

Maiku in the luggage. Maiku in the luggage. Maiku in the luggage. Maiku in the luggage.

Translated from the Hungarian by Jon Tarnoc

*“There's haiku in all luggage.
What it needs is unpacking.”*

G. T.

“The true traveller has no luggage.”
Huang-po

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Foreword to Haiku in the Luggage · Foreword to Haiku in the Luggage

Being Human

Miller Williams gives in *Patterns of Poetry, An Encyclopedia of Forms*¹ a precise description of the haiku: *An unrhymed syllabic poem, derived from Japanese verse. Lines 1 and 3 have five syllables; line 2 has seven.*

sssss x

sssssss x

sssss x

Traditionally, there is the mention of a season of the year somewhere in the haiku, as a means of establishing the poem's tone, though this may be only the slightest suggestion.

The author then cites a haiku of his choosing, by Clement Long. It goes

*Uncovered, you sleep.
Cars pass the house and I watch
Lights on the ceiling.*

¹ Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge and London, 1986. Chapter 3. *Traditional Poems of Set Length*. p. 70.

So much about the form, of which we couldn't say more, except that alterations in modern haiku, based on the traditional concept, are less strict about the set number of syllables involved, because it doesn't really matter whether we write a haiku in 17 or 15 syllables (especially in Western languages). There are pieces that consist of 4 lines, for example by Leonard Cohen², and we find a free choice of syllables in the poems.

Still, certain poems are called haiku. There's a particular mode and state of mind in which a haiku is born. When does a short poem of more or less 3 lines become a haiku? Many poets and theorists have asked this question. We do not possess a straight answer, but I would like to venture into the unknown by way of Gábor Terebess's haiku poems, recently published in the original Hungarian³, also available in English translation on the Internet.⁴

Haiku in the Luggage is made up of four parts. The first is *France, 1965-1969*, (this one ends with the *Haibun-Diary*), then comes *Japan, 1967*, after that *Australia, 1969-1970*, and the book closes with *Bali, 2004*.

The reader can immediately recognize the cosmopolitan character of the book, even more so when the reading begins. But what is traveling and what does it represent if we look at it on a higher level?

There's an essay, *Kierkegaard in Sicily*⁵, written by a unique personality in Hungarian literature, Béla Hamvas.

² See: www.terebess.hu/english/haiku/haiku.html

³ *Haiku a poggyászbán*, artORIENT, Budapest, 2005.

⁴ See: note 2; Gábor Terebess, *Haiku in the Luggage*, English translation by Jon Tarnoc.

He writes: *While at home, you get to know the world, but on the road, yourself; because at home the focus of attention is your own person, but while traveling, the world, and where you look, always remains unknown to you. One should travel as fire spreads, moving in all directions from the center, and like fire, consuming everything behind, – so when the journey's over, there should remain nothing else but ashes and ruins. Instead of all this the human is consumed, and the world flourishes.*

Actually, what happens in Gábor Terebess's haiku is a similar experience, a kind of *Magical Mystery Tour*, leading from a zen monastery through revolutionary Paris on to the land of Australia, where there's hardly any escape from the individualism of Western Society. After a long silence we arrive in Bali, this time more like tourists, but suddenly everything gets saturated with wisdom from the endless rain.

One after the other, we find poems that transcend the mundane, or rather the mundane is transformed in the process of the metamorphosis of self. The author's journey begins in the hidden, and it never becomes all so important to find out about particulars. Only the single moment counts, in which we see many things simultaneously, but with an open door to unity of vision.

Terebess's mode of writing is conversational, he likes to use slogans, and we see different meanings unfolding, loosening our grip on fixed allusions to names, as in this haiku:

⁵ *In Spirit and Existence*, Pannonia Books, 1988. Pécs, Hungary

*3M's – oh come on!
Marx, Mao and Marcuse,
teach one another.*

Names of places and people are almost as important in the earliest poems as the mentioning of seasons in the traditional haiku. It seems that the world doesn't yield itself easily to the traveller anymore, we are not in touch with the center either in the universe or in ourselves. So we have to start outside, explore what the world has to offer, then move on to another plane, to the individual arriving in the focal point of his questions.

