

28. The flourishing of rural literature

28.1 The village haiku poet Gyokusekikan Bairi

Composition of haiku (a Japanese poem of seventeen syllables in 5-7-5 syllabic form) reached its peak in the Tama region during the Tenmei era (1781-1788). Economic expansion in the Edo region during the Bunka, Bunsei and Tenpo eras (1804-1843) brought popularity and marked development to haiku poetry of the Tama area.

The representative haiku poet of Fussa in the Bunka, Bunsei and Tenpo eras was Gyokusekikan Bairi, a resident of Kumagawa Village. Bairi's real name was ISHIKAWA Kamesaburo (Yahachiro). He was the Ishikawa family's head and hereditary shogunate fiefdom head. Bairi's father Kojuro and grandfather Shozo were both headmen as well as amateur haiku composers. During the Horeki era (1751 - 1763),

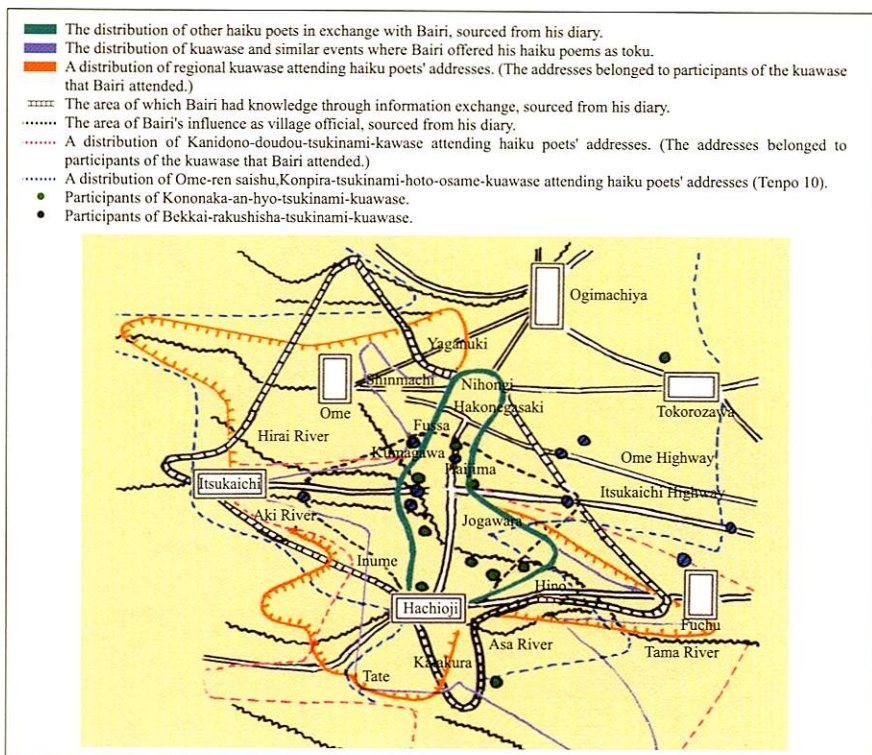


Fig.167 Bairi's exchange with haiku poets and others. Bairi had exchange with a range of people such as Buddhist priests, village officials, physicians and village-based merchants.

grandfather Shozo used the pen name Kyokucho. His son Kojuro used the pen names Gyokusekitei (Gyokusekiro) Ryoshu and Gyokusentei Kikaku during the Tenmei era.

Bairi keenly attended *toku* (haiku offerings) and *kuawase* (haiku competition) events, enjoying interchange with other haiku poets. Sometimes the *toku* were offered to haiku masters living in Edo, however *toku* were mainly performed for the *kuawase* events of surrounding villages. When Bairi was the family head during the Bunka, Bunsei and Tenpo eras the Ishikawa family engaged in small money finance, raised silkworms for sale and traded in textiles. In the process of expanding their businesses, local merchants sought to widen and deepen their interchange with various other groups. This must have influenced Bairi's haiku style.

28.2 Fukusensha Yuho's activities

TAMURA Kanjiro, pen name Yumu, of Fussa Village had exchange with Bairi. He was the most famous haiku poet of Fussa Village from

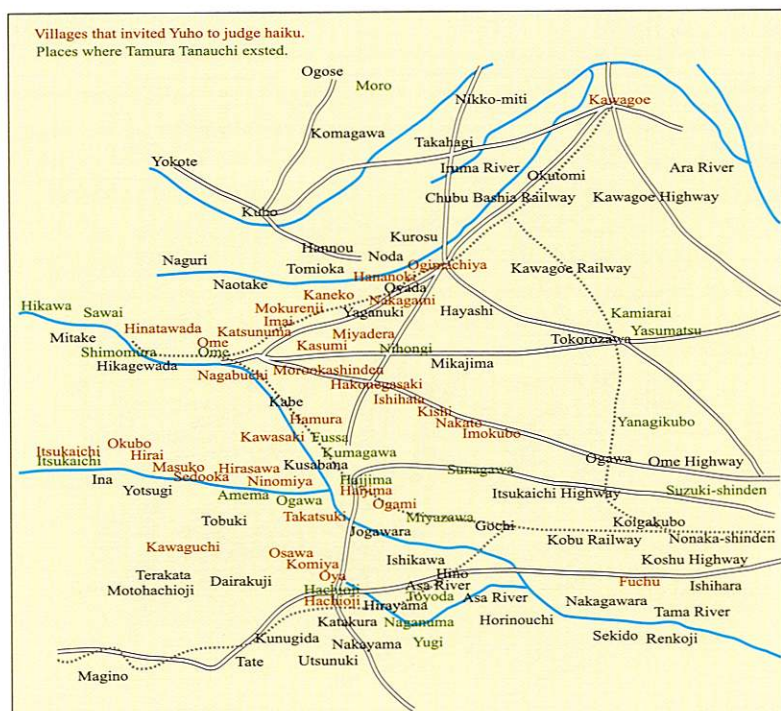


Fig.168 Distribution of Haiku events by Yuho's judgment. Villages that invited Yuho to judge haiku 1875-1898(Meiji 8 - 31).

