

Three Wakas at Evening in The Autumn with Reference to Tea Ceremony

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This paper is concerned with the three Wakas at evening in the autumn, which may be most popular and are compiled in *Shin-Kokinwakashu* [1]. Waka is a short literal sculpture based on pointillism, and filling enormous amount of contents regarding emotion and/or scenery. The first common characteristic point of these three Wakas is to be paused at the end of the third phrase, respectively. The second characteristic point is that the fifth phrase is common. They describe lonely scenery at the mountain, swamp, and sea shore, respectively, at evening in the autumn without using any subjective literal expression. It is, therefore, suggested that they become the symbol of simple tea ceremony, and provide the original idea to establish the standard rules. Japanese people have been continued to be influenced by the rules in their daily lives for a long time.

Waka [1] is a symbolic and 31 syllables poem, which is often compared with Haiku of 17 syllables poem [2]. Waka is literal sculpture by engraving and removing odd parts as much as possible from the original material, but has potential to fill enormous amount of contents regarding to emotion, atmosphere and/or scenery. However, each of poems has its own context and cultural specific, so that it is worth pointing out that Waka is essentially different from literal architecture, western poetry consisting of various components that are added up during composition. Waka may be considered as poem based on pointillism [3] similarly to Haiku and/or painting.

Waka has a simple structure consisting of the first half with 17 syllables, and the second half with 14 syllables, where the former may be considered as a Haiku [2], which is already an independent poem itself. Therefore, the first half describes the principal emotion and/or scenery, while the second half contributes to let the content clearer and evolve into another direction. In case of Waka, the first half and second half are combined and are composed by a single poet, and become an another independent poem.

The main purpose of this paper is to introduce the three Wakas at evening in the autumn with reference to tea ceremony, and to appreciate and discuss them by translating into English. This is because these three Waka have provided the profound impact to Japanese people in their way of thinking as well as behaviors for over thousand years.

This section introduces Waka rules [4] in brief. In Waka, *Kake-kotoba* (word with dual meanings), *Makura-kotoba* (prefix phrase), *Engo* (relevant word), *Jyo-kotoba* (irrelevant phrase(s) to draw out a particular word.), *Monona* (jargon), and/or *Mitate* (metaphor) appear occasionally, and Waka is independent of language. Waka is sometimes composed based on the old one, and such Waka is called '*Honka-dori*'. Poet can put a letter at each the top of 5 phrases in Waka so as to express a flower name, for example, with these 5 letters, and this technique is called '*Oriku*'.

It is necessary to review any Waka in order to know the way of thinking and behaviors together with the philosophy of ancient Japanese people, which form an unique culture in this globe and is quite valuable even for the people living in the present days: Symbolism and/or pointillism in poem are of significance, for human brain is trained by the composition under the strict limitation of syllables and the requirement to include enormous amount of information in it. It is interesting to point out here that the amount of information in Waka is usually much greater than that in Haiku, though number of syllables in Waka is greater than that in Haiku only by 14 syllables.

The common first characteristic point for the three Wakas at evening in the autumn is to be paused at the end of the third phrase, respectively. All of the Wakas are punctuated by the auxiliary verb for admiration, 'keri', which means the termination of the sentence at the end of the third phrase. Thus, they are clearly divided at the end of third phrase, viz. the first half and the second half. The second characteristic point is that the fifth phrase 'at evening in the autumn' is common: The last word 'yuugure' (evening) is noun, so that each of these Wakas is sharply punctuated at the end of fifth phrase. This is the reason why they are called as "three Wakas at evening in the autumn". This rhetorical technique is known as *Taigen-dome* (stopped by noun word).

Let us review the first Waka composed by Priest *Jyakuren*(1139~1202):

さびしさは その色としも なかりけり 真木立つ山の 秋の夕暮れ

sabishisawa sonoirotooshimo nakarikeri makitatsuyamano akinoyuugure

Lonely life myself ! Is color or atmosphere critical? I cannot judge.

Mountains with green trees at evening in the autumn.

There are weak pauses between the first phrase and the second phrase, and the second phrase and the third phrase, respectively, but there is a strong pause at the end of the third phrase. Thus, it can be viewed that this Waka flows smoothly from the beginning to the end of the third phrase. Then, after taking a clear pause there, this Waka restarts the flow smoothly and reaches at the end of the fifth phrase, though there is a weak pause between the fourth phrase and the fifth phrase. In fact, *Jyakuren* feels loneliness, and cannot judge which of the material color or atmosphere surrounding him is critical to depress his feeling. However, having nothing to do with his lonely feeling, this Waka describe a calm scene that mountains are covered with cedar and cypress having green leaves, and the sun sets in the horizontal line. Therefore, it is realized that time is at evening, and the season is the autumn.

