

Situating a Badiouian Anthropocene in Hagiwara's Postnatural Poetry

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Volume 16 Issue 4 (December 2014) Article 5**Dean A. Brink,****"Situating a Badiouian Anthropocene in Hagiwara's Postnatural Poetry"**<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol16/iss4/5>>Contents of ***CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 16.4 (2014)***Thematic Issue ***New Work in Ecocriticism***. Ed. **Simon C. Estok and Murali Sivaramakrishnan**<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol16/iss4/>>

Abstract: In his article "Situating a Badiouian Anthropocene in Hagiwara's Postnatural Poetry" Dean A. Brink discusses the ecological dimension of the poetry of one of the founding voices in modern Japanese poetry, Sakutarō Hagiwara (1886-1942). Brink argues that Hagiwara developed a poetics characterized by engagements with nonhuman organisms and actants to situate the materiality of these actants in ways that diffuse the binary of "language" and "nature" and present a postnatural relationality that Bruno Latour describes. Drawing on the recent work of Alain Badiou, Brink explores materialist alternatives to representationalism—including the Lacanian triangle of the imaginary real and symbolic—by emphasizing human-nonhuman relations and Badiouian models of change in reading poetry in the anthropocene.

Dean A. BRINK

Situating a Badiouian Anthropocene in Hagiwara's Postnatural Poetry

While echoing new materialist and speculative realist critiques of "correlationalism" and "representationalism," I draw primarily on the thought of Alain Badiou to situate the subject as a distributed site of components rather than as a human being. Following Badiou, a poem becomes a material assemblage that both invokes a world and more clearly takes ethical positions in light of what is included or excluded in relation to "presentations" in other poems, times, places, as well as in material and discursive situations. Thus, if a Lacanian model of communication in language is predicated on socially situated egocentric *jouissance* at the empty center of the triad of imaginary (ego), symbolic (representation), and real (traumatic alienation and materiality), Badiou provides a model enabling both what might be called hybrid human-nonhuman subject formations and ethically situated site-specific measures of change. According to Badiou's critique of Jacques Lacan's thought, "the body is subordinated to the signifier" (478) and "inhabiting speech does not suffice to found this singularity [of the human animal] and the breach that results from the linguistic marking of the body is by no means the last word," since such breaches "can be effortlessly observed in animals with small brains" (481). Thus rethinking Lacan's thought in a less egocentric and more materially situated relation, Badiou moves toward a view of poems as local sites of objective subject-presentation, each "as a world" (455). Thus I explore the possibility of new materialism moving even further beyond dependence upon the idea (certainly a legacy of poststructuralism) that merely bringing into play multiple dimensions (such as the material and the textual) would somehow overcome this legacy. For instance, Serenella Iovino situates knowledge as "materializing ... the progressive becoming-together of bodies and the world" as "their intra-action" (103). This intra-action is then linked "in ethical and political terms" with "a practice of liberation" (Iovino 112). Thus, Iovino makes claims to ethical political positioning while remaining complicit with the postmodern foregrounding of "play" linking it in the formulation "human creativity 'plays' together with the narrative agency of matter" (112).

In *Logics of Worlds*, Badiou attempts to overcome this legacy of poststructuralism and thus contributes to the development of new research within new materialism. He situates poems as poetic configurations which index limited worlds which are not necessarily ontological givens, but responses to unfolding events (potentially of any era) by including the heretofore "inexistent" (at a given site in time). By inexistent, Badiou means something that may have existed elsewhere sometime, but that has not been recognized at this given site in space and time when the poem is composed (377). In this way, poetry reclaims the position Percy B. Shelley suggests in his "A Defense of Poetry" that it is a form of writing at the forefront of the knowable and capable of shaping how one sees and acts "at once the centre and circumference of knowledge" (503). However, Shelley's vision leans heavily on the Enlightenment and anthropocentric progress. Reading the transhuman poetry of Sakutarō Hagiwara (萩原朔太郎 1886-1942) in light of Badiou, one finds examples of how poetry presents human and nonhuman intra-action in ways that in effect question modernity. One finds that it is not dependent, in a Lacanian sense, on a distancing from animals to form its poetic authority. Rather, Badiou suggests that poetry embodies the "multiple-body of the human animal" and its subject production in flesh or poetry; the body itself is not a singularity but multiple and permeable, "a transhuman body" (481). In examining poetry, Badiou shows how a poem constitutes its site, what he calls a body, by way of the components that it includes: "the elements of the body—such as it is created by the poem within itself—are those whose identity ... is measured" by its intensity as compared with other sites (466-67). In simple terms, this means change is measured in poems and Badiou posits that "the body is the set of everything that the trace of the event [viz. the poem] mobilizes" and "the trace of the poem opens onto a new present" (467) as a poem alters our understanding of the world.