The outward direction reverses in the Japanese pieces. The soul has found its master and mate. We're not in the world of illusion any longer, this is hardcore reality:

*Your spiritual
master was the master of
masters. Didn't speak.*

Writing a haiku is the rectification of the moment. The desire of *mending the seams of creation* comes from deep understanding of oneself. The poet, perhaps in one of his *satori* experiences, becomes aware of his not being fully alive in the world, as if there had been invisible barriers between him and reality.

According to the teachings of G. I. Gurdjieff⁶ Man is a machine, a toy of external influences from the universe.

⁶ Quoted *In Search of the Miraculous* by P. D. Ouspensky, (1947); Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc. New York, 1949, pp. 14-15.

He *is not*, because he doesn't know himself, he's not what he can and should be. He can decide nothing about the future, because he's one person today, another tomorrow. Only in total awakening does he become *human*. This level is attained by remembering oneself. In a state of higher consciousness Man is enabled to choose the influence he wants to live under.

We find the same concept in Terebess's haiku poems. Each piece is a story, a narration of moments caught in the process of things happening, time. The author remembers and re-lives his experiences, puts them into a perfectly condensed narrative. Then suddenly one feels a part of the writing of some haiku-novel which has as many versions as the number of its readers.

D. H. Lawrence writes the following about the novel⁷: *Turn truly, honourably to the novel, and see wherein you are man alive . . . at its best the novel, and the novel supremely, can help you. It can help you not to be a dead man in life.* If we take into consideration the active, creative imagination of the recipient, we can see how every work of serious art heralds resurrection. The writer is alive in the process of creating, the reader in the act of reading.

The third part of the book is about the Australian stay of the author in 1969-70. Immigration must have been a queer choice in the eyes of his friends. But a diary fragment interspersed with poems, a *haibun* from the time of leaving France for Australia, is a witness of the author's

⁷ Quoted in *Lawrence* by Frank Kermode, Fontana/Collins; 1973, Great Britain, p. 27.

state of mind before departure, proving the clarity of his spiritual aim. For the poet the question is not *to be or not to be*, but *how to be*. One answer is liberation:

*Break out from all bonds
before you become
torn apart by them.*

Where one lives is not important anymore. It could be Australia, Europe, Africa, America, or Asia. What we call *condition humane* holds true everywhere on our planet, therefore it causes no difficulty to finally move back home. The poems don't tell us what happened between 1970 and 2004. Nearly thirty-five years pass before we see the author on the road again, as a tourist in Bali. It's constantly raining there, but the inner ears are open to the sounds of the animal world. Many pieces from this last cycle are about birds, dogs or frogs. Where people are mentioned they seem to be in the background, they're observed while doing rituals, but no familiar face emerges from the crowd. Still, there's a sense of profound contentment in the acceptance of distance, because it has led to the unification of character. We need perspective to put our lives' puzzle together.

Redemption poetry, like Gábor Terebess's *Haiku in the Luggage*, grows on us. The poet tells us through his experience to take part in the mundane, and we learn from him how to integrate and elevate it. The sacred can be found in the details, in any movement we make, but most of all it's a state of mind:

*Running in the rain
to the swimming-pool.
Saved!*

The last word, saved, can be associated with many images. But the greatest gift of this poem and of the whole book is the joy of being *human* transmitted to us. The haiku is a miracle. We need only to listen.

Jon Tarnoc
29 September 2005
Budapest, Hungary

France (1965-1969) · France (1965-1969) · France (1965-1969) ·

France • France • France • France • France • France • France

(Ezra Pound in memoriam)

**The Paris Metro.
You sit down among withered
faces on black bough.**

e • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • Fra

3

3M's — oh come on!
Marx, Mao, Marcuse,
teach one another!

24

4

Wrapped in teargas-cloud:
the summit of the Sorbonne.
You might as well cry.

25

e • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • Fra

5

Check out the papers –
they keep on lying here too,
just make yourself home.

6

An actor switched sides
on stage at the Odéon:
Jean-Louis Barrault.

