

A STUDY ON RECONSTRUCTION OF MOVEMENT AND SPACE IN BASHŌ'S HAIKU

Movement and Space on Horse¹

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Abstract

To write a poem is to unlock an immaterial space to invite and inhabit varied events and people from the material space. Japanese haiku is a fixed-verse poetry with a 5-7-5 string of sound units. Interestingly, Matsuo Bashō (松尾芭蕉: 1644-1694), the best-known Japanese haiku poet, succeeds in unfolding a diversity of spatialities through this 17-syllable genre. How could Bashō use only 17 syllables to open complicated spatialities in his haiku? To do this, Bashō implants a series of mobile variables into his haiku. Horse, as a figure constantly interacting with Bashō in the journey, stands out from other living beings, such as frog or even hibiscus. A horse can be viewed as a conscious vehicle to serve its human master's mobility. Although human beings spare no effort in taming a horse to move like a nonliving machine, a horse cannot function normally without living consciousness. In this manner, a horse falls into an in-between being, neither a living being with independent will nor a nonliving machine without consciousness. Such an in-between existence enables the horse to survive the social hierarchy of mobility between humans and animals, between animals and animals, and between humans and humans (Cresswell 26). While Bashō's time prefers a relatively fixed "hierarchy of mobility" (26) in reality, Bashō's haiku reconstruct a dynamic "hierarchy of mobility" in the poetic cyberspace (26). Such a dynamic mobile hierarchy not just gives the horse a taste of high mobility, but marks a balanced harmony for Bashō's haiku. This thesis basically focuses on the image of the horse to study the reconstruction of space and movement within Bashō's haiku.

Keywords

Matsuo Bashō; haiku; horse; space; hierarchy of mobility; movement

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INTRODUCTION

Matsuo Bashō (松尾芭蕉: 1644-1694), the iconic Japanese haiku poet, persists in literary activities by traveling around in 17th century Japan. All of Bashō's haiku are factually recorded inside his kikōbun (紀行文), namely, travel journals. In this regard, Bashō's haiku is interlocked with his travel experience. However, travel in early modern Japan (1603-1868) is severely circumscribed; ordinary people could not travel at will until the early 19th century. Back then, travel primarily served daimyo and samurai to perform their duty; it was accessible only to some civilians who accumulated enough wealth. Travel was a crucial factor to measure mobility, an important social resource, in early modern Japan. These harsh restrictions on travel reflect a very strict "hierarchy of mobility" in Bashō's age (Cresswell 26). Under such a hierarchy of mobility, Bashō is, in fact, a rare example of a person who traveled only for the sake of art.

Bashō was born in a humble samurai family in 1644 at Ueno in the Iga Province of Japan. He lost his father at the age of 13 and later became a servant of Yoshitada, the son of Tōdō Han's samurai captain. Bashō became interested in haiku in his late teens and learned how to write haiku from Yoshitada, who was two years older. However, Yoshitada suddenly died when Bashō was 23 years old. Bashō resigned his position and began a time of being unsettled. At the age of 31, he moved to Edo, an emerging metropolis, to create a new state of haiku. He was recognized as one of the 18 famous haiku masters at the age of 35. However, one day at age 37, Bashō moved to a secluded and humble hermitage away from the busy streets, living a quite simple life for several years, immersed in the creation of a new haiku. From the age of 41, Bashō started to live a traveling life. Through one journey after another, he wrote a series of kikōbun to document his travel experience and haiku: Nozarashi Kikō (The Records of a Weather-Exposed Skeleton, 1684), Kashima Mōde (A Visit to Kashima Shrine, 1687), Oi no Kobumi (Knapsack Notebook, 1687), Sarashina Kikō (A Visit to Sarashina Village, 1688), Oku no Hosomichi (The Narrow Road to the Deep North, 1689). Whereas a flesh-and-blood Bashō travels in the material space of the reality, a bodiless "Bashō" inhabits the immaterial space of the haiku. This "Bashō," together with other variables of mobility, co-constructs the spatiality and rules the mobility within the haiku space. The image of a "horse" stands out from all these mobile variables within Bashō's haiku space, because a horse acts as a paradoxically in-between being, neither an independent living being nor an automatic nonliving machine.

To look into how mobility and spatiality are shaped in Bashō's haiku, this article pays special attention to the image of the horse. A horse can be viewed as a conscious vehicle that serves its human master's mobility. A horse, as a conscious vehicle, plays a crucial role in multiplying the spatiality and leading the mobility in Bashō's haiku.

Before talking about the horse's roles in Bashō's haiku space, how both concepts—space and movement—are defined and interlinked through the lens of the new mobilities paradigm is going to be discussed. The article would then look into how the image of a moving horse functions as a conscious vehicle to interrupt, join, or even dominate the construction of intersecting spatialities in Bashō's haiku.