Based on the above argumentation, I examine Badiou's departure from the Lacanian triad in the context of ecocriticism. I situate a distributed or plural subject in lieu of the "imaginary," materiality in lieu of the "real," and Badiouian indexicality, as a measure of degrees of symbolic divergence from the

material, in lieu of the "symbolic." By way of examples from Hagiwara, this model offers a clearer focus on ecological issues and actions on various material scales of presentation (not representation). This approach has the advantage of measuring various positions in poetry in relation to ecological issues without reducing a poem to an ecological poem; any poem may appear as an ecological poem according to its degree of engagement, whether in stated or implied positioning, as inferential and world-invoking assumptions are often present in a poem.

The importance of indexing change is unmistakable today as the controversial term "the Anthropocene," in Mark Hudson's analysis, "marks a real crisis in sustainability, involving significant threats to the resilience of social-ecological systems and to human well-being and security," though he also cautions of its homogenizing effects (942). Bruno Latour also characterizes opportunities and dangers writing that "what if we had shifted from a symbolic and metaphoric definition of human action to a literal one? After all, this is just what is meant by the anthropocene concept: everything that was symbolic is now to be taken literally. Cultures used to 'shape the Earth' symbolically; now they do it for good. Furthermore, the very notion of culture went away along with that of nature. Postnatural, yes, but also postcultural" ("Waiting" 11). In short, what is needed in the humanities is a means for presenting measured assessments of how humans and nonhumans relate within the global ecosphere. The difficult part is to do so without letting the term Anthropocene become a term indicating an age of neoliberal ascendancy and apathy with regard to environmental issues. One may understand the application of the word Anthropocene as a demand that change must be situated, at very least in terms of endangered species habitat preservation as well as in terms of possibilities for reshaping human-induced climate change to avoid the pending sea rise and weather-related disasters. If calling this age the Anthropocene advances action and a sense of urgency in moving toward Latour's postnatural earth, it serves earth; however, applying the word only to rationalize a human tipping point in the overcoming of nature defeats the potential of developing such a critical discourse. What one can do in producing and reading literature and film is to resituate the role of such symbolic gestures of naming and provide a means for situating literature in relation to a continuum of human and nonhuman materiality. When a species is dying because of our footprint on earth, what can scholars do? Besides being obliged to alter practices that lead to the continued damaging of the earth and, for instance, to find means of urbanization which would curb suburban sprawl, one is also obliged to alter one's practices so as, in Badiou's language, to present change. This article aims toward such cold reparations in light of the lost sense of control by situating Badiouian sites of poetic engagement as measures of ethical responsibility.

Through various techniques including the poetic fusion of human and nonhuman, emulation of the rhythms of life in the sonic materiality of poetic rendering, and the adaptation of a Nietzschean critical spirit, Hagiwara presents poetic bodies melding human and nonhuman elements. Many of these poems situate sadness as a bridge of empathy to bring the poems into emotional focus. This sadness, found in much of his poetry, may for readers today seem as first excessive, descending into a dark comedy of self-pity. Yet, in light of a Badiouian and ecological reading, his poems become suddenly transformed into pivotal sites of empathy linking human and nonhuman organisms. In an original twist on a Nietzschean critique of modern fictions of progress and evolution, Hagiwara rethinks the nature-culture binary. These passages from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, which was available to Hagiwara in a 1911 translation, may have suggested this direction to him: "The Overhuman is the sense of the earth. May your will say: *Let the Overhuman be the sense of the earth!*" and "I beseech you, my brothers, *stay true to the earth* and do not believe those who talk of over-earthly hopes! They are poison-mixers, whether they know it or not" (12). Taken literally, these passages suggest that Hagiwara selectively emulated Nietzsche insofar as he situated materiality so as to present a common field inclusive of multiple actants in his poetry. In effect if not intent, it is ecopoetic today. A key point of interest in this regard is Hagiwara's submission of the human to the nonhuman. At the same time, his poetry suggests a common (unspecified) life force built on a Nietzschean elevation of creativity, but one that Hagiwara extends to all life through the linguistic-material sites that poems embody. As Nietzsche's Zarathustra also says, "What is great in the human is that it is a bridge and not a goal" (13).

