

**Chapter 5**  
**Thai Plants, Seasons, and Natural Phenomena as Described**  
**by Japanese Haiku Poets**

5.1 Plants

Plants, trees, flowers, fruits, leaves, trunks, grass, and vegetables are important subjects that describe Thailand and Thai seasons. As physical objects that people can see, feel, smell and appreciate, plants represent familiar ground for people. Even newcomers to Thailand are able to experience and become familiar with local plants, depending on their circumstances. Some haiku poets were orchid lovers who tended the tropical blooms everyday, while others tried to draw and paint the many varieties of flowers. It often happened that haiku poets used Thai or English names of plants as season words, even though some have proper Japanese equivalents, in order to suit the 5-7-5 haiku form. When poets cannot find names of plants with the appropriate amount of syllables in any language, it is usually difficult for that plant to be depicted in a short-form poem like haiku.

5.1.1 Fruit-bearing Trees

The mango tree, with its distinct fruit and flower, has long been considered an ideal plant for indicating the exact season. In January, February or even in March, small, creamy-white mango blossoms indicate that the mango season is coming soon. After the flowers have scattered, the small green fruit will start to grow. Eventually the oval fruit ripens into a rich yellow color and issues a sweet smell. Among the many species of mangoes in Thailand, *nam dokmai* (flower sap) and *ok rong* (cleavage) are the best known. Green or unripe mangoes are also commonly eaten with sugar, salt and/or a chili dip. Mangoes and mango trees are depicted in the following haiku:

*Mango no hana ni aiki no tayutaeri*

(Gogyū, 1970, Ntbk., vol. 10)

Mango flowers  
have a somewhat mysterious,

## foggy atmosphere

Tropical and exotic fruits of Thailand such as mango, durian, coconut, mangosteen, pomelo, banana and longan have long aroused the interest of Japanese haiku poets. Gogyū suggests the showering mango flowers look like mist or fog, creating a mysterious atmosphere.

*Waga kokoro ugokasu mono ni hana-mango*

(Gogyū, 1973, Ntbk., vol. 10)

What moves  
my heart are  
mango flowers

*Mango-ju zenryoku hana o sakasetari*

(Inpin, 1987, Ntbk., vol. 16)

A mango tree  
with all its energy,  
blossoms

*Nanimo kamo hikareru naka ni hana-mango*

(Suriyon Teruko, 1987, Ntbk., vol. 16)

Among  
all the shining things,  
are mango flowers

The previous poems reflect the impression of mango blossoms in the minds of the Japanese poets. Inpin refers to the release of power as the tree blooms. Each mango flower is simple, but in total they are powerful and gracious.

*Roboku ya iki fuki kaesu hana-mango*

(Yōko, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 20)

An old tree  
revives,

mango flowers

Though the tree is old, the poet confirms the fact that the tree is still alive with flowers, indicating the beginning of another growth cycle.

*Mizu to hi o ayatsuru fune ya hana-mango*

(Yoshiko, 1974, Ntbk., vol. 10)

A boat which controls  
water and fire,  
mango flowers

In a long-tail boat, a floating vendor is cooking food to sell on the river. She is arranging the charcoals on a portable stove while steering the boat at the same time. The boat is close to mango trees along the riverside.

*Banpain rikyū mango no hana-namiki*

(Shunrō, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 20)

Bang Pa-in, Summer Palace  
roadside trees  
of mango flowers

At the Bang Pa-in Summer Palace, near the old capital of Ayudhya, there are many fine mango trees along the road. They provide welcome shade, as well as rich flowers.

*Yure-mango karako ga shūsen de asonderu*

(Sekiyō, 1978, Ntbk., vol. 11)

Wavering mangoes  
like Chinese children in the old days,  
playing with swings

Watching the mangoes in the trees, this poet is reminded of the figures of Chinese children in the past, with pigtailed, which are often depicted on chinaware.

*Tare-mango higoto akaruki iro no masu*

(Sekiyō, 1973, Ntbk., vol. 10)

Dangling mangoes

increasing in color  
each day

*Ao-mango dete atsuku naru Tai no machi*

(Gogyū, 1988, Ntbk., vol. 16)

Green mangoes appear,  
then, it becomes hot  
in the towns of Thailand

Many people had the chance to watch and enjoy the mango trees along the canal of Sathorn Road before they were completely cut down in order to expand the road.

*Enjin ni narabete mango-uriōshi*

(Yoshiko, 1983, Ntbk., vol. 14)

Arranged in circles,  
many vendors  
sell mangoes

Fruit vendors in Thailand take pride in arranging their fruit neatly to attract purchasers. Even small-sized vendors on the roadside place mangoes neatly around them.

*Dorian no hana miki ni fuku fusa to nari*

(Keison, 1973, Ntbk., vol. 10)

Durian flowers bloom  
in a cluster  
at the trunk

The unusual shape and taste of the durian fruit intrigue many haiku poets. The flower, however, begins to blossom in January, and is surprisingly simple.

*Kao naru hana-dorian no jimisa kana*

(Sekiyō, 1973, Ntbk., vol. 10)

The king of fruits,  
durian,-  
The flowers are plain!

Here, the poet, Sekiyō, expresses this sentiment, perhaps with some disappointment.

*Kaku amaki kaori o mori ni hana-dorian*

(Gogyū, 1973, Ntbk., vol. 10)

Such a sweet fragrance  
in a forest,  
durian flowers release

*Dorian no kaze niwa koboreyasuki hana*

(Shunrō, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 20)

Durian has flowers  
which easily drop  
in the wind

This poet seems to be impressed by the contrasting images of the gentle flowers and the impervious, sharp-pointed shell of the fruit.

*Chiru to iu yori dorian no hana no furu*

(Shunrō, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 20)

Not scattering,  
but falling,  
the flowers of durian

Many durian flowers fall, but others stay on to become fruit.

*Mi no omosa taete dorian gonenboku*

(Yoshiko, 1994, Ntbk., vol. 18)

Bearing the weight  
of heavy fruit,  
a five-year-old durian tree stands

In the orchards of Rayong, it is said that five-year-old durian trees bear the best tasting fruit.

*Dorian kau kin no makura to yobaruru o*

(Akihiro, 1980, Ntbk., vol. 12)

I buy durian  
called  
"Golden Pillow"

*Mon thong*, or Golden Pillow, is a rather new species of durian that has become popular among Thais over the past few decades since the taste is good and the smell is not as strong as other ones. There are many popular varieties of durian. In the 1960's and 1970's, *Kaan yao* which has a strong smell but excellent taste, was considered the best. The poet here is interested in the name "Golden Pillow", and the irony that no one can sleep comfortably on a spiky pointed durian.