Secondly, let us review the second Waka composed by Priest *Saigyō* (1118~1192).

心なき 身にもあわれは しられけり しぎ立つ沢の 秋の夕暮れ

kokoronaki minimoawarewa shirarekeri shigitatsusawano akinoyuugure

Regretting merciless, I am impressed to the delicacy, being realized indeed.

Snipes are taking off swamp at evening in the autumn.

This Waka is also punctuated clearly at the end of the third phrase, so it is divided at this point from the first half to the second half. In the first half, regretting his merciless in mind to others deeply, he is delighted to be able to respond to such a faint delicacy when a group of snipes are just taking off the desolate swamp at evening soon after the sunset in the autumn. The author could imagine and hear voices of snipes crying 'cha-, cha-', as reverberations at evening in the autumn.

Thirdly, let us review the third Waka composed by *Fujiwara Teika* (1162~1241).

見わたせば 花ももみじも なかりけり 浦のとま屋の 秋の夕暮れ

miwataseba hanamomomijimo nakarikeri uranotomayano akinoyuugure

Being perspective around, there is no cherry and maple, I am realized.

Thatched house on sea shore at evening in the autumn.

This poem describes lonely scenery at the sea shore in the autumn without using any subjective literal expression, so that this poem is often considered to be the symbol of simple Japanese tea ceremony originated in *Sen no Rikyu*(1522~91). Refer to Appendix for the details.



Sen no Rikyu(1522~91)

Painted by Hasegawa Tohaku(1539~1610)

Again, at the end of the third phrase, this poem is punctuated clearly. In fact, the first half is the 'Jo-kotoba' to draw the word, 'ura'(shore) at the top of the fourth phrase.

It is believed that the above three Wakas at evening in the autumn have provided *Rikyu* the original idea to

establish standard rules of the Japanese tea ceremony, which shares with these Wakas in atmosphere, scene, utensils, harmony, purity, tranquility, respect to others or materials used. There is no question that Waka gives a great influence to the Japanese tea ceremony, but this is no more than an example. Waka has made a critical influence to the numerous Japanese people regarding to their philosophy of life, way of thinking, utensils, painting, flower arrangement, calligraphy, handcraft, novel, poem, sculpture, house design, and many others. It is often said that Japanese people have been also influenced by the rules of tea ceremony in daily life for a long time.

The fourth Waka at evening in the autumn is presented as a trial, and to enhance the discussion with readers and their critical comments on it:

しらやまに 真白き雪も なかりけり 真木立つ峰の 秋の夕暮れ

shirayamani mashirokiyukimo nakarikeri makitatsumineno akinoyuugure

White mountain ! Pure white snow has already gone.

Ridges with green trees at evening in the autumn.

It is hoped that someone find interest in this Waka, which is 'Honkadori' composed based on the three Wakas at evening in the autumn.