Jean-Louis Barrault, the director of Odéon, fondly embraced the
revolters and opened the doors of his theater to them.

26

27

e • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • Fra

7

How many smoky
nights were you staying awake,
talking on till dawn?

28

8

Total sleeplessness –
with your morning coffee,
scare-news, *croissant*.

29

e • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • Fra

11

The word broken inside –
underneath Mirabeau-bridge
the Seine's flow has stopped.

12

The smell of teargas,
that taste of rotten apples –
unforgettable.

32

33

e • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France*

13

Boulevard Saint-Michel,
knocked over sycamores — you
weren't flabbergasted.

14

Turned the night into
the day, all for the sake of
ideologies . . .

34

35

e • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • Fra

15

Street at night again:
the film of your memories
remained black and white.

16

What happened by day?
You'll have to search in other
people's memories.

36

37

e • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France* • *France*

17

**Spring and violence
in public places ended –
a general strike.**

**Considerable
lack of soup. Not even a
vegetable dish! Ha!**

38

39

e • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • Fra

Arabic donut.
The Bald Soprano is played
right across the street.

Ionesco's play, *The Bald Soprano*, is continually performed in a small Parisian theater (Théâtre de la Huchette, 23, rue de la Huchette) since 1957.

No toilet-seat in
the restroom — *just as before*:
you crouch like A. J.

The reference is to Attila József (1905-1937), Hungarian poet, who also lived in Paris for awhile.

e • *France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France*

**Two floors of chance
with Mireille in the lift . . .
Arrived. Over.**

**Corsican girl:
ice-wet handshake,
scorching eyes.**

e • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • Fra

Her problem bores me
shitless, but the girl herself –
how uniquely odd!

The look in your eyes
like that of a startled bird's,
though your mouth aspires.

e • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • France • Fra

**Your overheated
book lies open in the sun —
you should cover it.**

**A cliché opened
with another cliché's key —
the gate of secrets.**

Haibun (1969, 2005) · Haibun (1969, 2005) · Haibun (1969, 2005) · H

I Set Off from the City of Paris

Haibun-diary, 21 November – 3 December 1969

This piece of writing, the story of my immigration to Australia, could have become my “Long Voyage to Down Under” in place of Bashô’s *Narrow Road to the Deep North*, but I didn’t get any further than the day of my departure, for I felt bored by writing a journal. I wouldn’t be able to write a *haibun* even today, only haiku on the theme of traveling... All of a sudden I realized there’s a potential *haibun*-diary in this fragment written 35 years ago, I would only have to sprinkle it with haiku – afterwards. It’s not bad as entertainment either: a diary from the time I was 25 and writing its haiku-commentary at the age of 60.¹

21 November (*Friday*)

Don't be concerned about struggle. Make no plans for what you would do or what others would do against you. Your energy should be

¹ Haibun: Even one sentence of prose with a haiku, or a long travel journal interspersed with a number of haiku, may be accepted as *haibun*; and of course, the same goes for everything between the two extremes.

waiting in your solar plexus, don't paralyze your muscles and your brain by wedging your power into them in advance. So you can break out with full power in the right direction and at the right time, aiming at the real (not imagined) target with the greatest spontaneity.

It's unnecessary to daydream about Australia. What's to be done and how it will be dictated by the circumstances there and then.

Australia!
Just go ahead! Your errors
will give you plenty.

Dusty as Paris
with red dust instead of grey –
you don't know it yet.

22 November (*Saturday*)

After having sent over 20 packages of books, today I posted my typewriter and Japanese monk-robes to Pest. What a relief! We only realize

while traveling how many useless things we collected as indispensable.

The farewell lunches that began a few days ago, which start with an *apéritif* and finish with a *digestif*, remind me of the necessity of “frugal” meals. I have a constantly upset stomach and I'm quite sure I'd drop dead shortly if I had to continue these indulgent stuffings. (No question, the French know how to enjoy food – that's why they all suffer from gastric disorder.)

Don't be decadent!
The Saturday-market is
over – ripe the brie.

Be nostalgic in
Australia, having
Danish canned-brie.