*Dorian no jukushiyukitaru nekki kana*

(Yoshiko, 1977, Ntbk., vol. 12)

Releasing hot air,  
Durians  
are going to ripen!

When durian are about to ripen and after harvest, they produce hot gas with a strong smell.

*Ohigasa Menamu e taoshi dorian uru*

(Takako, 1980, Ntbk., vol. 12)

Reclining big parasols  
on the Menam  
vendors sell durian

Durian vendors operate in the midst of the hot season, and it is said that when the rainy season starts, the taste of durian declines. To avoid the hot afternoon sun, male and female vendors relax under big beach umbrellas on the riverside, awaiting customers.

*Dorian no sara ni nokoseshi tane mittsu*

(Shunrō, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 20)

On the plate of durian,  
remain

three pieces of seed

For durian lovers, it is easy to eat three pieces of durian, while those who do not like the fruit, cannot stand even the smell.

The coconut is familiar to most Japanese in Japan, but only by name, despite the fact that coconut oil and scrub brushes made from coconut palm trees are often used in Japan. The beautiful poem about a floating coconut from a southern island, written by Shimazaki Toson made coconuts widely known in Japan as a tropical fruit. Many Japanese people living in or traveling to Thailand drank coconut juice with fascination. Today, such fascination with foreign countries has changed as a result of the availability of information and the easiness of contact with other countries. However, some older-generation people of Japan still retain special feelings for coconuts.

*Sunahama ni dosun to yashi no ochinikeri*

(Takako, 1979, Ntbk., vol. 12)

Onto the sandy shore,  
thump!  
a coconut has fallen

*Atama hodo aru yashi no mi o sutte ori*

(Akihiro, 1980, Ntbk., vol. 12)

Somebody is sipping  
a coconut,  
as big as one's head

*Yashi no mi no korogari tsuzuku ishi-datami*

(Gania, 1996, Ntbk., vol. 20)

Coconuts are lying about  
here and there  
along the stone pavement

*Ido no soko yashi no mi hitotsu uiteori*

(Akihiro, 1980, Ntbk., vol. 12)

At the bottom  
of a well,  
a coconut floats

*Doro-michi ni ochishi yashigara mebukitari*

(Yoshiko, 1982, Ntbk., vol. 13)

Having dropped  
on the muddy lane,  
a husk of coconut germinates

The various poems above about coconuts depict this enchantment with the tropical fruit. Another tree that is often the topic of haiku poems is the palm tree, as demonstrated below.

*Yashi-namiki ittuchokusen ya hoshi-zukiyo*

(Takako, 1982, Ntbk., vol. 13)

Palm trees in a straight line—  
a night filled with the stars and the moon

This somewhat romantic poem describes the row of palm trees and the clear night skies.

*Yashi no ha o takitsuke to seru takibi kana*

(Akihiro, 1980, Ntbk., vol. 12)

Palm tree leaves  
are used to make a fire —  
a bonfire!

The Japanese poet finds it hard to believe that palm tree leaves are used for a bonfire. While the palm tree leaves evoke images of summer, a bonfire conjures up very cold winter images in Japan.

*Biru-shoji oikakete kau yashi-bōki*

(Yoshiko, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 14)

Following the vendor



to buy a palm-leaf broom,  
into the alley past the buildings

It is not always possible to buy a palm-leaf broom nowadays. The broom vendors with their bicycle-drawn carts are dwarfed and hidden among the modern buildings.

Mangosteens are called “the queen of fruits”, while durian is called “the king of fruits”. Mangosteens are loved by many people because of their exquisite shape and taste.

*Mada'aoki mangosuchin no ki no kaoru*

(Yoshiko, 1983, Ntbk., vol. 14)

Mangosteens are still green,  
yet the tree is fragrant

Pomelos are a people's favorite. In Japan, people have no chance to taste this fruit, but only sweetened peels from Nagasaki district. So, Japanese people are pleased to know pomelos.

*Ha shi-go mai tsukete zaban o taorikure*

(Akijo, Menam., vol. 1)

The farmer cut off  
a pomelo for me by hand  
together with several leaves

It was a memorable experience for the writer of this haiku to be able to obtain a fresh pomelo directly from the farmer. For the first time she could see the pomelo leaves. As a student of the Yokota Art School (private), she was keen to draw fruit and flowers. The taste of fresh, ripe pomelos is delicious.

*Ryo no te ni tewatashi kureshi zaban-uri*

(Shunrō, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 20)

Into both my hands,  
the pomelo vendor

placed a pomelo

The pomelo is pretty big and heavy, so it is necessary to hold it with both hands. The famous place of products for pomelos in Thailand is Nakhon Chaisi.

*Nanbā no kakareshi zaban hinpyo-kai*

(Takako, 1983, Ntbk., vol., 14)

Pomelos

with numbers written on,

at the pomelo contest

In Thailand, pomelos from famous areas often have numbers or prices written on their skins.

*Raichi no okarete kuraki ichiba kana*

(Yoshiko, 1999, Ntbk., vol. 22)

Lychees are placed

in the darkness

in the market

Lychees from Chiang Mai are expensive and seen only for a limited time during the rainy season. Lychees have purple-colored peels, but the color easily changes to dark brown.

*Kōtei no banana futorite natsuyasumi*

(Takako, 1980, Ntbk., vol. 12)

Bananas in the school-yard

become bigger,

during summer holidays

In Japan, banana trees usually have only leaves, and do not bear fruit. During the summer holidays in Thailand, the banana palms bear fruit in the schoolyards where children no longer play. Bananas give a rich image to the generation of this poet. In her childhood, bananas were very expensive, being an imported fruit in Japan, although nowadays they are cheaper.

The jackfruit is also a rare fruit for Japanese people. The fruit is bigger than durian, and the taste is very sweet with a peculiar flavor.

*Taiboku no nemoto ni minoru kanun kana*

(Nansei, 1982, Ntbk., vol. 13)

At the foot of the big tree,

A jackfruit is born

The jackfruit appears at the base of the tree, while the durian tree bears many big fruit high in the tree. It was a surprise for this elderly Japanese poet when he made these observations. The tropical plants brought about new discoveries for haiku poets in Thailand.

In June, durian, mangosteen and longan are brought to the markets from Chiang Mai. The longan is grape-like in its shape, but has a different peel and color. It has a round black pit inside the fruit.

