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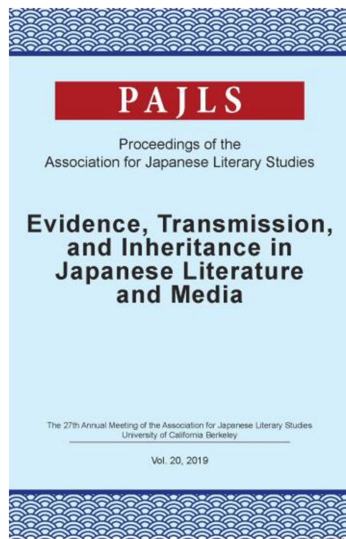
Proceedings of the Association for Japanese Literary Studies 20 (2019): 41–52.



PAJLS 20:
Evidence, Transmission, and Inheritance in Japanese Literature and Media.
Editor: Matthew Mewhinney
Managing Editor: Matthew Fraleigh

IDENTIFICATION WITH OR DISTANCE FROM CHINESE POETRY? "CHINESE-STYLE" *HAIKAI* BY BASHŌ'S CIRCLE

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During the early 1680s, especially the Tenna era (1681–1684), it was fashionable for poets to infuse Chinese elements into *haikai* (Japanese popular linked verse). The circle of Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694) also followed this trend, composing many so-called *kanshibunchō haikai* 漢詩文調俳諧 (*haikai* in the style of Chinese poetry and prose), or "Chinese-style *haikai*." In the history of *haikai* development, this Chinese style was sandwiched between two contrasting styles. Before this style emerged, the *haikai* world was dominated by the Danrin School, which aspired to creating an unconstrained, illusory, and sometimes even absurd world that inverts traditions and conventions. After this style emerged, *haikai* was developed into a more serious art form by Bashō's school, which sought for beauty and elegance in the representation of poor, secluded, and everyday lives. Then, what was the place of this Chinese style in this *haikai* development, and what role, if any, did Chinese style play in the establishment of the Bashō style (*shōfū* 蕉風), which is generally considered the zenith of *haikai*?

Interestingly, scholars have varying, and sometimes even contradictory opinions on these questions. For example, Kon Eizō asserts that the Chinese-style *haikai* was still in the stage of seeking novelties on superficial levels; there were essentially no improvements in terms of literary awareness, and in that sense, it did not surpass Danrin-style *haikai* and was no more than a transitional product in *haikai* history.[2] Conversely, Satō Katsuaki states that Bashō had already developed an awareness to revolutionize *haikai* during the Tenna era; the Chinese-style *haikai* verses composed by Bashō's circle "informed the birth of the new Bashō style" and should not be considered mere transitional works.[3] There are also seemingly discrepant comments with regard to aesthetic style. While many scholars summarize the major themes of Bashō's *haikai* during this time

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[2] Kon Eizō 今栄蔵, *Shoki haikai kara Bashō jidai e* 初期俳諧から芭蕉時代へ (Tokyo: Kasama shoin, 2002), 223.

[3] Sato Katsuaki 佐藤勝明, *Bashō to Kyōto haidan* 芭蕉と京都俳壇 (Tokyo: Yagi shoten, 2006), 319.

as poverty, reclusion, and desolate beauty, it also has been noted that there frequently appear verses representing a flamboyant and sensual world.[4]

