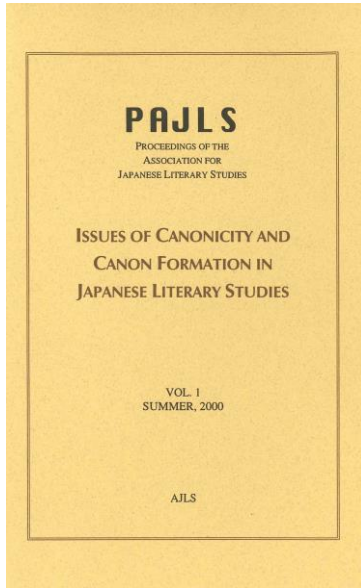


“Shiki ariki *Nōhon-shugi* (子規ありき農本主義):
Reconsiderations of the Haiku Canon by Japanese-
Brazilian Farm Poets”

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SHIKI ARIKI *NŌHON-SHUGI* (子規ありき農本主義):
RECONSIDERATIONS OF THE *HAIKU* CANON
BY JAPANESE-BRAZILIAN FARM POETS¹

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Introduction²

In this paper, I will analyze some of the *haiku* poetry written in Brazil by Japanese immigrants and their Brazilian-born children. I will examine the question of Japanese poetic canonicity in general by looking at issues of cultural authority, economics, and political empowerment using this South American case study. First I will present the history of Japanese immigration to Brazil in order to introduce their cultural values, especially their strong Japanese identity. I will then analyze some of the *haiku* written by Japanese-Brazilians and argue for the importance of their contributions to Japanese literature, even though they are not yet well known or well accepted in Japan. In order to consider how this South American style of *haiku* relates to the canon of traditional *haiku*, *haikai*, and *renga*, I will next review some of the modern principles of *haiku* as advocated by Masaoka Shiki. I will then make some comparisons between the work of Mayuzumi Madoka, the brilliant young critically acclaimed contemporary *haiku* writer, and Japanese-Brazilian *haiku* writers in Brazil. I argue that when we compare Japanese-Brazilian *haiku* with the innovative *haiku* written by the creative young women in the Mayuzumi Madoka school, we see that they stand up very well. Both are poetry at the margins, or at least a bit non-traditional, but both have grace, emotional appeal, and strength—and isn't this what *haiku* are about? Finally, I will connect the generally regarded non-canonicity of

¹ Japanese names are given in the Japanese order, with the family name first.

² Since my first trip to Brazil in 1989, my thanks go to Yagi Shūhei (八木修平); I was never able to return his kindness. I have always wished to pass on his passion for both Brazilian and Japanese cultures to people of the world, especially after his death in 1996. I wish to thank the Association for Japanese Literary Studies for giving me this chance to introduce his works to a wider audience.

Japanese-Brazilian *haiku* with political and economic power as well as ultimate cultural authority.

A History of Japanese-Brazilians

No one can walk through the streets of the São Juanquine district in São Paulo city without hearing the flowing rhythms of the sensuous Portuguese language. But if you stop to listen to the conversations for a moment, you will soon discover that it is not Portuguese that you hear but actually Japanese. Every morning little children come to kindergarten in São Juanquine, an area in Japantown, saying, “Bon dia, Ohayoo, Sensei Sonoe!” “Haaai, Ohayō, kyō mo genki da neee, eeee,” says the owner of the kindergarten, my dear friend Sonoe, a second-generation Japanese-Brazilian. This is very much unlike North America, where Japantowns such as those in San Francisco or Los Angeles have become mere tourist attractions.³

After several hours on a bus ride to the interior, I find myself in an old Japanese village, as if I had stepped into a time warp back to the early twentieth century. Here people speak Japanese as their primary language. Their Japanese has very little Portuguese influence, and their accent sounds more like the Kansai area dialect⁴ of their early immigrant ancestors. Announcements for the villagers are still written in Japanese; when Portuguese is added, it is more as a courtesy or a supplement.

In the 1930s the early immigrants established four villages in the area, which developed with minimal non-Japanese-Brazilian influence. Even now Japanese-Brazilians have political, economic, and cultural power. After World War I the Japanese government, along with a privately-funded emigration association, wanting to reduce the home population and establish Japanese colonies abroad to demonstrate their political and economic power to the Western nations, built these villages in the interior forests of São

³ See my “Little Tokyos,” *Racial and Ethnic Relations in America*, ed. C. Moose and R. Wildin (Pasadena, CA: Salem Press, 2000).

⁴ Although the Kansai dialect consists of many different regional variations, I will not go into such details in this paper. Those interested could consult English sources such as Miller (1967) or Shibatani (1990) or Japanese sources such as Okugawa (1991).

Paulo and Paraná.⁵ In those days Japan had just opened the country after 260 years of self-imposed isolation, and the government felt it had to protect the nation from the colonial expansion of the West into Asia. To the Japanese, the situation in India, China, and Indonesia was the proverbial handwriting on the wall.

However, in spite of the Japanese government's intentions, these villages became home to more Japanese who were already in Brazil than to actual newcomers. Japanese immigrants were already working in the coffee plantations of São Paulo because in the 1900s coffee planters had sought cheap labor to make up the shortage of plantation workers lost to the demise of slavery, which Brazil abolished only in 1888 (the last country in the New World to do so). Immigrants from all over the world were invited to come and work on the coffee plantations.