23 November (*Sunday*)

After lunch we have a nearly three-hour-talk with Brigitte and Marie-Thérèse. (Their uncle, the *abbé*, had to leave earlier.) The more I explain,

the clearer it becomes how incomprehensible it is to them what I'm searching for. (My desire diminishes for sharing my thoughts with anyone.) The conversation started, of course, with the idea of me marrying Marie-Thérèse (she might make a good wife, but me, a bad husband),

**You'd happily say
yes today – you aren't wise
and young anymore.**

but finally we were talking about what Christ might have meant by the blessedness of the “poor in spirit”. My explanation has little to do with Christianity. Our luxurious images and thoughts alienate us from the world, they won't let us be open to people and things in their own reality, we won't be able to identify with them – although it would be the only possible “heaven” in an eternal now.

**Litany.
Old ladies teach you
to pray in French.**

**Cool church.
Left your tormented
thoughts there.**

(pauvres pécheurs)

**The hour of our death,
may the devil take it, is
full of divine grace.**

25 November (Tuesday)

I had lunch with Mireille today, in the Chinese restaurant, of course. After getting rather tipsy, she forced a farewell necking (should her husband, who's always dying of jealousy, see it!) But instead of getting horny, suddenly her face went pale and she couldn't hold back her trembling. She might think I'm “superior” (what an idiocy), and in the crucial moment there's more fear in her than passion. (Or because she doesn't understand more.)

How can her eyes be so fearful, like startled birds, while her mouth sucks you in with such

celestial power, pulling you in and surrounding you? She should know that when my hands touch her hip – it's unbearable bliss for me.

**Like Krapp, you'd
happily rewind the tape
right here.²**

I'm leaving for Australia in one week.

28 November (*Friday*)

I haven't written anything for a few days. When my time's full of activities and experiences, nothing seems more absurd than writing about them. Conceited idleness makes the writer, most probably.

Today was my last day at the office. Being set free from prison could resemble the feeling. I'm shocked how many people love me so much – and what joy it is to leave them all.

² As if *Krapp's Last Tape* by Beckett had happened to me.

**Break out from all bonds
before you become
torn apart by them.**

29 November (*Saturday*)

Maybe the truth, our personally attainable truth, is not more than gathering all our strength and forcing ourselves to the uttermost limit of our sincerity again and again.

I watch with the greatest suspicion when anxiety tries to take hold of me, though I've seen no sign of it so far. On the contrary. Occasionally, when I'm alone, I start laughing for no reason; and I have no regrets about forgetting things from my luggage, I would rather leave all my possessions out of it.

**Torn lizard's tail in
your hand. But tails don't
grow into lizards.**

30 November (*Sunday*)

For a year and a half I haven't seen a single Hungarian, but now that I'm about to leave, I have the pleasure of acquaintance again. Károly, my sister's boss, and I saw each other the second time this week. (We're on familiar terms with each other already.) At first I feel like a stutterer while speaking Hungarian, but soon I start warming up and no one could shut my mouth, not even by force. I'm speaking about things he's interested in, so he's all ears. His being overcome by emotion when saying good-by makes me feel slightly embarrassed. (If there's anything I feel, it is the shame of feeling nothing.)

There's no true aloneness in the solitary life, especially if we constantly daydream about possible companions. True aloneness must be found in human relationships in which neither interest nor curiosity play part.

(thirty years later)

**Infected dog-tick
drilled its head into your flesh –
somebody loves you.**

Having lunch with the Marquets, this could be the last home-made French meal in my life. The old man offers to give me a ride to Saint-Maurice (Val-de-Marne), for the books sent by Dezső. My host bought his VW yesterday and obviously wants to show off; the car hasn't run more than 3 miles by now.

I'm calling Judit Tóth, the poet, she's not at home to me. That's why I know she is...

