

## Ecstasy of the Moment and the Depth of Time

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### **WORLD HAIKU ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE - TOLMIN, SLOVENIA - SEPTEMBER 1-3, 2000**

#### **OPENING HAIKU**

No one special --  
a Yugoslav Gypsy  
Mute beggar-woman

*Dusan Pajin*

### **GLOBALIZATION AND HAIKU ECSTASY OF THE MOMENT AND THE DEPTH OF TIME**-- HAIKU-TIME AND HAIKU-BREAK(Dedicated to the members of the world-wide haiku club)

Haiku is a fresh experience of being alive. That makes it so virulent. It responds to world-wide homesickness - that makes it global, aside from short form, and English. It is a recovery of basic vision -- that makes it so important.

#### **HOMELESSNESS AND HAIKU**

The homeless of the world find their home in haiku. This is one of the reasons that makes haiku global. How come?

In his essay on "The End of Philosophy and the Rise of Films", Michael Bischoff speaks of the need to find an antidote for world-wide homesickness.

*The reason that both Heidegger and Wenders feel the need for this transformation into Being is to address an uprooted consciousness which they see and feel in the contemporary world around them. This lack of rootedness is the motivation which prompts the transformations each wishes to make. I am looking at their creations and expressions offered to the world, both in writing and film, as an attempt at dealing with a profound lack of connection with world and Being prevalent in our technological time. (...) The extent that each man's longings are subjectively true, and the extent that they are true for all people alive in the second half of this century strongly merge together in my mind. ...The longings and lack of connections which they describe are very resonant with what I see and feel, and don't feel as distant situations peculiar to post-war Germany. (...) "Not angels, not men, and the shrewd animals notice that we're not very much at home in the world we've expounded"*

*(Rilke: 1st Elegy).*

Many people nowadays search for authentic, poetic dwelling in their own way -- participating in the haiku movement. This poetic dwelling, and participation, is for them equal to finding home, or home coming. In "haiku time" they leave aside their professions (and particularities) -- of being this, or that, of selling, buying, or begging, applying for visas, simulating, pretending, or marketing, one or the other way. Having a haiku-break, they come in touch with the inner core of their being, and find their way to "nearness" (Ger. *Nähe*).

## DWELLING AND PERCEPTION OF THE PRESENT-AT-HAND

People with short-span attention are bred world wide -- on video-spots, video games, or just by watching multichannel TV. In *Notes and conversation* with Jonathan Cott, the composer and jazz musician John Zorn said: "I've got an incredibly short attention span. In some sense, it is true that my music is ideal for people who are impatient, because it is jam-packed with information that is changing very fast. (...) you've got to realize that speed is taking over the world. Look at kids growing up with computers and video games -- which are ten times faster than the pinball machines we used to play." (ed. by D. Bither).

Haiku poems fit well with short-span attention -- you can read a haiku in no-time, and instantly get the whole image. But, there is more to it. It can resonate in your mind for a while, and perhaps give you a glimpse of hope, that haiku can transport you beyond -- opening a vista of thoughts, and reminiscences. Starting from the surface, it can open you toward a specific depth of time (Jp. *aware*). Also -- by sharpening one's perception, and/or focusing on some detail -- it can slow-down, or even to bring to full stop one's mind (at least for a while). Even if the event, being, or person is nobody, or "nothing special" (Jp. *buji*).

For example:

No one special --  
a Yugoslav Gypsy,  
mute beggar-woman 1)

Most important -- haiku can take you out of the dominant, instrumental way of relating to the world: to nature in general, and other beings, including humans. What does this mean?

"Such looking-at enters the mode of dwelling autonomously alongside entities within-the-world. In this kind of 'dwelling' (Ger. *Aufenthalt*) as a holding-oneself-back from any manipulation, or utilization, the perception of the present-at-hand (*Vorhandenen*) is consummated. Perception is consummated when one addresses oneself to something as something and discusses it as such."

Although these lines by Heidegger (in *Being and Time*, p. 89) are not meant to describe the essence of haiku poetry, they describe a specific attitude of being in the world in a non-instrumental way, restraining (or rather, laying aside) utilization and manipulation. This does not only include abstaining from such kind of action, but also a change of

perception -- functional, automated perception, is different in kind from aesthetic, deautomated perception. Later, in his texts on Hoelderlin, and the source of art (*Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*), Heidegger articulated this further, taking as a guiding principle Hoelderlin's dictum: "...poetically, dwell humans on this earth".

