The Death of Kobayashi Yagobei

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Introduction

It is an accident of literary history that we know anything about Kobayashi Yagobei. His death, on the twentieth day of the 5th month of 1801 (Kyōwa 1) in Kashiwabara village, Shinano Province,[1] was important to his family. But Yagobei was not John F. Kennedy, Matsuo Bashō,[2] or even Woman Wang.[3] Yagobei's death was the quotidian demise of someone of no historical importance. However his eldest son, Yatarō, became Kobayashi Issa.[4] In the years following his father's death, Issa became one of the two or three most famous *haikai* (haiku) poets of his generation and his renown has not diminished since.[5] At some point before he had reached the pinnacle of *haikai* rankings, Issa wrote an account, now called *Chichi no shūen nikki* (父の終焉日記: A Diary of my Father's Final Days), of his father's illness, death, and the first seven days of the family's mourning.

Chichi no shūen nikki, as it has come down to us, is a complex text. Some parts of it have been discussed in English language scholarship at least since Max Bickerton's 1932 introduction to Issa[6] and it is often treated as a work of literature or a diary.[7] This approach to *Chichi no shūen nikki* owes a great deal to the work of *Kokubungaku* (Japanese National Literature) scholars.[8] However, in order to read *Chichi no shūen nikki* as a book within the canon of Japanese National Literature (*Kokubungaku*), it must be significantly transformed in various ways and a large portion of it is

[1] The part of Shinano Town closest to Kurohime train station in Nagano Prefecture.

[2] Who, besides being a famous poet, was commemorated after his death in *Bashō-ō shūen-ki* by Bashō's disciple Takarai Kikaku (See, for instance, Kira Sueo, Yamashita Kazumi, Maruyama Kazuhiko, and Matsuo Yasuaki, editors and annotators, *Kinsei haiku haibun-shū* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2001) 457-467. Shinpen Nihon koten bungaku zenshū #72). There is also a similar text called *Issa-ō shūen-ki* by Issa's disciple Nishihara Bunko (Kobayashi Keiichirō, Maruyama Kazuhiko, and Yaba Katsuyuki, editors and annotators, *Issa zenshū volume 9 (bekkan) shiryō, hoi* (Nagano: Shinano Mainichi Shinbun-sha, 1978) 52-56) although it is more an exercise in elegance in honor of Issa than a description of his final days or death.

Robert Huey discusses some of the reasons why *Chichi no shūen nikki* cannot be considered as characteristic of the *shūen-ki* genre on pages 29-30 (Robert N. Huey, "Journal of My Father's Last Days: Issa's *Chichi no shūen nikki*," *Monumenta Nipponica* 39 no. 1 (1984): 25-54).

[3] Jonathon Spence details the murder of a woman surnamed Wang in Qing China (Jonathon D. Spence, T*he Death of Woman Wang* (New York: The Viking Press, 1978) 116-139).

[4] Also known as Nobuyuki in his youth. I will refer to him as Issa in this essay even though he was known throughout his life as Yatarō in legal documents and by other names in other situations.

[5] While there have been ups and downs in Issa's popularity, he has remained well-known among *haikai*/haiku poets and scholars in the years since his death. Yaba Katsuyuki discusses the popularity of Issa during his life in Yaba Katsuyuki, *Shinano no Issa* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1994) 197-202. For a concise account of the history of the critical reception of Issa after his death, see Yaba Katsuyuki, *Issa daijiten* (Tokyo: Taishūkan Shoten, 1993) 550-557.

[6] Bickerton's article includes translations of parts of *Chichi no shūen nikki*. Max Bickerton. "Issa's Life and Poetry." *The Transactions of the Asiatic Society*. Second Series, Volume 9 (1932): 111-154.

[7] Bickerton treats his translated segments as diary entries. Harold Bolitho calls *Chichi no shūen nikki* "literary" but is uncomfortable with that classification (see, for example, page 167 where literary is in quotation marks). Bolitho's reading of the text straddles the modern disciplinary boundary between history and literature and he treats it as a "thanatologue." (Harold Bolitho. *Bereavement and Consolation: Testimonies from Tokugawa Japan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003)). Ueda Makoto, however, clearly treats *Chichi no shūen nikki* as literature (Ueda Makoto. *Dew on the Grass: the Life and Poetry of Kobayashi Issa* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), especially pages 42 to 45).

[8] As does this essay.

usually elided.[9] As an example, Robert N. Huey problematizes the status of *Chichi no shūen nikki* as a diary and he never classifies it as "literature" but he does not discuss the structure or content of the text as a whole.[10]

The parts of *Chichi no shūen nikki* that are commonly elided, however, provide important clues as to how Issa constructed Yago-bei's death in language. In this essay I will examine Issa's description of Yagobei's death in the "literary" part *Chichi no shūen nikki* together with some of the citations of the classical past that give the work its power while positioning my reading within the full text. I will show that it is the classical past, interpolated in the text via citation, which enabled Issa to narrate his father's death in an emotionally moving way. Further, I will suggest that there is evidence which indicates that some of the "citations" in the text may not be there as the result of a conscious choice on the part of Issa.[11]

My emphasis on text is not intended to deny the importance of the material or to suggest that these two are somehow separable. In fact, where we can follow the traces of the material effects of Yagobei's death on Issa's life, they seem to be profound. Yagobei's death started a twelve-year dispute between Issa and his stepbrother Senroku over the division of their father's estate, the eventual settlement of which allowed Issa to return from Edo to (half of) the family house.[13] Nevertheless the only way that Issa can communicate aspects of his father's death to us today is via the mediation of written language. The relationship between the material and the written is, of course, not simple in any culture nor is the perceived relationship the same today as it was in early modern Japan. *Chichi no shūen nikki* is an excellent place to begin to understand the possibilities and the limitations on the expression of death and dying in language in early modern Japan precisely because the text, taken as a whole, exposes certain aspects of Issa's techniques of narration. These can cause us to question our own readings of the text as a work of literature, a diary, or perhaps even a thanatologue.

I begin with a description of what is known about Issa's father and family in order to set the stage for understanding *Chichi no shūen nikki*. Then I examine the structure of the text and comment on the most important inter-text Issa used in preparation for a potential revision of *Chichi no shūen nikki*, the *Hōbutsu-shū*. The relationship between these two texts is fundamental to my argument because it seems likely that Issa unconsciously cited the *Hōbutsu-shū* in his narration of Yagobei's death in the portion of *Chichi no shūen nikki* which is commonly read as literature. The linkages between *Hōbutsu-shū* and *Chichi no shūen nikki* thus expose some of the techniques that enabled Issa to narrate his father's death in a way that continues to move readers today. Next, through a translation and analysis of the passage from *Chichi no shūen nikki* in which Issa relates the death of his father, I examine the way that Issa used multiple types of citation, perhaps not always consciously, to make his father's death both moving and comprehensible in language, and I show the importance of intertextuality as a step toward understanding the representation of death and dying in *Chichi no shūen nikki*.

Kobayashi Yagobei

When Issa was born in 1763 (Hōreki 13), Yagobei was a middle class farmer, aged 31;[14]

[9] An important exception which reprints the whole text is Yaba Katsuyuki. *Chichi no shūen nikki, ora ga haruta ippen* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1992). Yaba also discusses the structure of the text on pages 307-313.

[10] Huey, "Journal of My Father's Last Days," 25-54. Huey's problematization of what I will later call "Nikki honbun" text as a diary is on pages 28 to 30. Huey would have strengthened his arguments by positioning "Nikki honbun" within the complete text.

[11] While the word citation carries strong connotations of an agent making conscious choices, I will, in this essay, extend the word to cover situations where it seems probable that Issa is unconsciously borrowing from the classical past as well.