*Ramuyai no ryū to iu yori yakku no me*

(Miyako, 1998, Ntbk., vol. 21)

Longan, dragon-eyes -

they are more like a Thai Giant's eyes

than a dragon's eye

In the Japanese language, longan is called *ryūgan*, and it is written in Chinese characters having the meaning of "dragon-eyes". The young poet in this poem, who spent her childhood in Bangkok, feels rather that the fruit should be called "Yak's eyes" (Thai Giant's eyes). The "yak" in Thailand is more familiar to her than a Chinese dragon.

*Ryūgan no mada aoki mi o tōrinuke*

(Gania, 1994, Ntbk., vol. 19)

Passing through

still green longan fruit

in the tree

### 5.1.2 Other Trees

The tamarind tree, in Thai *makhm*, is very useful in Thailand; the trunks are cut into pieces and used as chopping boards, the nuts are a favorite snack for Thai people and it is an important seasoning for Thai cooking. Besides, these trees offer good shade in the hot weather.

*Kago goto ni urine tagaete makamu uru*

(Shunrō, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 20)

Each basket differently priced,  
tamarind nuts on sale

Tamarind nuts also make a popular sweet and sour jam. Depending on the quality, the price differs. The highest quality tamarinds are rather expensive, considering the actual quantity one can eat.

*Tamarindo kozaruni narabe asa no ichi*

(Shunichirō, 1997, Ntbk., vol.20)

Placing tamarind nuts  
in a small basket,  
a morning market

*Makamu-juka enza shite matsu natsu no kō*

(Takashi, Menam, vol. 4)

Under the tamarind tree,  
sitting in a circle and waiting for  
the boat in summer

In the haiku gatherings in 1983 and 1997, “kapok” was used as the common season word for March. Kapok trees are also rather tall and unusual trees, in the eyes of Japanese poets. The image of the long green pods clinging to trees is unique, but may not be noticed. These kapok (*panya* cotton) pods split open naturally and drop onto the ground. In this process, some panya cotton floats off into the air. Such *panya* (kapok) is often used in cushions for rattan chairs. Panya is described in the following:

*Panya no mi hitostu hajikete tsugi tsugi to*

(Yōko, 1997, Ntbk., vol.20)

The kapok tree pods  
split open,  
one after the other

*Sōten ya odoke panya no ki ga odoru*

(Midori, 1976, Ntbk., vol.11)

A blue sky,  
a *panya* tree looks as if dancing  
in a waggish style

*Kapokku no sugarete kakyō no haka ga ari*

(Midori, 1983, Ntbk., vol.14)

A *panya* tree is withered,  
tombs  
of Chinese descendants

The green spaces in Bangkok usually attract birds and squirrels. These natural places maybe gardens of individual persons, condominiums, institutions, or parks and road sides.

*Kyampasu no konomi chirashi ni kotori kuru*

(Akihiro, 1983, Ntbk., vol.14)

Birds come to scatter  
nuts of the trees  
in the campus

Nuts are considered the season-words for autumn in Japan and in this haiku, they indicate the cool season in Thailand.

*Ore o mite konomi o kajiri mata ore o*

(Hajime, 1994, Ntbk., vol.14)

It looks at me,

bites the nut  
and again looks at me

The poet does not mention what "it" is, but it could be supposed to be a squirrel in the tree or on the ground nearby.

Bo (Bodhi) trees are considered sacred in the Buddhist world including Thailand. We often see large Bo trees on the roadside or in the corners of the compounds of temples. They are usually wrapped with white cloth and offerings are placed underneath. The sound of rustling leaves in the breeze gives people comfort. These Bo trees are depicted in the following:

*Bodaiju no yurameki yamanu kaze no aki*

(Midori, 1978, Ntbk., vol.12)

Ceaseless rustling  
of bo tree leaves,  
the winds in autumn

*Ryōfū no bodaiju ni kite uzu makeru*

(Gania, 1994 Ntbk., vol.19)

A cool wind blows  
over the bo tree  
and whirls

Thailand is famous for its good quality teakwood. In the past, teakwood was used for furniture, floors, house construction and various smaller goods. Due to over-logging, the number of teak trees seriously decreased, people were forbidden to cut down teak woods freely, to avoid the destruction of this precious resource. The following poem describes a temple, which was named after a teakwood forest:

*Ochiba fumishimete "chīku no mori no tera"*

(Shunrō, 1997, Ntbk., vol.19)

Treading on fallen leaves  
at the "Temple of Teak-Forest"

In this haiku, “fallen leaves” is the season word of the cool season.

“Silk tree blooms” were used as the common season words for April at the Menam meetings in 1977 and 1983. Many large silk trees can be seen around Bangkok, for example in the Lumpini Park, and along Wireless Roads. Silk trees offer good shade, but these trees find it difficult to exist in narrow, crowded, urban spaces. Originally, they were planted along the canals, which have now been replaced by roads. Silk trees have small, delicate pink flowers. The symbolic color of Chulalongkorn University is pink, hence symbol tree of King Chulalongkorn (Rama V), the namesake of the university was born on a Tuesday and of the week, Tuesday’s color is pink.

*Hana-nemu no juka suzushikute yaya umai*

(Gogyū, 1977, Ntbk., vol. 11)

Under the silk tree in bloom,  
a baby sleeps soundly  
in the coolness

*Yūkaze ni hi tomosu yōna nemu no hana*

(Midori, Menam., vol. 1)

As if set alight  
in the windy evening,  
silk tree flowers bloom

*Yasashisa o ha ni sasaerare, nemu sakinu*

(Fumi, 1974, Ntbk., vol.11)

Gentility is sustained  
by the leaves,  
silk tree flowers bloom

The umbrella tree, is referred to often by Japanese poets in Thailand as “*fukuwan*” “*fukwon*”, or “*fukowan*” (Japanese people describe it according to the sound they hear and because they like the sound), meaning “deer’s ear”. Haiku poets love the umbrella tree for its shape and the color of its leaves, which turn dark red. For haiku

poets, “fukuwan” is the representative tinted tree leaf in Thailand. These trees are depicted in the following haiku:

*Fukuwan momijisu unga no magari kado*

(Midori, 1974, Ntbk., vol.11)

Umbrella tree leaves  
turn red  
at the turn of the canal

*Tōku kara ichiyō medatsu fukuwan*

(Sekiyō, 1980, Ntbk., vol.13)

From afar,  
one leaf is remarkable,  
an umbrella tree

*Pakusoi no momiji suruki o mejirushi ni*

(Shunrō, 1998, Ntbk., vol. 21)

Making a landscape  
at the mouth of the tree,  
a tree tinged with red

The red of the “fukuwan” tree is distinct and impressive.