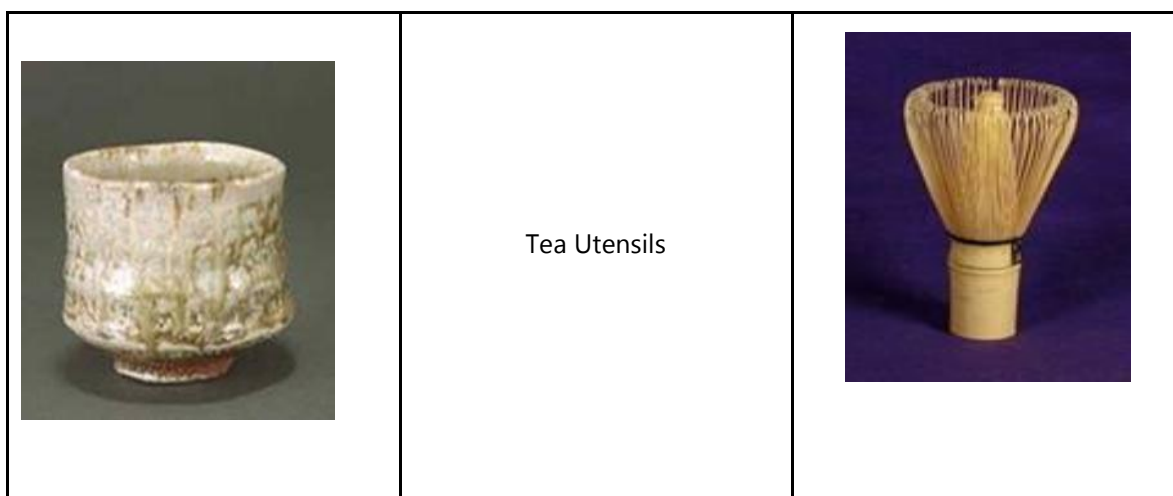
It is concluded that Waka is a short literal sculpture based on pointillism, and filling enormous amount of contents regarding emotion and/or scenery. The two characteristic points of the three Wakas are the clear pause at the end of the third phrase, and the common fifth phrase. They describe lonely scenery at the mountain, swamp, and sea shore, respectively, at the evening in the autumn without using any subjective literal expression. It is, therefore, suggested that they become the symbol of simple tea ceremony, and provide the original idea to establish the standard rules: At first glance, though the three Wakas look as if there is no relation to tea ceremony, but the four fundamental qualities, viz. harmony, respect, purity and tranquility are common. In fact, the latter is strongly influenced by the former. History of Waka dates back to the ancient time well over thousand years, and Waka maintains the vital soul among Japanese people, many of whom are composing it every day. Moreover, similarly to Haiku, Waka possesses some relative significance to other poems, for number of syllables to be used is limited to be small, which is believed to train and polish poet's brain. Japanese people are continued to be influenced by the rules of tea ceremony in their daily lives for a long time.

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Chawan (Tea Cup) *Chasen*(Tea Stirrer)

Appendix: *Sen no Rikyu*

Rikyu is born at the merchant city of Sakai near Osaka. He begins his study of the tea ceremony at an early age. He initially learns traditional style and later contemporary style, conducted in a small thatched tea house. The temples have a long, deep relation with tea and *Rikyu* begins his *Zen* study there. By the time he reaches at the age of 58, he is serving as tea master to *Oda Nobunaga* (1534~ 82), a leading *Samurai* in Japan. After *Nobunaga's* assassination, he becomes the tea master for *Toyotomi Hideyoshi*(1537~98), *Nobunaga's* successor.

When *Hideyoshi* is hosted a tea at the Imperial Palace in 1585, *Rikyu* receives the Buddhist rank of *Koji* from the Emperor *Ogimachi* (1517~93). This is an honorary title for a lay person who has lived a pious faithful Buddhist, and from that time he is known as *Sen no Rikyu Koji*. This establishes his preeminence among the leading Japanese tea practitioners.

According to *Rikyu*, there are four fundamental qualities that should be exemplified in the tea ceremony:

- Harmony
- Respect

- Purity
- Tranquility

These are the same qualities that practitioners of the tea ceremony endeavor to integrate into their daily lives.

Many of the prescribed behaviors used in contemporary Japanese tea ceremony are introduced by *Rikyu*. Some of his contributions include:

- A tea house that can accommodate five persons,
- A separate small room where tea utensils are washed,
- Two entrances, one for the host and one for the guests, and
- a doorway low enough to require the guests to bend down to enter, humbling themselves in preparation for the tea ceremony

Although *Rikyu's* tea ceremony is closely associated with *Zen* Buddhism, three of *Rikyu's* seven disciples are Christians.

Rikyu's sense of esthetics influences design as well. For example, he popularizes the use of smaller stone lanterns as garden ornamentations. He also designs several new utensils for serving tea. Rather than basing on the formal Chinese designs that are previously used, *Rikyu's* designs are wonders of simplicity and typically contain asymmetrical irregularities which give them a natural quality and atmosphere.

Rikyu's relationship with *Hideyoshi* is a quite complex and entangled one, and eventually causes his death. *Rikyu* is more than *Hideyoshi's* tea master; he is often an advisor on other matters as well. However, *Rikyu* maintains his independence and so the relationship is occasionally serious. When *Rikyu* refuses *Hideyoshi's* request to take *Rikyu's* daughter as a concubine, the relationship never recovers again. Finally, *Hideyoshi* orders *Rikyu* to commit ritual suicide. While the reason is not certain, it is said that *Hideyoshi* is infuriated when he enters the gate of *Daitoku-ji* temple and sees that he is walking under a statue of *Rikyu*. After *Rikyu's* death, *Hideyoshi* is said to have repented, regretting the loss of such a great person.