

論文

Climate Change is Changing Haiku

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気候変化は、変わる俳句である

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摘要

地球温暖化を受け、俳句における季語の役割を研究する。俳句詩における気候や地理および地質学の観点に基づいた季語が俳句にどのような影響を与えるのか。春夏秋冬を表す季語が変わりゆく気候にどのような効果があるのかを分析する。近年特にこの気候の変化によって、ユネスコが俳句を世界遺産として保護することを考える要因にもなりうるであろう。

ABSTRACT

This paper outlines how global warming has changed haiku season words by analyzing the effects of climate, geography and geology on the writing of haiku poetry. The specific problem under study is to measure the effects of global warming on the topics that haiku poets write about. The changes are significant enough that UNESCO could consider safeguarding haiku as an intangible world cultural heritage.

キーワード 気候変動, 俳句, ユネスコ, 無形文化遺産

Keywords: climate change; haiku; UNESCO; intangible cultural heritage

1. Introduction

This paper outlines how global warming has changed haiku season words by analyzing the effects of climate, geography and geology on the writing of haiku poetry. The changes are significant enough that UNESCO could consider safeguarding haiku as an intangible world cultural heritage.

The specific problem under study is to measure the effects of global warming on the topics that haiku poets write about. The research strategy follows an argumentative reasoning intended to persuade the reader that climate change is either changing or not changing the way haiku are composed.

1.1. Hypothesis

The central hypothesis in this paper is that climate change is diminishing the functionality of traditional haiku season word lists.

The experimental design is based on a longitudinal study of

international haiku composed during the past 20 years and differences in haiku composed since it was created. A longitudinal study relates to the problem by measuring the historical record, the canon of haiku, alongside measurements of global warming.

The theoretical implications of the study are that future generations can appreciate the environment in which haiku was written in the past and understand the way that haiku has been written in the past. Poetry is assumed to be a natural expression of human feeling, akin to birdsong, an idea presented in the preface to the Japanese collection of court poetry in the *Kokinshu* (circa 920).

1.2. Background

International haiku is a popular short form of poetry. It was traditionally written and read aloud in Japanese with three phrases of 5-7-5 *on* (syllables) including a *kigo* (seasonal

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reference) usually drawn from a *sajiki* (an extensive defined list of season words). Enjoyed by readers around the world today in 56 languages it might need safeguarding as an intangible heritage for future generations because global warming has dramatically changed environments and ecologies. This article explores this resolution and provides a practical way of enlisting support from international haiku communities to safeguard haiku as a UNESCO intangible cultural heritage for future generations.

A profound change in haiku literature has been the disruption in the use of the traditional almanac of writings about early Japanese haiku written the past four centuries. The revision of the canon of haiku translated into English has been freighted by the literary historian's necessary acts of sifting through and refiguring the archival record to produce a haiku that will seem worth examining to current global audiences. These haiku almanacs are field guides to the literature of nature with glossaries containing thousands of remarkable words used by haikuists (Blyth, 1952a, 1952b).

Higginson (1996, 141) claims "The *sajiki* should not be viewed as a fixed canon of acceptable season topics." Blyth (1949, 337) cautions that because haiku are listed in seasonal order, "we obscure completely both the development of haiku historically." In addition to differences between the lunar and solar calendars readers must be aware of the climactic and geographical changes that have taken place.

The seasonal almanac used by poets can be considered as an inventory or lexis of essential terms. UNESCO (2014) recognizes that inventories are integral to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage because they can raise awareness about intangible cultural heritage and its importance for individual and collective identities. The process of codifying intangible cultural heritage such as almanacs with representative haiku and making those inventories accessible to the public can also encourage creativity and self-respect in the communities and individuals where expressions and practices of intangible cultural heritage originate. Inventories can also provide a basis for formulating concrete plans to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage concerned.

An oceanographer participating in the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) summarized a 2,000 page manuscript by composing haiku to communicate the essences of this important information for

policymakers. Here is an example of his haiku that pithily summarize the recent history (1850 to 2013) section of the report. Johnson (2013) claims that haiku "does make you focus and distil things. Another nice thing about haiku is that it generally took me away from technical language."