I think these contradictions result from the fact that the so-called "Chinese style" originally does not refer to a single, immutable style. Despite its misleading name, the concept of Chinese-style *haikai* signified a series of attempts of different groups to infuse Chinese elements in *haikai* during the early 1680s, for the purpose of improving the stagnant Danrin *haikai*. Even if we only focus on the works of one group—Bashō's circle—it is difficult to reduce them to one pattern or one style. I argue that for Bashō's circle, Chinese-style was an experimental stage, and a definite direction for their style had yet to be established when Chinese-style *haikai* emerged. In fact, they were hospitable to a wide range of Chinese texts with diverse styles and a variety of approaches of appropriating Chinese literature. This paper examines the multi-dimensional incorporations of Chinese elements in *haikai* by Bashō's circle, and accordingly, the various styles their *haikai* verses embody. In doing so, it will also become clear which aspect(s) of Chinese literature, if any, contributed to the formation of the Bashō style. This paper focuses on *Jiin* 次韻 (*A Response to the Seven-hundred and Fifty Verses*, 1681), *Musashiburi* 武蔵曲 (*Musashi Style*, 1682), and *Minashiguri* 虚栗 (*Empty Chestnuts*, 1683), three *haikai* anthologies that include Chinese-style verses and involved the participation of Bashō's circle.[5]

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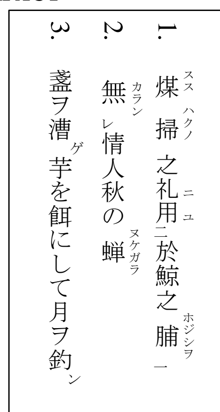
[4] Haruo Shirane, for example, states: "Each *haikai* group attempted to develop its own set of identifiable poetic images and motifs. For Bashō's circle, at least during the Tenna era, it became the themes of 'poverty' (*hin*), 'impoverished dwelling' (*hinkyo*), coldness, loneliness, social failure—topics found in the Taoist *Chuang-tzu* and in Chinese recluse poetry, particularly that of Tu Fu and Su Tung-p'o." See Haruo Shirane, *Traces of Dreams: Landscape, Cultural Memory, and the Poetry of Bashō* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1998), 66. Ishikawa Shinkō 石川真弘, on the other hand, points out the frequent occurrences of verses with a flamboyant (*en* 艶) style in "Tennaki no shōfū haikai" 天和期の蕉風俳諧, *Shōfū ronkō* 蕉風論考 (Osaka: Izumi shoin, 1990), 1–18.

[5] For base texts, I used the typeset version included in Komiya Toyotaka 小宮豐隆, ed., *Kōhon Bashō zenshū* 校本芭蕉全集, vol.3 (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1962–1969) for *Jiin*, and the typeset version included in Katsumine Shinpū 勝峰晋風, ed., *Nihon haisho taikei* 日本俳書大系, vol.3 (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1928) for *Musashiburi* and *Minashiguri*. *Kōhon Bashō zenshū* also provides a typeset text and annotation for the linked verse sequences that includes participation of Bashō in *Musashiburi* and *Minashiguri*, and I consulted the annotations. I also consulted the annotations in Abe Masami 阿部正美, ed., *Bashō renkushō* 芭蕉連句抄, vol.3 (Tokyo, Meiji shoin, 1989) for *Jiin* and the linked verse sequences that include participation of Bashō in *Musashiburi* and *Minashiguri*.

CREATING VISUAL IMPACT

When reading the three *haikai* anthologies, one can hardly ignore the frequent appearance of orthographies that remind us of *kanbun* (Sinitic) writings and Japanese *kundoku* reading of classical Chinese texts.[6] Most Chinese-style verses can be identified through this kind of visual observation, as shown in the following examples.



1. 煤掃之礼用於鯨之脯 (煤掃の礼に鯨の脯を用ゆ) Kikaku

for the ritual of	*susuhaku no*
"Year-End House Cleaning,"	*rei ni kujira no*
whale jerky is used	*hojishi o mochiyu*[7]

2. 無情人秋の蝉 Ranran 嵐蘭

a heartless person—	*nasake nakaran hito*
shell of a locust in autumn	*akino nukegara*[8]

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[6] In this paper, I use the word *kanbun* to refer specifically to Sinitic writings by Japanese authors.