SPATIAL RE-CONSTRUCTION IN BASHŌ'S HAIKU

To compose a poem is in fact to unfold some virtual space, one free from real circumstances. What makes Bashō nearly the most famous Japanese writer of all time lies in how his haiku cracks open one and another unbounded worlds with only a 5-7-5 string of sound units. Reading his works, Bashō's readers in the real world are like an Alice going down the Rabbit Hole to another dimensional fairyland. Traditionally, haiku contain three parts: two images and a concluding line which helps juxtapose them.

This is Bashō's best-known haiku: “267. 古池や蛙飛こむ水のおと” (*Matsuo Bashō shū, hokku* 146), which Jane Reichhold translates into English as “old-pond / frog jump into / water's sound” (262). It's all deceptively simple. Yet it is such simplicity and economy of the words that demand the readers themselves to fabricate the space between the two images. In this sense, says Reichhold, “this miracle of involving the reader in the creation of the poem has expanded our own definition and concept of poetry. No longer is poetry what someone tells us. It is the mental and emotional journey the author gives the readers” (16). The spatial construction in a haiku, as a result, becomes a collaborative work done by both the poet and readers.

More interestingly, how a poet frames the poetic space through language determines the spatiality within. In literature, Bashō values *karumi* (軽み)²: lightness. He wants it to seem as if children have written it. He abhors pretension and elaboration, as he tells his disciples: “The style I have in mind these days is a light one in form and in the method of linking verses, one that gives the impression of looking at a shallow river with a sandy bed” (Bashō qtd. in Reichhold 188). The ultimate goal of this lightness is to allow readers to escape the burdens of the self: one's own petty particularities and circumstances in order to experience unity with the world beyond. Bashō believes that poetry could, at its best, allow one to feel a brief sensation of merging with the natural world. One may become, through language, the leaf, the water, the moon, leading one to an enlightened frame of mind known as *muga* (無我), loss of awareness of one's self. Bashō's concept of *muga*, or self-forgetting, can be regarded as a way he invites readers from the physical world almost to inhabit his subjects, and to weave the space within the Haiku.

Such a process as *muga* is by nature similar to today's experience of surfing the Internet. While literate readers of Bashō's time sought to escape from being themselves in the real world by indulging themselves in the poetic world even for just a moment, today's Internet users—with increasingly smart mobile devices at hand—can immerse themselves in the cyberspace for as long as they can. Both poetry and the Internet can be viewed as an artificial space beyond the physical world. Both are co-constructed by both their creators and users. For a poet, to write a poem, especially those rather abstract ones such as haiku, is essentially to casually splash some “dots,” that is, “images,” into a huge “blank space.” How this blank space with dots splashed by the poet is built up hinges on how these dots or images are linked by the poet and readers. In the same way, the Internet nowadays is composed of numerous digital dots: ones and zeros that are generated, placed, replaced, linked, and crossed at will by billions of online users.

Whereas capitalism is now seducing nearly everyone offline to draw a gigantic “Inter-Net” all together, the ruling class in the past excluded common people from the literal cyberspace through privileged education.

[Bashō's] use of colloquial words and common expressions both grounds his work in reality and allows it to soar. This ability to be up-to-date and ageless distinguishes him from the poets of his days and many in our times. Bashō was a major influence on the democratization of poetry in his day and now. In his time, as poetry moved from the court's inner circle to the military and merchant classes, Bashō's choice of students and friends crossed a similar bridge. Among his close disciples were members of the imperial court and doctors, as well as several men who had been in prison. Still today, the accessibility of Haiku allows it to move from the ivory towers of academia and mainstream poetry, into the heart and mind of anyone. (Reichhold 10-11)

However, the simplicity of Bashō's language makes his haiku open to a wide range of social classes and readers across a broad span of time zones. Different from highly classical court literature, Bashō's haiku build up a relatively low threshold accessible to common readers. In this manner, the spatiality of Bashō's haiku grows all the more complicated, as growing readers at all times go in and out of Bashō's poetic cyberspace.

As readers log in and log out of the haiku space, the imagery space could be generated and regenerated by different readers of different ages. Even the same eyes could construct rather distinct spatialities within the same poem under various situations. As time goes by, what really makes a Bashō haiku would rely not only on the original frame set up by the 17 letters, but on a numerously interlaced dimensionality constructed by its to-and-fro readers. The point is that Bashō

encourages his readers to reside in, explore, define, and build up his poetic space by leaving so much unspoken.

MOVEMENT'S INFLUENCE OVER SPATIALITY IN BASHŌ'S HAIKU

In fact, “people and things do not operate independent of space. Space is not simply a container in which things happen; rather, spaces are subtly evolving layers of context and practices that fold together people and things and actively shape social relations” (Kitchin and Dodge 13). That is, space is not a unidimensional and static place, but covers overlapping time-space events and people. In fact, the physical space seems never able to satiate human beings. The bodies might be confined to this real world, whereas the spirit is always on move, seeking elsewhere. To accommodate the moving spirits, human civilization has, ever since ancient times, been evolving to exploit, expand, construct, reconstruct, twist, multiply, hack into, or colonize spatialities through a series of literary and artistic activities. Whereas people today are busy in actively reproducing the survival dimensionality by living within ever-changing smart machines, the ancients learn to unfold multifold intangible spatialities by creating poems, paintings, or artifacts.