The history of Japanese Brazilians, then, starts in 1908—only twenty years after the abolition of slavery—when the first plantation workers arrived. A majority of Brazilian plantation owners, former slaveholders, were not ready or able to change how they treated these new hired farmhands; many had difficulty adjusting to the transition from slavery to a wage-labor economy. Struggling with a lack of respect, poor wages and long hours and facing difficult, grueling labor, many immigrants wanted to leave the plantation jobs.⁶ But since the Brazilian economy was heavily dependent on coffee products—for example, as much as 69% of the national income in 1900 came from coffee—it was not easy for them to find other types of work.⁷

In addition, Japanese immigrants were often unhappy living among the former slaves who had become their co-workers and neighbors on the plantations. Besides feeling uncomfortable living among people with whom they had little in common, they also worried about exposing their children to what they felt were the uncivilized customs of the former slaves. Though probably unwarranted, they felt that if their children continued to live in

⁵ *Nihon Immin Hachijūnen-shi* (São Paulo: Tupão, 1991).

⁶ For more details, see my "Japanese Voices in the Brazilian Forest: Cultural Maintenance and Reformed Ethnic Identity in a Transplanted Community," *World Communication* 28.2 (1999): 68-82, and *Nihon Immin Hachijū-nen-shi* (São Paulo: Tupão, 1991).

⁷ *Ibid.*

these areas they would grow up acting like the former slaves. As a result, the primary goal of most Japanese immigrants was to get off the plantations as soon as possible. This eventually became even more important than their original goal of making money and returning to Japan.

In the Japanese villages in Brazil, the Japanese government and the emigrant association organized the Brazil-Takushoku-Kumiai (Brazilian Colonial Association), known as BRATAC. In many ways, life was like it might have been back in Japan. BRATAC provided most everything the immigrants needed in this new social, political, and economic environment, including banks, hospitals, pharmacies, rice-cleaning mills, coffee-selection mills, and schools. In school, children learned all the subjects taught in Japan at that time, and of course these were taught in Japanese.

However, there was one difference in the BRATAC-sponsored curriculum from that taught in Japan: the agricultural doctrine known as the *Gozar A Terra* (GAT) or "Love the Soil" movement among Japanese Brazilians, which emphasized the dignity of engaging in farming activities. Since it was based on an ancient Japanese myth, it became deeply embedded in the minds of most Japanese-Brazilians.⁸ As a result, the majority of Japanese immigrants lived in farming areas with other Japanese immigrants, and very few went to cities until the 1950s, after World War II. These were close-knit, primarily Japanese communities. Non-Japanese Brazilians in the villages were those who came to look for steady jobs. They may have worked on the Japanese fields but they lived in a different part of town from the Japanese immigrants.

Today, Japanese-Brazilians and their descendants who have stayed in the farm areas are still bound to their Japanese identity and the agricultural ideology. They still keep some social distance between themselves and non-Japanese-Brazilians, except employees or paid farmhands. It is unusual for them, especially females, to marry non-Japanese Brazilians. As I discovered in my several years of fieldwork, Japanese Brazilian women believe that non-Japanese Brazilians are not able to provide a stable marriage, financial support, or emotional security.

⁸ See my discussion of this movement in "Language Choice: An Ethnographic Study of the *Nōhon-shugi* Ideology and Language Maintenance of Japanese Immigrants in Brazil" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Toronto, Canada, 1997).

Japanese language and culture, then, are still very much alive among these Japanese-Brazilians. There are newspapers, Japanese cookbooks, and academic publications from the Centro de Nipo-Brasileiros (Center for Japanese-Brazilians), all written in Japanese. There is even a Japanese comic book library in São Paulo. Each time I go there I feel like Japan is very close, and when I go to Japan I feel that Brazil is very far away (although recently there have been many Japanese-Brazilians working in Japan). I wonder if this feeling might be related to Japanese-Brazilians' *haiku* not being recognized in Japan.

Before turning to Japanese-Brazilian *haiku* poetry and its relationship to the *haiku* canon, I will discuss the history of *haiku*, especially the changes it underwent at the turn of the century, and its surprising and important implications for Japanese-Brazilian *haiku*, even that written today.

Haiku and Its Historical Development

Haiku 俳句 was once an opening stanza of *renga* 連歌 (a witty, linked poetry form) written by many great, famous poets such as Matsunaga Tētoku 松提貞徳 (1571-1653), Matsuo Bashō 松尾芭蕉 (1644-1694) and Yosa Buson 与謝無村 (1716-1783). However, in the middle of the Meiji era (1867-1912), Masaoka Shiki 正岡子規 (1867-1902) separated *haiku* from *haikai renga* 俳階連歌 (nonstandard *renga*) as an independent short poem. According to Shiki, *haikai renga* poets had progressed to the point where they only wished to pursue technique. Shiki believed that the dignity of *haiku* was in its presentation of emotion through sketching objects and enacting scenes. Shiki respected the colorful and exotic works of Buson, who was also a *haikai* painter. His work influenced Shiki's picturesque style, known as the *Shasē-shugi* 写生主義, and his philosophy of art and poetry. Shiki chose to write about subjective feelings in rural lifestyles instead of immersing himself in the urban intellectual environment.

Shiki respected traditional works such as the ancient court poetry, *Manyō-chō* 万葉調. Yet he was a man of vision and revolution, and he advocated the use of modern vernacular language for poetry—even slang and katakana loanwords—as long as those words helped represent the motifs and emotions the poet was trying to express. In order to propel contemporary *haiku* forward and to detach it from the historical constraints of *haikai*, Shiki suggested that poets should not have to be bound to any “school” or lineage of a classical *haikai* master.