[7] *Jiin* in *Kōhon Bashō zenshū*, 192. For verses 1–3, I provide how the verses were transcribed in the original text on the right side. All English translations are mine unless otherwise noted. *Susuhaki* 煤掃, literally "cleaning up soot," refers to the custom of thoroughly cleaning the house in preparation for the New Year in Japan. During the Edo period, this was generally done on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month in aristocratic and samurai families, usually accompanied by ritual events. It also became popular among commoners. Here the reading for the kanji combination 煤掃 is given as *susuhaku* instead of the more common reading *susuhaki*. According to the annotation in *Kōhon Bashō zenshū*, the composer intentionally used the reading of *susuhaku* to imitate the *kanbun* style.

[8] *Musashiburi* in *Nihon haisho taikei*, 10. We do not realize that the locust only has its shell left until we see that the kanji 蝉, usually read as *semi* with the meaning of locust, is given a reading of *nukegara*, meaning "shell." The shell of a locust alludes to the "Utsusemi" chapter of *The Tale of Genji*, where, in order to escape from Genji's pursuit, a lady slipped from her room in a panic, leaving her thin, silk outer robe behind. Genji took the robe home, and sent her a poem, in which he compared her to a locust that sloughs off its shell. The lady is thus referred to as

3. 盞ヲ漕ゲ芋を餌にして月ヲ釣ン — Gyōun 暁雲

they catch the full moon	*sakazuki o koge*
with taros as bait	*imo o esa ni shite*
while rowing sake cups	*tsuki o tsuran*[9]

The above verses represent several typical ways of transcriptions in the Chinese style. They all include part(s), although varying in length, that imitate *kanbun* writings or Japanese *kundoku* reading of Chinese texts from the aspect of orthography. Verse 1 is entirely written in *kanbun*, which is rare in Chinese-style *haikai*. It is worth noting that Kikaku apparently was not so good at *kanbun* writings, since he misused the word 於 here.[10] Verses 2 contains a phrase that is transcribed in *kanbun*, with Japanese readings in katakana on the right side, and diacritical marks including a return marker (*kaeriten* 返り点). Verse 3 resembles a *kundoku* reading of a Chinese or *kanbun* text. While the second line *imo o esa ni shite* is written in kanji and hiragana like most *haikai* verses, the rest has particles written in katakana and *okurigana* shrunk to the right in katakana, which are similar to transcriptions of *kanbun* writings. It also includes the structure of “object+を,” which Satō Katsuaki considers to be influenced by *kanbun* writings.[11]

The above examples imitate Chinese and *kanbun* texts from the aspect of orthography, and the mixture of this kind of transcription in the genre of *haikai* leads to an unconventional and somewhat bizarre style that is

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Utsusemi, which literally means an empty locust. Here, the image of Utsusemi resonates with “a heartless person.”

[9] *Musashiburi* in *Nihon haisho taikei*, 5. The poet describes a moon-viewing party using the terms that are usually associated with fishing, a seemingly completely unrelated activity. The *sake* cups that go gaily around are like moving boats; the moon is comparable to fish in the sense that both are the goal of the activity. Taros usually serve as votive offerings in moon-viewing parties on the fifteenth day of the eighth month in lunar calendar. Therefore, it is like a bait, which seduces the moon god to come.

[10] It should be either 煤掃之礼用鯨脯 (*susubaku no rei ni kujira no hojishi o mochiyu*) or 鯨脯用於煤掃之礼 (*susubaku no rei ni oite kujira no hojishi o mochiyu*).

[11] Satō points out that the appearance of “を” is much more frequent in Chinese-style *haikai* than in Teimon, Danrin *haikai*, and *waka*. Unlike in modern Japanese, where を is generally necessary to mark the direct object, in classical Japanese, direct object marker is not obligatory, and the function of を is usually limited to emphasizing the object. In *kanbun* writings, however, を is generally included as a direct object marker in katakana on the right side. Satō thinks that this explains why there are so many を in Chinese-style *haikai*. See Satō Katsuaki, *Bashō to Kyoto haidan*, 274–293.