In fact, intangible space within any poem or artistic work is the derivative of the tangible space, which is closely interlocked with material places. It is material places, or rather earthly circumstances, that contain tangible space for flesh-and-blood bodies. Nevertheless, for bodiless souls, physical places never seem ample. Bodiless souls are always desiring more and calling for more. Since souls or spirits are disembodied, they are not confined to material places and therefore crave a “spiritual asylum” free from secular limits. What early modern artists like Bashō do is to encode such a spiritual asylum into poetic language. In a sense, these spiritual asylums can be viewed as certain places of another dimension.

Based upon new mobilities paradigm, “places themselves are seen as traveling, slow or fast, greater or shorter distances, within networks of human and nonhuman agents. Places are about relationships, about the placing of peoples, materials, images, and the systems of difference that they perform” (Sheller and Urry 214). In other words, places are by nature flowing as people and things move in and out. Place co-exists with the process of placing, which, in a way, can be regarded as the same process as movement. As Tim Cresswell puts it, despite “being about movement, it was really about places” (18). Under the lens of mobility studies, movement is by nature the process of mobility, whereas place, or rather space, is the structure of immobility.

In fact, the interaction between place/space and placing/movement mirrors the essential relation between mobility and immobility. “The new paradigm emphasizes how all mobilities entail specific often highly embedded and immobile infrastructures....Mobility is always located and materialized, and occurs through mobilizations of locality and rearrangements of the materiality of places” (Sheller and Urry 210). Namely, mobility by nature co-exists with what is the immobile. Whereas space is the materialization and localization of the mobile, movement happens based on “highly embedded and immobile infrastructures” (210). In the same manner, to study the reconstruction of movement and space in Bashō’s haiku, it is crucial to understand that movement and space exist as an integrated whole. For Bashō and his haiku, how Bashō could move in real space directly influences the mobility and spatiality in his haiku.

What’s interesting is that Bashō travels as a living for most of his life. He defines “traveling as a living” in his travel journal, now called *kikōbun*, as follows:

The months and days are the travellers of eternity. The years that come and go are also voyagers. Those who float away their lives on ships or who grow old leading horses are forever journeying, and their homes are wherever their travels take them. Many of the men of old died on the road, and I too for years past have been stirred by the sight of a solitary cloud drifting with the wind to ceaseless thoughts of roaming. (*The Narrow Road* 159)

Bashō regards ceaseless time as the “travellers of eternity” (159). In the same sense, boatmen and grooms, who spend their whole lives in floating boats and along with a moving horse, are compared to permanent travelers. Such a living state, just like a drifting cloud, is what Bashō has been yearning for over the years.

Travel can be indeed viewed as a specific outcome of movement in material space. Bashō is indeed living a traveling life. Traveling as living is not about leaving one place for another, so it is by nature different from migration. “In migration theory, movement occurred because one place pushed people out and another place pulled people in” (Cresswell 18). In other words, migration is destination-oriented, and thus “human movement as a given — an empty space that needed to be expunged or limited” (18). Heavily relying upon machines, today’s physical movement is being channeled into fixed routes like railways and limited spaces like cabins. As transit systems now grow all the more mature, movement is being increasingly cut down to a vacuum of time and space. In some sense, physical spaces for movements are nowadays being immobilized into relatively static zones.

In contrast, Bashō’s traveling as living is being on the move, namely, moving as being. Whereas today’s traveling is more machine-dependent and a whole lot faster,

moving as being in Bashō's time is largely free from machine and rather slower. It is this slowness instead of rapidity that truly constitutes far more dynamic spaces during Bashō's traveling. Such slowness enables Bashō to be exposed to significantly richer stimuli as he moves, thereby contributing to more abundant spatialities in his haiku.

Notably, travel in Bashō's time, 17th century Japan, was severely circumscribed; ordinary people could not travel at will until late modern times, not to mention Bashō's traveling as a living. In *Minkanseyō* (民間省要), Tanaka Kyūgū (田中休愚: 1662-1730) described such situations in 1721 as follows:

Travel is something you can't do without a reason. The warriors (武士) follow the orders of the lord (領主) to travel; the merchants travel for their own business; others pilgrimage from place to place for confidence in afterlife Bodhi. However, there are rather few people of the time who travel for the sake of a poem as a pastime or consolation. (156; trans. ours)

Tanaka was a contemporary of Bashō's time (1644-1694). Tanaka's description indicates that in Bashō's days, it was really rare and difficult for ordinary people to travel, let alone "travel for the sake of a poem as a pastime or consolation" (156; trans. ours). Instead, Bashō's time, the mid and late 17th century, witnessed warriors traveling following the lord's orders, merchants moving to and from different places for commercial transactions, and others pilgrimaging for religious reasons. Even Tokaidō (東海道), the country's first main road, was off limits to those who had no business, not to mention those who traveled for travel's sake. Therefore, back then, Bashō was indeed a rather rare example of a traveler who in 1689 even visited the northeastern wasteland, where the lodgings and roads were not yet well maintained.