*Fukuwan ochiba fumishiki ken no mai*

(Tada Minoru, 1980, Ntbk., vol. 13)

Treading on fallen umbrella tree leaves,  
performing a sword dance

*Fukwan ha o otoshitsutsu mebukiori*

(Shunrō, 1998, Ntbk., vol. 21)

An umbrella tree,  
while dropping its leaves,  
puts forth its buds



This haiku indicates the significant differences between trees of tinted leaves in Thailand and in Japan.

*Pin kahan hyakusai o kosu fukowan*

(Midori, 1996, Ntbk., vol. 20)

Along the Pin River,  
the umbrella tree  
is over a hundred years old

Some other trees have impressive leaves and fall.

*Bon hodo mo aru kareha otsu Indo-dera*

(Midori, 1972, Ntbk., vol. 10)

A dried leaf,  
as big as a tray,  
falls in the 'Indian Temple'

The golden shower tree, "raja-pruk" is the national tree of Thailand. A mass of long pendulous yellow flowers attracts with its elegance, blooming mostly in March or April.

*Kin'uka no taruru robburi eiheisha*

(Sekiyō, 1976, Ntbk., vol. 11)

A cluster of golden shower tree flowers  
hangs down on a guard-house  
in Lop Buri

*Kin'uka ya taiju no kage no Robburi-butsum*

(Yoshiko, 1977, Ntbk., vol. 11)

Blooming golden shower tree,  
beneath the big tree  
is a Lop Buri-style Buddha shadowed

*Kin'uka ni mamorarete ki no dōbutsu-gun*

(Mariko, 1986, Ntbk., vol. 12)

Protected by  
a blooming golden shower- tree  
a group of pruned animal-shaped trees

*Kin'uka no soko wa yume no yo tsūkin-ji*

(Takashi, 1980, Ntbk., vol. 12)

It's a dream world  
of golden shower trees in bloom,  
on the way to the office

These haiku capture the joy of witnessing the golden shower blooming in season.

*Kaisho-shiki eto kin'uka no namiki nuke*

(Shunrō, 1998, Ntbk., vol. 21)

To attend the opening ceremony,  
following the path lined with  
golden shower trees in bloom

*Kin'uka ya sesuji nobashite shikan-sei*

(Midori, 1996, Ntbk., vol. 19)

Golden shower trees in bloom,  
a military cadet walks  
stretching himself

The young military cadets are often observed walking on Rama IV road. Crisp and fresh, their image matches the golden shower flowers.

*Sangai ni kin'uka no fusa todokikeri*

(Yoshiko, 1996, Ntbk., vol. 19)

To the third floor,  
clusters of golden shower tree blooms

reach!

*Kin'uka wa hanabusa tawawa joji umaru*

(Yoshiko, 1976, Ntbk., vol. 11)

Clusters of flowers are rich,  
the golden shower tree,  
a baby-girl is born

This lucky baby-girl, born during the season of the blooming golden shower tree, is immortalized in Japanese poetry.

The flame tree, *hang-nok-yung* in Thai, is one of the most remarkable trees with its burning red color in April in Thailand. This tree may reach a height of 5 to 8 meters (William Warren, 1996: 23) Japanese people use the name *kaenju* to referring to *hang-nok-yung* (flame tree) but actually *kaenju* in Japanese language is another tree. So, "ho-oboku" (flame tree) is seldom called by its real name in tropical countries. For Japanese people who see the flowers, *kaen* (flame) seems to be accepted or appropriate for the flame tree. The spectacular trees of red flowers in the hottest season seem to have made striking impressions on many Japanese poets as in the following:

*Kaenboku sakitemo nōfu hin ni sumi*

(Kiyoshi, Menam., vol. 2)

Flame trees bloom,  
yet female farmers  
live in poverty

This is the impression of the Japanese poet, and a scholar who lived in Korat for a few years, working on sericulture projects in the 1970's.

*Kaenju ya susugime susugu mono ōki*

(Akihiro, 1980, Ntbk., vol. 12)

A flame tree in bloom,  
a washer woman  
has a lot of washing

This scene may be on the riverside.

*Kaenju chiru gakumon no fu no shizukanari*

(Midori, Menam., vol. 4)

Flame tree flowers fall,  
the university, the seat of learning  
is quiet

*Ho no iro ni nire kurenokoru kaen-boku*

(Gogyū, 1984, Ntbk., vol. 14)

Some branches still reflect at dusk,  
the color of fire  
in the flame tree

This quiet and beautiful scene obviously takes place at sunset, when the orange flame tree displays its fire.

Bougainvillea, *fuang far* in Thai, is also called the "paper flower". In Thailand in February, when the weather is dry and a little warm, the bougainvillea flowers (actually the flowers are part of the bract) are most beautiful, so haiku poets adapted the plant as the season word for February, as seen in the examples in 1972 and 1989.

*Ippen no būgenbiria kaze ni noru*

(Midori, n.d.)

A bougainvillea flower  
floats in the wind

Ixora flowers, *Khem* in Thai, meaning needles, are popular flowering shrubs in Thai gardens. The wide range of colors of these flowers includes orange, red, white and pink. On "Teacher's day" in Thailand, students often offer *khem* flowers to their teachers, hoping they will become clever or sharp, like *khem* (needles). The ixora flowers are eulogized in the following haiku:

*Kari karare soredemo saiteru kemu no hana*

(Nansei, 1987, Ntbk., vol. 16)

Branches are pruned  
and pruned, yet blooming,  
ixora flowers

Thai people often prune branches of shrubs in the shape of animals.

*Kemu no hana saki shirō no tamariba ni*

(Shunrō, 1998, Ntbk., vol. 21)

The plants  
surrounding a small shrine  
are ixora flowers

Such scenes are often observed in gardens in Thailand.

Plants of *Adenium*, *chuan-chom* in Thai, are often found in pots, placed in small gardens or on sunny terraces. The colors of commonly seen trumpet-shaped flowers are crimson and pink and some know it as the tree of new rich. Chinese people seem to like this plant.

*Ryū no e no hachi no sakari no chuanchomu*

(Shunrō, 1997, Ntbk., vol.21)

*Adenium* blooms its best  
in a pot  
decorated with dragons

Pots decorated with a dragon pattern are the product of Ratchaburi district. In daily Thai life, we can often find *adenium* blooming in such pots.

