

## Chapter 2

### Review of Literature

#### 2.1 Various Aspects of Haiku

##### 2.1.1 Traditional Haiku of Japan

##### 2.1.1.1 Historical Aspects

Haiku was previously called *haikai*, which has been called "...a verse-form evolved for the ordinary man, in contrast to most other Japanese poetry, which is aristocratic in form and tradition" (Tsunoda et al: 441). Yet, haiku has its origins in Japanese classical poetry, *waka* and other literature. The start of *haikai*, Konishi writes, could be traced before Sōgi (1421-1503) in the middle of Muromachi Era when he wrote 100 *haikai* poetry. His *haikai* is seen in *Gyokukai-shū* published in 1656. (Konishi. 1995: 34)

Japan has a long and rich literary history. *Manyōshū* or *Mannyōshū* [the period is unclear but was believed to have spanned 450 years and ended at the close of the Nara period (710-794)], is the oldest collection of Japanese poems containing 20 volumes and 4,500 poems, including several kinds of poems - long poems (*chōka*), short poems (*waka* or *tanka*), and *sedōka*. Writers of these poems include emperors and ordinary people. Most poems were written in the period of Jomei Tennō (7<sup>th</sup> century ) and around 100 years (Kōjirin six ed. 1985: 1865). This accomplished anthology of poetry covers a wide variety of subjects written or sung by people of all classes.

Chinese characters were imported to Japan in 4-5<sup>th</sup> Century. Chinese culture influenced Japanese culture, especially most strongly when ships were sent for Japanese envoys and apprentice Buddhist monks to China in the Tung dynasty (618-907).

Chinese style poems were considered more formal style of literature than the traditional *waka* in Japan during 809-849 and if one was to be considered a learned person, knowledge of Chinese poems was required. (Konishi, 1993, 48-49)

By 871, following the influence of Chinese literature, traditional Japanese poetry, *waka* recovered its status. The *waka* anthology, Kokinwakashū was accomplished in 905 and Shin-Kokinwakashū in 1205.

*Waka* consists of 31 syllables, arranged in five lines of 5, 7, 5, 7 and 7 syllables. While anyone could compose a *waka*, only those *waka* that showed a mastery of the poetic traditions of the past were given attention (Tsunoda et al: 442). Thus, a poet had to spend the majority of his time studying old poetry which would enable him to become prolific in the restricted number of themes and imagery under the demanding rules of classical poetry. Poets must imitate the masterpieces of their predecessors and restrict themselves to the same vocabulary. Such scholarly pursuits were therefore mainly restricted to the nobility or the upper class people..

In the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, *waka* reached the peak of its existence. *Uta-awase* (poetry composition competitions) became popular entertainment for nobles and this became more than mere play, causing rivalry between groups which were settled by the famous poet Fujiwara Shunzei. Shunzei, the monk Saigyō and Shunzei's son Fujiwara Teika (1162-1241), the celebrated arbiter of poetic excellence, influenced people, including later haikai poets. Shunzei's attitude is "to write poetry using old vocabulary with new heart" and the concept could be expressed as *yugen*, which includes subtle profundity, essential qualities and Buddhist thought (Ibid. 77-78) Saigyō's *waka* are plain and sincere and have the touch of Chinese poet, Hakurakuten.(Ibid. 79)

By the 8<sup>th</sup> century during the Heian Period, poetry had evolved to a more refined level. However, in order for their poems to be considered proper poetry, poets had to adhere to strict rules. An example of this is the classical *waka* poem.

By the time of the Kamakura period (1185-1333), poets from other classes such as soldiers, farmers and villagers began to express themselves through them poetry. After the 15<sup>th</sup> century, *waka* declined and, form of linked-verse poetry called *renga*, became more popular.

*Renga* is a linked-verse poem normally composed by several poets in "dialogue". The first three lines of the 5-7-5 syllables are composed by one person, the next two 7-syllable lines by another person, and the following three lines of 5-7-5 by a third person and so on. In groups of usually around four or five people members take turns to alternately add verses until they complete a poem generally composed of 100

verses. The communal quality of such verse compositions made them poetry, a popular pastime for the people. There were cases of one single poet composing the entire 100 verses. Eventually, between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, two main types of linked-verse poetry emerged: the linked-verse of the court and the linked-verse of the provinces. The poetry of the court was “refined, melodious, and melancholy, in the aristocratic tradition”, while the poetry of the provinces was “gay, simple, and often so crude that only their obedience to the codes of linked-verse preserved a semblance of poetic form about them.” (Tsunoda et al: 443)

From this tradition, a more “light-hearted” and “comic” form of poetry emerged. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the *haikai* or humorous poem became popular as “poets tired of the stale vocabulary and images of the court linked-verse”. (Tsunoda et al: 445) *Haikai* (*haikai no renga*) is a poem comprised of verses of 17 and 14 syllables like *renga*, but it parodies *renga* introducing modern and sometimes vulgar subjects.

The first 5-7-5 verse of *haikai* (*haikai no renga*) is called *hokku*. The *hokku* were always the most important and well-known part of the poem, and *hokku* were often prepared in advance of a linked-verse party. Some poets, such as Matsuo Basho (1644-1694), became famous for their *hokku*, and such verse eventually developed into an independent poetic form, the haiku, which was later called by Masaoka Shiki in the 1880's.

In the world of Japanese poetry, Basho is referred to as “The First Great Master of Haiku”, or simply “The Master”. Born into the samurai class, Basho eventually gave up his status in order to lead a life devoted to poetry. “Basho's style of haiku is called *shofu haikai*, from *sho*, the second syllable of his name, and *fu* (style). The belief that nature is the realm par excellence of poetry is the fundamental tenet of *shofu haiku*.” (Giroux 1974: 18)

Pursuing the way of *haikai* as Japanese literature, Basho also loved and studied the way of life and poetry of Saigyō and Chinese poems and thoughts. Through his long travels, Basho sought the new way of *haikai*. His achievement is still considered great today.

Yosa Buson (1715-1783), the “Second Pillar of *Haikai*” was a famous painter and his life style was in contrast to the hermetic existence of Basho. “Buson never mentions, as Basho did, the union of the individual with Nature, but advocates rather

exploring and enjoying to the full the world of imagination, irrespective of any philosophy of Nature.” (Henderson 1977: 25) His techniques in writing *haikai* included the omission of words and often utilized the principle of comparison. In later periods, Buson’s *haikai* was highly appreciated by Shiki, the reformer of haiku.