the Bunka, Bunsei eras (1804 - 1829) to the last days of the shogunate regime. Yumu, a sake brewer of significant management ability, had strong influence in the region as village headman. At that time various types of literature and amusement such as *yoruri* (dramatic narrative chants), *eki* (fortune-telling), *go* (stone game), *koshaku* (storytelling), *ningyoshibai* (puppetry), etc. existed in villages and this cultural climate might have influenced haiku expansion.

Jubee, an adopted child to the Tamura family, took over and expanded the Kanjiro family business. Jubee wrote haiku under the pen name Fukusensha Yuho. Yuho's natural father, SASHIDA Shichiroemon, was Jogawara Village (Akishima City) headman and local trader, brokering in cocoons and raw silk. An important background for Yuho, as haiku poet, was his parental Sashida family's home life. His natural father was a village poet, Koyu, and his natural elder brother was also pen-named as Yushi. Yuho, having acquired haiku skills at his parental home, was also blessed with the fertile environment of his adopted family. In 1839 (Tenpo 10), his haiku poem was accepted for the Konpira-tsukinami-hoto-osame-kuawase held in Ome Village. From that point he gradually honed his skills. In 1858 (Ansei 5), his haiku poem was accepted for "Shoshin Haikai Hiyakunin-shu" with his image chosen by the Shigitatsuan of Oiso Village, for the official stamp of approval.

Yuho's name first appeared on the ranking list of haiku poets late in the Tokugawa shogunate and became popular nationwide during the Meiji Restoration. After the Meiji Restoration he transferred his official positions as village and family head to his son Hanjuro, devoting himself more to haiku poetry. His added devotion seems to have gained the further popularity. Evidence of his position as haiku master is the Basho haiku stone monument of Fussashinmeisha Shrine. MATSUO



Fig.169 Basho haiku poem stone monument (Fussashinmeisha Shrine, 1877 (Meiji10)). This monument was established in commemoration of Fukusensha Yuho's 60th birthday.

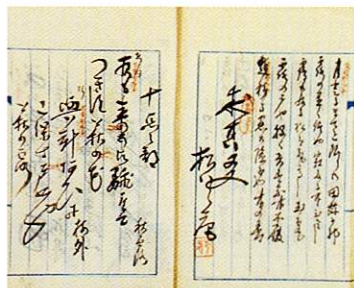


Fig.170 "Yusho Hiten Shuro Hoka Hokku Eisoshu". Kihoken Shuro, a silk thread broker of Yokohama, was a haiku friend of Yusho.

of the Basho's monument by Yuho indicated his status of haiku in the region. He must have greatly influenced haiku poets of neighboring villages as kuawase judge.

28.3 MORITA Yusho

MORITA Yusho, haiku poet of Fussa Village, was born in 1829 (Bunsei 12). His given name is thought to have been Tashiro, although the name Yujiro is also postulated. Yusho acted as a managing raw silk trader of the Yokohama shop known as *Shibaya*, opened 1859 (Ansei 6). After the Meiji Restoration, he stood down from Shibaya to deal more in dried bonito (he seemed diversified from raw silk and sea foods). At the same time he gained the title *Shogetsuan*, and became an active haiku poet of the Yokohama and Tama regions.

His first haiku poem collection, "Takamushiro-shu" published in 1870 (Meiji 3), brought him notice as a haiku poet. Later, in 1879 (Meiji 12), he gained the famous poet title *Matsubaraan* and published the "Asakawa-shu" collection to commemorate the event. Preface by HIRATSUKA Baika state that Yusho learned haiku under TAMURA Yuho of Fussa Village, and the title Matsubaraan was handed down from TAMURA Yuho and seven other local haiku poets.

Exchange between poets centering on Yusho, whose activity was grounded on his Matsubaraan title, expanded through the Tama region, particularly the Hachioji and to the Yokohama region. Furthermore he had contact with many popular haiku poets in Tokyo. He became the Tama region's representative living haiku poet until he died in 1885 (Meiji 18) aged 57.

His commemorative "Asakawa-shu" poem collection was published one year after his gaining Matsubaraan title in 1879 (Meiji 12). This Shigo Hiro (Name announcement) was the important event for the haiku masters. "Asakawa-shu" was widely published as appropriate to the master's title naming event.

ISHIZAKA Masataka, movement leader for civic rights and freedom in Kanagawa, wrote the preface. The preface summarized an article by HIRATSUKA Baika. Haiku master MITSUMORI Mikio and artist OKUHARA Seiko wrote the postscript. It is said that Yusho gained praise from varied members of academic and regional business worlds.

Fig.172 MORITA Yusho's haiku poem collection "Asakawa-shu".



Fig.171 Seated Statue of MORITA Yusho. Sculpted from a single piece of timber. Wearing a Hattoku kimono he holds a strip of haiku paper in his left hand and writing brush in his right.