narrow the perceived distance between human and nonhuman inhabitants of this planet, inspiring his readers to adopt, as he has done, a warmly compassionate appreciation of animals." For Issa, haiku was not a precious matter of art for art's sake but an ethical and mind-expanding form of literature deeply informed by his Buddhist perspective. We have much to learn from him yet and from Lanoue's excellent book, which should be read widely and remembered when awards are handed out. No haiku book I have encountered demonstrates so clearly the relevance of classical haiku to crucial concerns of our own time or delves so deeply into a theme of comparable significance.

I Wait for the Moon: 100 Haiku of Momoko Kuroda, translated with commentary by Abigail Friedman (Berkeley, Calif.: Stone Bridge Press, 2014). 144 pages; 5¼″×7¼″. Matte four-color card covers; perfect bound. ISBN 978-1-61172-016-7. Price: $14.95 from online booksellers

Reviewed by J. Zimmerman

I Wait for the Moon: 100 Haiku of Momoko Kuroda is the first book in English of selected haiku by Japanese poet Momoko Kuroda. Born in 1938, she began haiku practice in 1957 when she joined Yamaguchi Seison's haiku group. Although she set aside haiku in 1961, she began again in 1968 and has maintained a strong practice ever since. She is widely known in Japan where she has published six haiku collections, the first in 1981 and the sixth in 2013.

This book, beautifully presented with the full moon rising across the chapter title pages, contains translations of and comments on a hundred of Kuroda's haiku by her American student Abigail Friedman, author of *The Haiku Apprentice* (2006). Relatively few and isolated haiku by Kuroda have been translated into English elsewhere, particularly by Fay Aoyagi at http://fayaoyagi.wordpress.com/

Kuroda's work combines a formalist tradition with a *gendai* (or modern) sensibility that is powerful and refreshing. One aspect of that sensibility is to address modern events such as the 2011 Eastern Japan Great Earthquake Disaster which included not just earthquakes but also an immense tsunami:

minasoko no nemuri no soko ni chiru sakura

deep beneath the sea
upon those in deepest sleep
cherry blossom petals fall

and:

michinoku no hito hika rakka hika rakka

Michinoku people —
petals flying falling
flying falling

"Michinoku" is a historic name for the region worst hit by the disaster. It corresponds roughly to the modern Tohoku area. Fay Aoyagi writes to me that this area is the birthplace of Kuroda's mentor Yamaguchi Seison (1892 – 1989), and that Kuroda has many students there whom she has visited annually.

Kuroda structures her poems in the formalist tradition, using the 5–7–5 pattern and a season word. The romaji gives the Western reader a sense of each Japanese sound pattern used by the poet, particularly the sounds that repeat within a poem. Syllable counters are reminded to count an extra syllable for a Japanese double consonant (as in "rakka" above). Friedman documents each poem's season word, many of which (like "blossoms") are well known while some (like "pilgrim") might be unfamiliar.

Kuroda's mentor Yamaguchi Seison had been part of the circle (and often referred to the work) of Takahama Kiyoshi (1874 – 1959). The latter

was one of Shiki's two main disciples, the one who espoused the traditional form that Kuroda continues.

Friedman writes, "Structurally, her haiku do not depart greatly from those of Shiki and his poetic antecedents." However, Friedman's opinion is that Kuroda's work can be considered gendai because she escapes "into the mind. What she experiences through her five senses is but a springboard for her thoughts." An example could be:

ku o sutete shizuka ni toshi no aratamari

I discard haiku
quietly
the New Year comes

Of the selected poems, Kuroda wrote only a quarter before 1990 but almost two-thirds in the current century. A third of the total is from her 2010 fifth book, *Nekkou Gekkou*; a quarter comes from her 2005 fourth book, *Kaka Soujou*.

I Wait for the Moon has seven sections. The book is not organized by chronology or by season. Even so, the first section emphasizes the earliest haiku, mainly written in the 1980's and before. These are mostly shasei (sketches from life), to use Shiki's term, and include the intriguing:

fugu nabe ya kabe ni oukina John Lennon

fugu in a pot —
pasted on the wall
a big John Lennon

In this 1983 poem, by juxtaposing something traditional with something new, Kuroda's sensibility is already leaning toward the modern.

The second section of the book comprises haiku written in 2011 and 2012 in response to the Eastern Japan Great Earthquake Disaster, like the opening examples above.

The third section has relatively subjective poems from the 1970's to the present, like:

hatsuaki ya ai ni hajimaru tsuukingi

start of fall —
my indigo outfit thing
begins

The fourth section, comprising primarily cherry-blossom poems, reflects Kuroda's multi-decade traditional pilgrimages, which she began in 1968, to see Japan's hundred famous cherry trees in blossom:

inori tsutsu sekuna nagekuna sakura saku

as you pray
don't rush, don't mourn —
cherry trees are blooming

The fifth section contains poems from her travels outside Japan in the 1980s. The sixth section returns to her theme of pilgrimage:

hayaoki no onna henro to nari ni keri

an early rising
woman pilgrim —
so that's who I am

The poems of the concluding seventh section are primarily late-life poems.