generally considered to be "stiff" (*kikkutsu* 詰屈) by Japanese scholars. This effect of strangeness and novelty, however, is originally what the poets intended to achieve through the Chinese style. As noted by Inui Hiroyuki 乾裕幸, the Chinese style was a new approach that places emphasis on orthography, fostering visual imagery. The *haikai* spirit is thus obtained through visuality instead of vocality, a focus of the so-called "*nō* play style" (*yōkyokuchō* 謡曲調) *haikai* favored by the Danrin School.[12]

INFUSING AN ALIEN WORLD

Not all Chinese-style verses only imitate Chinese and *kanbun* texts on the level of form. The incorporation of Chinese content is also abundant in the Chinese-style *haikai* anthologies. Many of the verses draw upon, allude to, and gain inspiration from Chinese sources. In most cases, these verses reconstruct the poetic images, ideas, and associations of the Chinese sources into a new, localized context, often transforming, twisting, and even inverting the connotation of the original.

4. 白親仁紅葉村に送聟 Tōsei[13]

the old man with gray hair — *shiroki oyaji*
sends his son to marry into a family — *kōyōson ni*
in the village of Red Leaves — *muko o okuru*

5. 嘲りに黄金は小紫ヲ鋳る Kikaku[14]

to vent his anger, — *azakeri ni*
he uses gold to cast — *ōgon wa*
a statue of Komurasaki — *Komurasaki o iru*

In verse 4, the association between the image of "red leaves" and "an old man with grey hair" can be traced back to a poem by Huang Tingjian, which says "His grey hair faces red leaves. How to prevent them from

[12] The "*nō* play style" *haikai* refers to the verses that draw upon on texts of famous *nō* plays. Inui argues that these verses evoke people's memories of the *nō* plays, the texts of which are often remembered with corresponding melodies. See Inui Hiroyuki 乾裕幸, "Yōkyokuchō to kanshibunchō" 謡曲調と漢詩文調, *Renga haikai kenkyū* 連歌俳諧研究 45 (1973): 6–10.
[13] *Jiin* in *Kōhon Bashō zenshū*, 185.
[14] *Minashiguri* in *Nihon haisho taikei*, 41.

falling down?” 白頭對紅葉，奈此搖落何.[15] Huang’s poem expresses his feeling aggrieved about the frustrated life of his friend Huang Jie 黄介, who was talented but did not succeed in court. The images of Huang Jie’s grey hair and falling red leaves constitute a colorful picture and resonate with each other. “How to prevent them from falling down?” is Huang Jie’s question about the red leaves, but also about his own situation, since he has become old but still has not fulfilled his political ambition. This political implication, however, completely disappears in the Japanese verse, which deals with common people’s life. The “red leaves” becomes the name of a village, and the old man similarly has a complicated feeling toward the “red leaves,” since his son will not only marry a girl from this place, but will also be adopted into the bride’s family.

Verse 5 alludes to two lines from the poem titled “Chao Fanli” 嘲范蠡 by Zheng Xie 鄭獬: “Based on who made the greatest contribution to conquering the state of Wu, all the gold should be used to cast a statue of Xi shi” 若論破吳功第一，黃金只合鑄西施.[16] Xi Shi is a well-known Chinese beauty who was sent to the King of Wu from the King of Yue as part of his revenge plan. The King of Wu was enchanted by Xi Shi as expected, and his indulgence in sensual pleasure and his neglect of state affairs eventually led to the defeat of the state of Wu to the state of Yue. The poet apparently thinks that Xi Shi was the most important factor that caused the downfall of the state of Wu, and consequently, the state of Yue should build a golden statue of her as a reward. In the Japanese verse, a golden statue is also cast, but for Komurasaki, a famous courtesan in Yoshiwara whose story is featured in various literary texts, including Ihara Saikaku’s *Life of An Amorous Man* (Kōshoku ichidai otoko 好色一代男, 1682). The verse is not based on existing stories about her, but rather re-creates a post-battle situation that is similar to the Chinese source. The real battle in history, however, is re-contextualized into a bidding war in Japanese pleasure quarters, where two men compete with each other in ransoming Komurasaki. Unlike in the Chinese poem, it is the defeated side who builds a golden statue, since he could not acquire the real person. The statue that symbolizes political contribution in the Chinese poem becomes a means to show off one’s wealth and to console himself.