If for Latour the modern distinction of human and nature is a mistaken distinction that is characteristic of the modern (see Anderson 120), how does one situate "modern poetry"? Moreover, how do newer claims implied by terms such as the Anthropocene and hyperobjects (e.g., Morton) merely reify the distinction of human entanglements on earth, serving to obscure human actions today by universalizing them within the expanse of a foregone era? If one reduces presentation and action to an unalterable trajectory of habitual practices and blows up problems to unimaginable scales, then what remains but an ungrounded (postmodern) morass? I show below how poems by Hagiwara reflect an exemplar engagement with components of the world so as to refuse a modern distinction of human-nature while situating affective human-nonhuman relations in clearly spatialized sites that contain the human, not vice versa. Latour, in his challenge to the popular notion of deep ecology as falling into modern fallacies, sees the "hierarchy of beings to which [deep ecology] lays claim [as] entirely composed of those modern, smooth, risk-free stratified objects in successive gradations from the cosmos to microbes by way of Mother Earth, human societies, monkeys, and so on. The producers of this disputed knowledge remain completely invisible, as do the sources of uncertainty" (*Politics* 26). Hagiwara literally includes the human in a rough presentation of organisms in stages of both bounding with life and dying, and tying these to human processes in manifold ways that defy subordination. In Hagiwara's poetry we find a clarity borne of an uncanny sense of displaced phenomena and a pre- or postnatural engagement (in the sense of Latour) that refuses the modern, rational, reduction of sense data to the separate categories of "human" (master) and "nature":

Mouths of starfish,	ひとでの口
ears of fish,	魚の耳
hands of turban shells,	さざえの手
viscous red camellia blooming on sea cucumbers	ぐにやぐにやにただれたうにの肉と
from the guts of rotten sponges	くさった海綿のはらわたから
and the rancid squashed flesh of urchins.	なまこの赤い樺がべつとりと咲き
In the faint light of stringy jellyfish	ひもくらげのうすらあかりで
the awful sight of a rheumatoid octopus	らうまちすのたこが足をたべたり
nibbling at a leg and the flesh of green snails	青貝の肉をたべるいやな光景
while in these shallows	またここの浅洲には
shellfish stuff themselves	わがしんけいのいたむ根をくふつめた貝
with the throbbing roots of my nerves	ほの光る浪のあなたに
and there tentacles of anemone	いさぎんちやくの手はたえずうごめいてゐる
constantly squirm in faint luminous waves.	

(Hagiwara vol. 3, 338-39; unless indicated otherwise, all translations are mine)

The compound title of this poem—"病氣した 魚介・海底" ("Diseased Seafloor / Fish and Shellfish")—reflects how it appeared in unpublished form (with an undecided title) before being collected for his complete works. The seafloor (or fish and shellfish) is sick not because of a natural disaster but because of the poet's aestheticization of the grotesque—usually associated with Baudelairean urban life—here found in tide pools and shallows. Nevertheless, the Baudelairean grotesque becomes the primary typological intertext, the example and pattern for it—as opposed to the associative matrix of *tanka* poetry with which he began writing poetry. The sea presents not a mirror to human material biological existence and not merely an existential allegory of human containment among the components of nature (in a sense that includes humans). Akin to the literal—material—renderings of metaphor in science fiction, the poem depicts the affective and physical entanglement of human and non-human. That the "the shellfish stuff themselves / with the throbbing roots of my nerves" implies a spatial containment of the human poet—contrary to how one usually thinks of nature as being dominated by a discrete cultural apparatus. The lines present the poet as overwhelmed, consumed by shellfish, not the reverse.

