greguería both from Norberto de la Torre, El universo en un sombrero, 3rd ed. ([San Luis Potosí, Mexico]: Koan Editores, July 2008) This collection was originally published in 1995.
48. A hundred thanks to Klaus-Dieter Wirth for his careful reading of the French section as well as his helpful suggestions and vetting of the translations. Note that our study did not extend to haiku written in francophone countries outside France. Especially interesting would be to trace the roots of French Canadian haiku: did this vibrant tradition derive from French or English roots, or—most likely—both?
58. I am not aware that Sartre himself ever considered haiku; rather it is the case that after the fact “existentialism” has become one of the buzzwords sometimes attributed to the gendai haiku of poets such as Ban’ya Natsushi. Roland Barthes addressed haiku directly in three chapters of L’Empire des signes (Geneva: Editions d’Art Albert Skira, 1970; Empire of Signs. Translated by Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang, 1982). Lee Gurga includes a short discussion of Barthes’s speculations on the nature of language in Haiku: A Poet’s Guide. Lincoln, Ill.: Modern Haiku Press, 2003, 138–39.
59. French and English from Anthologie, 40; apparent typo, cello, in this source corrected here.
translating from French.


98. Iura.


102. Haiku by Japanese immigrants to the United States sprang from a different school, Kairou (“Red Sea”) of the free-form Shin Kei movement—i.e., without set syllabic structure or season words—of Nakatsuka Ippekirō. It is interesting to note that Japanese- and English-language haiku have never merged in America as they did in Brazil. For a good example of Japanese American haiku, see Violet Kazue de Cristoforo, compiler and translator. May Sky: There Is Always Tomorrow: An Anthology of Japanese American Concentration Camp Haiku (Los Angeles: Sun & Moon Press, 1997).


104. Iura.

105. Caqui Web site.

106. English translations by C. Trumbull, except for the Beça, which is translated by Rosa Clement.


108. Portuguese text from his “O haïkai japonês ou epígrafe lírico” (1928).


115. Text from 100 haïcassas brasilieros.


117. Text from 100 haïcassas brasilieros.

118. Ibid.


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——. *Shadowings*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1900.


One Hundred Bridges in a Single View. Woodblock Prints Title: One Hundred Bridges in a Single View. Publication: 1823. Size: Double Oban 43.2 x 56.9 cm (17 x 22 3/8 in.) Publisher: Nishimuraya Yohachi (Eijudô). Signature: Seal Only. Five hundred traditional Japanese season words with authoritative English translations, seasonally organized, for the benefit of haiku and linked poem poets and translators of traditional Japanese poetry. But as we connect more and more with the depths of the haiku tradition, we begin to understand that a great haiku makes use of seasonal themes in a deeper way. Each of the more important seasonal themes--such as those listed here--has a long history of not just physical associations, but emotional tone as well. A good haikai saijiki (almanac of seasonal topics and season words used in haiku and linked-poetry composition) explains these traditional associations, but that is beyond the scope of this list.

tugging at the strings.

married well from peg to bridge.

pulling sound from air.

[98] The Call.

watch you taste the air.

jaws open, pointed skyward.

galaxy filled mouth.

[99] Scale.

sing through the night like song birds.

gasp, sting, bending wing.

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