After Shiki's death in 1902, his followers split into two schools: the radicals, led by Kawahigashi Hekigotō 河東碧梧 (1873-1937), and the traditionalists, led by Takahama Kyoshi 高浜虚子 (1874-1959). Because of his focus on Shiki's *Shasē-shugi* philosophy, Hekigotō believed "a poem should come as close as possible to its subject matter, which is part of life or nature."⁹ Traditional or man-made rules, including the essential rules of *haiku* such as the 5-7-5 syllable pattern or the use of *kigo* 季語 (seasonal words), became less important than capturing emotional pictures. Thus poets from the Hekigotō school do not always follow the expected syllable patterns or sometimes do not use *kigo* in their poems. For example, the following *haiku* does not have the 5-7-5 syllable pattern, but one of 7-7-6 instead:

- 1) 遠く 高き 木 夏 近き 立てり 畳む 屋根 に
Tōku takaki ki/ natsu chikaki t ateri/ tatamu yane ni.
 Far tall tree/ summer near stands/ manifold roofs on
 (In the distance a tall tree near summertime stands above multitudinous roofs.)¹⁰

Although the rules are less important than a close poetic and emotional examination of the subject matter, Hekigotō was not necessarily against traditional guidelines. This is shown in the following example by Hekigotō:

- 2) 思はずも ヒヨコ 生まれぬ 冬 薔薇
omowazumo/ hiyoko umarenu/ fuyu sōbi.
 Unexpectedly/ chick has-been-born/ winter rose
 (Unexpected a chick has hatched. Midwinter rose.)¹¹

This poem, which follows the 5-7-5 syllable pattern, captures the scene of a new, warm, fluffy, fragile life, and yet it also depicts a rose standing strongly in the crisp winter morning. The *kigo* is the "fuyu sōbi" (winter rose), but it does not really indicate the season here. The cold, beautiful, strong *fuyu sōbi* gives a powerful contrast to the warm, fragile new chick; this impact makes for a strong image.

⁹ Ueda Makoto, *Modern Japanese Haiku. An Anthology* (Tokyo: Univ. of Tokyo Press, 1976), 9.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 68.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 65.

The more orthodox Kyoshi school, on the other hand, respected traditional rules. Consider the following *haiku* capturing a scene in a farming area, written by Hashimoto Kēji 橋本鶏二, a student of Kyoshi:

- 3) たふれたる 麦 の 車 の 輪 が 廻る¹²
taoretaru/ mugi no kuruma no/ wa ga mawaru
 Fallen barley of vehicle of/ wheel SCM* turn
 [*SCM=subjective case maker]¹³
 (The wheel of the fallen barley cart is turning.)¹⁴

These traditional 5-7-5 syllables capture a scene of rural summertime, symbolized in the *kigo* season word “*mugi*” (barley).

A *haiku* poem tends to break down into two phrases, such as either 5-7 plus 5 or 5 plus 7-5. *Kireji* 切字 (cutting words or syllables) are often used to indicate this. For instance, in Hekigotō’s poem in example 2 above, the first phrase ends after the first set of 5-7 syllables and is indicated by the *kireji* -*nu*.¹⁵ A *kireji* gives a suggestion or an aftertaste. Its use in a poem does more than indicate a stanza without a break. For instance, one of the most famous of Bashō’s poems uses -*ya* after the first word and divides it from the rest of the verse:

- 4) 荒海 空 佐渡 に よこたふ 天河
aranami ya/ sado ni yokotau/ amanogawa
 raging waves *kireji*/ sado at lie down/ the Milky Way
 (The raging waves. Sado is crossed by the Milky Way.)

The *kireji* “-*ya*” gives readers a sense of the two subjective topics of the poem. One is the raging waves, which have strength and volition, while the other is the calm spirits in the sky. The picture here is as if there is volitional energy (a strong spirit) contrasting with an ill body (or a weak soul). In fact, Bashō was ill when he was in Nīgata, where he watched the island of Sado across the Japan Sea when he wrote this poem.

¹² Toshihido Hashimoto, *Yasashī Haiku-Nyūmon* (Tokyo: Nihon Bungai-sha, 1999), 180.

¹³ Hereafter “subject case marker” is written as SCM.

¹⁴ Translation mine.

¹⁵ “*Ya*,” “*heri*,” “*kana*,” “*nari*,” “*tari*,” “*zu*,” and “*shi*” are also *kireji*.

This brief analysis of *haiku* poetry, of course, has been cursory. But some of the above points directly relate to the following issues in Japanese-Brazilian *haiku*.

Japanese-Brazilian *Haiku* Poetry

Around the time when *haiku* was solidifying its position in Japanese literature, members of both the reforming Hekigotō school as well as more traditional schools, such as the Shirakaba 白樺派 school, represented especially by Mushakōji Saneatsu 武者小路実篤 (1885-1976), proposed living as natural a life as possible in order to understand human nature and human ideals. Saneatsu, for example, believed that engaging in farming was the only way to understand humanity. But as capitalism thrust farmers into the modern political economy, they were not able to fully understand nature as a result of the contingencies of economic survival. In order to detach themselves from this economic cycle, Saneatsu and his followers established a self-sufficient farming village, Atarashikimura, in the hinterlands of Brazil. This philosophy and the lifestyle of this village were to have a great impact on all of Japanese-Brazilian society before the Second World War.¹⁶

Most Japanese immigration to Brazil occurred around the time that Shiki, Saneatsu, and their followers were advocating a farming lifestyle. Also, in Brazil itself, Japanese-Brazilians were involved in the GAT or "Love the Soil" movement under BRATAC education. Thus Japanese immigrants deeply believed that engaging in farming activities was the one true way to cultivate the spirit. Since such cultivated spirits should be expressed in art and literature, they participated in various cultural activities. Even today, one of the most successful art groups in the area is the Kubo Ballet, whose members are self-sufficient farmers like the villagers of Atarashikimura before the war.¹⁷ Japanese-Brazilians have also developed a spe-

¹⁶ For more detail see my "Gender Roles, Women's Speech, and Ethnic and Community Boundaries in a Japanese-Brazilian Commune," *Engendering Communication: Proceedings of the Fifth Berkeley Women's Language Conference*, ed. S. Wertheim, Ashlee C. Bailey and Monica Corston-Oliver (Berkeley: Berkeley Women and Language Group, 1998), 1-12; and Adachi 1999, op. cit.