In these verses, although the Chinese original and the Japanese verses share some poetic images, associations, and even ideas, they are very different in terms of central theme and main message. The political implications in the Chinese texts are replaced by depictions of common

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[15] This poem is included in *Quan Song shi*, vol. 18, 11350.
[16] This poem is included in *Quan Song shi*, vol. 10, 6685.

people's lives, or events associated with pleasure quarters. The interest of this kind of adaptation lies in the contrast between the foreign and the local, the traditional and the contemporary, the elegant and the vulgar. The bigger the contrast is, the more effective the *haikai* verses are. In this sense, they are essentially the same as the parody of classical texts in the Danrin *haikai*, which also achieve *haikai* effect in the astonishing gap between source texts and *haikai* verses.

INHERITING THE SPIRIT OF CHINESE LITERATURE

The reception of Chinese literature in Chinese-style *haikai* did not stop at the level of form or content. Verses that displayed the spirit of Chinese texts start to appear in *Jiin*, and show a steady increase from *Jiin* to *Musashiburi* to *Minashiguri*. An obvious example is the two verses below, which follow two lines of a Chinese poem included as a foreword to the sequence "A floating world buoyed up by cherry blossoms" (*Hana ni ukiyo* 花にうきよ) in *Minashiguri*.

6. 憂方知酒聖，貧始覺錢神。

Only when he feels sad does one know the "saint of sake,"
(*Ureetewa masani sake no hijiri o shiri*)
Only when he becomes poor does one realize the "god of wealth."[17]
(*hinsureba hajimete zeni no kami o oboyu*)

花にうき世我酒白く食黒し	Bashō
眠ヲ盡ス陽炎(カゲボシ)の痩	嵐雪 (Ransetsu)[18]

In a floating world buoyed up	
by cherry blossoms,	*Hana ni ukiyo*
I drink white (unstrained) sake	*wagasake shiroku*
and eat black (unpolished) rice	*meshi kuroshi*

[17] The "saint of sake" and the "gold of wealth" are personifications of sake and wealth, respectively, that emphasize their power and value. This foreword is from Bo Juyi's poem "Ten Verses Composed during my Exile in the South" (Jiangnan zheju shiyun 江南謫居十韻), which laments his frustrated and impoverished life in *Jiangzhou*, where he was exiled.
[18] *Minashiguri* in *Nihon haisho taikei*, 18–19.

sleeping as much as he wishes—	*nemuri o tsukusu*
shadow of his slim body under	
the dazzling sunshine	*kageboshi no yase*

In the opening verse, Bashō made use of the dual meaning of the word *ukiyo*, which can mean both "sad world" and "floating world." He creates a contrast between the protagonist, who lives a sad life (*ukiyo*, 憂き世), and people living in the so-called floating world (*ukiyo*, 浮世), or a cheerful pleasure-seeking world. This contrast is further externalized by the juxtaposition of a colorful scene of a bustling cherry blossom viewing, and a black-and-white portrayal of a person having his simple and cheap meal alone. This verse does not directly adopt content of the Chinese poem, but creates new poetic scenes that also represent a poor and lonely life isolated from the outside world. The second Japanese verse illustrates the benefit of this anti-social way of living, in other words, reclusion. Unlike workers or officials, who live a regular life, the protagonist can sleep as much as he wants. Despite his lack of wealth, which is reflected in his slim body, he enjoys his leisurely life. These two verses thus create a paradox about the life of a recluse: materially restrained and scanty, but spiritually free and fulfilling.