[13] According to the document settling the division of the estate, Issa received the "southern half" of the house. It also outlines which fields Issa got as well as the fact that his step-brother was to provide him with household goods and bedding (Kobayashi, Maruyama, and Yaba, editors and annotators, *Issa zenshū volume 9 (bekkan) shiryō, hoi*, 70-71).

[14] Yaba Katsuyuki, *Issa daijiten*, 3. I have fol-

however, the age of his mother, Kuni, is unknown.[15] Yagobei's total holdings of 6.05 *koku*[16] put him in the upper portion of the middle class farmers in his village.[17] His property was divided between 3.41 *koku* of paddy and 2.64 *koku* of non-paddy field which, according to Kobayashi Keichirō, placed Yagobei's holdings as the 47th largest out of the 138 *honbyakushō* households.[18] In addition, Yagobei owned a post-horse and earned money by transporting goods along the Hokkoku Kaidō thoroughfare that ran through Kashiwabara.[19] Kuni was the daughter of the headman of one of Kashiwabara's branch villages, suggesting the social and economic status that Yagobei had achieved.[20]

These are the limited facts we can glean about Yagobei from historical documents. While they indicate that he was hard working and dependable, they say little about his personality, desires, and hopes. Although there are reasons to doubt the veracity of portions of *Chichi no shūen nikki*, as long as we realize that the text is not necessarily objective in ways that its genre markers suggest, it tells us things about Yagobei that historical documents cannot reveal.[21] For instance, while it is a historical fact that most villagers in Kashiwabara were parishioners of *Jōdo Shinshū* (True Pure Land) Buddhism,[22] it is still touching to read about Yagobei gargling, facing the Buddha, and reading scriptures aloud on the sixth day of his illness.[23] This passage also shows that Yagobei was literate.[24] Another example is on the 13th day of the fifth month when Yagobei drank 5 *gō* (900 milliliters) of *sake* over

lowed Yaba in giving ages throughout this essay.

[15] Kobayashi Keiichirō, *Kobayashi Issa* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1961) 17.

[16] *Koku* is a measure of volume of grain equal to 180 liters.

[17] Yaba, *Issa daijiten,* 3.

[18] *Honbyakushō* households were fully fledged members of the village. They paid taxes and owned fields and houses.

[19] Kobayashi, *Kobayashi Issa*, 18. Family registers in most regions of Japan were updated yearly in the early modern period but in Kashiwabara they were produced biennially. All entries for the period from 1788 to 1805, when Senroku (Yagobei's second son and Issa's step-brother) is listed as the family head, show the family owning a horse. The entry for 1815 specifically mentions that there is no horse (Kobayashi, Maruyama, and Yaba, *Issa zenshū volume 9 (bekkan) shiryō, hoi*, 75-81, especially 75-76).

[20] Yaba, *Issa daijiten,* 3.

[21] I will return to this problem later but, for example, the text characterizes Issa as extremely filial while his step-brother and step-mother are shown as greedily awaiting Yagobei's death. Another more difficult problem is the question of how accurately "events" have been portrayed in the text. As Kobayashi Keichirō points out, it is highly unlikely that Issa was in Kashiwabara when his father fell ill as the text portrays. It is more probable that Issa was called from Edo by Senroku (Kobayashi, *Kobayashi Issa*, 86). Ueda Makoto notes, however, that there is an extant *haikai* linked verse sequence composed with local poets soon after Issa arrived. He suggests that this shows Issa was already in the village when his father fell ill— had he been called from Edo because of his father's illness, he would not have been composing linked verse with other poets (Ueda, *Dew on the Grass*, 42). Even so the text of *Chichi no shūen nikki* shows that Issa was not fully aware of the severity of his father's illness when it began. Issa wrote "… I did not realize until later that this was a foreshadowing of death" on the first day of his father's illness (Yaba, *Chichi no shūen nikki, ora ga haru, ta ippen*, 9). It is possible that he was called back to the village after his father fell ill but initially felt that the situation was not severe enough to require him to refrain from poetry.

[22] Kobayashi, *Kobayashi Issa*, 6.

[23] Yaba, *Chichi no shūen nikki, ora ga haru, ta ippen*, 12. Shinran, who was treated as the foundational figure of *Jōdo Shinshū* by later generations, died on the 28th day of the eleventh month of 1262 (Kōchō 2) so the 28th became a monthly day of commemoration for adherents. Issa described the scene thus: "It was cheerless to see his (Yagobei's) wasted form from behind." This was the last time that Yagobei would perform these rituals.

[24] Kobayashi Keichirō cites, as further proof, that Yagobei wrote out a will which he gave to Issa (Kobayashi, *Kobayashi Issa*, 93). Issa's step-brother, Senroku, was also literate. One of his letters in *Issa zenshū* is praised as well-written (Kobayashi, Maruyama, and Yaba, *Issa zenshū volume 9 (bekkan) shiryō, hoi*, 91).

the objections of Issa.[25] Coupled with the historical documents, then, *Chichi no shūen nikki* provides a fuller understanding of who Yagobei was: a hard working, literate, religious, *sake*-loving middle class farmer in Shinano Province in the late eighteenth century.

Yagobei's family situation is central to both the drama and narrative of *Chichi no shūen nikki*. Kuni died in 1765, when Issa was a little over two years old by western count. After her death, Issa was raised by his grandmother.[26] Sometime around Kuni's death, the fortunes of Yagobei began to decline sharply.[27] In 1770 Yagobei married again, to a woman named Hatsu[28] who gave birth in 1772 to Issa's step-brother (and only sibling), Senroku. Issa's grandmother, who according to Issa protected him from his step-mother, died in 1776. Although we have only Issa's account of their relationship, it is clear that Hatsu, Senroku, and Issa did not get along and this is probably the reason, rather than economic necessity, why Issa was sent to Edo to work in the spring of 1777.

The personal difficulties among the three were compounded by the fact that while Issa was in Edo, the family fortunes in Kashiwabara improved greatly. By 1789, the holdings of Yagobei were 10.86 *koku*. While they declined afterward (to 7.09 *koku* in 1801, the year of Yagobei's death), the family was much better off economically without Issa and his grandmother and Hatsu and Senroku working alongside Yagobei.[29] According to *Chichi no shūen nikki* the dying Yagobei wanted to split this property evenly between Senroku and Issa. Given that the increase in wealth had taken place largely during Issa's absence, neither Senroku nor Hatsu are portrayed as being happy with Yagobei's choice even though equal division of estates was common in Shinano.[30] Yagobei's will set in motion a long feud which was finally resolved in 1808 when Issa and Senroku came to an agreement which paved the way for Issa to return to Kashiwabara permanently in 1810.[31]

These facts help us understand who the mortally ill Yagobei was as well as the family drama that his illness and death set off. Let us now examine how Issa constructed Yagobei's death in language, and in particular how he used important citations from the *Hōbutsu-shū* to do so.

Chichi no shūen nikki and *Hōbutsu-shū*

Chichi no shūen nikki was written on the reverse side of a collection of *hokku* (haiku) called *Gasen saitanchō* which was published in 1800 (Kansei 12) by the *haikai* poet Gasen. Issa had published *hokku* in Gasen's *saitanchō*[32] as early as 1791 (Kansei 3) and he had some in the 1800 collection as well.[33] The manuscript is untitled and was known by various names such as "Kanbyō nikki" (A Nurse's Diary) and "Mitori nikki" (Diary of the Vigil at my Father's Deathbed) until Tsuka-

[25] Because *sake* had been prohibited by the doctors. Yaba, *Chichi no shūen nikki, ora ga haru, ta ippen*, 37.