Another famous haikai poet in the Edo era was Kobayashi Issa who wrote daily familiar subjects often.

In the Meiji era, when the modernization of Japan began, Masaoka Shiki (1867-1902) played an important role in the development of haiku during his short life; he reformed both haiku and *waka*. Professor Konishi Jinichi, of Tsukuba University in Japan, who received the Cultural Award from the Japanese government in 1999, writes that Shiki reformed haikai as modern literature and opened haiku to everybody. (Konishi, 1995: 258) After Shiki’s death, Takahama Kyoshi succeeded Shiki’s reform such as suggestion of ‘Shasei’ (sketching, observing and other broad meanings) and became influential as the traditional haiku poet. Haiku were accepted by people and various poets, like the famous 4S: Mizuhara Shuōshi, Takano Sojū, Aono Seiho and Yamaguchi Seishi (three of them were students of Tokyo University) sent fresh haiku to Kyoshi’s group and succeeded magazine, *Hototogisu*. New-style haiku and poets, such as Kawahigashi Hekigodo, became well-known. Nakamura Kusatao and Kato Shūson were known as poets of “the group of seeking humanities”.

According to Giroux “The haiku moment may be defined as an instant in which man becomes united to an object, virtually becomes the object and realizes the eternal, universal truth contained in being.” (Giroux 1974: 45-46)

### 2.1.1.2 The Four Seasons and “Season Words”

The concept of seasonality is pervasive throughout Japanese aesthetics and culture. For example, eating foods that are in season is highly prized in Japanese culinary arts. Most people around the world have heard of the famous cherry blossom (*sakura*) viewing that takes place around Japan in the spring. The turning of the leaves in the autumn is regarded as a national event in Japan, and is even reported on the evening news.

It is therefore not a surprise that the seasons also play an important role in Japanese poetry. Traditionally, Japanese books of poetry are usually divided into

sections according to the season; New Year is often added to the traditional four, as a special season of its own. The first example of seasonality dates back to 905 A.D., when poems were classified according to seasons in the *Kokinwakashu* anthology.

In classical Japanese poetry, it was required that a season word (*kigo*) referring to a season, be included in the first verse of renga and haikai. Therefore, it was required to introduce a *kigo* in a *hokku* (and in a haiku), too.

The indication of season in haiku can be explicit, as in the mention of the word "summer" or "autumn". It can also be indicated implicitly, by referring to a particular event that is known to take place only in that season, such as the blooming of cherry blossoms. Alternatively the season can be indicated by the overall tone of the haiku.

### 2.1.1.3 The Rules of Haiku and General Recognition

Some basic rules for haiku poets applied to traditional haiku in Japan are: 1) having the three lines of 5.7.5 syllables 2) having one season word 3) preference to break off once, using *kireji* (the word to cut connection of verse in a haiku) or other methods.

Henderson's research reveals the following generally recognized concepts on about haiku:

There are four general rules that apply to classical Japanese haiku. The first is the required number of lines and syllables: 17 syllables arranged in three lines of 5-7-5. The second is that the poem contains at least some reference to nature. Third, haiku usually refers to a particular event and is not given to generalization. Fourth, the event presented in the poem is an event happening *now*, rather than in the past. (Henderson 1977: 14)

While not all of these rules are followed one hundred percent of the time, especially in some forms of modern haiku, they give the general basis for determining what is a haiku.

"The arrangement of the 17 syllables into three lines in the 5-7-5 pattern gives proportion and symmetry." (Giroux 1974: 81) There are usually three elements in any haiku, one for each line, telling the where, the when and the what of the haiku moment.

Directness and paradox are also characteristics of haiku. Phenomena of nature are not symbols of something else - they are called by their name. As Giroux notes,

“Simile and metaphor are frowned upon in haiku as being efforts at cleverness [...] Directness, it cannot be repeated often enough, tends to prohibit cleverness and false intuition.” (Giroux 1974: 51)

The main function of haiku is to recreate through words the circumstances that aroused the poet’s emotion. (Henderson 1977: 23) Sometimes the full emotion is apparent on the first reading of the haiku; other times repetition is required. “..the whole purpose of the poem is to express the poet’s union with nature, his flash of intuition concerning the objects which his senses perceive.” (Giroux 1974: 23)

### 2.1.2 Present World of Haiku

Today, more than ten general haiku magazines are sold in Japan. Konishi estimated that more than 800 haiku magazines (including literary coterie magazines) are in publication and possibly one percent of Japanese people write haiku. (Konishi 1995: 365).

Newspaper and magazines publish columns of haiku and *tanka (waka)*, once a week or once a month. The NHK (Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai, Japan Broadcasting Association) TV also airs a haiku program every Sunday morning, and well-known haiku poets appear, discussing how to write and choose good haiku. Recently, Kanazawa University held the Second Haiku event for all high school students in Japan. As a result, about 7,000 students from 200 different schools sent their haiku to the university. There are large and small haiku groups in towns all over the country.

In Japan the haiku world can be roughly divided into two; one is the traditional way of haiku, which is followed by most poets upholding the basic rules of the 5-7-5 form and a season word, while the second is the new wave of haiku under which writers do not to adhere to such rules and the poetry has a tendency to express sensitive feelings in an alternative way.

Haiku are also written overseas and in foreign languages. For a long time, Japanese people overseas have continued to write haiku, especially old generations of Japanese people who immigrated to Hawaii or South American countries. The Haiku group in Hawaii published a fine collection of season words. Haiku written in English or in other languages are not a new concept in the world. In the United States, haiku is taught in school, Donald Keene writes. In August 2000, members of BHS (British

Haiku Society) are planning to hold a large international haiku gathering involving many people in the world. The JAL Foundation regularly organizes haiku contests for children. Such haiku are introduced as in Chikyu Saijiki (Haiku by the Children) vol. 3 in Japan, which featured poems by children from many countries, including haiku written by five Thai children, presented in Thai, English and Japanese translations in 1995.