The question is how Bashō could travel from place to place in an age when little mobility is available to common people. "Mobility and control over mobility both reflect and reinforce power. Mobility is a resource to which not everyone has an equal relationship" (Sheller and Urry 211). Bashō in his days was obviously granted an exceptional right to mobility, so that he could travel around even just for travel's sake and for art's sake. This privileged mobility owned by Bashō, to some extent, derives from the fantastic space, or rather intangible space, cracked open within his haiku. Before traveling, Bashō had already been a renowned haiku poet in Edo (Tokyo). "In the summer of 1680, Bashō published a poetry anthology *Best Poems of Tōsei's Twenty Disciples (Tōsei Montei Dokugin Nijikkasen)*, through which Bashō and his disciples became well known in Edo" (Kira 25). Evidently, by 1680 a wide range of authorities and scholars in Edo had openly identified and logged into the elusive cyberspace of Bashō's haiku.

In a way, Bashō is the creator of the immaterial space attached to his haiku, thereby directing the spatial distribution and mobile traffic for ethereal souls from the secular world to touch down. As his poetic techniques and methods grow all the more mature, Bashō's haiku is progressively seducing secular souls to check into his haiku cyberspace. As a result, his poetic space flourishes to such an extent that the physical world increasingly mobilizes him almost everywhere to act as contest judge, guest of honor in *renga* parties, and haiku master to give lessons. In this sense, the spatiality Bashō created in his poems has inversely contributed to breaking the limitation of mobile politics in reality.

In short, material space and immaterial space are never separated, but instead interlocked mutually. As a crucial part in Bashō's life, travel not only functioned to popularize his haiku style and build up fame, but enlarged the spatiality inside his haiku. To travel can be treated as a proactive reconstruction of space and movement. As Bashō wrote, "There is no particular road I have to follow and no particular time I have to set off in the morning. . . . Time after time new sights stir my spirit, day after day my feelings are kindled" (Imoto, *Matsuo Bashō shū, kikō* 58-59; trans. ours). Travel witnesses Bashō compose some of his most prominent haiku. Those in Bashō's travel journals are more likely to fold layers and layers of spatialities, since Bashō, the composer of the virtual space, is undergoing constant shifts of space, thereby existing as a sustained being of movement. Travel is a conscious movement to free the body from static space and time in the physical world; it, at the same time, inspires the soul to seek spiritual harbors in virtual worlds.

HORSE'S INFLUENCE UPON SPATIALITY AND MOBILITY IN BASHŌ'S HAIKU

The immaterial space is essentially another artificial layer of the material space to shelter erratic souls. It is derived from the real world but not confined to reality. By implanting figures, objects, or events from reality into his poetic space, Bashō fundamentally knits an immaterial space open to construction and reconstruction by either multiple elements imbedded originally by Bashō or by "landing visitors" from reality. The spatiality within his Haiku hence hinges on both native figures, objects, or events and foreign landing visitors, namely, the readers. Whereas readers from the secular world are out of control, what the natives—namely, native figures, objects, or events—can be and how these elements can be linked depend upon Bashō, the creator of the haiku cyberspace.

When it comes to the natives, especially conscious figures, in Bashō's haiku, there seems always to be an underlying fight over the superiority in spatial construction. Breathing beings, including human figures and animals, are factually the variables

of different mobility in a haiku. How these conscious beings could move and who leads the movement thus decide the generation and regeneration of its spatiality within a haiku. Figures transplanted from the physical world by Bashō could cover human beings and/or animals. With only human beings occupying the frame, the space construction turns into a constant process subject to the mobility of the persons involved. With only animals dominating the intangible space, the spatiality is open to changes brought by the animals' dynamics. But what if both human beings and animals co-exist in the same space? This is exactly what oftentimes happens to Bashō's haiku, especially those where both a conscious horse and a willed person come on the scene together.

When the space in a Bashō's haiku is shared by both a conscious horse and a willed person, a latent competition for dominance in mobility and spatial construction is unavoidable. Horse, we believe, can be regarded as a conscious vehicle. According to the new mobilities paradigm, "mobile machines, mobile phones, cars, aircraft, trains, and computer connections, all presume overlapping and varied time-space immobilities" (Sheller and Urry 210). In this sense, vehicles today are by nature immobile, mechanical, and lifeless. Instead, it is human's will and imposed physical energy that drive vehicles. Seemingly running automatically, today's vehicles are factually programmed to shuttle across fixed routes and stop based on certain schedules and at certain docking stations following only human's wills rather than their own. But what if the vehicle to carry human beings gets its own consciousness to move in its own way? This is the case that Bashō is facing up to during his travels.