With haiku a person can develop a long-term attention, and discover that time and personality have their depths -- which can contain a lot of pain,<sup>2</sup>) but a lot of ecstasy, as well.

Among poets, Whitman was a man with long-term attention, and he saw that:

All truths wait in all things,  
They neither hasten their own delivery nor resist it,  
They do not need the obstetric forceps of the surgeon,  
The insignificant is as big to me as any,  
(What is less or more than a touch?) Logic and sermons  
never convince,  
The damp of the night drives deeper into my soul.

(*Leaves of Grass*, Song of Myself, 30)

## ECSTASY OF THE MOMENT -- ONCE IN A LIFE-TIME

"Once in a life-time" (Jp. ichi-go ichi-e) is a concept developed in tea ceremony (Jp. cha-no-yu), and Zen meditation (Jp. shikan), but fits well with the essence of haiku.<sup>3</sup>) It responds to the uniqueness and non-repeatable experience related to each haiku.

Most haikus are records of perceptions, and experiences which are unique, and perhaps literary "once in a life time" -- acute perception makes one aware that each event is now, and never again. Once you get the feeling for it, it makes you more aware of the uniqueness of every moment.

In his poem "Never more" Edgar A. Poe records the desperation that can arise from this awareness (of transitoriness), and many haikus did the same -- sometimes also with the image of the crow:

Kare-eda ni	On a withered branch
kurasu no tomari keri	A crow is perched
aki no kure	This autumn evening
Basho (transl. by R. H. Blyth)	

However, many haikus also record the ecstasy of the moment, which arises from this same acute perception of the momentariness of time, and life, which Basho compares with lightning:

Inzuma ni	How admirable,
satoranu hito nonot:	He who thinks not: Life is fleeting
totosa yo	When he sees the lightning!
(trans. by R. H. Blyth)	

Perhaps the most famous haiku giving an example for the "once in a lifetime" is:

Furuike ya  
kawazu tobikomu  
mizu no oto

The old pond,  
A frog jumps in -  
Plop!

Basho (transl. by R H. Blyth) Devidé and others consider this as a most famous haiku, for several reasons.<sup>4)</sup>

However, we will focus on one aspect: ecstasy of the moment. Although the poem seems to be devoid (or deflated) of any ecstasy -- just "Plop", or "sound of the water" (Jp. mizu no oto) when a frog jumped into the water -- it is a good example for the "ecstasy of the moment." Why?

We leave aside the point noted by Hausmann (1963), who translated the last stanza as "vertieft das Schweigen" (deepening the silence). The sound of water -- plop, or splash -- when the frog jumped in, must have really deepened the (former, and following) silence. Aside from this non-mediated impression, there is another one: that the frog (jumping into the water), or the sound of water (cutting through silence), marked the momentaryness: (a) as the essence of life, experienced through meditation (Jp. *shikan*), and (b) of enlightenment, attained in a moment: suddenly, and "all in one piece" -- according to the Rinzai Zen tradition.

However, beyond Zen meditation, the ecstasy of the moment belongs to the common heritage of mankind, as the possibility to feel the fleeting transiency of life, at the same moment when we feel its ecstasy, or transport, beyond the confines of time, into the "eternal now," or "the (privileged) moment beyond time."

We find this idea in various types of literature -- in mysticism,<sup>5)</sup> in diaries,<sup>6)</sup> and literature which belongs to the "literary canon." For example, Marcel Proust and his privileged moments,<sup>7)</sup> or Ivo Andrić (*Znakovi pored puta* -- *Marks by the Road*, 1980, p. 131): "There are moments when I feel, violently and extraordinary... the overwhelming fact of existence -- naked, wonderful, and terrible: 'The world exists and I exist in it'... I lose myself, searching for something that could describe this... just a sign, letter, or sound, which will be able to express clearly, and for sure: WE EXIST. In such moments, it happens that I come to a standstill, on a traffic square... among the stream of cars... while their drivers watch me, with mixed curiosity and anger."