In 1990, the Haiku International Association in Tokyo published the first issue of its bulletin, HI (Haiku International) which introduces international members' haiku in various languages, with Japanese, or English translation. HI No.21,1996, introduces haiku from Germany, the United States, Spain, Canada, Australia, Holland, Croatia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, New Zealand, and various districts of Japan. Although this bulletin is small (only 41 pages), people around in the world have a chance to share their feelings through haiku.

In 1999, at Matsuyama (well-known as Shiki's hometown), Ehime prefecture in Japan. people released the "Matsuyama Declaration" to the world, expressing the intention to exchange through the medium of haiku and to share haiku.

## 2.2 Background of Japanese Haiku Poets in Thailand

To understand haiku in Thailand, it is useful to review the background of Japanese haiku poets who came to live in Thailand. By knowing about the poets' circumstances, situation and general trend of society, readers can appreciate deeper meanings of haiku, together with the poets' feelings and impact of the time.

Japanese people came to Thailand mainly because of their jobs, or their spouse's jobs. This 'labor factor' influenced by the flow of historical, social, economic changes in Thailand, as well as in Japan and other countries in the world. When we look at the occupations of the poets or their families, in the past and present, we can learn about the changes of the period.

Despite changes in the society, there have continued to be gatherings on haiku by Japanese people in Thailand for more than five decades, in the form of haiku clubs formed by Japanese people in Thailand. The Japanese Association in Thailand has

supported the Menam Kukai since its first gathering, offering the venue and various focus of support every month.

The Japanese Association in Thailand, was first established with less than 200 members in 1914 in what was then known as Siam and interrupted for eight years, after the Second World War, then, reopened in 1953 with about 100 members. The number of members of the Association gradually increased from 634 in 1964 to 2,880 in 1984. The number has increased rapidly to 4881( including 311 Thai or other nationalities and there are 388 enterprise members) in 1990. On June 1997, the number of members reached 9,578(including 382 Thai or other nationalities. The number of member enterprises was 738), reflecting the economic development of Thailand. The number decreased to 9196 (including 396 Thai and other nationalities and the number of enterprise members was 790) in 1999, due to the economic recession which started in 1997 in Thailand. (The List of the Japanese Association, 1990, 1997, 1999)

The Japanese Association aims to help unite Japanese people living in Thailand by encouraging them to have a smooth life in the foreign country, by cooperating with Thai people and Thai circumstances. The Menam Kukai was the first activity listed of the many clubs among the cultural section of the Association.

## 2.2.1 A Brief History of Haiku Clubs and Haiku Poets in Thailand

### 2.2.1.1 Haiku Clubs during the Second World War

During the Second World War (1944-1945), there were active haiku gatherings attended by Japanese people in two clubs in Bangkok: one was called the Bangkok Haikukai and the other was the Pinan Haikukai. The former club's gatherings were held sometimes at the Bangkok Mainichi Newspaper Company, poets' homes or other places, while the latter group's gatherings were often held at Pinan Hotel.

Yokota Sekiyō (Nirō), who became a main founding member of the Menam Kukai in the Japanese Association in 1962, joined both haiku clubs during the end of the War. He wrote that the Bangkok Haikukai held its first gathering in the middle of 1944 and the last one on July 8, 1945, and that the scheduled meeting was cancelled by the events of the war-end. In the Bangkok Haikukai, 34 haiku gatherings were held in a year, or so. To explain why haiku gatherings were held so many times, Sekiyō wrote



that it might be that there was nothing to do other than writing haiku. (Sekiyō 1962, Fiftieth: 102-103)

The members of the Bangkok Haikukai consisted of many civilians, a few officers and civilians in the military. In each gathering, 12-13 poets attended, and sometimes 17-18 people gathered. The leaders were Ishibashi Shūsui and Baba Kokubaishi and officers included Sōō, Sōgyo, Sōmi, and others.. In Sekiyō's Notebook, more than 30 names were listed as the members at several haiku gatherings. Sekiyō joined the haiku club in October 1944. [Sekiyō: 1944-45 (Sekiyō's Notebook)] In Sekiyō's Notebook, he also wrote about his participation in the Pinan Haikukai gatherings around the same time.

#### 2.2.1.2 The Menam Kukai in the Japanese Association: Its History and Names of Main Members

After the Second World War ended in 1945, most Japanese including some Taiwanese numbering nearly 4,000 people, were detained in the Camps at the Ban Buathong district in Nonthaburi province. Some people were sent to prisons from the camps. In 1946, nearly 3,000 Japanese people were sent back to Japan, while formally 126 Japanese people in the camps were allowed to stay in Thailand. Later, recalling the warm treatment by Thai people to the war-beaten Japanese civilians and the families in the camps, many Japanese people were grateful, and repeatedly talked about the kindness and presents of sugar they received. (Seto, 1995: 173)

The Japanese Association reopened in April, 1953 with approximately 100, Japanese people, including long-term residents who were able to stay in Thailand, newcomers, and embassy people.(Fiftieth. 1963: 96) The first gathering of the Menam Kukai at the Japanese Association was on July 28, 1962. Since then, monthly gatherings have continued. However, there have been periods when the number of members of the Menam Kukai was extremely reduced due to the deaths of old regular members, and those leaving for Japan. However, the club has survived and today the Menam Kukai has more than 10 regular members. All haiku from the monthly gatherings, since the first meeting, have been recorded in the 22 Notebooks written by the members, including their activities, although the first eight Notebooks are missing. The Notebooks are a record of over 37-years in history of the Menam Kukai,

describing the fact that more than 100 people joined the haiku gatherings; some attended for a long time, some for rest of their lives, while some stopped attending the club after a relatively short time, and many haiku poets left for Japan after their, or their husbands' job-terms in Thailand were over. By referring to the five volumes of the Menam Haiku collections, which were published at various intervals, the names of the main members can be picked up. The following is a brief history of the Menam Kukai which outlines the names of the main members involved in the Kukai.