[26] "Sobo sanjū-san nenki" in Yaba, *Issa daijiten,* 398-399.

[27] Kobayashi, *Kobayashi Issa*, 18. Kobayashi's graph on page 19 shows that the wealth of the family spiked from 3.92 *koku* in 1760 to 6.05 *koku* in 1763 (the year of Issa's birth) and then declined to 3.71 *koku* by 1772. Furthermore, it had been between 3.91 *koku* to 3.98 *koku* from 1742 to 1760. So whether this was a "decline" or a "return" to norms requires investigation.

[28] Also known as Satsu. Following Yaba, *Issa daijiten,* 3 and other sources, I will refer to her as Hatsu.

[29] Kobayashi, *Kobayashi Issa*, 19.

[30] Muramatsu Tomotsugu suggests that the Senroku's argument with Yagobei's decision was not over the division of the estate but over which child received which fields (Muramatsu Tomotsugu, *Issa no tegami* (Tokyo: Taishūkan Shoten, 1996) 36).

[31] See Kobayashi, Maruyama, and Yaba *Issa zenshū volume 9 (bekkan) shiryō, hoi,* 70-71. Yaba suggests that *Chichi no shūen nikki* is important in Japanese literary history because it is the first text in which a family explicitly fights over a father's will (Yaba Katsuyuki, *Shinano no Issa* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1994) 13).

[32] New Year's compendia of *hokku*.

[33] It was not unusual to use the back side of paper for notes or drafts in early modern period Japan. For example Issa used the back side of one of his own publications, *Issa-en tsukinami*, to jot down *hokku*. See Yaba Katsuyuki, *Shinshū kōgenji Issa shinshiryō-shū* (Nagano: Shinano Mainichi Shinbun-sha, 1986) 97-125.

matsu Rokō named it *Chichi no shūen nikki*.[34] It was first published (in modern printed form) in 1922 from a text prepared by Tsukamatsu.[35] The haiku poet Ogiwara Seisensui, however, maintained that Tsukamatsu made too many changes and he revised the text for Iwanami Shoten's Iwanami Bunkō series.[36]

Issa did not finish writing *Chichi no shūen nikki* and it is undated. The main body of the text relates events which took place in 1801 (Kyōwa 1) and Yaba Katsuyuki argues that the latest possible date of composition is 1806 or 1807 (Bunka 3 or 4). While some scholars have maintained that it was written as evidence to be marshaled by Issa in his dispute with Senroku, Yaba suggests that it is an early draft of a work of belles-lettres.[37] Given Issa's aptitude with various registers of early modern Japanese, it seems likely that Yaba is correct to conclude that Issa was working on a text that he intended to be aesthetically pleasing rather than legally persuasive.

The text, as a whole, can be divided into three main parts. The first is called "Nikki honbun."[38] This is a fairly well constructed "diary" that covers the period from the onset of Issa's father's illness on the 23rd day of the 4th month through the end of the first seven days of mourning on the 28th day of the 5th month. "Nikki honbun" is the part of *Chichi no shūen nikki* that is most commonly anthologized because it can be read as *bungaku* (literature) in the modern sense of the word.[39] It is this part of the text which both Huey and Bolitho have translated into English and in the next section of this paper, I will re-translate and analyze the day which contains the description of Yagobei's death from "Nikki honbun."

The second part of the text is called "Nikki bekki." It covers the period of time from Issa's early childhood to his fifteenth year when he was sent to Edo by his father to work. Yaba notes that this is an important source for information about Issa's early years and because the style of the handwriting is the same as the "Nikki honbun" he believes that the two were written at about the same time. There are no direct thematic ties between "Nikki bekki" and "Nikki honbun" and "Nikki bekki" makes no mention of Yagobei's death so I will not deal with it in this paper.[40]

The third part of *Chichi no shūen nikki* is called "Nikki kakiire." Most of this section consists of notes appended after "Nikki bekki."[41] Yaba divides these into two categories. The first is made up of notes that he considers to be preparation for a re-writing of "Nikki honbun" and the second are those

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[34] Ōshiki Zuike, *Kobayashi Issa: jinsei no hiai* (Tokyo: Shintensha, 1984) 127-128.

[35] Yaba, *Chichi no shūen nikki, ora ga haru, ta ippen*, 307.

[36] Ogiwara Seisensui, editor, *Issa ikō: chichi no shūen nikki* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1934) 72. Besides being a renowned haiku poet, Ogiwara was one of the most important editors and annotators of Issa's texts in the twentieth century. His version of *Chichi no shūen nikki* was in print at least until 1982 so it is probably the most common way that it was read in the twentieth century.

[37] Yaba, *Issa daijiten,* 487.

[38] I will use Yaba's names for the three parts (Yaba, *Chichi no shūen nikki, ora ga haru, ta ippen*, 307-313).

[39] See, for instance, the introduction to *Kokubungaku dokuhon* where it is suggested that the word *bungaku* had become common even if people did not know what, exactly, it meant. By 1890, people were not only theorizing about *bungaku* but more importantly they were also "practicing" it. (Haga Yaichi and Tachibana Senzaburō, compilers. Ueda Kazutoshi, editor. *Kokubungaku dokuhon* (Tokyo: Fuzanbō, 1890) pages "i" to "ro."). The meaning of *bungaku* in *Kokubungaku dokuhon* is certainly closer to "literature" than is the use of the word in the early modern *Dai Nihon shi retsuden sansō* where the best English translation might be "belles-lettres." See Asaka Tanpaku. "Dai Nihon shi Sansō." In *Kinsei shiron-shū*. Matsumoto Sannosuke and Ogura Yoshihiko, editors and annotators (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1974), especially pages 214 and following.

[40] Yaba, *Chichi no shūen nikki, ora ga haru, ta ippen*, 310. Portions of it are translated in Bickerton, Huey, and Bolitho.

[41] There is one exception to this, the poem by Lady Umetsubo that I discuss below. This segment is classified as part of the "Nikki kakiire" by Yaba and other scholars but it was written in the margin above the "Nikki honbun." I presume they have based their judgments on an analysis of the handwriting in the two different segments of the text.

which he sees as having no relation to *Chichi no shūen nikki*.[42] According to Yaba, the first category of notes can be further divided into two parts. One section consists of citations from the *Hōbutsu-shū*.[43] The other is made up of notes taken from different sources or sentences written by Issa.[44] Some of the citations from the *Hōbutsu-shū* are preceded by dates that corresponding to entries in "Nikki honbun." Yaba theorizes that Issa re-read the "Nikki honbun" after making extracts from the *Hōbutsu-shū* and added dates to those citations he planned to use when he rewrote the text.[45]

Since these dated extracts provide insight into the way that Issa composed as well as the way he represented events in the material world in language, a few words about the *Hōbutsu-shū* are in order. It is attributed to Taira no Yasuyori (dates unknown, active in the late 12th century). According to *Heike monogatari*, Yasuyori was exiled to Kikaigashima in 1177 (Angen 3) because of his involvement in the Shishigatani plot against Taira no Kiyomori.[46] He was allowed to return to the capital in 1179 (Jishō 3).[47] The person listening to the discussions that are recorded in the *Hōbutsu-shū* has just returned from exile on Kikaigashima and this may be the basis of the attribution of the text to Yasuyori. Assuming that Yasuyori wrote the work, the initial version must have been composed between his return and the first mention of it in 1198 (Kenkyū 9).[48]

In the narrative frame of the *Hōbutsu-shū*, the returnee visits a friend in the capital (Kyoto) and then sets out to see a statue of Shakyamuni at Seiryōji. He spends the night at the temple where he listens to the other pilgrims discussing what the greatest treasure in this world is. After hearing such answers as wealth, children, and health, a priest tells them that the correct answer is Buddhism. The remainder of the *Hōbutsu-shū* consists of questions posed by a young woman and the priest's answers. The priest explains such Buddhist concepts as the *rokudō*, the six paths of existence for sentient beings,[49] by using religious tales and Japanese and Chinese poetry for illustration. Nakajima Hidenori argues that the *Hōbutsu-shū* is meant to introduce Buddhist doctrine rather than to serve as a collection of religious and secular tales such *Uji shūi monogatari* or *Konjaku monogatari-shū*.[50]

The title "*Hōbutsu-shū*" is applied to a diverse collection of related texts which vary greatly in their content. Nakajima lists 8 major varieties of the *Hōbutsu-shū*. His classification actually simplifies the diversity since he lists other versions that he does not categorize into the eight major varieties.[51] In an article about the relationship between *Hōbutsu-shū* and *Chichi no shūen nikki*, Yaba Katsuyuki makes even finer distinctions within several of Nakajima's categories.[52] Like its near contemporary text, *Heike monogatari*, the *Hōbutsu-shū* is really a single name for multiple texts.