In the same spirit -- explaining an important point in Heidegger's idea, that man's authenticity is being-toward-death (Sein-zum-Tode), and dwelling as finding one's own nature -- Bischoff (1999) says: "Dwelling is the process of finding your own nature, which for humans is deeply rooted in mortality. With this comes an eternity, by being what you are now, and not being elsewhere. The experience of bliss comes in the acceptance and willingness of our own mortality, and acceptance of change, glad to be here, not there."

Most type of haikus relate in particular to this -- being right **here, and now**, not there, later, or before. One type of poems (sometimes haikus)

-- death poems -- address this issue in particular moment, prior to one's death, and these go into a separate category of "death poems." 8)

Four and fifty years  
I have hung the sky with stars.  
Now I leap through --  
What shattering!

(Dogen, 1200-53, transl. by L. Stryk & T. Ikemoto)

Coming and going, life and death:  
A thousand hamlets, a million houses,  
Don't you get the point?  
Moon in the water, blossom in the sky.

(Gizan, 1802-78)

However, one can also discover this in a moment when life seems to have run short of its essential possibilities, and basic dignity, but when death, which could have been a reasonable "way out," also seems to be "too late."

Too late to live,  
Too late to die,  
This is the right moment. 9)

## **"NEVER BEFORE" AND AESTHETIC CONTEMPLATION**

For the writer, haiku can be a record of particular moments when he sees something particular, as "never before" (French, *jamais vu*). The expression "jamais vu" was used by the French psychologist Pierre Janet, to denote a particular feeling: that something familiar, and common, suddenly appears as completely "new," and un-familiar, as something not known, or seen, before (in contrast to "deja vu" -- feeling that the particular situation already happened before).

In haiku-time things appear as new, or as "never before" -- in a new and special mood, or glow. In most cases such experiences of seeing things as "never before" is related to aesthetic experience, although it can also be related to meditation, and deautomatization of perception, which can follow it.

Since the time of romantics, this "never before" was compared with the infant's immediacy, of child's sense of belonging, and joy. Wordsworth (in his "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood") considered that we lose (irretrievably) the child's capacity to see the splendor in the grass, and compensate this loss by values of ethics, and/or religion. Kirkegaard believed that we pass the aesthetic stage of existence in order to reach the stage of ethics etc. Others, like Whitman felt that logic and sermons are (for some people) less convincing than the "damp of the night". Baudelaire considered that under particular conditions the artist can regain the childlike capacity,

becoming a man-child (*un homme-enfant*).<sup>10)</sup>

That the artist can regain a childlike quality of perception, to see the world everyday as new and fresh, fascinating, and charming, and can discover the sublime and beautiful in the everyday and common, was displayed by haiku poets in the 16th and 17th c., and by the Western poets in the 18th. c.<sup>11)</sup>

The purpose of a good haiku is to record this mood, or feeling, for the writer, and to transfer it to the reader. Therefore, haiku is also a kind of "reminder" of such "privileged" moments, and possibilities. For this reason, haiku sometimes has a particular quality related to INSIGHT, or an answer to some existential query, which cannot be transferred by other means, but by haiku itself. This made it useful and popular in Zen time, and this makes it popular in our time.

Haiku-break means a break in the usual way of seeing things, and the world, a break of the "dominant narrative". Haiku gives you a break. The idea of getting a break from routinized perception and awareness, was in Japan first employed in the particular type of Zen poems called *geju* in Japanese (Chin. *chieh-sung*), which utilized paradox (Jp. *ha*).<sup>12)</sup> "Because *ha* or paradoxical writing is employed to break down routinized and fixed awareness, it must always be spoken in 'one's own words.' Even when one uses existing expression, it is essential that the way one uses it be 'something that belongs to one alone'" (Koinichi, 1991, p. 377).

However, humor and paradox were not exclusively related to Zen -- haiku was first developed as *haikai* (a comical verse of 17 syllables). But, ordinary humor and paradox can differ from Zen humor and paradox, although they can be intertwined.

## HAIKU AND FILM

Back in the 20's, Eisenstein (Sergey Mikhaylovich, 1898-1948) coined his phrase -- the "montage of attractions"-- in which chosen images, would be presented in such a way to create the maximum psychological impact. Thus, the filmmaker should aim to establish in the consciousness of the spectators the elements that would lead them to the idea he wants to communicate; he should place them in the spiritual state, or the psychological situation, that would give birth to that idea. To explain film editing and montage, he used examples from Japanese poetry, in particular haiku. First, he explains the VISUAL essence of this poetry relating it to film (in the Chinese and Japanese context, this was responsible for close connections between poetry and painting). Second, he sees further ANALOGIES BETWEEN MONTAGE in film editing, and haiku-montage.