The frangipani, or *plumeria*'s is called *lan thom* in Thai. Its sound is similar to that of the word meaning 'sorrow' Thai people do not grow it in their gardens. These trees are seen at temple compounds or near temples, although they are also seen in gardens at schools and apartment-houses. In the northern and northeastern regions, they have other names, so people there do not mind the tree. *Plumeria* are easily recognized by their distinctive scent and smell. They have creamy white, yellow, red or pink flowers. Haiku featuring the *plumeria* are described in the following:

*Shiro-sokei no hana kugurikoshi yama no tera*

(Fumio, 1964, Shūhō)

White plumeria flowers  
 creep into the temple  
 at the mountain

White plumeria smells strongly and the flowers are often found in temples, welcoming the visitor.

*Purumeria haikyo no butsu no kata ni otsu*

(Keison, 1972, Ntbk., vol. 9)

A fragment plumeria flower  
 falls on the Buddha's shoulder  
 in the ruins

This is a scene at the ruins in Ayudhya. Damaged by the battles during the Ayudhya period, the ruins of great stone buildings and temples remain. In this case, perhaps the Buddha image gets a message from the fragrant petals.

*Ōhi nomishi ike shiro-sokei beni-sokei*

(Mariko, 1985, Ntbk., vol.15)

The pond swallowed the queen,  
 white and pink  
 plumeria trees in bloom

*Ōhi no hi eto rantomu no fuyu-kodachi*

(Shunrō, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 21)

To the monument  
 of the late Queen,  
 plumeria trees in winter

In Thailand, the sad story of an accident at Chao Phraya River is well-known. The Queen Consort Sunanta (or Sunanda, 1860-1880) of King Rama V and their children drowned after their boat capsized in the water. As commoners were forbidden to touch the bodies of nobles, no one dared to rescue them.

*Kane tataki meguri megurite purumeria*

(Nansei, n. d.)

Beating bells, turning and turning,  
making merit at the temple,  
the plumeria flowers

People come to the temple at Saraburi to ring small bells, one by one. By this action, people can make merit under the plumeria trees.

Jasmine flowers, *Buddha-chart*, are often used in Thailand for garlands and religious offerings. The small white flowers are loved for their fragrance and shape. The flowers are also used in jasmine tea and jasmine rice.

*Mizu koeba jasumin ukasu gin no hachi*

(Inpin, 1979, Ntbk., vol.12)

Requesting water,  
a silver bowl is brought  
with jasmine flowers floating

The writer of this poem came to learn about Thai hospitality through having received a bowl of water with fragrant scent. In the past, and occasionally today, Thai villagers offered water which was prepared in the earthen jars, to quench the thirst of people passing the paths in front of their houses.

*Pecha kucha to sugishi kora m Ayudhya ari no ka o nokoshi*

(Sekiyō, n.d.)

Chattering young girls pass,  
leaving the fragrance  
of jasmine flowers

The poet who encountered those young Thai girls could not describe the fragrance exactly, but the impact is captured in this haiku, even after his death.

*Jasumin o harisashi tsunagu hiru no tsuki*

(Yasuko, 1994, Ntbk., vol.19)

Threading jasmine flowers

to make a garland,  
the moon during daytime

Thai women and girls can often be seen making garlands to sell, perhaps in the markets or along roadside. It is said that this activity was originated by girls in the palaces skillfully making this floral art.

The champak, or *champi* in Thai language, is also often used as decoration for religious offering. The creamy white flowers have elegant scent and a Japanese poet recalls the tree, which used to exist in the changed Bangkok environment in the following:

*Kono atari chanpi niou roji ariki*

(Midori, n.d.)

Around here,  
there used to be a lane  
of fragrant champak flowers

The Thai name *chong-ko* is known as the orchid tree in English as it appears similar to the shapes of orchid. Its leaf is cloved and easily recognized.

*Chonko no hana o chirasete ame mikka*

(Shunrō, 1996, Ntbk., vol.20)

Scattering  
the orchid tree flowers,  
raining for three days

There are blooming trees in Thailand that are called "*Thai-zakura*" (Thai cherry-blossoms) by Japanese people. Long-term Japanese residents started to call the pink cassias (*kanlapaphruek* in Thai) and trumpet tree or *tabebuia* (in Thai *chomphu-panthip*), as "*Thai-zakura*" because they bloom during February to April, coincident to *sakura* blossom-time in March and April. Although the species and characters of the trees are totally different, Japanese people in the past who were not able to go back home often to Japan really enjoyed the "*Thai zakura*" phenomenon.



*Roji-oku no ike akaryushi Tai-zakura*

(Jisuke, 1998, Ntbk., vol. 21)

Making the pond  
in the end of the lane brighter,  
the “Thai cherry” blossoms

*Okunigara chiri wa isoganu Tai-zakura*

(Hajime, 1993, Ntbk., vol.17)

It is Thai nature  
not to scatter in haste,  
the Thai “cherry blossoms”

Thai “cherry blossoms” and Japanese “*sakura*” are different but share similarities, like Thai people and Japanese people.

*Ten ni kumo chi ni nobiyakana Tai-zakura*

(Yoshiko, 1998, Ntbk., vol.21)

Over the sky is the cloud,  
on the ground are the  
relaxed Thai “cherry blossoms”

*Seiten ni magirete awashi Tai-zakura*

(Gania, 1996, Ntbk., vol.19)

Vague in the blue sky,  
Thai “cherry blossoms”

The bottlebrush flower, which gets its name from the shape of the common household utensils, (in Thai *dok prenglang khuwat*, or *lieu dok* was used as a common season word in September in 1996) are similar in shape to the bottlebrush. Thirty years ago in the Menam Kukai haiku group, a poet described the plant as in the following, and this red bottlebrush became familiar to other members:

*Shūten o migaku makkana binburashi*

(Fumio, 1970, Menam, vol. 1)

The autumn sky,  
 as if brushed by  
 bright red bottle-brush flowers

Each person usually has a memory of particular plants, and for some older members in the Menam Kukai, the bottlebrush and the autumn-like sky in Thailand remind them of the late Fumio.

The popular Thai plant, *ta-bak*, (known as *obana-sarusuberi* in Japanese) is called the crepe myrtle, or the Pride of India, or the Rose of India. Warren writes in Tropical Flowers of Thailand that the rather long, pointed leaves drop during the dry season, turning red before they do so, and the tree blooms along with the appearance of new foliage...flowers...in colors that range from pale to deep lavender. (1996: 52) We can see this beautiful blooming tree in many gardens.