One may situate Hagiwara's poetic formulation above in terms of how specificity of language and the rhythms of organisms are presented and indexed within poetic configurations. As such, Hagiwara attains one of his own stated aims in writing: "Poetry can only explain what cannot be explained in human language. Poetry consists of words that go beyond [being just] words" (vol. 1, 12). This statement resembles the saying that poetry is untranslatable, yet it may be read as meaning poetry engages a materiality and as such goes beyond words. Indeed his poetry stands out in its complex

presentation of elements which appear to refuse categorization by conventional standards: the use of quasi-fantastic (what seem science fiction) fuses human and animal or plant into worlds and common scales of attention coupled with an empathic commingling in sadness together form a vector. Yet it is not sadness as one may think of it as a weakened human state but rather an adaption of a Nietzschean affirmation of life as transformed through a fusion of conventional longing and sadness in *tanka*. His fusions refuse the modern distinctions of nature and culture, language and materiality, I and ecology. To the degree the poem suggests a materiality apart from which words as mediating symbolic language fall short, in terms of the classical Lacanian formula, it presents a failure of the imaginary ego to approach the real through the symbolic register of language. Instead, the poem presents an ecology (rather than ego) of human and nonhuman. The poem presents itself as a material textual montage (rather than the real) and measures the materiality of the emplacement (rather than a universal register) enacted by the poem both as a material poem and as an indexing of relations to other poems and places (sites).

In a short essay "人間の退化について" ("On Human Degeneration") (see vol. 4) Hagiwara situates a wide range of interrelated ideological, scientific, and global trends in light of a contrarian view of Darwinian common sense. Although not citing Nietzsche, Hagiwara reflects his biting critique of modern society, especially its disjunction between universal assumptions and more ironic possibilities. Hagiwara builds an argument that resituates human society not as the preeminent species, but as environmentally and economically doomed. He argues that "Darwin's point is not the evolution of living creatures but their degeneration, how their fortunes are reversed" ("ダウキンの説くところは、生物の進化でなくして退化を教へ、価値の存在を轉倒してゐる") and how the "living creatures on earth exist only by way of their adaptation of capabilities within suitable environments" ("地上の生物は、その環境に適するところの、素質の順応に於いてのみ存在する") and "the ease with which they adapt to the environment by virtue of the simplicity of their cellular structure and the vigor of their reproductive capacity" ("その細胞組織の單純さと、繁殖力の旺盛さとから、容易に環境に順応仕手して行き") (vol. 4, 306-07). Hagiwara argues, somewhat tongue in cheek, that the law of the jungle only works in the age of the dinosaurs and mammoths, while overall the maggots and rats will prevail. He writes that in the end the conqueror of the earth will be bacteria, which can consume any living creature, "even the last to go extinct on our planet" ("地球の死滅する最後までも") (vol. 4, 307). He sees the metaphor of the "struggle of the fittest" to decree the fall of the strong—from the dinosaurs to man. The ending of the essay situates democracy, communism and anarchism all as evidence of this degeneration, which Hagiwara attributes to a reduction to a common majority among men, leaving no place for powerful heroes, only "slave-like uniformity" ("奴隸的均一") (democracy), "bliss of an ant-like society" ("蟻的社會の幸福") (communism), or "singled-celled animal grouping" ("單細胞動物的な集團") (anarchism). This is a standard Nietzschean critique of democracy resituated creatively as a Darwinian dwindling or extinction of the strong. Hagiwara closes the essay with a vision amounting to a leveling of species: "The so-called human race will revert to being monkeys, become lizards, units of bees, even the lowest form of bacteria in a complete degeneration" ("あらゆる人類が猿に歸り、蜥蜴になり、蜜蜂敵の單位になり、最下等の黴菌にさへ、退化してしまふと言ふことである") (vol. 4, 308).