It is the awareness born with a horse that affords Bashō's haiku a diversity of mobility shifting and spatial construction. Essentially, to write a haiku is to unfold or fold multidimensional spatialities, which basically rest on how the living beings—including both human beings and animals—move within the poetic cyberspace. The existence of horse significantly interrupts human's monopoly on spatial construction in a haiku. When a horse comes on the scene, the architecture of movement and space that should have originally been dominated by human will can significantly be shaken and disrupted from time to time.

Born to be divested of its mobility, a domestic horse is tamed to serve the mobility of its human master. Domesticated in an acquired environment, a horse is not born to succumb to human beings. Despite being docile generally, such a domestic animal as a horse always maintains its potentially resistant will against its human master's. This is what truly makes a horse a volatile but intriguing agent in Bashō's haiku. The horse's rebellious will makes it an in-between being, neither a living being with an independent will nor a nonliving machine without consciousness. In Bashō's haiku, such an in-between being as a horse cannot only disrupt the exclusive spatial shaping overpowered by its human master, but also

co-create complex spatialities with its human master involved, or even wittingly or unwittingly overthrow the master in the movement.

With both the horse and the human being involved, Bashō's haiku mainly depict three scenarios where the horse and the human being compete for superiority in the construction and reconstruction of mobility and spatiality within the intangible dimension.

SCENARIO A: THE HUMAN BEING OVERPOWERS THE HORSE IN MOBILITY AND SPATIAL CONSTRUCTION

In Bashō's haiku, “167. 馬ぼくぼく我を糸に見る夏野哉” (*Matsuo Bashō shū, hokku* 93), which in Reichhold's translation reads as “horse clip clop / myself a picture in seeing / field of summer” (265), both a horse and Bashō are placed in the same frame. He sees himself riding on a horse proceeding on a plain on a summer day. The whole scenario is referred to as a painting of undergoing movement in the haiku by Bashō. “Bashō” as a character inside this haiku is riding the horse, thereby consciously dominating the fabrication of space and movement. The enslaved horse follows its human master's order to march ahead. In other words, it falls into a predictable and mechanical variable of mobility. In this way, “Bashō,” the character within, presides over the process of movement, whereas the horse turns into a human tool to experience spatial shifting and movement. Though little physical effort in the movement is made by “Bashō,” he in fact directs the constant process of spatial shaping and flexibility of mobility.

What's more, to compare the scenario where “Bashō” on a horse is marching ahead to a dynamic painting within this haiku, in fact, unlocks multifold spatialities. In this case, the horse and the human character involved are no longer the first layer of the mobile variables in this poetic space. Instead, the figurative picture is the only element within the haiku. The point is that this picture is indeed something dynamic rather than static. It is permanently subject to the undergoing movement of the conscious creatures inside, namely “Bashō” and the horse. Since Bashō implants himself in this immaterial picture, he ends in co-inhabiting both the material space of the physical world and the immaterial space of the picture within this haiku. Whereas this tangible world witnesses Bashō acting as a flesh-and-blood creator of the haiku, the intangible poetic cyberspace inhabits him as a moving figure existing forever within a visionary picture. Outside this artificial haiku space, Bashō, as a breathing creator in the physical world, is imagining himself riding on a horse heading on a wild plain on a summer day. Inside this artificial haiku space, there is another “Bashō” riding on a horse marching ahead. In this manner, Bashō, at the

same time, could exist in two spaces of totally different dimensions, namely, the material space and the immaterial space.

If a reader from this reality looks deeper into this haiku space knitted by Bashō, multifold spatialities could come into view. The visionary picture can be regarded as a mirror hanging up eternally within Bashō's poetic space. Within this mirror, a "Bashō" is moving on a horse. Within the mind of this "Bashō" in the frame, there is another floating picture where one more "Bashō" on a horse is imagining himself marching ahead on a summer day. Another "Bashō," in the same sense, would come out as another figure automatically formed in the mind of the second "Bashō." By analogy, numerous "Bashōs" coexist respectively in endless layers upon layers of visionary pictures. Following such an infinite loop, the spatial shaping within this haiku is invariably under way. In this manner, infinite spatialities come into being within this haiku.

On the other side, to place himself within a picture in this haiku, in a sense, reflects the concept of *muga* as asserted by Bashō. This haiku was composed after Bashō learned Zen meditation from a Zen monk called Buschōu in a cottage called Rinsen-an. Bashō highlights the philosophy of *muga* in *The Records of a Weather-Exposed Skeleton*: "matter, others, and me in essence exist as a whole" (*Bashōzenshu*, *shokan* 341; trans. ours). The belief highlights that everything in nature essentially interlocks with one another and that a person can become one with the nature. From the *muga* perspective, to view himself within a picture, rather than as an independent variable, is indeed an attempt to merge himself unobtrusively into the background. By placing himself inside a picture, "Bashō" becomes part of the picture together with the rest of the nature. In this way, the human figure retreats from the foreground space, but instead falls into the background space. Without a foreground, the space, the painting where "Bashō" dwells, in truth loses the three-dimensional spatiality; hence, it is a two-dimensional plane. At the same time, it falls into the two-dimensional spatiality within the painting that acts as a mirror to contribute to an infinite loop in spatiality.