Japanese name, *sarusuberi* is also a kind of crepe myrtle, and is called as an Indian lilac. When plants have long names, Japanese poets abbreviate or adapt shorter names as in the following:

*Katagawa o shimete unga no sarusuberi*

(Shunrō, 1998, Ntbk., vol.21)

Occupying one side of the canal,  
 crepe myrtle flowers bloom

The coral tree, known in Thai as *thong-lang* has red flowers during the hot weather. The trees are called as *deigo* in Okinawa (the 'flower of Okinawa Prefecture' in Japan) and haiku poets use this name often. The flowers are big and shaped like bird feathers.

*Tsue tsuite rōso deigo no tera no mon*

(Midori, 1997, Ntbk., vol.21)

Holding a stick,  
 an aged monk is at the gate  
 of the temple with flowering coral trees

*Sansō to iu wa bochi nari hana-deigo*

(Shunrō, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 20)

The “Mountain cottage” in Chinese letters  
means the grave-yard,  
coral tree flowers

The Burmese rosewood is called *pradu* in Thai language and the flower was chosen as the symbol of the Royal Thai Navy, because the flowers bloom together and in one day or so they scatter at the same time. This form of solidarity among flowers is a metaphor for the sailors who may die together on the warship. This saying is similar to what was said about soldiers in the Japanese army during the Second World War. Since both Japan and Thailand signed treaties of cooperation during the war, they might have shared this similar mentality of dying a glorious death, like the scattering like *pradu* or *sakura*. (It may be in common in the world of the navy) A botanist at Chulalongkorn University notes that for some reasons these days, the *pradu* do not bloom and scatter at the same time, as they used to.

*Praduka dotto chirinuru kaigunka*

(Yōko, 1998, Ntbk., vol. 21)

The “*pradu*” blooms fall at once  
At the same time,  
the flower of the Thai navy

*Seiki-matsu praduka koku chirikobore*

(Midori, 1994 Ntbk., vol.21)

The end of the century,  
the *pradu* blossoms  
scatter a lot

*Shuryūdan hodo no tsubomi ya niu saite*

(Shunrō, 1997, Ntbk., vol.20)

The bud  
 as big as a grenade,  
 silk cotton tree flowers in bloom

The angel's trumpet is different from the trumpet tree, which is a taller tree. The long, large yellow flowers of the angel's trumpet, known in Thai language as *lampong*, are found on shrubs.

*Burasagari saku ranpon no hana no yado*

(Shunrō, 1997, Ntbk., Vol. 20)

Hanging,  
 flowers of the angel's trumpet tree bloom  
 at the flower inn

The asoka tree, or sorrowless tree, is called *ton asoke* in Thai and is considered the holy tree of Buddha's birth in the Buddhist world. This tree is not a shrub like ixora but the red flowers are similar to ixora, known as *dok khem* in Thai.

*Asoku no hana saku shita ni kiku hanashi*

(Shunrō, Menam., vol. 4)

We listen to the story  
 beneath  
 the blooming sorrowless tree

From this haiku, we may wonder what kind of stories are told, and guess that they may be of the Buddha's life, or of Buddha's previous ten lives.

### 5.1.3 Grass and Flowers

The flower field is used as a season word for the cool season. Grass and flowering plants are depicted as the landscapes or backgrounds as in the following haiku:

*Yakegi nokoru kaitaku-mura no hanano kana*

(Takashi, 1982, Ntbk., vol. 13)

In the flower-field,  
burnt trees remain  
at the village of cultivation

The flower field in this poem could be in the mountains or on a hillside. Hill-tribe people in Thailand used to burn grass and trees and migrate around cultivating fields in the mountains. Today, these people are more settled and tend to remain in one place. Thai farmers also often burn fields after the rice harvest.

*Kobune futo suberi detekishi hanano kana*

(Akihiro, 1979, Ntbk., vol 12)

A small boat  
slips out unobtrusively  
from the flower-covered field

Near this flowering field, there is a narrow canal and a person in the boat moves through the landscape.

The spider lily (*crinum asiaticum*), in Thai, *plub-plueng*, is often seen in the gardens or along roadsides in Thailand. Before the skytrain was constructed in Bangkok in the nineties, the white spider lilies could be seen in the center of Silom Road. Bangkokians enduring traffic jams and pollution gained some solace from the rows of sweet-smelling, spider-like white flowers.

*Shi no hitsugi yukishi hamayu restunasu michi*

(Takashi, 1985, Btbk., vol. 15)

The coffin of the late professor  
is carried through the street  
lined with spider lily flowers

The coffin referred to in this haiku is that of the late Sekiyō who was an art teacher and a member of the Menam Kukai poetry gatherings. The reference to the white spider lilies along Silom is appropriate for the deceased artist and poet who lived for a long time nearby South Sathorn Road.

*Kōsoku o orireba hamayū furueori*

(Midori, 1999, Ntbk., vol.22)

Coming down from the highway  
 spider lily flowers  
 quiver along the roadside

The canna flower, *Buddha-raksa* in Thai, is seen in both Thailand and Japan. The canna has been adapted as a season word for summer in Japan and Thailand. The canna flowers vary in color; including yellow, red, pink and orange. In Thailand, these flowers can often be seen in gardens or along riversides.

*Aka-kanna dengu yamu me ni omo-omoshi*

(Fumio, 1963, Fiftieth.)

The red canna  
 is too heavy for the eyes  
 suffering from dengue fever

The sick poet who has been affected by tropical disease is sensitive to the striking red color of the canna.

*Ano hito mo yukite kanno no hana-zakari*

(Nansei, 1983, Ntbk., vol. 13)

Somebody else has passed away,  
 cannas  
 in full bloom

Some poets from Japan may have had the impression that the cannas were deliberately planted by people, not just growing by chance in the fields. This suggests that cannas are attached to people, including those who have passed away.

*Oburi no kikubachi okare kyū-shigai*

(Yoshiko, 1995, Ntbk., vol. 19)

A rather big chrysanthemum pot  
 stands  
 in the old city area

In the alleys in the old area of Yaowarat (Chinatown), both small and large flower pots are often found standing in front of houses. Chrysanthemums are popular among Chinese people.

*Nosodachi no toge no surudoki bara ikuru*

(Midori, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 20)

Arranging wild roses  
with sharp thorns  
grown in the field

The sharp thorns on wild roses make them difficult to arrange, but at the same time the wild nature attracts this poet.

*Beni-bara no ukabite shiroki kinu-doresu*

(Haruo, 1997, Ntbk., vol.20)

Pink roses  
appear  
on the white silk dress

*Ki fusagu hi jinjā no hana kubi futoku*

(Midori, 1974, Ntbk., vol. 11)

On my depressed day,  
a flower of torch ginger  
has a thick stalk

There are sometimes melancholic days when people are not satisfied with their jobs and have difficulties with human relationships. In this situation, the poet finds that the flowers of torch ginger look strong and she gains strength from this image.