¹⁷ See Adachi, 1997, op. cit.

cial literary genre—novels called *Koronia* (colonial or “colonials”),¹⁸ all written in Japanese—which describe the struggles, achievements, and dreams of rural Japanese-Brazilians.

In this section I will argue for the canonicity of Brazilian-Japanese *haiku*. I suggest that much Japanese-Brazilian *haiku* reveals as much depth of feeling as *haiku* in Japan. It is only its unavailability, I feel, that keeps it from getting the recognition that it deserves. Still, we need to keep in mind two points. First, we must remember that as much as it has in common with traditional Japanese *haiku*, Japanese-Brazilian *haiku* is still a *Brazilian*-inspired art form and thus will always have some unique characteristics. Second, I believe there is some reluctance by mainstream Japanese critics to consider writing from Third World nations to be up to First World standards.

Let me begin with the following gentle example. This poem was written by a woman named Harue six years after she first landed in Brazil, when she worked on a Brazilian coffee plantation. This poem has the unmistakable influence of the Hekigotō's school in its stanzas:

- 5) 黒ん坊 に 怖じ 夜濯ぎ も そこそこに¹⁹
Kuronbō ni/ kowaji yosusugi mo/ soko sokoni
 Negro by/ afraid night laundry even/ hastily
 (Because I was afraid of “Black” people²⁰ I finished washing clothes as soon as possible at night.)

These few syllables capture a powerful moment in an immigrant's life. Readers can imagine a woman finishing her day by hastily washing her family's muddy and sweaty clothes. She is not only in an unfamiliar country but on an undeveloped farm without lights. This foreign Japanese woman is scared just by her neighbors' appearance: unfamiliar, unknown, different-looking people, former slaves. The poem depicts early Japanese immigrant

¹⁸ Japanese-Brazilians call Japanese-Brazilian society in general *koronia* (> colonia). However, it has nerve to be a colonia of Japan politically and economically.

¹⁹ Kaeno Kazan, *Kazan Shasē Bunshū* (São Paulo: Nippaku Nōson-Bunka shinkō-kai, 1994), 149.

²⁰ The literally meaning of *Kuronbō* is “black folks.” However, Japanese immigrants called both native people and African-Brazilians by the same term, *Kuronbō*.

life on the plantation and also the emotional experiences many must have had upon their arrival.

Although Harue's work did not follow the exact expected syllable pattern, many *haiku* written by Japanese-Brazilians follow the essential *haiku* rules. The following poem was presented by a third-generation Japanese-Brazilian woman at an *utakai* ("songfest") in one of the Japanese-Brazilian villages in 1992:

- 6) カフェー 煎る 香り 流るる 春の風²¹
kafē iru/ kaori nagaruru/ haru no kaze
 coffee roast/ smell floating a spring-wind
 (The smell of roasting coffee is floating. A spring-wind.)²²

This poem captures a scent of roasting coffee outside a house using the 5-7 and 5 style. The *kigo* is "*haru no kaze*" (a spring-wind). The aroma of coffee beans being roasted and the smell of woodburning invite people to come to investigate—and appreciate—what is taking place in the backyard of a Brazilian farmer on a peaceful spring day.

Japanese-Brazilians choose their motifs from nature and their rural lifestyles. Many of their works strictly respect technical poetic details like *kigo*, *kireji*, and the 5-7-5 syllable pattern. Yet their works have been neglected in Japan, since their poems are not thought to satisfy the standards of regular Japanese poetry. The common criticism made by Japanese critics is that since Japanese-Brazilians use Portuguese loanwords, Japanese in Japan would not understand their poems; while they may be accessible to other Japanese-Brazilians, it would be impossible for others to appreciate them. Such examples might be the following Japanese-Brazilian poems, which do have Portuguese loanwords:

- 7) ドラセーナ 栄えた 墓碑 の 日本文字²³
Dorasēna sakaeta bohi no Nihonmoji
 Doracēna flourished gravestone in Japanese letters

²¹ Yuba Raori (Pojin) *Yuba-Nōjō Tōsho-bako* (privately published booklet), 1992, 1.

²² Translation mine.

²³ Yumiya Kin, *Colonia Shibungaku* 40 (1992): 108.

(There are [now] only Japanese letters on the gravestones to tell the story of the prosperous Japanese period in Doracēna.)²⁴

- 8) 綿 摘み や カラピッシヨ 熟るる ころに 済み²⁵
wata tsumi ya karapissho ururu koroni sumi*
 cotton picking kireji carrapicho wrap around to finish
 [*karabissho → carrapicho, a wild sensitive plant like a thistle (a Portuguese loanword)]
 ([Good Lord!] It's the end of cotton-picking season—the time when the carrapichos become really thistly.)²⁶

In order to understand example 7, one needs to know that *Dorasēna* is a farm village located some 700 kilometers northwest of the city of São Paulo. Once there were many Japanese immigrants farming in this village. Lately, many young Japanese-Brazilians have left either for São Paulo City or for Japan for *dekasegi* 出稼 (temporary work abroad).²⁷ The time when the Japanese flourished can now be seen only in the remaining gravestones. The poem conjures up the same sentiment for the old days as Bashō does in the following poem:

- 9) 夏草 や 兵ども が 夢 の 跡
Natukusa ya tsuwanomo-domo ga yume no ato
 Summer grass kireji soldiers of dream of marks
 (There is only the summer grass now to tell the story of the many samurai who fought for their dreams in this place.)

Both of the above poets, Yumiya Kin in example 7 and Bashō in example 9, use similar imagery. Bashō's poem is one of the most famous in the canon of *haikai*. It brings forth a moment of much activity in a now tranquil place. Bashō stands over *Tagajō-ato* 多賀城跡, where several centuries before samurai warriors were sent to the interior to protect the country. The poem conjures up an image of individual blades of grass standing for the soldiers who faced each other in battle. Likewise, in example 7, Kin speaks of times

²⁴ Translation mine.