However, when more than one person comes into the frame, the scenario could grow even more precarious in the spatial shaping and movement orientation. Bashō's haiku can sometimes be populated by more than one figure, such as a groom to lead the horse or kids from villages nearby to show the way. Even though it is still the scenario where the human being overpowers the horse in the generation of space and movement, the appearance of more than one human figure brings forth a more subtle situation. The spatial shaping and movement are thus subject to one or more human will.

This haiku by Bashō, “490. 野をよこに馬牽むけよ郭公” (*Matsuo Bashō shū*, *hokku* 260), translated by Reichhold as “field (object) across in / horse pull turn / cuckoo” (319), for instance, shows how several will interact with each other in balancing the movement and space.

There are four variables put into this poetic space by Bashō: a horse, a cuckoo, a “Bashō,” and a groom. The horse moves following the order of the groom; the groom leads the horse according to the will of “Bashō.” The overall movement, in this way, is ultimately led by “Bashō.” The groom and the horse are largely deprived of their own volition during the movement. In some way, both essentially fall into certain conscious machines to serve the mobility of “Bashō.” Meanwhile, it is the privileged mobility granted to Bashō by the authorities that empowers the whole process of traveling.

The fact is that both the horse and the groom are born to be divested of a large part of their mobilities. The rest of their mobility is mainly left to serve the privileged mobilities of the rich and the authorities of the time; their own volition, hence, gives way to that of their masters during the movement. Even though the groom seems to have the right to move around along with his master during the travel, his own will is scrupulously suppressed to move and act in ways that satisfy his master. In this sense, the groom can be treated as a conscious machine, or rather a conscious vehicle that is just the similar existence to the horse.

What distinguishes the groom from the horse lies in different mobilities available to them. Even though their mobilities both work for that of “Bashō,” the horse’s mobility first gives way to that of the groom. The groom’s mobility is directly subject to the master’s. In such a manner, “hierarchies of mobility,” a term referred to by Tim Cresswell (26), inevitably come into being to underpin the architecture of movement and space within this virtual haiku space. The point is that this hierarchy of mobility is indeed composed of more uncertain nodes to maintain the movement. Since such uncertain nodes as the groom and the horse are conscious beings with their will socially repressed, they are by nature potential rebels against the dominant mobility of the upper class.

Despite the existence of such a hierarchy of mobility, an experienced groom can overpower his master, “Bashō” in this haiku, to decide the process of movement and thus spatial shaping. In particular, when the master during the travel, sometimes “Bashō,” knows nothing about the directions and roads to a certain destination, it would be the sophisticated groom that leads the travel in the wild. In such a case, this groom is empowered with more mobilities than what he is originally granted. The haiku above in truth reflects such a situation. The groom is authorized to “drive” the horse, the “conscious vehicle,” thereby determining the whole moving process.

In the course of marching ahead, the groom all of a sudden turns around to follow a flying cuckoo, whose tweet catches his attention. This action can be regarded as an independent act to move around, rather than an accidental disruption of the primary movement that should have served the mobility of the “Bashō.” It is the groom’s own volition, instead of his master’s, that rules how the travel is carried out. In this regard, the groom overthrows “Bashō” in the monopoly on mobility.

SCENARIO B: THE HORSE INTERRUPTS THE HUMAN BEING’S DOMINANCE IN MOBILITY AND SPATIAL CONSTRUCTION

In this haiku of Bashō, “176. 道のべの木槿は馬にくはれけり” (*Matsuo Bashō shū, hokku* 101), which Reichhold translates as “road of nearby of / hibiscus as-for horse by / grazed” (269). While “Bashō” is marching ahead on the horse, the moving horse all of a sudden pauses to taste the hibiscus by the wayside. In this case, the horse should have been moving straight to conform to its human master’s order, but instead it stops wittingly to satisfy its own curiosity. This stop can be viewed as an autonomous act imposed by the horse to disrupt the dominant mobility enforced by human beings. In this respect, although a horse is consistently tamed to serve the upper classes of the hierarchy of mobility, namely Bashō in this haiku, its repressed volition remains alive in the unconscious mind. Thus, a horse, as an oppressed variable, could potentially challenge and interrupt the ruling mobility led by human beings from time to time.

In another haiku of Bashō, “339. 徒歩ならば杖つき坂を落馬哉” (*Matsuo Bashō shū, hokku* 181), which reads in Reichhold’s translation as “walking affirmative (conditional clause) / walking-stick use hill (object) / falling-off-a-horse” (293), the horse intervenes in human’s superiority in mobility by immobilizing its human master.