When dealing with the theme of reclusion, Chinese-style verses constantly represent two sides of the same coin. These verses are portentous of the future direction of Bashō's *haikai*, and are thus often highlighted by scholars to be representative of Chinese-style verses. However, they had not dominated in the Chinese-style *haikai* at the time. In fact, in the three anthologies, there co-exist verses that have a very different, if not opposite, style. If we say the verses with a recluse theme are like landscape ink paintings, then these verses resemble colorful portrayals of court ladies (*shinü tu* 仕女圖). With flamboyant images and mostly love-related topics, they exhibit a world of *en* 艶 (*yan* in Chinese, literally meaning colorful and flowery), an aesthetic that's important in both Chinese and Japanese classical poetry. Some scholars consider these verses no more than a reflection of the real lives of Kikaku and Ransetsu, both of whom had indulged themselves in dissipation.[19] Nevertheless, this alone could not explain the frequent occurrences of this kind of style, and many other poets including Bashō composed in this vein.

[19] See Ishikawa Shinkō, "Tennaki no shōfū haikai," 14.

7. 梅柳さぞ若衆哉女かな	Bashō[20]
Plum blossoms and willow leaves— they are just like beautiful young men and pretty women	*ume yanagi* *sazo wakashu kana* *onna kana*

8. 花芙蓉美女湯あがりて立りけり	Sodō[21]
Like a rose, the beauty just finishes taking a bath and stands up	*hana fuyō* *bijo yu agarite* *taterikeri*

Both Bashō and Sodō had already retired from the world, and both of them are celebrated for their recluse poems. Verses 7 and 8, however, represent a very different world. Verse 7 is a depiction of landscape, but the comparison of plum blossoms and willow leaves to male and female beauties, which insinuates male and female prostitutes, reflects the viewer's inner self. It is worth noting that this verse is not an accident for Bashō. He included it as one of the seven representative verses of spring 1682, in his letter to his disciple Bokuin 木因 (1646–1725).[22] Unlike verse 7, verse 8 is a direct portrayal of a beauty. It captures one of the sexiest moments of a woman and is imbued with an amorous atmosphere. It reminds us of Yang Guifei, or Yōkihi, as portrayed in the *Song of Everlasting Sorrow*. These *en* verses are certainly representations of contemporary life in Edo Japan, but I think they also reflect a desire of Bashō's circle to pursue the spirit of *fengliu* 風流 (*fūryū* in Japanese).

According to Konishi, an ideal life for a Chinese courtier is to comply with Confucianism in public and behave in a *fengliu* manner in private. Chinese *fengliu* "signified an idealized sphere of worldly pleasures and was symbolized by four components: zither, poetry, wine, and singing girls."[23] The fourth component "became the focus of intense consciousness with the Tang period." Nevertheless, only when accompanied by a witty, poetic refinement does sexual pleasure become associated with *fengliu*. Konishi argues that during what he calls the "Early Middle Ages"

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[20] *Musashiburi* in *Nihon haisho taikei*, 4.
[21] *Minashiguri* in *Nihon haisho taikei*, 28.
[22] Three of the seven verses are composed by Bashō. In the letter, the verse is transcribed as 梅柳嘸若衆哉女哉. See Ishikawa Shinkō, "Tennaki no shōfū haikai," 1 and Satō Katsuaki, *Bashō to Kyōto haidan*, 24–25.
[23] Konishi Jin'ichi, Earl Roy Miner, trans., *A History of Japanese Literature* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), vol. 2, 129–139.

(roughly corresponding to the Heian period), *fengliu* had been well incorporated into aristocratic life in Japan: “the leading principles of the Early Middle Ages, *miyabi* and amorousness, are both equivalent to the Chinese principle of *feng-liu*.” He further points out that *fengliu* is closely associated with *en*, another term incorporated from China and what he calls “the highest aesthetic ideal” for Japanese during the period.