### **The First Stage (July 1962)**

Yokoka Sekiyō welcomed Inoue Ichizo and Shinohara Michiaki who were working as representatives of Japanese enterprises, C. Itoh and JAL, respectively, and started conducting haiku gatherings with them. Inoue used to belong to 'Hototogisu', (the most famous haiku group in Japan following Shiki haiku tradition) and Shinohara belonged to 'Shin-chishiki'. Soon afterwards the active members, Ozawa Fumio and Shiba Issa (Giichi) joined, along with Inoue Masatoshi and Dr. Kaku. (Fiftieth. 1964, 102)

### **The Menam Collection Vol. 1 Stage (1962-1970)**

The first haiku collection of the Menam Kukai was published during this period commemorating 100 gatherings of the Menam Kukai. Some active members by 1970 were Aoki Kiyoshi, Aoki Hisa (from Korat), Inoue Masatoshi, Ozawa Fumio, Kurita Kaoru, Kuroda Gogyū (real name, Shōji), Nishi Michijo, Nishino Jun (Junjirō), Hanaoka Benijo (Yoriko), Higashi Shūson (Katsutoshi), Higashi Yoshijo (Junko), Yasuda Yasujo (Yasuko), Yamamoto Midori, Yokota Sekiyō, and Watanabe Akijo (Akiko). Haiku of the late members, Nishino Minoru (Satoru), Hatajitsu Sagop, were also included in the collection but haiku of rather new members at this time, Shigematsu Keison, Yoshioka Ryoko, and Yamamoto Yoshiko, were excluded.

### **The Menam Collection Vol. 2 Stage (1971-1976)**

The female members, Itoh Michiko, Ugajin Masae, Taniyama Toshiko, and Yamamoto Michiko joined during this phase, as well as long time male resident, Hoshina Nansei (Chuji). Hada Reika (Reiko), and Masuda Natsujo (Ikue) joined the group for the first time, and later left Thailand and then returned. Yoshioka Ryoko, Watanabe Akijo (Akemi), Sawamura Miho, Kitatani Fumiko, Tamai Keigetsu (Keiko), and Takahisa (Takaku) Fumi were wives of Japanese executives who were sent to Thailand from Japan.

### **The Menam Collection Vol. 3 Stage (1976-1987)**

Previous health officer in the Japanese army, Machida Inpin (Masanobu) joined at this time. The experienced haiku poet couple, Furuya Takako, and Furuya Akihiro, and the active member who traveled to rural areas for his job, Tada Minoru, and fairly long-time resident, Ibrahim Teruko, also joined the group and inspired other members. Another active couple who came back to Thailand two or three times was Kawai Takashi (Takashi) and Kawai Mariko. Others, who came back repeatedly (including later periods) were Reika, Natsujo and Yoshiko. Long time residents in Thailand, and teachers, Izumi Hanae, and Suriyon Teruko joined the Club for some years. The founder and a strong promoter of the Manila Kukai (Haiku Club) in the Philippines in later years was Mizuno Mie. She started writing haiku in Bangkok and later joined the Tokyo Menam Kukai. Many other members joined the Menam Kukai gatherings in Bangkok, such as Gōhara Nobuko, and Hachiyama Yuki. Nishiwaki Keiko, Matsumoto Toyohiko and Ueda Yoshiko joined the Kukai for 1-3 years, but had left long time ago before this collection was edited. The long-time member Sekiyō died in 1985.

### **The Menam Collection Vol. 4 Stage (1988-1996)**

During this stage, Gogyū, and Inpin died. Suriyon Teruko retired and left the haiku gathering and Ishihira Katori died in Tokyo. All of them were over seventy years old. The active members Takashi and his wife Mariko, as well as Natsujo and Nagai Naomi left for Japan. Midori was able to recruit some young people in their twenties, or thirties to join [Nishioka Seijin (Nobuo), Matsuno Shigeki, Onishi Takanori, Nunodate

Mikio, Mizuno Tetsurō Kitahara Shiroko (Hiroko) and many other people gathered occasionally]. Seijin who was born in Thailand was suddenly killed in a car-accident near Rayong province. His Japanese father had come to Thailand to work as fisheries expert. With some conditions, foreigners' children who were born in Thailand could obtain also Thai nationality, and when Seijin grew up, he chose Thai nationality and worked in Thailand as a young editor of the community paper, The Yomiuri Eyes. As a result of his death, other young members stopped attending the gatherings.

Tsutsui Hajime of the Sangkasi Thai co., who became a member at this time, loved to use puns sometimes in his haiku. Long time resident Isrankul (na Ayudhya) Yōko who came to Thailand in 1971 joined. Her Thai husband was an academic who studied in Japan and England. Yoshiko returned to the club again. The experienced, modern haiku poet, Tsushima (Nishimura) Yasuko, together with her husband, Nishimura Gania (Hidetoshi) who worked at JODC (Japan Overseas Development Corporation) joined the Menam Kukai for approximately three years, and then returned to Japan. Every month, poets of the Menam Kukai sent their haiku to the 'Ajia-Haidan' ('Asia Haiku Column'), which is edited and written by Yasuko in the Satellite issue of the Japanese newspaper, Yomiuri Shinbun. Kishima Ako, whose husband worked to Japanese Embassy, joined and left a symbolic, but new touch of haiku.

The experienced Shunrō came to work in Bangkok and joined the group. He often talked to Kukai members about basic important rules and inspired them by writing a lot of haiku about plants. He also started the monthly newsletter of the Menam Kukai with haiku selected at the gatherings, and distributed it to all members.

### **The Menam Collection Vol. 5 Stage (1996-1999)**

By 1999, Aoki Shun'ichiro, Hirakawa Komei and others had completed their job terms in Thailand and left for Japan. The second-time resident and student, Oyama Miyako who spent her childhood days in Bangkok, joined and introduced her mother, Oyama Keiko, to the haiku gathering and left Bangkok. Shunrō, Egawa Yasuhiro and Egawa Kakuko also left in 1999. Tagutchi Yuhsaku, an expert from JAICA and the person in charge of the Menam Kukai today, carries on the editing of the monthly newsletter in which all haiku in the gatherings are introduced. Enomoto Haruo came

back to Thailand, but Hayashi Jisuke, an honorable professor at Hokkaido University, who had worked at Kasetsart University, died in Sapporo in 1999. Other main members today are Yamamoto Midori, Shiotani Toshiko, Ichikawa Akira, Yamamoto Yoshiko, Yamamoto Hōjirō, Nakano Akiko. In 1999, three other female members, Yamakawa Kimiyo, Saga Haruno (Eiko) and Kikukawa Masako also joined. One phenomenon recently seen in this group is that relatively aged people come and join the Menam Kukai in Thailand. It indicates that after their retirement in Japan some Japanese people choose Thailand as a good place to stay.