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[42] Yaba, *Chichi no shūen nikki, ora ga haru, ta ippen*, 310. The notes that Yaba feels were not made in preparation for a revision of *Chichi no shūen nikki* consist mostly of the *hokku* by local poets, many of whom would become members of Issa's poetry circle after Issa settled permanently in Kashiwabara.

[43] Discussed below.

[44] Yaba, *Chichi no shūen nikki, ora ga haru, ta ippen*, 310. Yaba argues, from his analysis of Issa's handwriting, that the notes copied from the *Hōbutsu-shū* were made over the period of a few years (Yaba Katsuyuki, "Issa no 'Chichi no shūen nikki' wa himerareta shinjitsu wo doko made katatte iru ka," *Kokubungaku* (February 1993) 110-113. Page 113).

[45] Yaba, "Issa no 'Chichi no shūen nikki' wa himerareta shinjitsu wo doko made katatte iru ka," 113.

[46] Mizuhara Hajime, editor and annotator, *Heike monogatari jō (volume 1)* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1979) 175-188.

[47] Mizuhara, *Heike monogatari jō* (volume 1), 207-217.

[48] *Nihon koten bungaku daijiten volume 4*. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1984) 439.

[49] Heavenly deities, humans, *ashura* (war-riors), animals, hungry ghosts, and denizens of hell.

[50] The tales presented in the *Hōbutsu-shū* are usually in a condensed form. Nakajima Hidenori, "Hōbutsu-shū," *Setsuwa-shū no sekai II: chūsei*, edited by Honda Giken et al. (Tokyo: Benzeisha, 1995) 25. Setsuwa no kōza #5.

[51] Nakajima, "Hōbutsu-shū," 26.

[52] See Yaba, "Issa no 'Chichi no shūen nikki' wa himerareta shinjitsu wo doko made katatte iru ka," 110-113. Yaba distinguishes six varieties of "Hiragana Old-Printed Sankan-bon" for instance.

Yaba argues that Issa could have seen 19 different versions of the *Hōbutsu-shū*. By studying the waka that Issa cited, Yaba was able to narrow the possible texts to either the "Hiragana seiban sankanbon" or the "Genroku rokunen kanbon." Yaba concludes that Issa in all likelihood used the "Hiragana seiban sankanbon" because he did not choose any of the waka that are only in the other text. Yaba's investigation of the Chinese poetry that Issa extracted further backs up his argument.[53]

In this paper I work with the passages from the *Hōbutsu-shū* as Issa copied them. This approach is motivated both by fidelity to Issa and the unfortunate fact that the "Hiragana seiban sankanbon" is not readily available in either modern printed formats or facsimile reproductions.[54] I have, where appropriate, referred to Koizumi Hiroshi and Yamada Shōzen's extensive annotations in *Hōbutsu-shū, kankyo no tomo, hirasan kojin reitaku*.[55]

Issa's Narration of Yagobei's Death

The following is a translation of *Chichi no shūen nikki* on the day that Issa's father died:

The twentieth day, fifth month

Father's fever continued to worsen. In the morning he ate just a bowl of gruel.[56] Around noon his face became pale. Eyes half closed, his mouth moved as if he were trying to say something. With each breath phlegm rattled around as though it were attacking his life and so he became weaker and weaker. As the sun streaming through the window approached the hour of the sheep,[57] father could no longer make out the faces of people. The situation was hopeless. I would have gladly traded my life for his if I could but once more see him alive, strong, and eating. It was so desperate that even the most famous doctors in the world such Kiba and Hen Jaku[58] would not have had the skill to save him. Without the intervention of the gods there was nothing left but to invoke Amida.

寐すがたの蠅追ふもけふかぎり哉

Today is my last chance to chase flies away from his sleeping body[59]

Thus the day ended. From the basin of water by his pillow, all I could do was wet his lips without hope.

The moon of the twentieth night shone through the window. The neighbors had quieted down and gone to sleep. At about the time that the cock should start to crow, the sound of father's breathing died down and the phlegm that rose from his heart sometimes blocked his throat. Even if I could not save

[53] Yaba, "Issa no 'Chichi no shūen nikki' wa himerareta shinjitsu wo doko made katatte iru ka," 111.

[54] It would be interesting to know whether Issa made any changes to the text he copied.

[55] Koizumi Hiroshi, Yamada Shōzen, Kojima Takayuki, and Kinoshita Motoichi, editors and annotators, *Hōbutsu-shū, kankyo no tomo, hirasan kojin reitaku* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1993). Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei #40. Their text is based on one of the *shichikanbon* (seven volume) versions.

[56] Kawashima Tsuyu writes that both the meaning and the reading of Issa's text is unclear here (Teruoka Yasutaka and Kawashima Tsuyu, editors, *Buson-shū, Issa-shū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1959) 424. Nihon koten bungaku taikei #58). Most editions provide the reading *awako* but none make it clear whether this is supported in Issa's original text or not. The annotators of the text in *Issa zenshū* suggest that the word refers to a thin gruel made from the starch of the dogtooth violet (片栗粉) (Kobayashi Keiichirō, Maruyama Kazuhiko, editors and annotators. *Issa zenshū volume 5 kikō, nikki; haibun shūi; jihitsu kushū; renku; haikaika*, (Nagano: Shinano Mainichi Shinbun-sha, 1978) 103).

[57] About 2 p.m.

[58] I discuss these two doctors in the next section.

[59] Flies and afternoon nap (*hirune*) are related *haikai* words. Although Yagobei is mortally ill rather than just resting, the flies and the sleeping body can be seen as linked here. See Takase Baisen. *Ruisenshū, volumes 1 to 7*. Kyoto: Terada Yoheiji, 1676. Volume 1, Leaf 29, obverse. Facsimile PDF reproduction from http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/-kotenseki/html/Bunko20/Bunko20_00337/index.-html, accessed on 19 September 2010.

his life, I should have at least liked to have cleared the phlegm. But since I am not as great a doctor as Ka Da, I have no extraordinary skill as a healer.[60] There was nothing left to do but wait, with deep sadness and pain, for the hour of my father's death. The gods did not take pity on us and as the dawn began to break, just after the hour of the rabbit, father stopped breathing and seemed as if he were asleep.[61]

We surrounded the corpse. I prayed that this was but a dream from which I would soon awake. Be it dream or reality, it felt as though I were left without a candle in the darkness and that nothing remained in the world to rely on.