Hagiwara's aphoristic essay touches upon the centrality of bacteria, the topic of an early poem entitled "ばくてりやの世界" ("The World of Bacteria") (vol. 1, 52-54). The poem at first seems to be a morbid catalog of personified elements of an imagined bacteria, but in light of the later essay, one wonders if Hagiwara's placement of bacteria as a preeminent species goes back to this poem, or if the poem merely exemplifies his poetic fusion of motion, translucency, or "abundant light and radiance" (Clarke 143). In any case, the complicated interactions between species relates to currents today in ecocriticism, posthumanism, and new materialism. The poem itself, however, ends with an emphasis on the *sadness* of the bacteria, which underscores the poet's basis for contact as being one of loneliness—something shared with the imagined bacteria:

The legs of bacteria,
the lips of bacteria,

ばくてりやの足、
ばくてりやの口、

the ears of bacteria,
the noses of bacteria,

ばくてりやの耳、
ばくてりやの鼻、

bacteria are swimming.

ばくてりやがおよいでゐる。

Some are in the womb of man,
some are in the entrails of shellfish,
some are down in onions,
some are out in the landscape.

あるものは人物の胎内に、
あるものは貝の肉に、
あるものは玉葱の球心に、
あるものは風景の中心に。

Bacteria are swimming.

ばくてりやがおよいでゐる。

The hands of bacteria together form a cross,
their fingernails forking out like roots,
from there the barbed claws come
and capillaries of a sort *sweep over*.

ばくてりやの手は左右十文字に生え、
手のつまさきが根のやうにわかれ、
そこからするどい爪が生え、
毛細血管の類は**べたいちめん**にひろがつてゐる。

Bacteria are swimming.

ばくてりやがおよいでゐる。

Where bacteria live
the skin of the sick seems diaphanous,
rays of rouge dimly illuminating
that part alone seeming tender to the touch,
surely, surely seems a sadness hard to endure.

ばくてりやが生活するところには、
病人の皮膚をすかすやうに、
べにいろの光線がうすくさしこんで、
その部分だけほんのりとしてみえ、
じつに、じつに、かなしみたへがたく見える。

Bacteria are swimming.

ばくてりやがおよいでゐる。
(vol. 1, 52-54)

Hagiwara foregrounds sadness yet is reiterating a life energy that extends between human and nonhuman, even while the human seems to be failing as bacteria take over and the ill human's skin is red because of it. It is this connection to bacteria that inspires the refrain "Bacteria are swimming" and which humbles the poet in light of the sadness that is "hard to endure." In the short essay titled simply "シャルル・ボードレール" ("Charles Baudelaire") (vol. 4, 66-67) included in his 1922 prose collection *新しき欲情* ("The New Lust"), Hagiwara emphasizes Baudelaire as a sad wanderer producing works that "are no more than unrelenting 'sad toys'" ("慰めなき「悲しき玩具」であるにすぎないやうに") (vol. 4, 67). Following Nietzsche, Hagiwara admires and emulates not dwelling in despair, but overcoming what he sees in Baudelaire's work: "there is a modern, the most modern sorrow, as well as flight from pitiful, pitiful despair" ("近代の、最も近代の悲哀がある。傷ましき、傷ましき絶望の逃走がある") (vol. 4, 67). Hagiwara's poems overcome sadness and despair not by following Baudelaire's example of transcending a nature shorn from humanity, but by embracing it. While Baudelaire writes such lines as "Grands bois, vous m'effrayez comme des cathédrales" and "Je te hais, Océan!" (64-66) in "Obsession" in *Fleurs du Mal*, Hagiwara, on the other hand, experiments with rhythms of exchange and interaction in presenting human and nonhuman.