Accepting various people who had various motives to come to Thailand for a long span of time, the haiku gatherings of the Menam Kukai have offered the world the opportunity to explore the haiku poem world. This world also offers the members chance to discover Thailand and Japan through words. They encounter new Thai vocabulary and confirm old Japanese expressions of words. Regardless of age, sex, social background and experience, the Menam Kukai has been the place for the poets to share their feelings as individual persons.

### 2.2.2 Profiles of Some Menam Kukai Haiku Poets

It is easier to understand the haiku written by Japanese poets in Thailand if one knows something about their backgrounds and life-stories. The many poets throughout the over 30-year history of the Menam Kukai can be classified into three categories. The first category contains the founding people who participated in the group actively and spent almost half of their lives in Bangkok, choosing to live in Thailand. They are the late Yokota Sekiyō, the late Ozawa Fumio, the late Kuroda Gogyū, and Yamamoto Midori.

Other poets, the late Hoshina Nansei joined in the group during 1974-1987, and the late Machida Inpin joined in the late 1970's- 1989. Although they also spent the rest of their lives in Bangkok, they are later members of the Menam Kukai, so both Nansei and Inpin will be included in the last group. The second group consists of those members who came to Thailand for a limited time and were involved positively in the Menam Kukai gatherings. Such people include Furuya Takako, Furuya Akihiro, Kawai Takashi, Kawai Mariko and Nagao Shunrō. The third group of poets include a variety of people who joined the Menam Kukai for a relatively long period and their haiku are

contained in this thesis. Poets in this final group include: the late Aoki Kiyoshi, Aoki Hisa, Shigematsu Keison, Yamamoto Yoshiko (the writer), Kitatani Fumiko, Masuda Natsujo, Mizuno Mie, Tada Minoru, Ibrahim Teruko, Isrankul Yōko, Tsushima Yasuko, (and her husband, Nishimura Gania), Hayashi Jisuke, Yamamoto Hōjirō, Shiotani Toshiko, and Tagutschi Yuhsaku, according to chronology.

### 2.2.2.1 The Founding Members

#### Yokota Sekiyō (Nirō)

Sekiyō is a haiku name (*haigo*) which came from the name of a tree in Sekiyō's home town in Tochigi prefecture, Japan. He was born on November 27, 1895 in Tochigi and died in Bangkok on April 12, 1985 at the age of 89. As an artist and a teacher, he received many awards from both Japanese and Thai governments for his achievement in art, education and cultural activities.

It was when he was a teacher of art and handicrafts at the primary school attached to Keio University that the Thai embassy in Tokyo asked the Japanese Foreign Ministry to recommend a good teacher to teach basic handicraftsmanship, bamboo arts and woodworking in Thailand. Thus, Sekiyō came to Bangkok with his wife to teach at the National College of Arts and Crafts Poh Chang in June 1940, at the age of 45. In the following years or so, the Second World War started. Sekiyō had begun writing haiku in Japan and joined haiku gatherings led by Nakamura Kusatao, a famous haiku poet at Keio University. (Krungthep, August 1968:)

Towards the end of the war, Sekiyō found he had no teaching position, so he joined the Bangkok Haikukai and Pinan Haikukai for eight months and tried to establish tropical season words. He kept a notebook all of his life, and during this period (1944-1945) the Notebook, (herein called "Sekiyō's Notebook") describes many haiku, names of haiku poets, records of Bangkok Haikukai, and Pinan Haikukai. A lot of season words referring to tropical seasons are also described in detail. After the end of the war, all Japanese people were detained in camps at Ban Buathong, Nonthaburi province. Here, Sekiyō lost his wife, Yasuko, due to appendicitis. Later, when the Japanese were released, many left for Japan. Sekiyō felt that he could not leave his deceased wife alone and decided to stay in Thailand.

In 1949, Yokota Sekiyō remarried a Thai schoolmistress, Sanit Rojamarat. They have one son who studied architecture at Chulalongkorn University and later attended university in Japan. Sekiyō retired from Poh Chang College in 1962 and opened a private art school at his home. Many Japanese housewives, a few Thai people, foreigners, adult and children came to his home at Saint Louis Soi 2 to study art. Every year, he and his students held an art exhibition in Bangkok. Yokota's art exhibitions were repeatedly held at the gallery of the Mitsukoshi Department-Store in Tokyo and in other places. He was known as an artist of the canals. Japanese people called him, "an artist on the Menam". Sekiyō often encouraged his students to join haiku gatherings, saying that by writing haiku, they could know Thai seasons, nature, people, animals, plants and more. Eventually, many Menam Kukai female members came from Yokota Art School. Sketching Thai landscape and Thai people, as well as flowers, Sekiyō carefully made observations, which are reflected in his haiku.

#### **Ozawa Fumio**

Fumio was born in Tokushima, Shikoku province in Japan on September 30, 1913, and died in Bangkok on October 6, 1976 at the age of 63. According to his wife, Setsuko, he was the son of a primary schoolmaster, and when Fumio was 27 years old, he went to help in his uncle's business of fishing ponds in Singapore. In 1932, after his marriage in his hometown, he and his wife came to Bangkok to work. He worked at Suriwongse Euro Restaurant, Kaigai Doboku, and others.

In 1944, he was enrolled in the Japanese army, the first railway regiment, and trained in Burma for a year. After the war end in 1945, he and the family were detained in the camp at Ban Buathong as well as other many Japanese residents. In 1946, Fumio and his family were permitted to stay in Thailand, because they entered Thailand before 1934.

At first, Fumio and his wife sent their children to Convent School on Convent Road, but later they decided to send all three small children to their brother in Tokushima for their education in Japanese language. Fumio finally worked at a big Japanese shipping company after many trial jobs. His Japanese-language educated son eventually came back to Thailand after he had grown-up, and worked at the same

company. The son married a Chinese-Thai woman and had children Fumio did not have opportunity to meet them.