²⁵ Fuji Toshibune, *Colonia Shibungaku* 38 (1991): 111.

²⁶ Translation mine.

²⁷ Since the late 1980s, especially during the Japanese bubble economic boom, many Japanese-Brazilians went to Japan to be temporary factory workers. See Watanabe Masako, ed., *Dekasegi Nikkei Burajiru-jin* (Tokyo: Akaishi-shoten, 1995).

past. Once the town of Doracēna was a thriving overseas Japanese community; now there are only peaceful graves. Both poets use permanent signs—that is, *moji* 文字 (letters) or *ato* 跡 (marks)—to indicate the presence of those who came before. Both use transient images—*kusa* 草 (grass) for Bashō or *bohi* 墓碑 (gravestones) for Kin—to indicate the ephemeral nature of life.

Technically, Kin's poem, then, is steeped in the *haiku* tradition, with obvious echoes of Bashō. However, it is also highly original, creating new images in a new place. For example, Kin does not at first say that *Dorasēna* flourished due to the Japanese community. We only find this out later when we see that it is *Japanese* writing on the gravestones, indicating a lively past. This creates a universal appeal. Just as one does not really have to know about the historical meaning of Tagajō-ato in order to understand the Bashō poem, the reader really does not need to be familiar with the exact history of the Japanese in Brazil to understand Kin. Nonetheless, much of the whole story of the Japanese experience is captured in just these few phrases.

In example 8, a Portuguese loanword (here, *karapissho*) is again important. And yet, as long as there is a note saying that a *karapissho* is a "wild sensitive plant like a thistle," it is not difficult to imagine how great it must feel to finish picking cotton before the painful *karapissho* thistles stick all over your body.

This analysis suggests, then, that it is not loanwords *per se* that are the issue. The familiarity of the context or the content is probably the critical point. Consider the following example:

- 10) 純血 の 誇り 消えゆく 移民祭²⁸
Junketsu *no hokori* *kieyuku* *Iminsai*
 Pure not mixed race of pride . diminish the immigration festival
 (Every year the number of pure-Japanese Japanese-Brazilians is going
 down at the Japanese immigration festival.)²⁹

Although Japanese in Japan can read *iminsai* 移民祭, they might not really understand what it really means to Japanese-Brazilians. *Iminsai* is not just a name of an event but a symbol of Japanese immigration and the ancestors who started a new life in Brazil. It is a crucial word, and yet every reader

²⁸ Sato Bunroku, *Colonia Shibungaku* 34 (1990): 81.

²⁹ Translation mine.

can appreciate the feelings of the poet, who is undoubtedly an older immigrant. Looking at the people's faces and actions in the immigration festival, the poet Sato feels that Japanese society in Brazil is changing in ways unsatisfactory to him. It is always nice if readers know more about the context of any literary work; this is, of course, why we have literature classes, so students can learn to appreciate works of art more fully. However, like any other fine art, good *haiku* conveys its pictures and sentiments even if the reader doesn't know the details and background of the work.

In order to be accepted in Japan, many Japanese-Brazilian poets have changed their Portuguese loanwords to native Japanese terms or even to English loanwords commonly used in Japan. Such changes have also been criticized. It has been said that such poems are not able to capture the real feeling of Japanese-Brazilian and that they do not adhere to the notion of *Shasē-shugi* (the *haiku* philosophy which argues that poets should respond only to nature by using images). I question both these claims, and I will present examples that have been criticized as spurious. In the following poem, Yagi Bōga uses an English loanword, *mararia* (> malaria).

- 11) マラリア に 廃れし 町の 石畳³⁰
Mararia ni/ areshi machi no/ ishidatami
 Malaria by/ ruin city of/ stone pavement
 (The stone pavement in the city was ruined by malaria.)

When Bōga was talking to me—not as the poet, but as my friend Shūhei, a long-term Japanese immigrant—he never used the word *mararia*, but only *mareta* (from the Portuguese word *malária*). So I am certain that he intentionally borrowed the English loanword specifically for this poem. *Mareta* is meaningful for Japanese-Brazilians historically, and if Bōga had used “*mareta*” in this poem, it would evoke stronger sentiments for Japanese-Brazilians than *mararia* does, but it would have lost any greater appeal and appreciation among non-Japanese Brazilians, since most people are probably not familiar with the long battle that Japanese-Brazilians have waged against malaria. They are no doubt amazed by the image of a whole city destroyed by this disease. In this case, then, since sociolinguistically both the English and Portuguese loanwords carry the same semantic referent, Bōga chose to use *mararia* to appeal to a wider circle of readers.

³⁰ Yagi Bōga, 17.

The following poem uses a Portuguese loanword instead of an English one:

- 12) ビボカ 弾ける 八月 の 悪夢 のように³¹
pipoka *hajikeru* *hachigatsu* *no akumu* *no yōni*
 popcorn burst open August of nightmare like
 (Popcorn burst open like the nightmare of August [the atomic bomb].)³²

In this case there are two reasons why the poet, Iwao, uses ビボカ (*pipoka*), the Portuguese loanword for popcorn, instead of ポップコーン (*poppukōn*), the English loanword commonly used in Japanese, even though he might lose some Japanese readers. This is because the sound *pipoka* is very close to *pikadon*, an onomatopoeic expression commonly used by Japanese to describe the sound the atomic bombs made when they were dropped. In this poem the term *pipoka* has an effectiveness via its sound as well as its visual metaphor of something bursting open. Needless to say, if Iwao had used the English loanword *poppukōn*, people could hardly appreciate the connection he was trying to make between popcorn and an atomic bomb.