Iron-strapped hardwood door in the stone wall surrounding the yard. Closed shutters on every window. A small, soft, boneless woman. When she puts her flabby hand in my palm, I feel as if I held lukewarm butter in my hand. She offers me a chair to sit in, it's got a dirty, white cushion, the furniture in the room cheap and ragged. The greyness of dusk spreading and light coming in through the open kitchen door from a lightbulb. She begins to take out

the books and is sorry about not having sent them yet. I notice her eyes for the first time, they have a dark and hesitating glow of dissatisfaction. Suddenly everything falls into place, her eyes tell me why she needs to be a poet and why she lives in an unfriendly French suburb. She doesn't come outside to see me off, it's cold, she tells me to shut the door tightly, so I do.

**You'll never find out
what happened over the wall.
You're giving a boost.**

1 December (*Monday*)

Wild running around. Shopping, cleaning, packing. At last I get to the train station, one hour before departure. I'm cursing the books for making my luggage so heavy. I'm dragging my things.

Chilling, cold night. Two Portuguese, a Spaniard, and a Frenchman are with me in the compartment. For the Portuguese guys, it's a sure card to go to Australia, to a relative of theirs living near Melbourne. Both are well dressed and

up in the dough (they worked in nightclubs for two years, made a lot of money from the tipping). They're off for dinner shortly, in the awfully expensive restaurant car. The Spanish fellow knows only a few words of French, he's unwrapping his *chorizo* sandwich with his huge, rough hands, and smiles between every bite.

The Frenchman's whole family came to the station. His face ghostly pale, the cigarette quivering between his fingers, he takes a sip from his brandy bottle every now and then, offers it to each of us. I'm the first to lie down on the "couchette", but I have a hard time falling asleep, I see feverish, erotic dreams – on account of the train jolting, perhaps. A complete carriage is reserved for us. Ninety percent of our group consists of young males, if that's the rate of women in Australia, we're in big trouble.

**There's always a chance:
flatten in the asphalt if
a steamroller comes.**

2 December (*Tuesday*)

We reach Genoa at seven in the morning. Paperwork, waiting. The Mediterranean sun comes up, it's getting warm, almost like summer. At ten o'clock, finally I'm allowed to see the town with my new friends. The sidestreets are so narrow that it's nearly impossible to walk on them, except sideways. Every second moment someone wants to sell me something, smuggled goods, especially Swiss watches, American cigarettes, or condoms. It's quite obvious why they're needed here in the harbour district. We start bargaining with an older blondie in a doorway, just for the fun of it. She wouldn't sell herself cheaper than 3,000 liras. A little farther down there's a breathtakingly beautiful, plump, black-haired girl. Also 3,000. It seems there are set prices here (about half or a third of the Parisian price).

**Squeaking bed -
Enjoys more loudly
than its guests.**

We're having lunch in a noisy, little restaurant. We eat pepper-salad, octopus, and drink Italian wine. In Paris I'd get mad with this *joie de vivre* in an Italian restaurant, but here I appreciate it. Everyone's laid back, happy, loud. The natural background does it, or the wine, the Sun? Soon I am also shouting and laughing my face off.

Departure is right at sunset. From the uppermost bridge, I'm looking at the city lights being turned on and disappearing in the distance. By the time we're out on the open sea, I remain alone up there. The wind getting colder and sharper - reminding me it's December. Returning seagulls float away in the void; the boat softly wheezing.

**Seagulls know
where home is, ahead
or behind.**

The boat (*Marconi*, built in 1961, in its sixth consecutive year going to Australia, belongs to the Lloyd Triestino Line) is a snow white

labyrinth of ten decks – I never find my way in it. (The Greek cargo ship on which I came back from Japan could fit into this liner four times.) Cinema, swimming pool, ballroom with orchestra, whatever you imagine. They say 1,600 passengers are on board – almost a thousand of them from Yugoslavia.

**Our oceanliner
fared well: was sold for junk in
the year 2000.**

3 December (*Wednesday*)

We're in Naples when I wake up. Cloudy, cold weather. The Vesuvius looks like the midget version of the Fujiyama, with its tiny, sturdy, snow-capped volcano figure.