Fumio was very enthusiastic about writing haiku and often gave good advice to other members; so, he was called *Sōshō* (Master) as a nickname by his haiku friends. He often said that one should write haiku from what one felt and touched by just selecting words referred to them and that one should express without obvious words. He owned a lot of books written about haiku and he sent his haiku to the magazine, *Unmo*, which was edited by Ida Ryuta, a famous haiku poet. After Fumio's death, poets in the Menam Kukai wrote haiku for him:

*Attatakaki meganegoshi no me Fumio no ki*

(Natsujo, 1977, Ntbk., vol. 11)

Gentle eyes  
 through his spectacles  
 the anniversary of Fumio's death

Fumio was not talkative, but he was earnest enough to teach newcomers, who started writing haiku in Thailand for the first time.

*Fumio no ki shūten migaku bin-burashi*

(Gogyū)

The anniversary of Fumio's death,  
 bottle-brush flowers  
 brushing the autumn sky

Impressed by Fumio's haiku, "The autumn sky, as if brushed by bright red bottle-brush flowers", his haiku friends think of him whenever they see very red bottle-brush flowers.

*Ten'gai no chi no yūyake o mi ni mato*

(Fumio 1974, Ntbk., vol. 10)

In a far off land,  
 clad  
 in the glow of sunset



Fumio must have experienced some difficulties and loneliness during his long stay in Thailand. Such melancholy can be seen in the next haiku:

*Wasuren to kodawari oreba ari no michi*

(Fumio 1975, Ntbk., vol. 11)

Striving to dismiss the matter,  
I still cannot,  
a route of ants

### **Kuroda Gogyū (Shōji)**

The haiku name Gogyū means water buffalo in written Chinese language. As this name indicates, this good-hearted, industrious and sincere poet of haiku died on April 10, 1992 in Bangkok, after a long struggle with disease. He was one of the most active haiku poets in the Menam Kukai, but due to his unfortunate injury to his legs, which started out as just a minor wound but eventually caused his legs to be amputated, he could only participate through mail.

He came from Osaka as a young, Japanese soldier and worked in Kanchanaburi until the end of the war. He was apparently good at Thai language, as he wrote in Krungthep that as a Japanese officer he communicated with some influential Thai people. When all Japanese people, except escaped soldiers and civilians, were detained, Gogyū met a Chinese-Thai merchant at the camp in Ban Buathong, whose daughter became his wife. Later, he became an agent for Tōyō Tōki in Bangkok, a company that dealt in chinaware and bathroom ceramics.

Gogyū carefully counted the number of gatherings of the Menam Kukai, and the dates of the deceased haiku friends of the Menam Kukai. He also wrote haiku about many deceased members, commemorating their deaths by using their date of death as season words. He tried to translate his haiku in Thai language and some translation was introduced in the Krungthep, monthly magazine of the Japanese Association.

Two or three times, monthly haiku gatherings of the Menam Kukai were held at his home, where his Thai wife warmly welcomed Japanese guests.

## Yamamoto Midori

Midori is the sole senior member to have participated constantly in the monthly gatherings of the Menam Kukai since 1966 or 1967, until the present day.

Midori was born on March 1, 1928 in Kyoto and lived in Tokyo, Sapporo and other places, according to her father's jobs. She experienced the war-end defeat in 1945 in Sapporo, Hokkaido, and later returned to Tokyo. Although she was admitted to the University of Art in Tokyo, she discontinued her studies to continue working at a printing company.

Midori married a Chinese-Thai husband, *Tonmi*, Montri in 1963 and came to live in Thailand. She was 35 years old. Recently she published two of her own books, commemorating her 72<sup>nd</sup> birthday. In her books, she introduced more than 600 of her haiku, some *tanka* or *waka* (like some other haiku poets, she also writes *waka* and belongs to the Tanka Kai (club) in the Japanese Association, too) and essays describing her biography.

For more than 30 years Midori has been engaged in the printing and publishing business. She is involved in editing and publishing the monthly magazine of the Japanese Association, Krungthep. Midori and her husband set up a Japanese language weekly paper, Shūkan Bangkok. When Midori was 53 years old, she lost her husband through disease. She changed the weekly's name as Bangkok Shūhō and continued the job until the early 1990's. Today her only daughter, Reiko, who was brought up as a Thai and graduated from Chulalongkorn University, and her Japanese husband, run the printing business. Midori is satisfied with her present life in Thailand after overcoming difficulties. She writes that she could live a happy life in Thailand, thanks to the unseen, unexpected protection of great power.

Among Midori's many hobbies, haiku comes first, she says. Haiku could be used as a tool to encourage and inspire her through the powerful 5-7-5 verse of her own. By reading others' haiku, she could communicate with unknown poets, as well as familiar poets who had passed away or left for Japan. For a long time, she has been worried about the situation of the traditional haiku club, the Menam Kukai, for a number of members has decreased, due to some poets having returned to Japan. Her worries were expressed in the following haiku:

*Tōka shitashi hikō-nanori mo ko-ninzū*

(Midori 1997, Ntbk., vol. 21)

Under the autumn light,  
participating haiku members  
are only a few

#### 2.2.2.2 Some Active Members from Japan

In this second group, I have selected those who were involved in the Menam Kukai quite actively for a relatively long time, but who returned to Japan. Such people, among many others, include Furuya Akihiro, Furuya Takako, Kawai Takashi, Kawai Mariko, and Nagao Shunrō.

#### **Furuya Akihiro and Furuya Takako**

Akihiro and Takako are a married couple who came to Thailand in 1979. Akihiro was a representative of Mitsui-bussan, a leading Japanese trading company, and the family stayed in Bangkok for five and a half years before they left for Tokyo at the end of 1985. Their son who spent his childhood in Bangkok, grew up to become a diplomat.

A Catholic, Takako was born in Nishinomiya City, Hyōgo Prefecture in Japan in 1938. Takako has belonged to the haiku group, Katsuragi, since 1962 when she was taught by Awano Seiho, a haiku master in Japan. She also belongs to another haiku group, Ojiki. After she returned home to Sayama City, Saitama Prefecture, in Japan, her haiku collection, Mango no Hana (Mango Blossoms) was published in Tokyo in 1987. This collection included her haiku from Thailand.