Big, fast carbon surge:

Ice melts, oceans heat and rise.

Air warms by decades

Seas rise as they warm.

Rates quicken last century.

Melting ice joins in.

2. Purpose of this study

The more we know of nature images both culturally and scientifically, the fuller will be our understanding of the way people around the world experience nature. If we can accept the traditional Japanese and Chinese literary convention that plants, animals, and scenes have a true nature, we can better appreciate haiku poetry. A white pine tree that is shaped by winter winds and an autumn moon possess qualities that equate them to endurance and sadness. There are particular times of the year when the poet can fully express the true nature of these objects.

Perceptions of nature by poets are what create a community. When haiku dealing with similar phenomena can be grouped together through the use of season words, the phenomena and the poems themselves can be better understood and appreciated. The traditional haiku almanac (*sajiki*) can be considered an important tool to the haiku community. It is important to consider the environmental impact of global warming on this intangible culture. The purpose of this study is to ascertain whether climate change is disrupting the usefulness of an important reference for haikuists and if so, to suggest ways to protect the literary resource.

3. Method

This research compares haiku written during different time periods, as well as analyses haiku that reveal changes in temperature, ocean level, fauna and flora.

3.1. Research Theme

The main theme of this research paper is to analyze how

climate change has affected the way haiku is composed—a rather difficult subject to deal with. To prove the relativity of climate change to the way haiku is composed, two haiku by Japanese masters are cited incisively. It is hypothesized that there are authoritative experiences of nature. Great poets such as Matsuo Basho (1644–1694), Kobayashi Issa (1763–1827) or more recently Masaoka Shiki (1867–1902) are similar to sages who can embody the experience of deep insight. Barnhill claims (2004, p. 10) that “We can look to the experiences of great poets of the past as guides for what can and should be experienced when we see a bird, tree, or scene. These authoritative aesthetic experiences can be codified in literary conventions.”

3.2. Participants

Haiku composed by debutant and veteran poets and the comments made by scholars who have been contributing to the Asahi Haikuist Network during the past 20 years since April 1995 have been collected, selected and used in this study. These participants regularly refer to the readily accessible archived issues of the Asahi Haikuist Network that contain over 20,000 haiku and 1,000 pages of analysis and comments in the “From the notebook” section. Haiku written by Matsuo Basho and Kobayashi Issa have also been studied to provide a longer historical perspective of climate and geographical change.

4. Observations and Analyses

Haiku topics today are out of kilter from haiku penned in the past. This is what Blyth (1949, 337) means in warning that “there is the danger of reading into the verse meaning which the age had not attained to.”

4.1. Historical comparison of language change

When Matsuo Basho (Barnhill, 2004) visited Kisakata on the west coast of the Tohoku region in 1689, he saw a shoreline as beautiful as Matsushima Bay on the Pacific side and penned: *yuubare ya sakura ni suzumu nami no hana*.

*Clearing at evening—
cool under the cherry trees
blossoms on the waves*

Matsushima narrowly escaped being destroyed by the March 11, 2011, earthquake, and resulting tsunami and nuclear

meltdown that Kitajima hinted at in his haiku, but the lovely Kisakata Bay was completely filled in by one that hit in 1804. Kobayashi Issa revered it in 1811 with this haiku: *kisagata o naku-nakushi keru kirigirisu*.

*Crickets cry
as they lose it all—
Kisakata*

The landscape of *Kisakata* on the west coast of the Tohoku region (on the Sea of Japan) can be better appreciated when contrasted with works on the east coast.

It can be argued that the cause of these earthquakes was geothermal and not manmade, but recent geological evidence shows that man’s current pursuit of oil by fracking methods has induced earthquakes in the US. Fracking is a drilling process that injects millions of liters of water, sand and chemicals under high pressure into a well, cracking the rock to release natural gas and oil. The United States Geological Survey (2015) has confirmed that “wastewater fracking is causing earthquakes.”

Some parts of Japan continue to be lucky enough to have four distinct seasons, though in Akita, the spring and autumn seem to last shorter than before; winter and summer much longer and harsher. So long as there are four seasons in Japan, I am sure that haikuists would like to stick to season words. But as global warming is shortening spring, haikuists may have to dare to coin new seasonal references such as fracking defined above.