To make this obvious, he used -- as an example -- Basho's haiku:

*On a withered branch  
A crow is perched  
This autumn evening.*

In both cases -- in film, and haiku -- a simple combination of two or three FACTS, suggests something quite different: a MOOD, says

Eisenstein. In his film *Tokyo-ga* (made in 1985, as a homage to the Japanese film author Ozu), Wim Wenders says: "If only it were possible to make a film like that... Just looking, not trying to prove anything."

This could also serve as one of the most important principles of haiku, since haiku is usually a result of: JUST LOOKING, NOT TRYING TO PROVE ANYTHING.

## DEPTH OF TIME AND SHALLOWNESS

Spring in a fortress --  
Did they really exist:  
Those barons... and servants?

On a full moon night in May 1999 I was with a few Dharma friends at the Belgrade fortress Kalemegdan, which is at the same time a big park area.<sup>13</sup>) Suddenly, I had a peculiar feeling of the depth of time preserved at this place, going back to the first centuries of the Christian era, and then moving through the Middle ages -- I had a sense of presence of so many people who were at this same place, long time before me. It was a kind of transpersonal reverie<sup>14</sup>) -- and I remembered Basho's poem, which has a similar sense of transitoriness, and depth of time (Jp. aware):  
Natsugusa ya Summer grass:

tsuwamono domo ga  
yume no ato

(Basho)

of stalwart warriors splendid dreams  
the aftermath.

(trans. by H. G. Henderson)

Sense of **aware** is not just something we just use to explain to students ancient Japanese aesthetics. It is the aftermath of a rich tradition, which we need in time of shallowness, and absence of depth in culture, as explained by Jameson (1991), who recognized in postmodernism a fatal lack of depth, while others diagnose the problem as screen addiction.<sup>15</sup>)

**SUCHNESS OF NATURE AND ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS** "Arne Naess... concludes *that it is not enough to have ecological ideas, we have to have ecological identity, or ecological self*. How are we to expand our identities in this way? Naess believes we need 'community therapies' such as the Council of All Beings. In the Council of All Beings we remember our rootedness in Nature. (...) We further extend our sense of identity when we find an ally in the natural world, make a mask to represent that ally, and then speak in council for and with the animals and plants and landscapes. We are always awed at the very different view of the world that emerges from their dialogue. Creative

suggestions for human actions emerge and we invoke the powers and knowledge of these other life-forms to empower us in our lives" (Seed, 1998).

I believe that world haiku nowadays can contribute greatly to this ecological identity, or ecological self, and ecological awareness. Why, and how?

Haiku develops a strong sense of nature, reverence for its beauty, and its suchness. Beside fondness for the landscape, and its many creatures, haiku has a strong predilection to consider nature, and its beings, from an ecocentric (as contrasted to anthropocentric) point of view. The traditional credit and background of this goes to Shinto, Taoist, and Zen reverence and feeling for nature, but the modern one is related to the ecocentric, and ecological awareness of our time.<sup>16)</sup>

## **SOUTHEASTERN EUROPEAN HAIKU**

In ex-Yugoslavia, the "haiku movement" goes back to sixties, when individual poets started to write on haiku, and wrote haiku poems. Perhaps among the first were (women poet) Desanka Maksimovic (1898-1993, Belgrade), Dubravko Ivancan (1931-- published a first haiku book in 1966, in Zagreb), Alexander Neugebauer (1930-1989, in Novi Sad, who published a first haiku poetry book, 1975), Zvonko Petrovic (from Varazdin, born 1925, who edited one of the first magazines, "Haiku" 1977-1981, and published a haiku book in 1971), Vladimir Devide (born 1925, living in Zagreb), introduced Japanese haiku as well as Dejan Razic (teacher of Japanese in Belgrade, 1935-1985), and Vladimir Zorcic (1941-1995, Belgrade), who wrote and published haikus in 60's.