**To Pompeii? No!
“In the end you are tired
of this ancient world.”³**

³ “A la fin tu es las de ce monde ancien” Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918)

We have three hours for sightseeing. When we get past the public buildings of the harbourfront, we find ourselves in narrow alleyways, not as narrow as the ones in Genoa, cars can also get through them. And they're rushing by with deafening honking to make the pedestrian jump aside and lean against the wall if his life is dear. Cobblestones beneath us, an incredible amount of garbage, dirt, and all kinds of rotting things. Above the head we see smart devices of bamboo canes sliding on wire hooks for hanging clothes, drying underwear dangling all over, like some thrown about and torn decoration in our honor.

I'm writing postcards when a six-year-old child starts poking me, asking for 50 liras. I give him what he wants. As I look after him he's lighting a cigarette then kindly waves good-by.

**Spit out a cherry-
pit. It might become a tree,
if it finds good soil.**

At noon we're out on the sea again. My Yugoslavian cabin-mate bought a turntable and a lot of records for fourteen dollars. His compatriots flood the cabin and use the machine full volume. Of course they asked my permission, I say "dobro" (so much I learned) - then I flee. He even put his records on my lap that I may choose the music.

By the way, we're in a four-berth cabin: I share it with an Argentine, an Italian, and the above mentioned guy from Yugoslavia. None of them would speak any other language, except their mother-tongue.

We arrive in Messina, Sicily, at eleven in the evening. We'll be leaving in an hour, and there's not so much to see anyway. Unfortunately I bump into my cabin-mate and a bunch of Yugos. Since they're all speaking loud Serbo-Croatian, I don't immediately understand that they're looking for whores. Well, it's not the place. Barren, dark streets, everyone sleeping. Here and there palm trees. Here and there Fiat

cars parking (I haven't seen any other make in Italy). Apart from this: nothing, nothing.

**No prostitute in
the street, neonlight on the
lamppost: the Moon.**

**Now two tongues: Serb,
Croatian. Yugo? Only
more and more countries.**

This is the last European port, we won't stop till we reach South Africa, we're to arrive in Durban on the 16th of December.⁴

(the end of the diary)

**It takes up every
moment: you're busy sailing
around Africa.**

⁴ Upon arrival to South Africa, I attached this diary-fragment to a letter for my friends, Anna Fábri and Dezsó Helmich. I dedicate this book to them.

Japan (1967) · Japan (1967) · Japan (1967) · Japan (1967) · Japan (1967) · Japan (1967)

Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

(sento)

Snowing till twilight.
The bath-house two blocks away,
in *geta*, barefoot.

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

Your wooden shoe-prints
are snowed in by the Winter –
how will you get home?

(cha-no-yu)

Hang in there . . . on heels!
You might as well survive a
tea-ceremony.

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

(noh)

**Restrained movements –
still the mask shows much
intensity.**

(calligraphy)

**Here in Japan you
will have to be painting your
poems with a brush.**

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

(cinema in the suburbs)

**Black and white movie
turns technicolor during
the erotic scenes.**

Recovering from the poverty of post World War 2, Japan had this ambivalent message – the semi-colored film.

80

(soji)

**The wind cannot bang
windows and doors: it learns the
art of sliding them.**

Soji = sliding door. Common entrance type in traditional Japanese architecture.

81

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

(museum)

You definitely
remember the glass-cases —
contents forgotten.

(3 enlightenments)

Were conned: you found out.
You forgot: it crossed your mind.
Started sneezing:

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

**You wake up in sweat.
Solution was not to be
found inside the dream.**

**Your dream-self arrives
in wakefulness without your
actual self . . .**

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

The wake-up *bonze* runs
shaking his hand-bell in the
darkness of cloisters.

The wooden fish drum
follows your heartbeat, although
someone else drumming.

“Wooden fish” is a fish-shaped Buddhist instrument made of a single piece of hollowed wood. It is struck with a padded stick to accompany sutra recitation.

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

**Your spiritual
master was the master of
masters. Didn't speak.**

**Do No-thing!
You may sit down after
satori.**

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

Your *satori* can
wait — a scrap of food remained
stuck between your teeth.

Nothing so easy
as enlightenment — only
to believe is hard.

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

Stay a beginner —
be hired as a master:
eternal serfdom.

I shall spare all
my people of
my doctrine.