Akihiro was born in 1942 and started writing haiku after he met his wife, Takako. In Bangkok, the couple took short trips to write haiku. They visited orchards in Thonburi district, the Nontaburi durian market, Pakkret and other places by car or by boat. While in Bangkok and later in Seoul, where he worked for a few years, Akihiro sent his haiku to the haiku column of the Nikkei, a Japanese newspaper and his haiku were often chosen for publication.

Before leaving Bangkok in 1985, Akihiro was invited to talk about haiku at Chulalongkorn University. He gave a two-hour lecture to the third and the fourth-year students who majored in Japanese language at the Faculty of Arts. Using fallen leaves in tinted-color in the campus, he explained the Japanese season, autumn. By ringing a small bell and listening to its lingering tone, he explained the effects of haiku.

### **Kawai Takashi and Kawai Mariko**

This married couple came to Thailand for Takashi's job with an international organization related to water irrigation. Takashi joined the haiku group in June, 1978 and Mariko joined in July, 1981 and they continued for 11 years before the couple finally left for Japan in 1992. They were the main members when the Menam Kukai had only few numbers in the early 1990s.

Takashi came to Bangkok to work for ESCAP (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific). He wrote that he worked for the Mekhong Committee on the projects to do with the Mekhong River. Through his job, Takashi had many chances to visit and stay in the Northeast and in Laos. His many haiku were therefore written about rural life. Once he said that he admired haiku that reflected peculiarities of Thailand. He is good at painting.

Sekiyō and Takashi, teacher and art student, also planned and carried out other meaningful cultural projects. They started the study-group called, "*Ajia o Kangaeru Kai*" (Asia Discussion Group) and held seminars and lectures about Thailand and its surrounding countries by inviting guest speakers. Most members of the group were rather elderly men; later the group discontinued for lack of leaders.

### **Nagao Shunrō**

Shunrō was born in Fukuoka Prefecture in Japan in 1942. In Japan, he became a member of the haiku group, Keyaki, which was presided over by the late Ikeuchi Takeshi. Takeshi was the nephew of Takahama Kyoshi, who was a famous haiku master and successor of Shiki and Hototogisu haiku group.

Shunrō came to Thailand with his wife, Ai, in 1995 and immediately joined the Menam Kukai in August. He stayed in Thailand for four years. Thanks to his long experience with haiku in Japan, he was a good advisor to other haiku members. He often advised about the proper use of verse in haiku, which should not be explained like narrating sentences, but should be smooth poetic expressions. He sometimes criticized haiku written without careful study of rhetoric. Shunrō was a teacher for beginners of the Menam Kukai. He also started to edit a monthly report of haiku in the form of a newsletter, and distributed it to other haiku members. Later, Tagutschi Yuhsaku succeeded his volunteer editing.

Shunrō's special interest was in the tropical flowers and trees, seen in Thailand. He wrote that he continued to study Thai language for the purpose of being able to read the names of Thai flowers written in Thai books. His effort was rewarded. He traveled with his wife to various tourist places in Bangkok and to the provinces. Whenever he went somewhere, he wrote haiku. During his four-year stay in Thailand, he edited four booklets of his own haiku collections to present to his friends both in Japan and Thailand. In his diary-like collections of haiku, he introduced Thailand with his beautiful photos.

### 2.2.2.3 Some Other Haiku Members

The third group of poets is made up of people who were involved in the Menam Kukai for a long or a short time as regular members. Considering these haiku poets, I have organized them according to two aspects. The first aspect is to consider their occupations, or their husbands' occupations through time, including the motives for coming to Thailand, which reflects the social surroundings that they belonged to in Thailand and in Japan. The second aspect considered here is how some haiku poets in the Menam Kukai developed their activities in the haiku world, influencing others in later years. **Keison, Mie and Yasuko** contributed by sharing haiku to others widely.

The late **Shiba Isso** (Giichi), and the late **Nishino Minoru** (Satoru) came to Thailand before the Second World War and worked in the South as a doctor and a dentist respectively. Along with other Japanese people at that time, Isso, Minoru, and **Nansei** experienced the wartime and camp life at Ban Buathong in Thailand. Even in the camp, **Sekiyō**, Isso and others sometimes held haiku gatherings.

In the late 1960's, many Japanese people came to Thailand; **Aoki Kiyoshi** and his wife, **Aoki Hisa** lived in Korat, Nakhorn Rachashima. Kiyoshi from JICA was invited as an expert of sericulture and taught at a cocoonery there. Late Kiyoshi was a world known professor in his field of studies of insects, although other members did not know the fact.

In the past, Thailand and Japan had a long relationship in sharing knowledge of silkworm raising. From 1902-1912, 18 or so experts of sericulture from Japan visited Thailand taught silkworm raising techniques. (Ishii and Yoshikawa, 1987: 148-149) Once a month, Kiyoshi and Hisa came from Korat to Bangkok to attend the monthly gatherings of the Menam Kukai. The newly paved Friendship Road, constructed by the United States Army, from Korat to Bangkok enabled the poets to travel and attend the meetings.

**Inoue Masatoshi** stopped attending gatherings when his old haiku friends died. He was an active member of the Menam Kukai for the first ten years, or so. His last haiku in March 1972 can be seen in the monthly Notebook. Later he left for Japan.

By 1970, the late **Hatajitsu Sagop**, **Watanabe Akijo** (Akemi), **Shigematsu Keison** (Kagetsugi), **Hanaoka Beniyo** (Yoriko), **Yamamoto Yoshiko** became members of the Kukai. Sagop was a Japanese woman who married a Thai doctor. She worked at Tomen, a Japanese trading company, and died on December 28, 1971. **Nishino Jun** (Junjiro) was once the president of Tomen in Thailand. He also became the president of the Japanese Association. First, he was sent to Thailand by the Foreign Ministry in Japan to learn Thai language. As an expert of Thailand, he achieved many important positions in Thailand and acted as a bridge between the two countries. His Japanese translation of the famous Thai novel, Khukam (Sunset at Chaophraya) by Thom'yantee, is known as Menamu no Zansho in Japan. He stopped attending the meetings, although he is still in Thailand.

Keison was born in April 12, 1919 in Kobe, Japan. After his graduation from Kobe University, he worked at a shipping company. Keison was the president of Mitsui-Osaka Shosen in Bangkok and he previously experienced life in India, too. He understood some similarities between Indian and Thai culture (Indian culture has had a great influence on Thai culture). He also recognized the importance of learning from countries where he lived.