In 1970's the process gained momentum, including many writers, among them poets with former poetry reputation, and those who wrote solely haiku, in peculiar poetic form and content. Since that time -- especially during 90's -- the movement accelerated. The growing number of haikins was followed by groups, gatherings, festivals, and specialized periodicals, springing in all parts of Yugoslavia, including also smaller cities -- from the south of Serbia (Nis) to its northern part (Odzaci), to the northern parts of Yugoslavia, like Varazdin in Croatia, or Tolmin in Slovenia.

However, praise of classic Japanese haiku in Yugoslavia goes back to 1928, when -- one of the classics of Serbian literature of the 20th c -- Milos Crnjanski (1893-1977), published in Belgrade his book of translations "Poetry of Ancient Japan," introducing Basho, and the high tradition of haiku. He considered the influence of Japanese poetry as essential part of his own poetic stance, and writing. At that time he did not know anything about the Japanese metaphor-concept *aioi-no-matsu* -- growing in co-dependence, or sympathy transcending time and space. However, his poetic sensibility and personal literary ambition was influenced by haiku poems. He wanted to connect through sympathy, and love, things (or persons) which are far away (in time, and/or space) one from another, and to find connections (or empathy): "a smile which



can affect the grass," "care free gift of the waters", and "tranquillity transferred by pines in the snow." In Japanese poetry he particularly searched those peak experiences of tranquillity, eternity, and ethereal feelings, that can be reached by our minds.

His anthology "Poems of Ancient Japan" was popular between 1928-40, and after W.W.II. Several Yugoslav (Serbian) composers composed -- between 1930-1992 -- voice-instrumental pieces, using haikus of classic Japanese and modern Yugoslav poets.

Miloje Milojevic (1884-1946) composed in 1930 a cycle of music pieces using Basho's haikus. Dejan Despic (1930-) composed two cycles. In 1991, The Homeland Ozone (opus 105, on haiku poems by D. Maksimovic), and in 1992, Circle (op. 107 - old Japanese poets). Rajko Maksimovic (1935-) composed in 1966 two pieces on Basho's haikus, and three pieces on Basho, Shiki and Moritake (these were presented at the Zagreb Music Biannual, in 1967).

In South-eastern Europe (in particular in the region of ex-Yugoslavia) haiku practice had a unique development in the 90's. In that decade, everything was in a downfall, and crumbling (economy, politics, national, and personal relations, etc.) only haiku writing kept an upward course.

Only haijins seemed to resist, to communicate and share their common lot of haiku destinies. They went on writing and joining, in conditions of war and peace, semi-peace (warm peace), and semi-war (cold war). They managed to keep their friendships, and to make new friends with others -- outside the Southeastern Europe ghetto (or Balkan reserve). Jean-Louis Bouzou (from France) has published in his web magazine CARPE DIEM (No. 12) haikus from this part of Europe, and Basho's haikus (in No. 13 - <http://www.chez.com/erato/>).

With Serge Tome (from Belgium), Dimitar Anakiev (from Slovenia) made the Aozora site: <http://aozora.tempslibres.org>. Aozora (Haiku Association of South East Europe) is an international network of haiku poets, its societies & magazines from the Southeast European community, with further links to the World Haiku Association.

Together with Jim Kacian (from USA), Anakiev edited "The Anthology of Southeastern European Haiku Poetry - KNOTS," published (in English), in 1999, in Tolmin (Slovenia). The book includes (in alphabetical order) haiku's written by authors from Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, FYR Macedonia, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey, and Yugoslavia. This book is an excellent example of "balkanization" in positive terms ("balkanization" is otherwise used mostly in negative connotation), and an example of (positive) globalisation.

English and haiku (West and East) give it a global aura; a specific poetic feeling, bringing together poets from the Southeastern Europe, gives it its Balkan aura.

Since so much money,17) and energy has been introduced to divide and antagonize the peoples in the Balkans, one can consider this as a miracle: that English and haiku brought them together in this book --

poetry transcending so many hates and borders that were created and erected during the last few decades, to serve some "global" interest... (divide et impera).

If not in the world at large, it is at least in the minds of these "crazy poets" that friendship and understanding won over enmity and hate, and they go on, singing and communicating, in spite of everything... I admire them.<sup>18)</sup>

In the Balkans knots are used in everyday life to tie, and secure something, or -- in inter-personal meaning -- as something that brings people closer, but also in negative connotation - as something that binds, or creates hindrances. This anthology was followed by two other multilingual anthologies (Anakiev, 1999, and Simin, 2000), which introduced a new subject into haiku poetry -- war at large.