Thailand has a great variety of fine orchid species. Colorful dendrobiums, vandas, cattleyas are easily found among many others in the markets. These orchids, in Thai, *krei mai*, are popular export items today and orchid-lovers eagerly study how to take care of them. Sekiyō and Inpin, both members of the Menam Kukai, were also experienced orchid-lovers who spent long-term lives in Thailand with their Thai families.

*Katorea o yukidomari to su ueki-ichi*

(Takako 1982, Ntbk., vol. 13)

The dead end  
is cattleya,  
the pot plant market

There is a famous plant market along a canal in Bangkok where many plant-lovers enjoy the great variety of plants. This may be Tewet flower market, however the poet does not specify. Here, the most flowery and attractive cattleyas are sold at the end of the street.

*Ushio kiru hesaki ni ran no hana kazaru*

(Gania 1995, Kanryo)

At the tip of the stern,  
dividing waves in the sea going forth,  
orchid flowers are placed

*Hizakari ya tsurukusa tsuru o makiaezu*

(Kiyoshi, Menam., vol. 1)

In the sunshine,  
a creeper is not able to spiral  
a tendril

The above haiku describes the strong sunshine in the northeast region, where the poet lived, during the dry season. Even a strong wild creeper finds it difficult to survive.

*Ichiku no susuki o suten tabi owaru*

(Keison, Menam., vol. 2)

Discarding  
a bunch of eulalias,  
the trip has finished

Eulalias, which are sometimes known as Japanese pampas grass, are the representative season word for autumn in Japan. This nostalgic middle-aged poet or his wife picked up



the plants on their day trip. After many hours had passed, they found that they could not keep them any more and had to discard the eulalias.

Cattails are seen along the swamps and the waters' edge and are described in the following haiku:

*Numakaze ni gama no hosaki no oreteishi*

(Shunrō 1995, Ntbk., vol. 15)

Caused by the swamp-wind,  
the tips of ears of cattails  
are bent

*Gama no ho ya saron-sugata no michi-bushin*

(Yoshiko 1995, Ntbk., vol.15)

Ears of cattails,  
people in sarongs  
are building the roads

Plants grow rapidly in Thailand's tropical weather. Travelers to rural areas experience the power of wild nature, forests and grassy fields.

*Kusa-ikire kisha no oto no mi okikari*

(Mariko 1985, Ntbk., vol. 15)

The smell of grass,  
only the sound of passing trains  
is loud!

*Natsukusa no kore yori wa muri iseki yuku*

(Akihiro 1979, Ntbk., vol. 12)

Summer grass  
hinders our progress from here,  
walking in the ruins

*Wareme goto natsukusa haete ne-shakazō*

(Nansei, Menam., vol. 2)

In each crack,  
summer grass grows,  
the statue of the reclining Buddha

The reclining Buddha lies surrounded by trees and grass covers the cracks in the plaster.

One of the most impressive and prolific plants found in the rivers, canals and the waterways in Thailand are water hyacinths. In Thailand, people call this plant *phak dop chawa* as water hyacinths were brought back to Siam from Java during the King Rama V's royal visit to Java Island. Now, water hyacinths can be seen everywhere in Thailand as the plants have air bladders and can move around easily. They are not only found in rivers, canals and ponds, but also on flooded roads. These water hyacinths have long been a nuisance for boats as the plants wrap around the propellers and the engines are often stopped due to the swallowing of the water hyacinths plant. Studies have been made to explore the different uses of the plants and some of the successful products using dried water hyacinths include woven baskets, furniture and sandals.

*Ukikusa ya akane-yūbe no mizu no shiwa*

(Kiyoshi, Menam., vol. 2)

Water hyacinths  
ripple like wrinkles of water  
in the evening glow

*Hashike-nami hoteisō-gun nagare-dasu*

(Akihiro 1979.Ntbk., vol.12)

Waves from the barge,  
groups of water hyacinths  
start to flow

Along the Chao Phraya River (*Menam Chao Phraya*), these views can often be seen.

*Oshiyosete noriage-ainu hoteisō*

(Akihiro 1983, Ntbk., vol. 14)

Large waves surge against each other.  
 water hyacinths  
 stranded on the waves

*Ukikusa no tadayo Menamu ōkikari*

(Nansei 1986, Ntbk., Vol. 16)

The Menam is large,  
 water hyacinths  
 drift

*Ukikusa ni kakomare koshū tsunagaruru*

(Yoshiko 1997, Ntbk., vol. 21)

Surrounded by water hyacinths,  
 an old boat  
 is moored

In 1997, members of the Menam Kukai poetry group went to Ban Sai to write haiku. After inspecting the handicraft products produced at the Ban Sai 'SUPPORT' Foundation (the Foundation for the Promotion of Supplementary Occupations and Related Techniques, in Thai it is called 'Silpacheep') of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's royal projects, the members went back to the river to observe the multitude of water hyacinths utilized for products by the Foundation. This Foundation is well-known by people in Thailand as a project for farmers upcountry to promote traditional skills as extra jobs. (Lendsrisantad, et. al., *ibid*; Forward)

*Tsuribito ga kakureru hodono hoteisō*

(Wakako 1997, Ntbk., vol. 21)

Water hyacinths  
 so thick  
 the fisherman is hidden

*Ukikusa ni ukibukuro ari Menamu yuku*

(Yoshiko.Menam., vol. 3)

Floating grass  
with air-bladders  
drift down the Menam

#### 5.1.4 Vegetables

In Thailand, the lotus is a sacred and useful plant. The flowers are used as Buddhist offerings to monks and at temples, the stems and roots are used as vegetables and the broad leaves are used to wrap goods and food. The significance of the lotus is deep and able to be traced back to its origins in Hindu philosophy.

The lotus flowers are highly respected in India as being among the important possessions of Hindu gods Vishnu (Rama) and Rakshmi (Sita). The Lord Buddha is considered to be an incarnation of Vishnu and in the flow of history, Hindu and Buddhist ideas have become combined in Thailand. In Japan, lotus flowers are associated with Buddhism and the afterworld of the deceased. In Thailand, people often name their daughters after the lotus, giving a clean, beautiful image to their children.

*Hasu ippon kazashi yukunari entenro*

(Sekiyō, 1944, Fiftieth.)

Shaded by a lotus leaf,  
someone is going along  
his sweltering way

In this haiku we see the image of a broad lotus leaf being used in place of a parasol to provide shade from the strong sun in 1944. It seems a most natural form of protection from the sun.