In general terms, Hagiwara's poetic presentations displays fields of sympathy and sadness that do not simply ecologically bind the poet's projections and sensibilities with things in the environment but rather engage in a Nietzschean critique of and resistance to the modern. It is a critique borne of a modernity that problematizes the very culture of weakness and loss implied by sadness. Sadness is thus transformed by a Nietzschean affirmation of creatively embraced life as opposed to the cultures of weakness that characterize modern fictions of stability, passive conformance to fads and (changing) norms, and lack of vital inspiration (just "blinking" or *blinzelt* as opposed to "lightning" or *Blitz*) in thought, all of which Nietzsche critiqued (290). The Nietzschean ethos of affirming life as an invigorating ideal in itself underwrites an affirmation which Hagiwara extends to all life (not just the creative artist-philosopher), including the nonhuman animal and plant life that forms a material ontology of worlds indexed in his poetry. Recognition of this combination of ecological and Nietzschean ethos re-situates the hitherto evident sense of pathos and self-pity in Hagiwara. In short, Hagiwara takes the Nietzschean critique of power relations and extends them to the nonhuman so as to problematize and aestheticize (building a poetics around) this complex relation, which approaches a postnatural commonality that is neither premodern nor modern. As such, one may understand the recurring sadness

in his poetry, though differing in various periods of his life, as exploring the spatiality of aesthetic experience in light of affective responses heightened by modern knowledge and societal configurations but which he refuses to use against the nonhuman. He refuses the dominance of man and maintains a very un-modern relative equilibrium between self-satire—of the sadness or apathy of the self—and the sadness or indifference of animal and plant subjects that share the open site indicated by the poem.

By emphasizing that poetry is not a privileged collapsing of language and material world, following Latour, one may maintain the distinction between the aesthetic and the material without weakening or dismissing the influence of poetry in the world. Following Badiou's modeling of change in his *Logics of Worlds* (esp. bk. V), one may situate poetry more clearly, elevating it to an indexical practice on par with science or politics in its capacity for world-invocation, i.e., embodiments of altered ontologies. In this regard, poetry, as poetic configuration, is subject to interaction with multiple discourses and affiliations (including the sciences). However, in strictly Badiouian terms, the truth procedures of art, science, and politics are distinct. Each discourse or practice maintains the potential for rendering a presentational embodiment of change alone or in combination. Each is variously capable of altering how the world appears, and one takes positions concerning one's relations to it and differences relative to other sites. Because of the highly intertextual potential of poetry, one expects to find orientations to multiple discourses, rendering it most suited to critical (re)configurations of ontologies. Badiou opens poetry up to such a material engagement by way of ideas such as naming and points (Book VI), by which he means (put simply) selection—inclusion and exclusion—of certain names and issues and not others, all with a mind on ethical presentation and responsibility for one's poetic bodies in light of events and as events.

The basis for measurement is the site, the poem. Badiou writes that "take any world whatever ... a site is a multiple (assemblage) which happens to behave in the world in the same way with regard to itself as it does with regard to its elements, so that it is the ontological support of its own appearance ... The site supports the possibility of a singularity, because it summons its being in the appearing of its own multiple composition. It makes itself, in the world, the being-there of its own being. Among other consequences, the site endows itself with an intensity of existence" (363). Based on this model of the site—the poet's presentation—in relation to other sites and other transcendental indexing of existents, positions and materiality itself are presented in poems. More importantly (what distinguished Badiou's model), change can be situated as relations between human and nonhuman as measured and emplaced at the site (or body) of the poem. In other words, presentation is subject to interrogation based on possible worlds, other worlds, and ethical questions. Most importantly with respect to ecocriticism, the universal in Badiou's model is limited to the site of its own indexing of a transcendental world, so that a range of possibilities extends from a singularity (consistency of self-reference), which leads to an event (change), to a becoming that is merely a modification "without real change" (see 374).