Beckoned by the wind, the fickle flowers of spring scatter. In this world of ceaseless change the autumn moon often hides behind clouds. Moreover, those who are born must certainly die and those who meet must assuredly part. It is the way of the world. It is the road that all must travel once. But not knowing whether my father would travel it today or tomorrow was foolish. Even though evening after evening I nursed my father in earnest, it all came to naught in an instant. Those who had been fighting with my father until yesterday surrounded the corpse and began to wail. The voices of those chanting the name of Amida were hoarse. Now they realized that the duties of those who grow old together and share the same grave had not been fulfilled.

Constructing a Moving Death in Language

To understand the role that intertextuality plays in Issa's narration of the death of Yagobei, I examine three forms of citation in the above passage. The first two could be labeled "quotation" and "allusion." However, in order to grasp the function of citation in the entire passage, I will use the terms "citation of textual sources" and "citation of cultural codes" instead.[62] The third form of citation I take up is "citation of the cultural imagination."[63] By examining each of these forms of citation, we can appreciate the fundamental importance of the classical past not merely to embellish but to convey meaning and to create affect as well.

I will begin with the citations of textual sources since they are relatively easy to find and understand. Matsuo Yasuaki, in his annotations of *Chichi no shūen nikki* identifies three examples of citation of textual sources, all in the final paragraph. Each example intensifies emotional affect in the passage through citation of the classical past.[64] Matsuo's first example is from *Heike monogatari* and is translated as "Beckoned by the wind, the fickle flowers of spring scatter. In this world of ceaseless change the autumn moon often hides behind clouds."[65] This citation fits the mood and theme of the rest of the passage — the ephemerality of worldly matters. The tropes used here, the scattering of cherry blossoms and the fact that the most beautiful moon of the year is often hidden by clouds, place the passage within the authoritative tradition of Japanese poetry. By taking part in this tradition, the meaning of Issa's text exceeds the literal meaning of the words themselves by calling a much larger web of intertextual play. This enables Issa to movingly express the depths of his despair in just a few words.

The second citation of a textual source is also said to be from *Heike monogatari.* It deals more

[60] Discussed below.

[61] About 5 a.m.

[62] I have borrowed the term "citation of cultural codes" from Roland Barthes in *S/Z*. (Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, Translated by Richard Miller, preface by Richard Howard. (New York: The Noonday Press, 1974) 18-20).

[63] I think it is likely that Barthes would have considered this to be a form of "citation of cultural codes" but, as I will show below, I think it is useful to treat it separately since it seems probable that the examples of it that I have identified were not made consciously by Issa.

[64] Matsuo Yasuaki, "Haibun-hen," in *Buson-shū, Issa-shū*. Kuriyama Riichi et al. editors. (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1983). Nihon no koten kanyaku #57.

[65] See Takagi Ichinosuke, Ozawa Masao, Atsumi Kaoru, Kindaiichi Haruhiko, editors and annotators, *Heike monogatari ge (volume 2)* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1960), 428 for this passage in *Heike monogatari*. Kawashima Tsuyu does not treat this phrase as a citation (in Teruoka and Kawashima, *Buson-shū, Issa-shū*, 425).

explicitly with death: "Moreover, those who are born must certainly die and those who meet must assuredly part." Matsuo treats *Heike monogatari* as the immediate pre-text for this passage but Yaba goes further by noting that it is ultimately based on a line from the *Nehan-gyō*.[66] In other words, the use of the phrase in *Heike monogatari* is already a citation of Buddhist sutras. To my knowledge, this passage occurs in full one time in the "Hyaku ni-jūbon" version of *Heike monogatari* in the section "Koremori jyusui."[67] It also appears in truncated form later in the section entitled "Ōidono saigo."[68]

However,this phrase and its evocation of ephemerality is part of a much larger web of intertextuality, one about which there are diverse assessments. Besides being used in *Heike monogatari* and Buddhist sutras, Mizuhara Hajime points out that the first half of the phrase was used in a written supplication by Ōe Asatsuna which is included in *Honchō monzui*.[69] Mizuhara further indicates that the citation of the phrase in *Heike monogatari* is probably not directly from *Honchō monzui* but rather from *Hōbutsu-shū*.[70] Although Issa's source is unclear, it is fair to assume that it is not *Honchō monzui* since his citation is closer to that in the "Koremori jyusui." The question, then, is whether Issa is citing *Heike monogatari* as Yaba and Matsuo suggest or whether he is working from the *Hōbutsu-shū* or possibly even the Buddhist sutras themselves.[71]

What is important as far as constructing his feelings about his father's death in words, though, is that the cited phrase takes part in an extensive web of intertextuality with classical sources. This increases the affective power of the passage, at least for the reader who knows the phrase since it allows the death of Yagobei to resonate with the death of Taira no Koremori and Buddhist sutras.[72] Issa could have written in straightforward language that he was sad because he would never see his father again. This might have been more "accurate" or "objective" in terms of the situation but it would not have expressed his emotions as strongly nor would it have been as likely to move his readers.

The third citation identified by Matsuo is from the classical Japanese poetic tradition: "But not knowing whether my father would travel it today or tomorrow was foolish."[73] According to Matsuo, this passage cites a poem by Ariwara no Narihira:

病（やまひ）して弱くなりにける時、よめる　業平朝臣

つひにゆく道はかねて聞きしかど昨日今日とは思はざりしを

---

[66] Yaba, *Chichi no shūen nikki, ora ga haru, ta ippen*, 51-52. The *Nehan-gyō* is also known as *Dai-hatsu nehan-gyō*.

[67] Kenneth D. Butler, among others, discusses the diversity of the corpus of texts which are labeled *Heike monogatari.* Kenneth D. Butler, "The Textual Evolution of The Heike Monogatari," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 26 (1966): 5-51. See especially pages 6-10. See Mizuhara Hajime, editor and annotator, *Heike monogatari ge (volume 3)* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1981) 191.

[68] Only the first four Chinese characters appear here. Mizuhara, *Heike monogatari ge (volume 3) (Volume 3),* 310.

[69] Mizuhara Hajime, *Heike monogatari ge (volume 3)),* 310, note 3. *Honchō monzui* is a collection of writings in classical Chinese by writers from what is now considered Japan that was probably compiled in the years between 1058 and 1065 but which includes texts from the previous two hundred years. The use of the phrase can be found in Ōsone Shōsuke, Kinbara Tadashi, Gotō Akio, editors and annotators, *Honchō monzui* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1992) 372.

[70] I have not been able to use Mizuhara's citation to find the phrase there. Perhaps he is referring to one of the many variants which are not readily available.

[71] Of course it is also possible that Issa remembered the phrase without being able to identify its source. However, there are other citations of *Heike monogatari* as a textual source in "Nikki honbun."

[72] 1158- about 1184. Eldest son of Taira no Shigemori.

[73] Yaba (*Chichi no shūen nikki, ora ga haru, ta ippen)* and Kawashima (in Teruoka and Kawashima, *Buson-shū, Issa-shū)* do not identify this citation. Yaba (in *Issa daijiten*, 387-388) and Kobayashi and Maruyama (*Issa zenshū volume 5 kikō, nikki; haibun shūi; jihitsu kushū; renku; haikaika*, (pages 83 and 103)) do.

> When I had weakened from illness, I, Lord Narihira, composed the following:
>
> I had heard of the road that we must all travel in the end but yesterday I did not think it would be today that I would travel it[74]

Issa borrows heavily from it in terms of both language and feeling. It is, however, no longer the narrator who is going to die. Rather, Issa berates himself for not realizing that his father would soon be dead. The citation, once released into the new context of *Chichi no shūen nikkii,* changes in meaning but at the same time, it uses the authority of previous texts to increase the emotional power of Issa's self-critical lament. In this passage, as well as the above two, Issa relies on the power of intertextual citation to indicate to the reader the depth of his feeling.