The study of language change is labeled “historical linguistics.” Traditionally, scholars studied just the origins of language and the overall differences in the sounds of the language through the ages. In the 20th century up to present time, however, most language changes have taken place at the level of syntactic change, the meaning of words and sociolinguistics. The haiku example below contains these elements. Coining haiku that includes phrases such as “meltdown” are achieved by combining an understanding of traditional Japanese thinking with an accepted modern English format. For many haikuists in Tohoku such as Yutaka Kitajima (McMurray, 2015, April 17) the words radiation leaks and meltdown (from nuclear meltdown) have been codified among spring season words.

*Eastern wind—
radiation leaks
in silence*

The haikuist was inspired by the fool in “King Lear” who said: “Winter’s not gone yet, if the wild geese fly that way” (Act 2, Scene 4). He warns that if the winds of change don’t blow and “History repeats itself. . .it follows that the same fatal mistakes will be repeated sooner or later.”

4.2. Analysis of haiku that reveal climate change influences

Haiku is a poem that relies on season words and haikuists closely observe seasonal changes. Writing and reading haiku requires a relationship with nature—its fauna, flora, weather, and environment—yet these are rapidly changing. As an example, take note of this haiku that was penned on April 3, 2015 Ignatius Fay hints that he’ll soon pick fresh strawberries in Sudbury, a mining town located in Canada at the North 46° line of latitude.

*Early thaw—
the last four jars of preserves
in the basement*

The following poem was penned by Devin Harrison on Good Friday in Canada. White lilies are a biblical flower associated with Easter Sunday, so this haiku could be read in the context of Christians commemorating the death and rebirth of Jesus Christ. White lilies are a commercial crop, forced to bloom with fertilizers and the protection of greenhouses on the most advantageous selling date.

*Left behind
the white oriental lilies
I gave you*

4.3. Analysis of haiku composed for Earth Day, celebrated April 22

Marta Chocilowska was baffled to see a yellow butterfly so early in Warsaw, suggesting as a reason for, “this unusual phenomenon! The climate changes, without a doubt.” The Polish haikuist misses the “clear transition between seasons, and now spring and summer are similar. Even 20–25 years

ago, there was a lot of snow, now snow stays only in the mountains. Perhaps this will soon be a normal phenomenon, instead of the four seasons we will have only two.”

*Valentine’s Day
among heart shaped balloons
first brimstone*

Brimstones are usually the first butterflies to be seen in spring. The color of butter, botanist Stefan Buczacki suggests in the “Fauna Britannica” that this species may have inspired the coining of the word butterfly. Instead of the four seasons we will have only two is a major worry for the 4 or 5 season (including New Year’s) haikuist. As for these weather and the seasonal changes, the Polish haikuist’s evidence is surprising: “. . .instead of the four seasons we will (soon) have only two.” means that half of our season words are going to be obsolete.

At the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in her hometown 2 years ago, world leaders pledged to “reduce greenhouse gas emissions to limit the global temperature increase to 2 degrees Celsius above current levels.” In the following haiku, Izeta Radetinac reminds us how forests have changed in her homeland of Novi Pazar, a cultural center of Bosniaks in Serbia.

*In the blackbird’s song
budding forest of my childhood
leafing through my dreams*

Pratima Balabhadrapathruni wrote a one-line haiku explaining that in India it “is the same kind of sweltering heat” in either spring or summer: *Tropical spring—a butterfly’s shadow crackles mid-flight.*

Urszula Wielanowska reports (McMurray, 2015, April 17) that she briefly enjoyed “an unexpected spring” for a few days before it began snowing again in Kielce, Poland. Charlie Smith suffered through a long, cold winter in Raleigh, North Carolina.

*It’s snowing
so gently—
first crocus
* * **

*Southern breeze
snow piles slowly shrink
first crocus*

Namiko Yamamoto says she got stuck in Tokyo. Spring came very late to Nagoya in 2015, but within one week temperatures soared to 30 degrees reports Isao Soematsu.