More needs to be said about the unique place of onomatopoeia in Japanese-Brazilian verse. Nagao³³ reported that Japanese-Brazilian children use special onomatopoeia in their poems and word games. One such example is of an eleven-year-old boy who wrote ポンポンと蛙の鳴声がたつ (*pon pon to kaeru no naku koe ga tatsu*) ("Frogs start crying 'Pon pon.'"). In Japan the onomatopoeic expression for the sounds of frogs is either *kerō kero* or *ge ge ge*. Thus Japanese children choose one of these when they verbalize frogs crying. Children of Japanese-Brazilian descent grow up using onomatopoeia as a spice or special flavor in their verses and even their daily conversations. And yet, growing up in Brazil, where Portuguese speakers use hardly any onomatopoeic expressions at all,³⁴ the influence of onomatopoeia on Japanese-Brazilians is probably not so strong as Japanese. This allows them to be more flexible and creative in making their own new

³¹ Matumi Iwao, *Colonia Shibungaku* 41 (1992): 140.

³² Translation mine.

³³ Nagao Isamu, "Burajiru Nikkeijin no Nihong," *Gengo* [Language] 308 (1977): 52-60.

³⁴ In Portuguese, the sounds of frogs are "*quá quá*." However, as mentioned, in Brazil onomatopoeia is hardly used in daily conversation.

sound imitations. As a result, Japanese-Brazilians often use onomatopoeia in unique ways to capture feelings or create appealing pictures. This neatly corresponds with the philosophy of Shiki that *haiku* should seek to capture scenes and objects in as natural a way as possible, without relying on the convention devices.

The choice of words, then, is not just accidental for Japanese-Brazilian poets. As argued in examples 11 and 12, *mararia* and *pipoka* were carefully chosen to appeal to many people in the most effective manner. And this selection is not simply a choice between Portuguese and English loanwords. Consider the following poem by Yagi Bōga:

- 13) 王加王非樹 の きられし まま の 今年 かな³⁵
kōhī no kirareshi mama no kotoshi kana
 coffee tree SCM be cut as it is of this year I wonder
 (I wonder if the coffee trees will be left to have been cut again this year.)

In the early 1990s, Brazil was facing an inflation rate of 1000% a year.³⁶ In contrast, Japan was experiencing a bubble economic boom. As a result, 150,000 Japanese-Brazilians went to Japan in 1990 to be *dekasegi* (temporary workers).³⁷ Some Japanese-Brazilians who went to Japan rented out their agricultural fields, while others just left their fields lying fallow. Bōga's poem presents such a socio-economic situation. The landlord is in Japan and Bōga is wondering if the landlord is coming back from Japan this year to look after his farm. Using 王加王非, the kanji for coffee, instead of the common English loanword *kōhī* コーヒー (from "coffee") or the Portuguese loanword *kafe* カフェ (from "café"), Bōga successfully recreates three locations: Japan, Brazil, and Japanese villages in Brazil. Japan is where the *dekasegi* people are working, Brazil is where their family members are waiting for their return, and the Japanese-Brazilian village is where elderly Japanese immigrants are praying for the safety of their children working in Japan. If Bōga had used the English loanword for coffee instead, he could only have focused on the *dekasegi* situation in Japan (and not included the old man's concern about the young ones abroad, a characteristic typical of many Japanese-Brazilians in Brazil). And if the Portuguese word had been

³⁵ Yagi Bōga, 56.

³⁶ For more details see Adachi 1999, op. cit.

³⁷ *Veja*, Aug. 7, 1991.

used, the focus of this poem would be on a person who seems to be gazing at the coffee trees and the fields (again missing the old man's worry).

Unlike the criticisms over the use of Portuguese loanwords or the borrowing of Japanese katakana words, Japanese-Brazilians are able to express their ideas in unique and colorful ways in just a little over ten syllables. Thus Shiki's philosophy is alive and well in Brazil. In the next section I will argue against another criticism made toward Japanese-Brazilian poetry: that Japanese-Brazilians do not have a true sense of using *kigo* (season words). I will examine this problem by looking at the tremendously influential contemporary young Japanese *haiku* poet Mayuzumi Madoka.

The Current *Haiku* Movement in Japan

Few female poets had written *haiku* before the 1990s.³⁸ Women's social position has historically been inferior to that of men, and they were not allowed to study literature. Even if they had, their views would not have been accepted by men (and thus society in general). Since the 1980s, Japanese women have started to claim their social rights, and the leaders are usually young intellectual women. They wish to change the working environments created by men. Since the social system in the labor market has been plagued by tremendous gender and age discrimination, it has been very difficult to change society and people's ideas quickly. Some of these women have established companies of, for, and by women. A *haiku* journal, *Gekkan Heppubān*, is one of these companies.

Young female *haiku* poets are also challenging the old traditional *haiku* ways, thought to be rooted in men's ideas and older generations' perceptions. If *haiku* poets were to present their motifs in as natural a way as possible, their thinking goes, not only would they present *haiku* with a feminist consciousness, but they might also develop new *kigo*. The Japanese calendar and lifestyle have changed since *kigo* were first introduced in *haikai renga*, and for many *kigo* today it is difficult to sense which season they are symbolizing. For instance (and I do not think it is only my problem here), who would imagine summer to be suggested by *ama-zake* 甘酒 (a

³⁸ Historically there have been a few, however, such as Chigetsuya Someno 智月や園女 (16??-1???), Chiyoya Shokyūni 千代や猪九尼 (1714-1781), and Nakamura Teijo 中村汀女 (1900-1989).

sweet, warm drink made from fermented rice) unless one already had knowledge of *ama-zake* as a summer *kigo*? Modern Japanese grow up drinking *ama-zake* on a cold day to warm the body up. This generation has never seen *ama-zake* in a supermarket in the summer. However, in the Edo period, *ama-zake* was sold only in the summer, and it became a *kigo* in Edo times. Since then, *ama-zake* is believed by professional poetry teachers to symbolize summer in *haiku*.