Keison became the chief editor of the monthly magazine, Krungthep in 1971 of the Japanese Association. In this magazine, self-selected haiku by the Menam poets were introduced every month, since its first issue.

Keison left Bangkok with his wife, Keiko, in 1973, after four years and three months stay. When he returned to Japan, he wrote an article about haiku and the Menam Kukai of Thailand in the Japanese newspaper, Nihon Keizai Shinbun (the Nikkei), dated August 3, 1973, describing the importance of learning from the foreign country in which one lived. He stresses that haiku starts from observation and that it is necessary to watch what is happening in foreign countries. By understanding foreign people's heart and feelings, Keison believes it is possible to share common feelings with people living there.

Keison's strong relationship to the Menam Kukai continues until the present day. He suggested that the alumni of the Menam Kukai members establish a "Menam Kukai of Tokyo" in 1979 when haiku friend, Ugajin Masae died in a traffic accident in Tokyo in June. Those who joined the Tokyo Menam Kukai were the late Yamamoto Michiko, Ito Michiko, Taniyama Toshiko, Mizumo Mie, Takaku Fumi, Tsubokura Shizuko, Hanaoka Benijo, Yamamoto Yoshiko and others. They all once belonged to the Menam Kukai in Bangkok, having accompanied their husbands to Thailand to work for some periods and, after returning, lived in Tokyo and the vicinity at that time. Gogyū and Midori in Bangkok also sent their haiku to the Tokyo group. The first haiku meeting of Tokyo Menam Kukai started in July, 1979 in front of the picture of the late Masae, and continues until today, adding experienced, active members, such as long time university friends of Keison and those who have experienced foreign life in Bangkok, Manila and other places.

The late Yamamoto Michiko became an important member after 18 years in the Tokyo Menam Kukai, until her death in October 11, 1997. She lived in Bangkok with her children, while her husband was working at the Pranburi Sugar Co., (Mitsui Seito) in Pranburi district. It was necessary for the family to stay in Bangkok for the purpose of sending their children to the 'Japanese school'. (formally the school is called 'Thai-Japanese Association School) off Wireless Road.

Itoh Michiko and Taniyama Toshiko's husbands, as well as Higashi Shūson in the 1970s, were sent to Bangkok from the Telephone and Telegraph Organization in

Japan. Itoh. Michiko's husband came to assist in establishing a university. In Bangkok, Taniyama Toshiko sent her haiku to the haiku column of the Asahi Shinbun in Tokyo and a few times her haiku were selected and introduced by the selection member, Katō Shūson, a well-known haiku master.

Akijo, Benijo and Yoshiko came to Thailand as the spouses of employees working in Japanese firms in Thailand in the 1960's. Benijo's husband was an expert of Thai language, working at Tokyo Bank. As her husband repeatedly came to Thailand, she also came to Thailand often. But in later years she had to stay in Japan to send her three sons to higher education. She has been a continuous member of Tokyo Menam Kukai meetings. Yoshiko's (the writer's) husband, working at Kanematsu-Gosho, a trading company, repeatedly came to Thailand as a representative and stayed for a long time. Yoshiko joined the Menam Kukai in 1970 and attended haiku meetings both in Bangkok and Tokyo spending much time in Bangkok and getting to know most of the haiku members born in the past and present.

**Hoshina Nansei** (Chujiro) came to Thailand before the Second World War and stayed in Thailand for more than 40 years. He was a constant member of Menam Kukai for 13 years and continued to write significant haiku.

He lost his Japanese wife and lived alone, as his grown-up children lived in Japan. He owned his own company, dealing with car-parts on Sukhumvit Road. He became ill and died on November 4, 1987 in Japan.

**Machida Inpin** (Masanobu) joined the Menam Kukai gathering for the first time in 1979, after being in Thailand for more than 30 years. The ex-soldier Inpin is one of the 1,000 or so soldiers who deserted the Japanese Army at the end of the Second World War and preferred to stay in Thailand. Some of these soldiers were said to have taken on Thai identities, for fear being caught as deserters after the War. He married a Thai wife who was very kind when he was ill in his younger days. He loved the family very much; and often wrote affectionate haiku of her, the children and grandchildren who were not his real descendants. He regularly participated in the meetings until one or two months before his death in 1989.

**Kitatani Fumiko, Masuda Natsujo, and Hada Reika** (Reiko) joined the Kukai. Fumiko's husband worked at Kawasaki Kisen (K-Line) and she also stayed and traveled a lot in Thailand and in the United States. Fumiko once said that when she was



in Bangkok after the Second World War, she saw Sekiyō roaming around Wireless Road, distressed by his Japanese wife's death.

Natsujo and many other poets attended the Yokota Private Art School. Natsujo's husband worked at Central Glass Co. Many years later, her husband's job brought them back to Bangkok again. The farewell haiku gathering for Natsujo was held in 1989. Living in Yamaguchi Prefecture, Natsujo visited Thailand in 1999 and published her own book, titled The Landscapes in Thailand, with illustrations of watercolors and *waka* of her own. She also joined both haiku and *tanka* clubs in the Japanese Association during her stay in Bangkok. She seems to consider that *tanka* is more narrative than haiku, so she uses them to explain her drawings of the landscapes in Thailand.

Reika came from Shizuoka prefecture. Her husband was working at Teijin, a textile company, and they and their two sons lived in Brazil and later came to Thailand. She stopped joining the haiku gatherings during her second stay, focussing on her work as a writer. She continued to write novels and won some prizes for female writers.

Sekiyō also introduced Mizuno Mie to the haiku gatherings at Yokota Private Art School in Bangkok and started writing haiku. Her husband worked at the Japanese construction company, Nishmatsu Kensetsu. After she went back home, she joined Tokyo Menam Kukai. Later, Mie went with her husband to Manila and established 'Manila Kukai' (Manila Haiku Club) with four other members on January, 1989. This Haiku Club undertook very positive activities, thanks to Mie and her husband, Akira, as well as other members. The members publish annual collections of haiku and travel a lot not only in The Philippines but also to further foreign places to write haiku. Mie and another member Miyata Miki completed Manila Saijiki (the Collection of Seasonal Words in Manila), introducing haiku and season words in Manila, in 1996.