Trapped on
35th parallel North
spring snow
* * *
Spring in the mind
if not actually
in the air

Writing from Yemen, Heike Gewi is in a dream world without seasons.

*Drifting
in morning mist. . .
heaven's yellow voice*

Arendse Lund describes the new look of San Francisco, California. In Istanbul, Turkey it was extremely hot in May 2015. Dion Priatma (McMurray, 2015, June 5), reports there was no spring this year only “summer sun. And everybody gets colds and fevers because of the weather changing, the combination of both during the noon hours set people on fire, including me.”

*Terrain is seared and
blighted and withered or dead
trees droop listlessly.*

*The sun
and the spring fever
set me on fire*

The often quoted pledge to “reduce greenhouse gas emissions to limit the global temperature increase to 2° Celsius above current levels,” inspired Romano Zeraschi to note a peculiar side effect of this resolution in Riomaggiore, Italy.

*Iris
a more intense scent—
global warming*

In the following haiku 11-year-old Andrew Kochel sizes up the beech, asunaro and cedar trees in Aomori Prefecture. How will this 11-year-old boy get along 40 years from now? Hopefully he'll be back in Aomori and “wandering through the slender forest,” hearing a woodpecker tapping.

*Spring day
wandering through the
slender forest*

In the following example penned in 2015, Vincent O'Connor laments the loss of birdsong altogether from Cork, Ireland. He suggests removing the birdsong entries in the seasonal word lists and replacing them with manmade sounds. This is a sad forecast of a future without nature-oriented season words.

*Distant sirens
the nearest thing
to birdsong*

Maria Tirenescu heard a melodious warble for the first time while she was celebrating an all-but-forgotten Romanian holiday that was revived in 2015 after the end of her country's political isolation from Western influence.

*Blackbird sings
in the neighbor's cherry
dawn of Dragobete*

5. Results

Organizers of the annual Earth Day event on April 22 estimate that 1 billion people in 192 countries are helping halt the climate change that is causing global temperatures and sea levels to rise as well as extreme weather events. Climate change is altering the weather, the seasons and landscapes, and therefore the way haiku is composed. Ample examples of haiku demonstrating climate change has changed the timing of seasons have been presented in this paper.

Culture is not a legally defined entity for purposes of UNESCO recognition of intangible culture, yet it can be inferred from this research study that nature and culture are not separate. Writing and literature are human expressions. The tracks made by sparrows in the snow, or the hoof prints left in the dirt by a deer can be compared to human expressions via writing and literature.

“The risk of both climate change and Frankenstein crops is an ongoing worry for both humans and the little creatures of the world,” notes Alan Summers (McMurray, 2015). John Hamley penned his poem in Ontario.

*Corn moon
the jackdaw shifts
its iris
* * *
Frankenstein Creek
has drunk of
snowmelt*

5.1. Discussion

Since the early 1980’s we have become increasingly aware how climate change caused by increasing greenhouse gas levels will affect our lives. Asian countries and the Pacific islands have recently experienced extremely strong typhoons and cyclones. The Philippines in 2014 and Vanuatu earlier this year have suffered badly. In Japan the summers are getting hotter and the weather is becoming more unpredictable. Nowhere on Earth is immune to the impact of climate change. But people tend to take different attitudes about what can be done about climate change.

Control, harmony, and constraint are attitudes that people may harbor towards the environment (Brake, Walker, and Walker, 1995). Over 40 percent of Romanians, Cubans, Spaniards, Nigerians, French, Danish, Portuguese, Norwegians and Canadians believe it is worth trying to safeguard and control nature according to a survey by Trompenars and Hampden-Turner (1997). They believe that people can dominate their environment and change it to fit human needs. Living harmoniously with nature and the world around them is an accepted way of thinking by most Bahrainians, Egyptians, Kuwaitis, Japanese, Swedish, and Singaporeans. In other countries, including China, Malaysia, and the Philippines

people tend to believe they are constrained by the world around them and that fate, luck, and change all play significant roles in climate change.