In this haiku, “Bashō” falls down from the horse while traveling by a place called Tsuetukisaka. He thus regrets riding a horse in Tsuetukisaka, whose name implies that walking with a cane is highly recommended to pass by the place. Even if the horse probably does not unload “Bashō” from its back on purpose, it does immobilize its human master at a moment during the movement. In a sense, the horse switches off the original moving state requested by “Bashō,” but instead switches on another one of immobility for its master. The movement primarily serves the mobility of the human beings. However, when it is performed through such a living being as a horse, it is subject to the horse’s mobility. In this case, the horse’s mobility is largely confined to the road conditions of Tsuetukisaka. The limited mobility of the horse, therefore, disrupts that of the human being in this haiku.

When human beings entitle a horse to perform the movement needed for their travel, they are indeed outsourcing part of their privileged mobility to the horse. The horse, in return, expands its initial mobility. This outsourcing, on the one hand, assists human beings in experiencing more spatial shifting and achieving more mobility within limited physical energy. On the other hand, human beings are unavoidably subject to the mobility and will of the horse. As a conscious vehicle rather than as a mechanical vehicle, the horse has the potential to deviate from the mobility and spatial construction initially desired by human beings. Hence, the existence of a horse makes the spatiality within a haiku more dynamic and complicated.

SCENARIO C: THE HORSE OVERPOWERS THE HUMAN BEING IN MOBILITY AND SPATIAL SHAPING

As a matter of fact, the wild environment during the travel oftentimes restrains human beings from directly implementing their mobility. A traveler might know nothing about the specific routes; long distance and tough conditions compel the traveler to outsource his mobility to other living beings, such as a horse and a groom. Under such circumstances, human beings from the upper class of the mobile hierarchy have no choice but to rely upon the lower class of mobility to travel around. As a consequence, the horse is possible to overshadow or even overthrow its human master in spatial construction.

For example, the horse is by accident put into a situation to lead the travel by itself, as Bashō depicted in this haiku, “177. 馬に寝て残夢月遠し茶のけぶり” (*Matsuo Bashō shū*, *hokku* 102), translated by Reichhold as “horse on sleep and / not-quite-awake-from-dream moon faraway / tea’s smoke” (269).

“Bashō” in this haiku seems so exhausted that he dozes fitfully on the horse in the moonlight. While “Bashō” dozes on the horse, he is in fact shuttling intermittently between the haiku world and his dream world. The dream resulting from his doze adds a third layer of space to the physical space and the virtual Haiku space. The presence of such a third space as a dream means that “Bashō” could escape from the haiku world even for a moment. In his sporadic dreams, “Bashō” loses his awareness from the haiku space from time to time. Once his consciousness fails in the haiku world, he falls into a nonliving being without will, thus being subject to the mobility of the horse. The horse could factually prevail over its human master to rule the whole movement.

The truth is that a hierarchy of mobility has been repeatedly ingrained into the horse’s consciousness ever since it is born. It is tamed to serve its human masters. Even given a chance to outweigh its master in mobility, the horse is more likely to

move based on the initially requested routes. The deep-rooted hierarchy of mobility makes it hard for the horse to consciously free itself from the repression of its human masters concerning mobility. More intriguingly, since the awareness of “Bashō” remains elusive, the horse probably does not know whether its master is conscious or not. The horse has possibly gotten used to following its master’s orders, so that it would numbly move in conformity with its master’s will. In this sense, whether the horse notices that “Bashō” is conscious or not, it might still function as a conscious vehicle to serve the mobility of its human master.

But the point is that a horse can never transform itself into an unconscious machine, no matter how numbly it is trained to behave. Complete docility, or rather numbness, is what human beings ultimately want from a horse. To put it another way, a horse is expected to act like a mechanical machine to implement human’s mobility. However, awareness or living senses are what fundamentally drive a horse to move in a certain way. Its animal senses, such as sight, smell, and cognitive ability, help it to find its way and to follow its master’s orders in the wild. If a horse is coached to behave mechanically, it could no longer function as a normal vehicle to carry out human mobility.

Bashō’s other haiku suggests how significant the awareness of a horse is in fulfilling the wills and mobility of its human master.

In this haiku of Bashō, “856. 柴附し馬のもどりや田植樽” (*Matsuo Bashō shū, hokku* 472), which reads in Reichhold’s translation as “brushwood load (pass) / horse’s return / paddy-field transplant cask” (384), a horse runs an errand for its human master, a woodcutter, to deliver firewood to a farmer. In return for the firewood, the farmer loads the horse with a barrel of wine, which is to memorialize his ending of rice transplanting. The horse is placed as the only variable of mobility in this haiku space. Although its mobility is still subject to that of human beings, both the woodcutter and the farmer, the horse acts autonomously to perform the whole movement. To fulfill the errand independently demands that the horse should understand the orders and needs of human beings in the first place. This errand is not simply a mechanical action, but instead a behavior demanding a certain degree of cognitive ability, or rather living awareness. By the same token, on the way to deliver both the firewood and the wine, a horse needs its own mind to decide where to go and how to get back. Consciousness and cognition, thus, are crucial for the horse to carry out mobility.