Consider two other potential *kigo*. Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed with atomic weapons on the 6th and 9th of August, respectively. *Risshun* 立春 (the first day of autumn on the calendar) is August 8th, so *Hiroshima-ki* 広島忌 (the anniversary of the Hiroshima atomic bomb) is felt to be appropriate summer *kigo* by new *haiku* poets. *Nagasaki-ki* 長崎忌 (the anniversary of the Nagasaki atomic bomb) is an autumn *kigo*.

One of the leaders of the current new *haiku* movement is Mayuzumi Madoka 黛まどか (1965-). She received the Kadokawa *Haiku* Hōrei-shō 角川俳句奨励賞 (the Kadokawa *Haiku* Premium Award) when she was 29, and she and her colleagues from the journal *Gekkan Heppubān* believe in the necessity of having new *kigo*. This creates poetry with a contemporary feel, rather than limiting *haiku* by using unfamiliar *kigo*. For instance, they suggest *furōzun-kakuteru* フローズンカクテル (from the English “frozen cocktail”) as a summer *kigo* or *Bōjorē* ボージュレ (“Beaujolais”) as a winter *kigo* and *hābu ti* ハーブティー (from the English “herb tea”) as an autumn *kigo*. It is easier to imagine young women in the 1990s drinking a frozen cocktail than *ama-zake* on a hot summer day!

If we consider the following poems by Madoka we can begin to see how she captures the feel of contemporary Japanese women’s lives and their new sensibilities.

14) ビール 飲む このごろ の 恋 ときめか ず³⁹

bīru nomu konogoro no koi tokimeka zu
beer drink these days of love throb not

(Although I drink beer [with my male friends], these days my heart does not throb.)

This poem, written with the 5/7-5 pattern and using a summer *kigo*, beer, illustrates a contemporary urban woman’s lifestyle and feelings. The young

³⁹ Mayuzumi Madoka, *Koisuru Haiku* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1998), 78.

woman, who is financially independent, goes out for a drink with male friends. Until a little while ago, she was excited to drink with her male friends who, after all, are potential romantic partners. Now, however, although summer is here, only the weather is hot; these days her heart is not excited. There is no man who can really fulfill her desire. This dull feeling—of the working woman's lifestyle and her feelings towards men in this new era—is wonderfully captured in these seventeen syllables.

In this new movement, *haiku* has been revitalized, and many young people, including young women, have started showing renewed interest in this type of poem in Japan. The following two poems were written by fans of Madoka:

- 15) ○L は つらい 家業や バレンタイン⁴⁰
ōeru wa tsurai kagyō-ya barentain
 office lady SCM hard job SFP* Valentine

[*SFP=sentence-final particle]

(Being an office lady is a hard job. [Oh] Valentine's Day.)

According to Madoka, this was one of the poems she collected when she attended a party her fans had organized for her. Ayako, who participated in the party and wrote example 15 above, is an office lady who buys *Giri Choko*⁴¹ for her colleagues on Valentine's Day. Although Madoka thought that the *-ya* after the word *kagyō* (job) was a *kireji*, Ayako said it was a sentence-final particle, *-ya*, in her Kansei dialect. If Bashō could have heard what Ayako said he might have gotten angry, wrote Madoka in her book. Although Ayako does not know anything about formal *haiku* technique—in fact, this poem is the first she has ever written—she presents her feelings quite competently with just these few syllables. Madoka's intention in introducing the *haiku* written by such mature people is to show that *haiku* can be written by any one at any time and to show that *haiku* can be used to represent experiences in everyday life, just as Ayako did. Some three hundred years ago, Bashō, the high figure of the *haikai* canon, made *haikai* popular by doing exactly the same thing.

⁴⁰ Mayuzumi Madoka, *ra ra ra "Okuno Hosomichi"* (Tokyo: Kōbundō, 1998), 106.

⁴¹ In Japan, women are expected to give chocolate even to acquaintances on Valentine's Day. Such chocolate is called *Giri Choko* (obligation chocolate).

Japan has four seasons, and the lives of the Japanese people are profoundly connected to each season. However, some elements in each season have changed or are changing. Also, we are reminded of the differences between the solar and the lunar calendars when we read *haikai renga* poems. Some of the *kigo* are not able to stimulate feelings just by being read or heard; we have to learn them so that the great historical *haiku* poets can always be appreciated. As I mentioned at the beginning, *haiku* poetry is a universal art that can transcend time and space, but at the same time, unlike music and painting, *haiku* poetry does not give as much back if the reader does not have any knowledge of its formal elements.

The Japanese need to learn to truly appreciate older *haiku* poetry, but at the same time contemporary people need to create their own era's *haiku* with new *kigo*. This is becoming more acceptable even in traditional *haiku* circles. Why, then, do the Japanese not learn more about appreciating Japanese-Brazilian *haiku*? Can't *haiku* aficionados learn Brazilian *kigo* from Japanese-Brazilian reference works such as *Saijiki* 歳時記 (Dictionary of *Kigo*)?⁴² (Yes, such a thing exists in Brazil!) The issue of the unpopularity of Japanese-Brazilian *haiku* in Japan is neither a *kigo* problem nor one of loanwords, but that the Japanese in Japan have cultural authority over *haiku*, and these canonists do not wish to learn "deviated" *haiku*. In the following section I would like to consider canonicity and what it reveals about empowerment.

Who Has Authoritative Power over *Haiku*?