Another reference to Attila József. This haiku is a paraphrase of a famous stanza in his poem, *For My Birthday*: “cause it won’t be on a high school level / I’ll be teaching all my people / to know / to know” (translated by Gábor Gyukics and Michael Castro).

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

Masterly, keep your
satori secret, don't you
give a sign of it.

Now covered by snow —
you're doing exercises
beside the dung-pit.

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

While in the garden,
our bald heads are covered with shawls,
the master is first.

The laziest of
us can slurp his noodle soup
up the most quickly.

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

Wet cloth in hand, on all
fours you race along the
glittering floorboards.

Money for a robe,
beggar that you are, holy
change fills up your bowl.

Reference to *Naga-roka*, the hundred-cord passage in the Sōjiji Temple. The temple halls of this great Sôtō zen monastery are connected by a long, roofed corridor. We cleaned it with clean water every day, running on all fours with a cloth in hand – those were the races! – on the batten floor.

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

Torchlight in the night,
collecting day lilies
cannot be delayed.

Picking ripe *kaki*,
the master holds your ladder,
– important affair.

kaki = persimmon

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

There isn't enough
room for life's big things under
your half-closed eyelids.

In a clay piglet
mosquitocide burning —
fortune be with you.

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

Losing consciousness
in *zazen* . . . you're still sitting
when you recover.

Reverie and
zazen: one and the same —
it's raining.

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

**Lying on your right,
you fall asleep properly —
you'll sit up to die.**

**The screen of your closed
eye-lids shall be completely
darkened only once.**

When the moment of death comes, a zen monk should be sitting up.
Sleeping, on the other hand, should be in the death-posture of Buddha.

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

You prefer to eat
cold rice rather than having
festive buttered toasts.

Flowers of gardens
still bloom in the valley, then
they leave for their homes.

Quotation from the poem *The End of September*, by Sándor Petőfi
(1823-1849).

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

Freshly mowed grass — your
grandfather enjoyed its scent
while he was alive.

Dry leaf floats across
the road in front of you, do
not trample on it.

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

**Autumn trees surround
the row of pine, everything
is kept in order.**

**No fallen leaves, stones
called by their names – step in a
Japanese garden.**

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

**You were sleeping while
the cloister court had fallen
victim to the snow.**

**Who cares? Sit or stand,
follow a master or none –
the luggage empty.**

• Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan • Japan •)

Ship's horn screeching, you
take everything with you – no
zen is left standing.

Rebirth? You didn't
believe in it even in
your previous life.

Australia (1969-1970) · Australia (1969-1970) · Australia (1969-1970) · Australia (1969-1970)

Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia •

(under the Southern Cross)

1

**At night, don't look up –
stars are not to be found, but
a cross in their place.**

Itinerary: Fremantle, Melbourne, Bonegilla (Migrant Reception Centre),
Wacol (Migrant Camp), Stradbroke Island (working in a quarry),
Ipswich, Brisbane, Corinda (working in a plymill), Sydney

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austr

2

**At night, don't look up –
no memories left you in
the entire world.**

122

3

**At night, don't look up –
the sky is the sky even
without the Great Bear.**

123

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austra

**December-summer —
the legs of the women tan
before you arrive.**

**Winter is summer.
Snowless is your Christmas here,
as in Bethlehem.**

Here, the Sun also comes up in the East and goes down in the West, but it culminates in the North. The seasons are opposite that of the Northern Hemisphere: the Summer months are December, January and February. Christmas-time brings sweltering heat; the Summer vacations and annual holidays begin.

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austra

Put a scarf on your
neck, wear a hat, a long-sleeved
shirt: the Sun is out.

Drive indolently,
on the other side, not to
catch up with the world.

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austr

There's buzzing even
under the fly-screen — what a
night it's gonna be!

Royal prisoner —
brought in disease, genocide.
When will he go home?

The nickname “POM” is a contraction of “Prisoner of His Majesty”. This sign was sewn on the clothes of the convicts to Australia. Most family historians in Australia regard a convict in their ancestry as enormously desirable.

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austra

No land for *Abo*:
thousands of years, the country
uninhabited.