Phillip R. Kennedy, who is familiar with classical Japanese and Chinese, writes to me that Kuroda "writes Japanese that is very smooth and pleasant on the ear." He was "moved by how Momoko uses kana and kanji to visually reinforce the meaning and feeling of her haiku." He points in

particular to the "Michinoku people" haiku quoted above, saying how "the actual sounds of the words combine with this sensibility to create a truly remarkable haiku. This is an excellent example of how sensitive her style is." He continues:

> "Michinoku no" is a five-syllable element that occurs in traditional Japanese poetry. It has a very classical feel to it, and conjures up a certain picture of the traditional North (Michinoku paper, monks, trees and snow, etc.). The fact that Momoko uses kana to write this (and the following word "hito") deepens this feeling of old Japan.
>
> Then she switches to kanji and finishes the haiku with the Sino-Japanese (classical Chinese) noun phrases *hika* (flying flowers) and *rakka* (falling flowers). The use of Chinese characters here gives the second half of the haiku a very lapidary and official feel; this is the language of science and authority. It's a totally different authorial voice. It's both distancing and a pointer to the very deep emotion of this haiku (a region and its people in the first half, then an image of the falling petals which also refers to the people of the first half of the haiku, but in a slightly more distanced way, in a different voice). It's also highly visually disjunctive.
>
> The phonetics of this haiku work together with the visual language and the associations. *Michinoku no hito* is comprised of a sequence of open syllables, and sounds very classically Japanese (and, is a perfectly-formed phrase in both classical and modern Japanese). It's followed by *hika rakka hika rakka*, a sequence of words that contain closed syllables (the first syllable of *rakka*), and doesn't have that wonderful open-syllable flow of *michinoku no hito*. It's very disjunctive in how it sounds. When you say this aloud in Japanese, you really notice the long -kk- consonant and how it seems to interrupt the flow of breath.

It is useful at this point to look at the Japanese script for the *michinoku no hito* poem:

みちのくのひと飛花落花飛花落花

michinoku no hito hika rakka hika rakka

Kennedy continues:

> This haiku also breaks for sense after the first seven syllables. With the simultaneous change of script [from hiragana to kanji], the emotional value of the actual words in each half of the haiku, and the contrasting sound patterns in each half, we have a very strong sense that something has broken very suddenly and with great finality.

A Japanese colleague, Miki Kamata, told me that the use of hiragana where kanji exist (including for *hito* ("people") in that poem) can make the words milder and less formal. In contrast, kanji script can give an emphasis, a formality, and a seriousness.

I do not have enough knowledge to make a defensible generalization about Kuroda's choices of hiragana versus kanji. Nonetheless, and despite knowing little Japanese, those comments prompted me to look again at the Japanese script that Friedman has thankfully included. I see that similar (though less obvious) contrasts occur in many other haiku. One example is the closing poem of the book's final section:

mizuumi no hotori no tera tuski no matsu

at this temple
by the edge of the lake
I wait for the moon

Its Japanese script is:

みづうみのほとりの寺に月を待つ

Here also it is not until the second half of the haiku that kanji appear, even though kanji exist for words in the first half. The closing kanji emphasize the heart of the haiku: temple, moon, and wait. And speaking of patterns, I also notice that the last kanji (for the verb "wait") contains the first kanji (for "temple"): the temple embraces the moon.

The translations are fluid and attractive. Friedman's "Acknowledgements" indicate the enormous assistance provided by the Japanese author and translator Nakano Toshiko and by almost a dozen additional Japanese scholars and poets in translating this book. Poet John Gribble helped improve the poetry of the English version of the haiku.

I recommend this book highly. Several poets that I've told about it have bought it and enjoyed it. Please be aware that the profuse in-line commentary can be distracting. On my first reading I read only the poems and skipped over the comments. I waited till my second reading to attend to them. Friedman herself was probably alert to this issue, because she highlighted each poem (the translation with its Japanese script plus its romaji) in an off-white medallion; the rest of the page is light grey, de-emphasizing the commentary and making the focus on what it should be—the poems.

Overtones, by Bill Cooper (Winchester, Va.: Red Moon Press, 2014). 62 pages; 4¼″ x 6½″. Glossy four-color card covers; perfectbound. ISBN 978-1-936848-28-7. Price: $12.00 from www.redmoonpress.com

Reviewed by Cherie Hunter Day

Overtones is Bill Cooper's second full-length collection since he began writing haiku in 2009. His first collection, *The Dance of Her Napkin*, was self-published in 2012 under the moniker William E. Cooper. This change in formality signals a more relaxed approach towards both his subject matter as well as his audience. The fact that he has written two collections in just a few years is testament to a university professor being a willing and diligent student.

The collection consists of 45 poems, one poem per page, and is divided into three parts with a 3:1 mixture of traditional three-line haiku and single-line, horizontal haiku. The different styles play well with the cre-