In my overview of the *haikai* and *haiku* movements, I argued that Bashō made *haikai renga* popular by innovating in ways similar to what Japanese-Brazilian *haiku* poets are doing. However, as time went on, *haikai* poetry again became the purview of certain people who stressed technique alone, over all else. So after some two hundred years, Shiki created the new *haiku* structure (out of *hokku* of *haikai*) in order to revitalize short-form poetry. But almost a hundred years later, *haiku* has again become a stifled art of the limited, by the limited, and for the limited. This time, it is young women who are challenging the traditional canon. These historical movements of *haiku* can be seen in the following chart:

⁴² The first *saijiki* was written by Masuda Gōga c. 1970.

leader:	Bashō	Shiki	Madoka
Point of revolution:	Popularization	<i>Shasē-shugi</i>	Modernization
problem:		technique	obsolescence

Chart 1

These cultural movements do not occur by themselves without a socio-economic and political basis. Before, in the early days of *haikai* poetry, after some two hundred years of warfare, people were finally at peace and farmers could cultivate their fields. They invented fertilizers and produced more crops than before. Since the economy was doing well, even the general public was able to enjoy some high culture. As a result, in addition to *haikai*, art, literature, music, and theater of various kinds—such as *ukiyo-zōshi* 浮世草子 (books of the “floating world”) or *jōruri* 浄瑠璃 (puppet theater)—became popular as well.

As mentioned earlier, there was also the *Nōhon-shugi* (Agricultural First) movement at this time. The *Shasē-shugi* method that came out of the *Nōhon-shugi* philosophy was the product of a political and economic struggle between the government and young intellectuals. Although a new government was firmly established, the economic situation in the Meiji era was not that much different for the average farmer than that in the Tokugawa period. The Meiji government, like that of the Tokugawa before it, was totally dependent on farm crops for income. Thus, to entice people to continue farming, the government taught people about the dignity of farming, relating it to old myths of the Japanese being the children of nature. Since this lesson was very successful, farmers’ incomes actually stabilized. However, young intellectuals criticized this policy and wanted to detach farming (as in the Japanese myth) from the government’s political-economic strategy (i.e., modern Western-style capitalism). This political and economic struggle was reflected in the *Nōhon-shugi* and *Shasē-shugi* philosophies.

Likewise, Madoka’s modernization cannot be understood without considering the feminist movement. Focusing on the political and economic achievements made by women in the cultural domain, Chart 1 becomes Chart 2:

Empowerment:	economic power to the general public	political economic power struggle	economic power of women
	↓	↓	↓
Social movements:	Popularization (Popularization)	<i>Nōhon-shugi</i> (<i>Shasē-shugi</i>)	Feminism (Modernization)

Chart 2

In today's global era, Japan cannot avoid being involved in the political, economic, and social affairs of other nations, including Brazil. Thus Chart 2 requires some modification:

Empowerment:	economic power to the general public	political and economic power struggles	economic power of women/ political economic power struggles
	↓	↓	↓
Social movements:	Popularization (Popularization)	<i>Nōhon-shugi</i> (<i>Shasē-shugi</i>)	Feminism, and globalization (Modernization)

Chart 3

After the economic boom of the early 1990s, Japan experienced for the first time foreign workers coming from all over the world, including Japanese-Brazilians. Japanese culture is now changing as a result of these changed economic circumstances. Japanese now listen to samba music, dance the salsa, and eat at Brazilian restaurants. Isn't Japanese society now ready to respect the great art and literature produced by its overseas descendants, spread out all over the world?

Conclusion: Reconsidering the Canonicity of Japanese-Brazilian *Haiku*

As I have argued, I do not feel that the *haiku* poetry of Japanese-Brazilians has been given adequate attention by Japanese in Japan. This is all the more odd considering how important new physical environments are in the creation of *haiku*. Bashō, for example, respected traveling and cultivated his spirit through new experiences. Recently Madoka published her own work after traveling to the same places Bashō visited three hundred years ago. Madoka describes in her book *Ra ra ra "Oku no Hosomichi"* how important it is for people to travel to have new experiences. However, I question whether she really went to the same places that Bashō visited or whether she met local people, like he did, and wrote poems with and about them. Even meeting with local *haiku* lovers she would not be able to reconstruct Bashō's experiences at the same level. I am not talking about an historical time difference here. If it were only that, she could write a twentieth-century *Okun o Hosomichi* with fresh eyes. My question focuses on the quality of Bashō's travels. He and Sora, walking day by day, lived in each area. Madoka, during a break in her work in Tokyo, traveled to these places by Shinkansen bullet train and spoke with media reporters.

The point I am trying to make here is that physical place and space can be—and are—essential elements in the growth of the *haiku* form. Japanese *haiku* writers need to look at the *haiku* of people who have really traveled and incorporated new experiences into their art. Japanese immigrants crossed the ocean to live in and struggle with a hostile Brazilian environment and deal with difficult new neighbors. Such experiences were very different from those of the Japanese in Japan. In the case of Japanese-Brazilians, these new experiences and environments are, ironically, criticized as being the cause of the *non*-canonicity of the Japanese-Brazilian *haiku* poets. Brazil is a developing country; Japan is a developed country. In other words, the Japanese have economic power. Furthermore, *haiku* originated in Japan, so Japanese determine the cultural legitimacy of what constitutes "good" or "bad" *haiku*. As the people of an economically and culturally advanced nation, the Japanese not only give little credit to the experiences of Japanese-Brazilians, but they look down on them. In the new millennium I hope that Japanese-Brazilian *haiku* reach a global audience.

I would like to close by presenting two poems written by amateur *haiku* poets: Bōga, a Japanese-Brazilian farmer, and Yagishita, a Japanese office

lady in Japan. I chose poems with a similar subject matter and style. Please appreciate both poems in your way with your own sense before you read the explanations. I hope you will give them the respect and attention they deserve so that they can be fully appreciated.

16) バス 停めて 霧 の 窓 拭く 橋 の 上

Basu tomete kiri no mado fuku hashi no ue

17) コンビニ* に 車 を よせて 春 の 雨

Konbini ni kuruma o yosete haru no ame*

[*konbini > convenience store]

Example 16 is written by Bōga. Because of the heavy fog, the bus driver is not able to see well and cleans the window to go through a narrow bridge in the Brazilian countryside. Example 17 is written by a young Japanese woman who stops at a convenience store in a light spring rain.