This is the Australian “Terra Nullius” principle, not a joke.
Abo = aboriginal. In Australia the term is considered offensive and its
use is best avoided.

Reddish *Uluru* –
Sphinx-paw in the desert. Is
it the foot of God?

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austra

**Hired! In the park
you stick litter on the pin
of an alpenstock.**

We celebrated it. My friend from France, who was a university graduate, became a cleaner. New immigrants are just like that, they love blue-collar jobs.

142

**You may leave your white
collar at home, here it would
only get dirty.**

Australia didn't give university scholarships to the Hungarian refugees of the '56 revolution.

143

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia

**Work accident –
feeling guilty for
having escaped it.**

144

**Half a sandwich makes
you feel stuffed at the *smoko*,
back to the machine!**

Smoko = short tea or cigarette-break from work.

145

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austra

**Hit-and-run-driver
at night, the roo-bar kills and
keeps at a distance.**

Roo-bar = bumper. Popular name for pubs.

146

**In the morning on
the road there lies half of the
fauna, ironed out.**

147

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austra

**Kangaroo carcass —
swallowing dust with open
mouth by the roadside.**

**Long-weekend program:
you may use herbicide, if
there's no bushfire.**

According to legend, when the first white man went to Australia, he asked one of the aborigines what the name was of that strange, jumping animal in the distance. “Kangaroo”, he answered, which meant in their language: “I don't understand you”.

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austr

**Old aged people's home,
gathering in the garden,
barbecue – join in.**

**The laughter of the
kingfisher says everything
of your being here.**

Kingfisher = kookaburra (*Dacelo novaeguineae*), also called 'laughing jackass'.

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austr

**Girl in miniskirt
among youngsters staring as
she drags her suitcase.**

**Wife sitting at home,
the man standing in the pub,
gulping up *sevens*.**

People usually drink their beer by the 7 ounces.

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austra

Small glasses of beer,
apples being sold by the
piece, huge T-bone steaks.

Australian you
are not, though rewarded with
a frozen beer-glass.

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austra

**Bottom of the globe.
Things happen elsewhere, you stay,
you're staying away.**

**Maybe we should put
the Earth upside down
on its own axis.**

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austr

Cold *southerly* wind –
neither chimney, nor hearth,
your coffee cold.

Whatever the price,
a penny returned to you.
No empty pockets.

In Australia nearly all retail prices end with 99 cents.

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austra

**Earth-red trails hold this
dessicated continent
together somehow.**

162

**The edges of leaves
turn towards the Sun: gum trees
don't cast a shadow.**

163

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia

**As in an oven.
Hot dust settles on every
thing. Fear not the rain.**

**Thirsty koalas –
they keep on climbing higher
in the gum tree.**

Koalas never drink. Eucalyptus leaves provide the necessary liquid for them. The name in the language of the aborigines means 'no water'.

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austr

**Five-year drought.
Couldn't you just paint
the fence green?**

**Easier to find
water in the billabong,
than in the river.**

Billabong = stagnant backwater. (Oftentimes water remains here longer than in the living river.)

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austra

**You have another
Australia, except you haven't
reached it yet.**

**Just passing through here . . .
How many more washings by
hand, in a basin?**

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austr

No mail today, you
keep on reading old letters
again and again.

They immigrate,
then emigrate.
The Lucky Country.

The Lucky Country = Nickname for Australia, after Donald Horne,
Australian writer.

lia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Australia • Austr

**A flock of seagulls
toddling around for crumbs —
you might fly away.**

174

**Bring neither opals,
nor kangaroo-tail soup, nor
plush toy koalas.**

175

Bali (2004) · Bali (2004) · Bali (2004) · Bali (2004) · Bali (2004) · Bali (2004) · Bali (2004) · B

Bali • Bali • Bali • Bali • Bali • Bali • Bali • Bali • Bali

(rainy season)

1

Out there, pouring rain.
Coconut-shell bonfire,
apprehensive crabs.

• Bali • Bali • Bali • Bali • Bali • Bali • Bali • Bali • Bali • Bali

**Grading up and down
on the stairs of the hotel,
you measure your strain.**