Both can be found on Aozora site -- <http://aozora.tempslibres.org>

## NOTES

- 1) This personal haiku refers to a mute-and-deaf beggar, Gypsy woman, whom I met recently, after forty years (I saw her frequently in fifties, in a park near the railway station in Belgrade, where I lived in my teens).
- 2) Tomas Macho wrote an excellent "Fragment on Pain" -- quarterly *Istocnik*, jesen-zima, '93, Belgrade, p. 156-162. He explains Weltschmerz, and love pain, which were/are also familiar to haiku writers.
- 3) Wider discussion on the concept "once in a lifetime" was developed in my book *Philosophy of Chinese and Japanese Art (Filozofija umetnosti Kine i Japana*, 1998).
- 4) See Devidé (1976), and his comments, on pages, 94-101.
- 5) See W. T. Stace (1961): *Mysticism, and Philosophy*, London, Macmillan
- 6) See Arthur Koestler (1954): *The Invisible Writing*, New York, Macmillan, p. 352: "Then I was floating on my back in a river of peace under bridges of silence. It came from nowhere and flowed nowhere. Then there was no river and no I. (...) It is this process of dissolution... which is sensed as the 'oceanic' feeling, as the draining of all tension, the absolute *catharsis*, the peace that passeth all understanding."
- 7) See Pajin (1997-8): "Remembrance and Recognition in Transpersonal Perspective," *Philosophia*, No 27-8, 1997-8, Academy of Athens, pp. 45-58; or my home page - <http://dekart.bg.ac.yu/~dpajin/>

8) See Yoel Hoffmann: *Japanese Death Poems*, Vermont & Tokyo, Tuttle 1986, and *Zen Poems of China and Japan*, trans. by L. Stryk & T. Ikemoto, New York, Anchor/Doubleday 1973.

9) This is a personal haiku, which I will explain, turning it into a haibun. I was overwhelmed by despair, when I witnessed the civil war(s) -- which tore apart the former country in which I lived -- and the constant influx of refugees, who fled from the new states, since 1991, into present Yugoslavia, especially during the two NATO bombing "Storms" (in Croatia, and Bosnia) in 1995. War against the left-overs of Yugoslavia, and these refugees -- started in 1992, with sanctions, and culminating with the "Angel of Mercy" bombing in 1999 -- was an outrageous attempt to "finish the business" started in Vietnam, back in 1960's. Some people share poetry globally, some people like to threaten globally. Everyone needs to share the best part of himself. "We're going to bomb them back into the Stone Age." - said U.S.A.F. General Curtis E. LeMay, in 1965, threatening North Vietnam. "We will demolish, destroy, devastate, degrade, and ultimately eliminate the essential infrastructure of that country" -- said U.S. NATO General Wesley Clark, threatening Yugoslavia, in March 1999. Thomas Friedman, in New York Times (Apr. 23, 1999), advised Americans, whose tax money was to be used for war: "Give war a chance. (...) It should be lights out in Belgrade: every power grid, water pipe, bridge, road and war-related factory has to be targeted. Like it or not, we are at war with the Serbian nation." Addressing Yugoslavs, he said: "We will set your country back by pulverizing you. You want 1950? We can do 1950. You want 1389? We can do 1389, too" (the cynicism of "1389" is that this was the year of the Battle at Kosovo, when Serbs tried, without success, to stop the Turkish invasion: in the next three centuries Turkish Empire conquered Southeastern Europe, and from July-Sept. 1683 Vienna was under their siege). Bill O'Reilly, on the Fox News Channel (April 26, 1999) advised NATO: "Rather than put ground forces at risk where we're going to see 5,000 Americans dead, I would rather destroy their infrastructure, totally destroy it. Any target is OK. I'd warn the people, just as we did with Japan, that it's coming, you've got to get out of there, OK, but I would level that country so that there would be nothing moving--no cars, no trains, nothing." Stephen F. Cohen described the results in the Nation (May 24, 1999): "NATO's sorties are literally demodernizing Serbia. Two or three decades of its economic development -- the foundation of the elementary well-being of ordinary men, women and children -- have already been destroyed." A report released in London (August 1999), by the Economist Intelligence Unit, concluded that the enormous damage NATO's aerial war inflicted on Yugoslavia's infrastructure will cause the economy to shrink dramatically in the next few years. (...) Yugoslavia, the report predicted, will become the poorest country in Europe (San Francisco Examiner, August 23, 1999).