I will now move on to my second form of intertextuality, the citation of cultural codes. The reference to doctors in the first paragraph of Issa's text translated above is an example. In order to intensify the feeling of helplessness in the face of death, Issa cites the names of two famous doctors: *Giba* (Sanskrit: *Jīvaka*) and *Hen Jaku* (Mandarin: *Biǎn Què*). Potential readers presumably knew that Issa was referring to doctors of the highest skill.[76] If a medical case was beyond them, it was beyond hope. Issa could have indicated this by writing, "there was no hope" but the reference to the doctors allows him, via intertextuality, to intensify his feeling of despair.[77] The later mention of Ka Da,[78] another Chinese doctor, also works in this way. Such cultural codes provide a way to construct a description of an event, to provide it with poignancy without stating things directly.

There is another phrase in this text that is not identified by any of the editors but which might be considered as "citation of cultural codes." It is the phrase which I have translated as "those who grow old together and share the same grave." It is based on citations from two different poems in the *Shī jīng* 詩經, the first collection of poetry in Chinese.[79] Issa attended lectures on the *Shī jīng* starting in 1803 (Kyōwa 3). However the phrase is also common enough (at least today) to be included in many Japanese dictionaries so it is also possible that Issa knew the phrase before attending the lectures. The first half of the phrase (偕老) is used in several poems including "Máng" (氓) in the "Wèi fēng" (衛風) section and "Jūnzǐ xíelǎo" (君子偕老) in "Yōng fēng" (鄘風) section. The second half (同穴) is used only in the poem "Dà jū" (大車) in the "Wáng Fēng" (王風) section.[80]

This phrase clearly shows the problem that lies in trying to draw strict boundaries between different forms of citation and it is one reason to posit a typology of citation in order to strategically read *Chichi no shūen nikki* rather than use the more tra-

[74] This is poem number 861 of the *Kokin waka shū*. It also appears in the final (125th) chapter of *Ise monogatari* where the preface to the poem is different.

[76] They might have further known that *Giba* became a follower of the historical Buddha and was eventually successful in converting the regicide King Ajase (Sanskrit: *Ajātaśatru*) who later became a defender of the new religion or that *Hen Jaku* came from the state of *Tei* (Mandarin: *Zhèng*) during the Warring States period and learned several secret remedies which he applied to cure many famous people.

[77] He further intensifies this by citing two more examples from cultural codes— the heavenly deities and the good gods— who also are unable to aid Yagobei.

[78] Mandarin: Huà Tuó. He was a doctor in the last years of the Later Han and the early years of the Wei dynasties. He is reputed, among other things, to have developed anesthetic which he used to perform surgeries.

[79] *Shi kyō* in Japanese. The text is reputed to have been redacted by Confucius and contains 305 poems (plus the titles of six others).

[80] Note that the Kōjien 5th Edition mistakenly attributes this phrase solely to the poem "*Dà jū"* where the phrase 死則同穴 (after death, the same grave) occurs, not 偕老同穴.

ditional terms from Western rhetoric. It could be a citation drawn from Issa's study of the *Shī jīng*, in which case it would be a "citation of textual sources" or "quotation."[81] Or it could be just a general phrase that Issa knew, without having the *Shī jīng* open in front of him. Then it might be considered "citation of cultural codes" or "allusion." In either case, though, it is a citation of the classical past and it works on two levels. First, it intensifies the feeling in the passage, at least for readers who know a portion of the web of intertextuality for the phrase. Second, it is an appropriate phrase to use to describe the material reality of life in Kashiwabara because families there literally share a single grave.[82] Whatever the type of citation this may be, it performs its work by intensifying feeling via the classical past while at the same time making reference to Issa's material present.

My third category of citation is the trickiest to work with. Given its role in constructing the meaning of death and dying as well as problematizing the ways that material reality is represented in *Chichi no shūen nikki*, I feel that "citation of the cultural imagination" is the most important category, though. Unlike the previous two forms of citation, citation of the cultural imagination may be an "accident" of language and culture rather than a conscious choice by the writer. In this form of citation, the writer may not be aware that she or he is citing another source.[83] In *S/Z*, Roland Barthes suggests that we are the sum of forgotten texts and all texts are themselves made up of forgotten texts.[84] If this is the case, then the way that a culture constructs "death" in texts is certainly dependent on forgotten texts which both enable and limit what can be said and thought. To give an example, Issa could not have written about death in the way that Yōrō Takeshi does.[85] It is not merely that Issa lacks Yōrō's modern scientific approach to the observation of death but also that his language did not contain many of the concepts upon which Yōrō's observations are based. At the same time, it is likely that both Yōrō and his readers are not fully aware of the genealogy of the numerous "forgotten texts" which enable him to effectively communicate his observations to us.

Attempting to discover the Issa's forgotten texts may sound like tilting at windmills; however, *Chichi no shūen nikki* is not a finished work and by reading "Nikki honbun" together with the "Nikki kakiire" at least one of Issa's forgotten texts, the *Hōbutsu-shū,* becomes clear. Furthermore this forgotten text and its description of death casts doubt upon the "veracity" or "objectivity" of Issa's description of Yagobei's death. At the very least it suggests the importance of historicizing *Chichi no shūen nikki* and the way that it narrates Yagobei's death.

"Nikki kakiire" contains three passages from the *Hōbutsu-shū* which are dated the twentieth, indicating perhaps that Issa considered them as material to use in a future revision of the text. I will only consider the first two in this paper.[86] The first passage is a poem:

> 梅壷の女御、御病大事になりてよみ給ふ。
>
> 翌迄（あすまで）もあるべきものと思はねばけふ日ぐらしの声ぞかなしき
>
> The Lady Umetsubo composed this poem when her illness had reached a critical

[81] According to the Kōjien, it was also used in other texts such as *Heiji monogatari*.

[82] The grave marked "Kobayashi Issa's grave" in the graveyard of Kashiwabara is, in fact, the Kobayashi family grave.

[83] It cannot, thus, be considered as a form of allusion or quotation. I am not an expert on classical Western rhetoric but it seems that there is a strong emphasis on conscious recognition of devices by the author and readers. If that is indeed the case, then one of Barthes's contributions to modern Western rhetoric is the recognition of a kind of "rhetorical unconscious" represented by forgotten texts.

[84] Barthes, *S/Z*, 10-11. The first two forms of citation I have discussed show that Barthes may be engaging in a bit of hyperbole though. We do, in part, create texts from "remembered" texts as well.

[85] Yōrō Takeshi, *Kami to hito no kaibōgaku* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2002).

[86] The third segment is interesting because it cites classical Chinese sources and shows, to some extent, how a medieval text such as the *Hōbutu-shū* created meaning via intertextuality. But it has a less obvious relationship to Issa's narrative in *Chichi no shūen nikki* than the two segments that I consider here.

stage:[87]

> I do not think I shall last until tomorrow so today the song of the evening cicadas seems particularly sad[88]

This appears in the "illness" section of the *Hōbutsu-shū*. It was written in the upper margin of the twentieth day's entry in "Nikki honbun" so it seems that had he revised the text, Issa would have included this poem or a reference to it.[89] The sense of ephemerality in the poem is heightened by the name of the type of the cicada: *higurashi* or "lives a single day."[90] The poem might have been used in parallel with or in place of the one ascribed to Narihira to further stress the fact that we do not know when a loved one will die. But there is a significant impediment. Seasonally the *higurashi* is associated in *haikai* (haiku) poetry with the seventh month and Yagobei died in the fifth month.[91] How a poet as attuned to seasonal references as Issa was might have worked through this is an interesting problem. *Higurashi* are not as good for representing Yagobei's death as flies but the sentiments are close to what is already in the passage. Nonetheless, Lady Umetsubo's poem shows the importance of the classical poetic tradition with its strong feelings of ephemerality as a part of Issa's forgotten texts about death and dying. Still, the concept of the ephemerality of life is so common in Japanese texts that it is hard to suggest that this poem shows that the *Hōbutsu-shū* is one of Issa's forgotten texts.