The spirit of *fengliu*, accommodated into an Edo context this time, is also inherited in the *en* verses by Bashō’s school. Beneath the depictions of physical attractions and sensual pleasures is a representation of refinement, which essentially distinguishes these verses from love verses in Danrin *haikai*. When we understand the *en* verses in the framework of *fengliu*, it becomes more reasonable that they can be in harmony with the recluse verses in the same sequence or anthology. Although they reflect two seemingly contradictory lifestyles—one is to enjoy worldly pleasures, especially sensual pleasures, and the other is to abandon worldly attachments—they are unified by a motivation to discover poetic refinement in life.

Japanese reception of Chinese texts, especially during the Edo period, was often mediated through works by Japanese authors, either in vernacular Japanese or *kanbun*, so it is often difficult to tell whether the author directly drew upon Chinese original texts or gained inspiration from Japanese sources instead. Many of the Chinese-style verses in these three anthologies include a Chinese verse as a foreword, or mention Chinese poets and works in a preface, showing the authors’ conscious efforts to associate their verses with Chinese precedents. Their efforts are also revealed in Bashō’s preface to *Minashiguri*, in which Bashō writes:

> The book called “Chestnuts” has four flavors. Some verses taste like liquor with the spirit of Li Bo and Du Fu’s poetry, and some savor of porridge with the essence of Hanshan’s songs. It is not surprising that these verses look deep and sound distant. Moreover, the aesthetics of *wabi* (beauty in poverty) and *fūga* (elegance) represented in this collection are exceptional….. We transformed Bo Juyi’s poetry into Japanese versions, attempting to provide a guide for *haikai* beginners.[24]

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[24] The base text is from *Shinpen nihon koten bungaku taikei*, vol. 71, 177–178. I also consulted its annotation. A detailed analysis of the preface can be found in Satō Katsuaki, *Bashō to Kyōto haidan*, 231–251.

This preface shows that inheriting the spirit of Chinese texts was a conscious effort and goal of Bashō's circle. Their reception of Chinese literature was not restricted to one poet, school, or style. The authors Bashō mentioned—Li Bo, Du Fu, Hanshan, Bo Juyi—all have distinctive styles, but in Bashō's eyes, what their works all have in common are depth and elegance. These are the characteristics that appealed to Bashō's circle. The poets resorted to these Chinese texts as remedies to rescue *haikai* from lacking content or profundity, aspiring to create *haikai* that share motifs, concepts, and spirit with their forebears in the Chinese tradition.

CONCLUSION

The Chinese-style *haikai* composed by the members of Bashō's circle reveal two kinds of reception theorized by Dionýz Ďurišin, who has categorized forms of interliterary reception into "integrating forms" and "differentiating forms." In the former, "the prevalent element among the constituents involved is that of identification." In the latter, "the prevalent endeavor is to stress the distinction, to take up a negative attitude towards the nature of the received side."[25]

On the one hand, in some cases, Chinese elements—in form or in content—are brought in as antithetical, or at least alien, to Japanese elements. The symbiosis, contrast, and integration of the two distinctive constituents lead to humorous and witty effects that were especially sought after in the early stage of *haikai* development.

On the other hand, the *haikai* poets looked up to Chinese literature as a model and standard, attempting to identify their works with the older, highly-developed literature and culture. The authority of Chinese literature assisted in elevating *haikai* into a serious art.

The conscious efforts of Bashō's circle to absorb the spirit of Chinese literary texts distinguish them from other poets who also composed Chinese-style *haikai*. The recluse theme that appears in their Chinese-style verses eventually became the mainstream in Bashō's *haikai* during the late 1680s, the time when the Bashō style had already matured. However, in the early 1680s, the recluse theme had not yet dominated Bashō's *haikai*. Also, their *haikai* had not abandoned practices of referencing (imitation, adaptation, and allusion) Chinese literature on superficial levels—that is to say, on the levels of form and content. But without this period of experimentation, Bashō's school would not have been able to discover the

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[25] Dionýz Ďurišin, Jessie Kocmanová, trans., *Theory of Literary Comparatistics* (Bratislava: Veda, Pub. House of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, 1984), 166.

treasures in Chinese literature that could raise *haikai* to another level of complexity.

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