Another poem—"草の莖" ("Stem of Grass")—also displays in compressed forms a sense of organic entanglement conveyed by way of circulating repetitions of words with varied, incrementally more defining adjectives: "slender" (ほそき) becomes "fine" (うすき) and is intensified by "completely" (いちめん). The poem builds a shared point of view with a plant in this tautological description: "In winter cold / wrapped in thin hairs / look at the stems of grass, / be they sad green stems / everywhere covered with fine hair / look at the stems of grass. // Into a sky that might snow / stems of grass grow" ("冬のさむさに、 / ほそき毛をもてつつまれし、 / 草の莖をみよや、 / あをらみ莖はさみしげなれども、 / いちめんうすき毛をもてつつまれし、 / 草の莖をみよや。 // 雪もよひする空のかなたに、 / 草の莖はもえいづる") (vol. 1, 19-20). In a modern idiom, the short poem invokes classical Japanese literary associations of dry winter grass with sadness, but it also invokes Nietzschean creative entanglement, an energetic rising of "green stems" "into a sky," even though it may snow (and flatten the grass until spring), and they are "sad," "everywhere covered with fine hair" as if feeble and helpless. In this transcorporeal relationality, readers find neither personification nor realism. As Stacy Alaimo writes, "transcorporeality denies the human subject the sovereign, central position. Instead, ethical considerations and practices must emerge from a more uncomfortable and perplexing place where the 'human' is

always already part of an active, often unpredictable, material world" (16-17). Moreover, William Connolly explores the related issue of how to manage the scale of agencies when dealing with human and nonhuman interaction, arguing that all life—even bacteria—exhibit "pro-agency" as an "emergent phenomenon" (23), so that agencies indeed appear, as Hagiwara suggests, at common sites of interaction.

Thus Hagiwara does not simply emulate Western poets and writers, but offers a fresh synthesis of Baudelairean alienation in the world. While one may claim only anachronistically an environmentalist agenda, one can see an orientation toward flora and fauna that suggests a presentation of sympathy, so that awareness shifts not simply to plants and animals but to a new entanglement with the human. This constitutes a huge leap out of the world of *tanka* in which Hagiwara began his career as a poet. *Tanka* are distinguished by conventional symbolism and an associative matrix of words and images that echo precedents, not simply having similarities with other *tanka* (as in referential intertextuality), but typologically following the patterns of association as abstracted into a commonly held range of acceptable uses. The intertextual continuity itself defines *tanka's* formal alignments. Precedent, in this way, defines limits for acceptable compositions, ones which are consonant with earlier works yet not to the point of parodying them; yet the patterns of acceptable associational combinations regulate *tanka*. For example, in a *tanka* written just a few years before he turned to free verse one finds imagery of the bustling international Akasaka District in Tokyo situated with flowers associated with autumn: "Viewing Akasaka in the distance / sweet olive flowers / blossom on the windowsill of my room" ("かの遠き赤城を望む / わが部屋の窓に咲きたる/木犀の花") (vol. 3, 575-76). Here a sense of longing for the Western is intensified through the flower traditionally known for its intoxicating scent. Hagiwara, however, in his later turn to free verse, breaks away from this classical subordination of human consciousness to conventional associations. While stepping aside from *tanka* and its poetic conventions, Hagiwara nevertheless sustains its bias toward longing and sadness, which is found in various forms of expression throughout his poetry. Against the dominant Japanese short form, *tanka*, dependent as it is on this shared intertextual matrix of associations, Hagiwara develops an alternative poetics of accumulation, variation, and repetition that speaks to new forms of poetic embodiment. He synthesizes a new refined yet linguistically experimental poetry situated both within a global literary horizon informed by intratextual ordering that forms the template for reworking the *tanka* poetics. It is likely because of his proficiency in *tanka* that he is deftly able to avoid the gaudy mistakes of earlier modern free verse poets, especially those composing 'new-style poetry' [新体詩].

In conclusion, Hagiwara's poetry and prose show how he in effect refused to situate the modern as privileging a nature-culture divide found in one of his primary poetic influences, Baudelaire. Building on his emulation of a Nietzschean critical sensibility, he devised a poetics of materiality that engages contemporary life in all its contradictory historical and ecological concerns. It is only today, in our age of the Anthropocene, that one can see just what Hagiwara achieved in building this bridge to the non-human. Through the works of Badiou and Latour, one can begin to situate his (and perhaps others') poetry as presentations of relations subject to inquiry, inciting critical engagement rather than turning away from responsibility in the various realms of habitation and visitation. Suddenly, poetry sheds its modern detachment from human and nonhuman agents. It always addresses material relations, which may (or may not) index the production of nuclear power and waste, suburban expansion and deforestation, or neoliberal misconceptions that nature is opposed to corporate culture in its push to pollute without constraints.

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