The second quote, however, shows this more clearly. It is from the "death" section of the *Hōbutsu-shū* and might well have served as a forgotten text for the narration of Yagobei's death in *Chichi no shūen nikki*.[92]

> The pain of death. Disease attacks the forty-four joints.[93] The tongue draws back. The eyes roll back. Try to say something and you cannot. Try to see something and you cannot. The power of calling on Amida has limits, praying to *kami* provides no sign, and imploring the Buddha is fruitless. The medicines of Eiho and Masatada are ineffective.[94] The Daoist divinations of Yasunori and Seimei are not even worth mentioning.[95]

This passage is a description of death and dying from medieval Japan, describing the ways people try to stop its onslaught. First people turn to prayers to Amida, the *kami*, and the Buddha, then the medicines of famous doctors, but even Daoist practitioners, no matter how famous, cannot stop the inevitable.

Although this text is not quoted as a "citation of textual sources" in the "Nikki honbun" it is still "present." As Yagobei approaches death, he looks as if he is trying to say things but cannot, his eyes

[87] Fujiwara Seishi. 1014-1068. A court lady of the Gosuzaku emperor.

[88] This poem is number 1418 in the *Shoku kokin waka-shū*. It appears in other collections as well.

[89] At least the version in: Koizumi, Yamada, Kojima, and Kinoshita, *Hōbutsu-shū, kankyo no tomo, hirasan kojin reitaku*, 76-86. There is no reason to think it might have appeared in other sections of other versions of the *Hōbutsu-shū*. Kobayashi and Maruyama, *Issa zenshū volume 5 kikō, nikki; haibun shūi; jihitsu kushū; renku; haikaika*, 106.

[90] The *higurashi* is said to have a beautiful chirp, sounding something like "*kanakana*."

[91] Kyokutei Bakin, *Haikai saijiki* (Edo (Tokyo): Tsutaya Jūsaburō, 1803) leaf 158, obverse. Photographic Reproduction from Waseda University Library's web site: http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/-kotenseki/html/he05/he05_04664/. Accessed on 4 April 2007. The seventh month is autumn according to the traditional calendar. The fifth month is summer according to the traditional calendar.

[92] The text in Koizumi, Yamada, Kojima, and Kinoshita, *Hōbutsu-shū, kankyo no tomo, hirasan kojin reitaku*, page 86 differs significantly from the following text.

[93] According to Yaba, the number 44 is arbitrary since the word four sounds like death in Japanese (Yaba, *Chichi no shūen nikki, ora ga haru, ta ippen*, 78). Koizumi et al. suggest that the number is related to traditional Chinese medicine (Koizumi, Yamada, Kojima, and Kinoshita, *Hōbutsu-shū, kankyo no tomo, hirasan kojin reitaku*, 85).

[94] Heian doctors. Yaba, *Chichi no shūen nikki, ora ga haru, ta ippen*, 79.

[95] Kamo no Yasunori, 917-977; Abe no Seimei, 921-1005.

are half-closed.[96] Both Amida and the *kami* are invoked and Issa notes that even the efforts of famous doctors would be for naught. It is likely that Issa copied this passage from the *Hōbutsu-shū* some time after he wrote "Nikki honbun" yet it already seems to be cited, though probably not consciously, in "Nikki honbun."[97] There are several possible explanations for this. Perhaps Yagobei's death actually resembled the description in *Hōbutsu-shū*.[98] Maybe Issa read the *Hōbutsu-shū* just before or as he was writing "Nikki honbun." But given that Issa does not directly cite *Hōbutsu-shū* in other parts of "Nikki honbun" this second possibility seems unlikely. If he had not read it recently, then the *Hōbutsu-shū* would have been one of Issa's forgotten texts. If he had not read it at all, then it could be one of his forgotten texts in the sense that it had created part of the cultural imagining of death in early modern Japan. In other words, Issa may be citing the text while narrating Yagobei's death, without being consciously aware of doing so, perhaps even without having read it if it had become part of the way that his culture imagined death. The *Hōbutsu-shū* would then be a forgotten text, forming a part of Issa's cultural imagining of death.

If this is the case, then this passage raises questions about the relationship between the death of Kobayashi Yagobei portrayed by Issa in *Chichi no shūen nikki* and his death in the material world.[99] In order to understand Issa's construction of death in language, it is useful to first give up trying to fit it into our modern "truth/fiction" binary.[100] I am not claiming that Issa lacked concepts akin or parallel to truth or fiction. Rather Issa and his contemporaries did not divide their truth/fiction binary in the same way that we do so some of the texts which are clearly fictional to us may have been seen as accurate reflections of reality in early nineteenth century Japan.[101] Elsewhere I have developed a concept for understanding the poetics of Kobayashi Issa which I called *aru ga mama*. This is a written text, fictional or not, which presents a state of affairs perceived by Issa and his contemporaries as more real than material reality itself.[102] In the case of the death of Yagobei, an *aru ga mama* description may not have been an accurate narration of events in material reality. Rather it was more likely created out of the "cultural imagination" of the *haikai* writer Issa. For Issa, the "*aru ga mama* reality" of Yagobei's death was best expressed by conveying the emotions he felt, via the citation of the classical past, rather than "objectively" using language to portray events in the material world or using his own words. If this is the standard Issa was writing towards, then Yagobei's death was portrayed in a realistic fashion for Issa and his potential contemporary readers precisely because of the way that it cites the classical past, both consciously and unconsciously, in order

[96] They do not roll back in his head.

[97] Since it follows "Nikki honbun" and the texts copied into "Nikki kakiire" seem to be preparation for a revision of "Nikki honbun."

[98] Given the rather detailed medical diagnosis given by Jinseki on the 26th day of the 4th month (the fourth day of Yagobei's illness) as well as the other clues provided, someone with a good knowledge of traditional Chinese medicine in early modern Japan might be able to reconstruct the course of Yagobei's illness. Yagobei was diagnosed as having *shōkan* (傷寒) which is considered to be typhus.

[99] There are many passages in *Chichi no shūen nikki* that make us doubt the veracity of the narrative. Another example is the "Search for a Pear" passage on the tenth day of the fifth month. Yaba argues that it is based on a passage in Saigyō's *Sankashū* (*Chichi no shūen nikki, ora ga haru, ta ippen*, 28-32 and 272). Yaba suggests that it is a *hon'an* (an adaptation) of texts by the poet Saigyō (1118-1190) as well as the stories of the twenty-four Chinese paragons of filial piety. I have mentioned some of the other problems with *Chichi no shūen nikki* above. Issa, of course, was under no obligation to write the "truth" for us. It is primarily the genre markers associated with "diaries" that encourage us to read *Chichi no shūen nikki* as reflecting reality.

[100] Other passages of *Chichi no shūen nikki* also fail to fit neatly into our truth/fiction binary.

[101] I am also not claiming that any culture has ever had a monolithic "truth/fiction" binary despite my facile reference to "modernity" as a kind of "universal" in this sentence.

[102] Hislop, "In Defense of Skinny Frogs: The Poetry and Poetics of Kobayashi Issa," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 2002), especially chapter 4.

to re-create the material event in language.[103] As Fujiwara Shunzei (1114-1204) suggested in the preface to his treatise on poetics, the *Koraifūteishō*, without the canon of poetry we would not be able to smell the flowers of spring or see the crimson leaves of autumn.[104] Shunzei's poetry is what enables people to appreciate the world— flowers and leaves have meaning only because of past poetic discourses.[105] Similarly death becomes comprehensible, and moving, in discourse only because of intertextuality with past discourses, many of them "forgotten."