5.2. General agreement that climate change affects intangible culture

There is a general consensus that it is primarily government action that is needed to reduce greenhouse gas levels but everyone of us has a part to play. “*Our generation has inherited an incredibly beautiful world from our parents and they from their parents. It is in our hands whether our children and their children inherit the same world*” (Branson, as cited in Malone, 2012, p. 11).

UNESCO is a major supporter of protecting intangible cultures from the effects of climate change. In a UNESCO (2014) report *Climate change, commercialization, tourism: challenges for intangible heritage*, representatives from 130 countries confirmed that the impact of climate change and its effects on ecosystems and the communities concerned need to be addressed. Intangible culture is the counterpart of culture which is tangible or touchable, whereas intangible culture includes poetry, song, music, drama, skills, cuisine, annual festivals, crafts, and the other parts of culture that can be recorded. For the haiku communities around the world, this implies that because of climate change and the elimination of certain season words and the coining of new words for the almanac, haiku poetry could be considered as requiring protection.

UNESCO’s Intergovernmental Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee recognizes communities as key players in the identifying and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.

The Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity is made up of those intangible heritage elements that help demonstrate the diversity of this heritage and raise awareness about its importance.

Since 2008, 314 elements have been listed. Neither Canada nor the US have any recognized intangible cultural heritage, yet Japan has successfully placed 22 elements on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Japan was the first country to introduce legislation to protect and promote the Noh mask as its intangible heritage. In 2008, *kabuki* and puppet theatre were added; from 2009 to 2011, dance, parades and fabric making techniques were

included; in 2012 religious performances were preserved; and in 2013 *washoku*, the New Year dietary culture was recognized and in 2014 hand-made paper craftsmanship was listed. In future years, Japanese forms of poetry such as *waka*, *tanka* and haiku could be proposed.

UNESCO realizes that to be kept alive, intangible cultural heritage must be relevant to its community, continuously recreated and transmitted from one generation to another. There is a risk that certain elements of intangible cultural heritage could die out or disappear without help, but safeguarding does not mean fixing or freezing intangible cultural heritage in some pure or traditional form. Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage is about the transferring of knowledge, skills and meaning. Transmission—or communicating heritage from generation to generation—is emphasized by UNESCO rather than the production of concrete manifestations such as 5-7-5 haiku that must contain words from a fixed list of season words (*sajiki*).

Educators also must guide and teach the next generation, contributing to making the world a better place. Newbolt, B. (2009) attempts to educate young readers on how to debate whether climate change really is a terrible problem, or decide if humans can adapt to it. Higginson's (1985) handbook on how to teach haiku has been widely quoted by educators and used as an English word lexis for haiku.

Quality and adaptable educational resources are easily accessible from NGOs such as Plan International, Save the Children, Oxfam, and WaterAid whilst the United Nations is playing a central role. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has developed resources in areas linked to climate change such as trafficking, water, and emergencies. 25 groundbreaking and innovative projects were exhibited at the 2014 Educational for Sustainable Development (ESD) Nagoya conference (unesco-schools.jp).

6. Conclusions

The ineluctable conclusion is that climate change has changed haiku. Yet composing haiku won't change that reality—nor are they likely to change the minds of those who don't believe the global warming phenomenon is real.

This study has therefore contributed to efforts to safeguard haiku for future generations by registering it on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list. This study has helped to

analyze the effects of global warming on the calendar of seasonal words used by haikuists to compose poetry.

When scientific information such as place and date, genus and species, or climate and temperature are recorded alongside haiku it will be easier for future generations to understand the changes in the complexity of the natural world and its relation to culture. Some haikuists report that their morning routines include checking not only the weather forecasts but also information about radiological dosage in the air, the diffusion of PM 2.5, yellow dust and cedar pollen. Haiku present a joyous meditation on words, climate, landscape and the relationship between them. Climate change and its concomitant global warming effects is changing the words with which haiku are written, but not necessarily its form. This shortest form of poetry composed in the world that gains its power from seasonal references is a World Treasure that requires safekeeping and nurturing for future generations.

Acknowledgements

This research paper was inspired by this haiku composed by climatologist and oceanographer, Greg Johnson (2013) for his daughter.

*Forty years from now
children will live in a world
shaped by our choices*

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