Now -- although it was too late to live, and too late to die -- it still could be the right moment to write a haiku, or celebrate the Enlightenment Day (Vaisakha). And we (a group of Dharma friends) did celebrate it, during the

full moon night in May 1999, amidst the bombing event, when the whole city was dark (damaged electric system made at least Mr. Clark and Mr. Friedman happy). We recited some haikus, and a quote from the Lotus sutra (ch. VII):

"In all out palaces  
Never has there been such shining:  
What can be its cause?  
Let us together investigate it.  
Is it that a great virtuous god is born,  
Is it that a buddha appears in the world,  
That the great shining  
Everywhere illuminates the universe?"

And we did the same, in May 2000, although the predictions of the Economist Intelligence Unit were fulfilled.

10) See Poulet, *Les Metamorphoses de Cercle*, chapter on Baudelaire.

11) See Tanner, *The Reign of Wonder*, p. 31-35).

12) See Jin'ichi Konishi: *A History of Japanese Literature*, vol III, p. 369-379.13) See end of note 9)

13) Lafcadio Hearn has noticed in his text on "Sadness in Beauty" that on certain occasions we feel not only our personal longing, but also the inherited longing -- longing inherited from those who lived before us, and who still crave to quench their thirst for life through the living (Exotics and Retrospectives, 1983).

15) *Conditioned to become gazers and spectators for an average of 30 hours a week, youngsters now register as more obese and out of shape than any previous generation since 1900, when such records began to be collected. Their teachers see the results of this addictive commercial exploitation, the rat pack product conformity, the intrusion of commerce into the schools themselves. This does not prepare the next generation to become literate, self-renewing, effective citizens for a deliberative democracy. Instead, this commercial traffic makes them even more vulnerable to the streets (Nader, 2000).*

Ralph Nader has in mind the USA, but his description responds to something becoming a global phenomena.

16) See: - "Environmental Ethics," in *Philosophy East and West*, vol. XXXVII, No. 2 - April 1987;

- Naess, A., Seed, J., Macy, J. & Fleming, P., ed. (1988): *Thinking Like a Mountain: Toward a Council of All Beings*;

- Joanna Macy (1997): *World As Lover; World as Self*;

- (for a Yugoslav reader) Andrej Kirn: "Od antropocentricne ka ekocentricnoj

etici," in a textbook: *Ekologija i etika* (Belgrade, 1996)

17) On June 11, 1999, the *New York Times* reported that on the previous night the U.S. Congress passed a \$289 billion military-spending bill. Earlier, in March 1999, when the bombing campaign began, Congress had already approved "\$5.5 billion in additional spending through Sept. 30, for the air war alone."

18) To outline my background, and contributions to multiculturalism, I will give few informations. Between 1975 and 1999, I published nine books on the history of culture -- East, and West. From 1983 to 1992 I edited a quarterly magazine "Eastern Cultures" published in Belgrade, and specialized for art, philosophy and religions of Asia. In 1993, I wrote a study on Kuan-yin worship, in Taipei, and it was published as "Form and Meaning of Kuan-yin Worship" in *Dharma World*, Vol 21, May-June, and July-August, 1994, in Tokyo. Article on the "Symbolism of Chinese Gardens" was published in the "Journal of Oriental Studies" - Vol. XXXIV, No. 1, 1996 (University of Hong Kong). In 1997 "The Anthology of Contemporary Yugoslav poetry - 1950-1995" (edited by me, and Ms. Chang Shiang-hua) was published in Chinese, in Taipei, and in 1998 in Beijing. In 1998 I published a book on "Chinese and Japanese Art Philosophy" (in Belgrade, BMG), with separate chapters on Zen aesthetics, and development of classic haiku in Japan. In fall 1999, I finished my book (in English) on "Sung Dynasty Landscape Painting."

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#### CLOSING HAIKU

Too late to live  
too late to die  
this is the right moment.

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