For some cultures, moments of deep emotion might be most "accurately" narrated by a turn to the authority of the "cultural imagination" and citation to convey feelings rather than by a straightforward description of events. But citation in modern Western European and American literature has been seen as a fault for several centuries because the fear of being unoriginal is strong. Walter Jackson Bate has trenchantly called this the "burden of the past" and this, coupled with genre markers which encourage us to read the text as a "diary," may blind us to the importance of citation in *Chichi no shūen nikki*.[106]

While the past might also be a burden for many modern Japanese writers, for Issa and his contemporaries it was what enabled them to convey their feelings with the highest degree of narrative and poetic precision. By intertextually mobilizing the classical past and by participating in the cultural imagination (consciously or not), Issa conveys to readers the depths of his sadness at the death of his father which comes to have meaning in language in part via citation, conscious or otherwise, of the classical past.

Conclusion

The intertextual nature of *Chichi no shūen nikki*, particularly the kind of "forgotten text" that is represented by "citation of the cultural imagination" forces us to think about how Yagobei's death is narrated. If we wish to claim the *Chichi no shūen nikki* is a somehow valid representation of Issa's observations of Yagobei's death, we must first grasp the text in its historical specificity, starting with an understanding of what a "realistic" representation of dying would have been for Issa and his contemporaries.[107] In *Chichi no shūen nikki* this requires us to take into account the importance of citation of the classical past in the creation of "emotional realism." Had we been in the Kobayashi house on the day of Yagobei's death, we might have seen something quite different than what Issa portrayed, not only because Issa was writing a work of belles-lettres but also because of differences in cultural imagination of death and dying as well as different emphases on what makes a discourse "realistic."[108] Discursive constructions, even documents such as clinical records or family registers, do not mimetically represent or reflect material reality even if a culture maintains the fiction that they do.[109] Rather, they must be grasped in their historical specificity: it is incumbent upon readers to construct a histori-

[103] Few if any of Issa's contemporaries had a chance to read *Chichi no shūen nikki* though so we have no contemporary comments on the text.

[104] Fujiwara Shunzei, "Koraifūteishō," in *Karon-shū*, Hashimoto Fumio, Ariyoshi Tamotsu, and Fujiwara Haruo, editors and annotators (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2002) 249. The afterword is dated 1201.

[105] In fact one of Shunzei's purposes was to make his addressee aware of these forgotten texts.

[106] W. Jackson Bate, *The Burden of the Past and the English Poet* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970).

[107] Of course we must not expect the same kind of "realism" in a work of belles-lettres as in a legal document which is why, in this essay, I am limiting my conclusions to *Chichi no shūen nikki*.

[108] Bolitho captures this nicely: "All we have are the words, and these, as we are so often told, are inherently unreliable guides to human feelings, motivations, and behavior. To try to judge such things from the writings of men long dead, in another language and from a different cultural setting, and then to draw any definitive conclusion from them is— and there is no way around this— intrinsically impossible." (Bolitho, *Bereavement and Consolation*, 168.) Of course just because we recognize something at intrinsically impossible, we do not cease to make the attempt. Close readings of texts can provide clues which allow us to see aspects of them in their particularity.

[109] The cultural imagination of speakers of standard English encourages us to talk about artistic works "reflecting" reality.

cized poetics (or prosaics) of representation.

That said, death and dying have a more problematic relationship to discourse than most events that occur in the material reality of human life. No one has experienced death and then described it. In *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Wittgenstein wrote: "Death is not an event in life; we do not live to experience death."[110] Although I cannot, due to biological limitations, experience watching a 3-D movie or understand what it is like to see the world in three dimensions, the narratives of those who have such experience can and do (occasionally) help me to understand what this form of vision must be like. So while my knowledge of three dimensional vision will always be limited by lack of direct experience, my observations about what it must be like have a firmer basis than my observations on death. And though some descriptions of death, such as those by Yōrō Takeshi in *Kami to hito no kaibōgaku,* are based on extensive observation, they still are not informed by those who have experienced death. Yōrō's speculations on the dying process must also be constructed from the cultural imagination although in this case of modern science rather than medieval "literature."[111] To speak or write of death is to create a discursive construction which is marked by a different relationship to human material experience than most other events in our lives.[112]

So, obviously, no one can tell us what Yagobei's death was like. *Chichi no shūen nikki* records Issa's observations of it, enabled and limited by language and culture. This situation, though, is remarkably similar to many of the events that any good *haikai* poet became attuned to through poetic practice. Seasonal words (*kigo*) are cultural constructions. While they bear some form of relationship to material reality, they rely on their cultural construction to achieve their affect in poetry. As an example, the fall seasonal word *mimizu naku* (buzzing of the worms) must be a cultural construction because it is biologically impossible for worms to make such a sound. It is, however, based on the observation of a buzzing sound that appears in autumn. The cultural construction of it today is, however, quite different than it was in Issa's time. In modern almanacs of seasonal words (*saijiki*), the word is treated as "poetic" after being explained as biologically impossible. But in an almanac of seasonal words published close to the period when Issa was working on *Chichi no shūen nikki*, the word is taken as referring to a real phenomenon and is presented along with other knowledge about the "natural" world such as the "fact" that worms change into lilies.[113] The significant differences between modernity and the Tokugawa period in this case show the importance of historicizing the usages of words and concepts. The modern cultural construction of *mimizu naku* is not useful reading Issa's poetry which takes the phenomenon as "real."

Of course no human being has ever experienced the buzzing of the worms from the standpoint of the worms so, as with death, that which is referred to by the word is not an event of human life. Meanings for these kinds of words can only be based on observation coupled with cultural imagination, not on material experience. Issa constructs Yagobei's death so that it is "true" and "real" in the way that seasonal words in *hokku* poems are real: they both gain their "reality" and their power to create affect from a combination of observation and participation in the classical past via intertextuality.

Thus, to create an *aru ga mama* description of the death of Yagobei, Issa is dependent on the classical past and the cultural imagination. Part of this is via direct citation of classical sources such as *Heike monogatari* or the naming of famous doctors that readers recognize from cultural codes. Another

[110] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness, translators. Bertrand Russell, introduction. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), 147.

[111] Yōrō, *Kami to hito no kaibōgaku*, especially pages 58 to 98.

[112] This also makes "death" a particularly bad choice of words in the phrase "death of the author." Even if "authors" cease to exist in some way, many of them have already described what it is to write. Since we can read their descriptions of the experience, it is a very different situation than death. Authorship has been an event of human life.

[113] Bakin, *Haikai saijiki*, leaf 166, reverse. Uncharacteristically, Bakin has not provided the sources for his entry on *mimizu naku* but it appears to be based on a combination of folk knowledge and "Chinese science." Issa composed at least seven *hokku* which used some form of *mimizu naku* as the seasonal word.

part is reliance on what I have called the "cultural imagination" which can, in this case, be linked to the classical work, the *Hōbutsu-shū*. The pedestrian death of Yagobei would have soon been forgotten had his eldest son not made it elegant with the classical past and powerful by use of the cultural imagination. The construction of the death of Yagobei, then, can be compared to the death of Issa's daughter, Sato, which is recorded in *Ora ga Haru*. Like the death of Yagobei, Sato's is also a quotidian death of a person of no historical importance. But the death of Sato is constructed in an exceedingly elegant manner, weaving together strands of the cultural imagination and the classical past, to create one of the most moving moments in world literature.