Once again, the horse in this haiku is offered a rare chance to capture more mobility for itself just by escaping from its human master during the errand. Yet the horse has long been programmed to act and move mechanically according to its master’s orders. Such repetitive training ultimately serves the hierarchy of mobility from animal to animal, human being to animal, human being to human being. The

hierarchy of mobility, deeply engraved into its mind, makes it extremely hard for the horse to deliberately disobey its human masters. In this regard, the horse's will and consciousness are artificially distorted to serve human beings' mobility.

In fact, the horse acts as the only variable of mobility, or rather the only element, placed within this haiku frame. By describing the horse moving back and forth with different belongings, Bashō represents how the horse's owner would be happy upon receiving the wine. The horse, though with limited mobility available, does lead the whole movement independently during the errand. It decides to run or walk, to speed up or slow down, to cross a bridge or swim across a river, and control the whole process. It thus overshadows human beings in the generation of space and movement within the haiku space.

CONCLUSION

In a word, human beings spare no effort in taming a horse to move like a nonliving machine, whereas a horse cannot normally function without living consciousness to perform mobility for its human masters. In this manner, the horse becomes an in-between being, neither a living being with an independent will nor a nonliving machine without consciousness. Such an in-between existence enables the horse to survive the social hierarchy of mobility between humans and animals, between animals and animals, and between humans and humans. On the one hand, by outsourcing mobility to a horse, human beings can take full advantage of the mobility available to them: to travel a long distance, to maintain strength, to survive in the wild, to save time, and so forth. On the other hand, depending upon the horse to carry out mobility, human beings are subject to the mobility and will of the horse, more or less. The repressed horse always might disrupt or even overthrow its human master in the development of space and movement.

The intangible space in literary works can be regarded as outstretched layers of the tangible space in reality. Bashō cracks open immaterial space by writing haiku. By placing the horse, the "conscious vehicle," into his haiku, Bashō creates dynamic and diverse spatiality rather than static and monotonous spatiality for his haiku. As a rather paradoxical mobile power, a horse could diversify the spatiality within the haiku frame by disrupting, joining, or even overpowering humans' monopoly in reconstruction of space and movement in Bashō's haiku.

The "hierarchy of mobility," as coined by Cresswell, is not just existing, but always changing in Bashō's haiku. In fact, Bashō's haiku inhabit a series of mobile variables besides horse. Horse, as a figure constantly interacting with Bashō on the way,

stands out from other living beings, such as frog or even hibiscus. Human beings like Bashō can tame and direct a horse to move in a certain direction. The horse can remove or even uproot the vegetation like a hibiscus at the roadside, while running, walking, resting, or eating on the way. The hibiscus can absorb water and fasten soil in the soundings. Of course, the hierarchy of mobility in nature is never a linear and relatively static pyramid as that in the human society of Bashō's time. Instead, all living creatures are always on the move inside the food chain based on energy conservation law and other known/unknown natural laws.

Nevertheless, despite the hierarchy of mobility, Bashō's haiku can oftentimes present a balanced harmony. The chosen "inhabitants" can coexist harmoniously in Bashō's haiku. How could Bashō harmonize the mobile hierarchy of oppression and in his haiku? While pursuing the state of *muga* or self-forgetting, Bashō places the mobile variables not as the Other but as native Self living in his haiku. He tends to casually place mobile beings and let them facilitate the haiku space in their own ways.

Sometimes Bashō even willingly makes himself, "Bashō," the Other of other creatures in his haiku, for example, the horse. As discussed above, Bashō may outsource little or part or even all of his mobility to his horse in the journey. Travel for the sake of art indeed gives Bashō the chance to experience a dynamic mobility hierarchy, one different from the relatively fixed mobility hierarchy underwent by other travelers of the time, such as businessman, *daimyo* and samurai. Whereas other travelers' horse has to run as fast as possible to perform the duty, Bashō's horse can have a taste of high mobility from time to time. In his travel for the sake of art, Bashō treats his horse not merely as a vehicle, but as a partner who can share the same mobile hierarchy with himself. That Bashō writes horse into his haiku suggests such a bond between him and his horse.

Besides the horse, however, there are other mobile variables in Bashō's haiku space. This bond that we note in this study exists among different mobile beings in Bashō's haiku. We believe that this is why Bashō's haiku oftentimes exhibits a harmonious beauty, instead of hierarchical repression. In this manner, Bashō succeeds in reshaping the politics of mobility and spatiality in his haiku, thereby attracting numerous readers from the reality to log in and out of his poetic space. How these other mobile variables contribute to the beautiful mobility balance in Bashō's haiku space thus becomes a worthwhile topic for further research.

Notes

1. This paper was supported by Konkuk University in 2018.
2. *Karumi*. A poetic ideal advocated by Bashō in the last years of his life. It literally means “lightness.” It points toward a simple, plain beauty that emerges when the poet finds his theme in familiar things and expresses it in artless language. Bashō tried to teach the concept to his students by giving such directives as “[s]imply observe what children do” and “[e]at vegetable soup rather than duck stew” (*Bashō and His Interpreters* 428).

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