

Sado Island

The Urth list — 5 messages, 3 voices, 10 Apr 2003

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3920>

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Nigel Price — 10 Apr 2003, 13:13

About six years ago, there was a discussion on the list of the poetry quoted in "The Death of Dr. Island" which was initiated by alga. As far as I could tell, no one was able to pin down the source of the story's closing haiku. Has there been any progress since then? Anyone know about these lines?

I gather that there was a massacre of allied POWs on Sado Island towards the end of WWII, but have no idea whether that is in the least bit relevant. The POWs were being used as forced labour in a mine on the island and were apparently killed when the camp guards deliberately dynamited the mine while the POWs were working in it. Could be - probably is - entirely irrelevant to TDoDI, but I thought that I'd mention it.

Nigel

Alice K. Turner — 11 Apr 2003, 01:07 · follows Nigel Price

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Six years--gosh, are we all six years older? Surely not! Post the list, Nigel, for the Web is six thousand times bigger than it was six years ago and I will do a search. (I've been singing "Abdul Abulbul Amir" all afternoon after getting the words and tune off Google--do not forget, my friends, that the sons of the prophet are brave men and bold.)
-alga

silk tree — 11 Apr 2003, 12:08 · follows Alice K. Turner

On Thursday, April 10, 2003, at 08:07 PM, Alice K. Turner wrote:
Six years--gosh, are we all six years older? Surely not! Post the =
list,

oops. I posted from the wrong address.

<http://www.urth.net/urth/archives/v0003/0197.shtml>

Seas are cold tonight...
Stretching over Sado island
Silent clouds of stars.

<http://www.worldhaikureview.org/pages/whc-japan15.shtml>

haiku about Tanabata (Star Festival) appears in the chapter of =20 Echigo=A0 Road in Basho's Oku no Hosomichi: The Narrow Road to Oku araumi ya Sado ni yokotau amanogawa (Basho)

Araumi ya: wild sea
Sado ni yokotau: stretching to Sado Isle
Amanogawa: the Milky Way (literally)

Could be a pastiche of Basho?

I will ask some poetry friends.

mimosa=

Alice K. Turner — 12 Apr 2003, 21:46 · follows silk tree

On Thursday, April 10, 2003, at 08:07 PM, Alice K. Turner wrote:
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Mimosa:

It is not a pastiche of Basho. It is the man himself (17th c.), and this is a very famous poem.
Here are a few more translations.

High over wild seas
surrounding Sado Island:
the river of heaven

the rough sea -
flowing toward Sado Isle
the River of Heaven

rough sea
the Milky Way is crossing over
to Sado

And here is a tribute to it by a modern poet named Hoshino Tsubaki

Sado Isle in view
day stretches to an end
on the vast sea

(English version by ST & DWB)

sado=Sado Island, north of Niigata; mie-te=has come in view; oo-unabara=a big ocean;
chijitsu=lengthening day, sunset getting later, a spring kigo; kana=kireji, exclamation (Tsubaki
is obviously conscious of Basho's haiku: arau mi ya Sado ni yokotau ama no kawa, or rough sea/
over Sado Island/ milky way)

As you gathered from the six-year-ago posts, the other fragments are from Milton's "Il Penseroso" and Tennyson's "Enoch Arden." I think the Basho poem and the Tsubaki tribute are both intended to evoke feelings of humility at our small place in the universe, which is certainly a theme in the Urth series.

-alga

-alga

silk tree — 13 Apr 2003, 03:07 · follows Alice K. Turner

On Saturday, April 12, 2003, at 04:46 PM, Alice K. Turner wrote:
<http://www.worldhaikureview.org/pages/whcJapan15.shtml>

It is not a pastiche of Basho. It is the man himself (17th c.), and
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a very famous poem. Here are a few more translations.

I have been wondering why Wolfe translated the wild sea as
cold sea? I have not read the short story, maybe it would be obvious if I had.

btw, that page where I found the Basho haiku explains about Sado island and the Star Festival:

"The Milky Way (according to an ancient legend associated with Star Festival) excites pity for the Altair-Vega couple. They can meet only once a year at the time of the Star Festival called Tanabata in East Asia. Sado recalls the sadness of noble people who were exiled there, such as the famous Noh-dancer Zeami or Saint Nichiren (Buddhist)."

I looked this up on google and found that the festival is on July 7th (so it's not in winter (was wondering if that could explain the cold.) but one interesting thing about the legend is that if it rains on that day, the couple will be prevented from meeting.

<http://www.watanabegumi.co.jp/jpculture/tanabata/tanabata.html>

the translations you found...I like this one the best.

rough sea
the Milky Way is crossing over
to Sado

I am going to check my the book of haiku I have translated by Hass to see if this Basho is in there. I would like to see what he has to say about it.

Anyway, in this poem since the sea is rough, perhaps it is raining. And since it set on Sado, it is even more sad due to the mortal people who are exiled there.

[...] As you gathered from the six-year-ago posts, the other fragments are from Milton's "Il Penseroso" and Tennyson's "Enoch Arden." I think the Basho poem and the Tsubaki tribute are both intended to evoke feelings of humility at our small place in the universe, which is certainly a theme in the Urth series.

mimosa