*Tamatsuyu no korobu hasuha no hirosa kana*

(Sekiyō, 1963, Fiftieth)

Putting a roll of a lotus stem,  
aside at the stern  
sells vegetable

Water convolvulus, or morning glory, in Thai, *pak boong*, is a favorite vegetable in Thailand as well as in other Southeast Asian countries. Many Thai people consider

the plants to be rich in vitamin C, according to a survey of more than 200 Thai people in 1997.

*Pakubun no kobune kashigete wakame tsumu*

(Sekiyō, 1980, Ntbk., vol. 13)

Heeling a small boat  
of water convolvulus,  
picking up young leaves

*Fuyu no asa pakubun kurau kame mitari*

(Tada Minoru, 1981, Ntbk., vol. 13)

I saw a tortoise  
eating water convolvulus  
on a winter morning

*Takenoko no kawa muku tabi no nioi kana*

(Kimiaki, 1998, Ntbk., vol. 21)

Each time peeled  
the skin of the bamboo shoot  
is fragrant

*Takenoko o jibeta ni narabe kunizakai*

(Yoshiko, 1998, Ntbk., vol. 21)

Placing bamboo shoots  
on the ground  
at the border of the country

Chili peppers are an important seasoning in Thai cooking and there are various kinds of this spicy condiment. Over the past ten to fifteen years, some Japanese people have come to know and appreciate dishes using hot peppers, but many Japanese people first experienced hot pepper soups in Thailand. The landscape of a basketful of red peppers is a familiar sight in Thai markets. Hot chili peppers are illustrated in the following:

*Tōgarashi hikaru akanari asa no ichi*

(Yoshiko, 1996, Ntbk., vol.20)

Peppers are  
shining red,  
the morning market

*Kago ippai takanotsume nari funatsukiba*

(Midori, 1996, Ntbk., vol. 20)

A basketful of  
red peppers,  
at the boat pier

Boiled sweet corn can be found in the daily life on many street corners in Thai villages and cities. The taste is good and the price is low, especially when compared to the expensive price in Japan. Maize is another important export item for Thailand.

*Setake hodo no morokoshi sei yama kudarū*

(Midori, 1982, Ntbk., vol.13)

Stacks of maize  
as tall as her own height on her back,  
a woman goes down a mountain

Sugarcane is also produced in Thailand. In the dry season, many trucks fully-laden with sugarcanes can be seen on the roads heading from the northeast region (*Esarn*) to Bangkok.

*Kansho-bata jōheki no goto kararekeri*

(Midori, 1998, Ntbk., vol. 21)

The field of sugarcane,  
being harvested  
is like a castle wall

Spring chrysanthemum, and spinach which are called by Chinese origin names, (*phak*) *tang-o* and (*phak*) *puay-leng*, are the examples of vegetables only found during the cool season in Thailand. Strawberries are also a cool season fruit.

*Hashi no saki isshyun shungiku nioikeri*

(Midori, 1996, Ntbk., vol. 19)

The tips of the chopsticks  
smell for a moment  
spring chrysanthemum leaves

Thai rice and Japanese rice differ in shape, taste and the method of cultivation. 'Floating-style rice plants' (haiku poets call *uki-ine*) in Thailand enable the rice plants to grow longer as the water level becomes higher. Nevertheless, many haiku poets in the Menam Kukai group spent their childhood days seeing rice being planted every year, and directly or indirectly having rice in their everyday life, so they feel familiar among the rice fields in Thailand. Newly harvested rice is especially welcomed by Japanese people and used as a season word for the cool season of harvesting in Thailand.

*Shiro-kaki no kifuku no mama ni hatsugashite*

(Takashi, 1984, Ntbk., vol. 14)

Sprouting up and down  
according to the level  
of the prepared rice field

The specific way of rice planting in Thailand is observed.

*Katamukishi mama momi-bune no yuginikeri*

(Akihiro, 1980, Ntbk., vol. 13)

Lopsided,  
a boat of unhusked rice  
sails along

This scene is found after the rice harvest.

*Suika-bune hitotsu wa watte tomo ni oki*

(Sekiyō, 1970, Menam. vol. 1)

A boat of watermelons,  
 one cut open  
 at the stern

This watermelon boat is floating along selling watermelons on the canals and the vender has cut the fruit into two, placing it at the stern so people will notice his wares. In the past, it was common to sell a whole fruit without cutting it.

## 5.2 Thai Seasons and Natural Phenomena

Thai people divide Thai seasons into three; the hot season, the rainy season and the cold season. The cold season in Bangkok can be called the cool season. At the primary schools in Thailand, children are taught that there are three seasons in Thailand; the hot season is from the middle of February to the middle of June; the rainy season is from the middle of June to the middle of October, and the cool season is from the middle of October to the middle of February.

Foreigners living in Thailand judge three seasons according to their experience. So, there are different ways of grouping for the months of seasons among Japanese people. As natural phenomena for this year, the cool season may continue longer than the previous year and some year rain may start in May, not in June. Haiku poets feel seasons by themselves and most of them adapt seasons and natural phenomena in haiku after their own observation.

According to the weather report in The Bangkok Post on October 29, 1999, "Bangkok Today" was supposed to be very cloudy with widespread rain and isolated heavy falls and light east winds. The report also predicted a high temperature of 33 degrees and a low of 23. The same paper dated November 9, 1999 reported that "weather in Bangkok today" was cool, widely scattered light rain and that the highest temperature would be 29 degrees, while the lowest would be 24. It also wrote that the previous high temperature was 31 degrees, and that the lowest was 22. These reports indicate how difficult it is to pinpoint reality. So the poets accept what they have seen through the year and strict definition of three seasons is not discussed as a whole.



For convenience, I divided the Thai months into three seasons, March, April and May as the hot season, June, July, August, September and October as the rainy season, and November, December, January, and February as the cool season. This classification is based on judgement of many haiku poets. Using this, we will examine how seasons and natural phenomena are described in haiku.

### 5.2.1 The Hot Season

The hot season means the hottest season in Thailand, covering three or more months. This season is similar to midsummer for a month in Japan. Those who experience the hottest season for the first time in Bangkok often feel that the hot weather will continue endlessly.

Describing this season, poets used words related to "hot" such as "hot weather", "drought", "towering clouds", "a short summer night", "a southerly wind", "shades", "fresh green", and others which relate as season words and are used especially often. The hot climate experienced in Bangkok in the past and today is a little bit different, due to many factors. Among these factors, world and home environmental influences are large.

In the past, through a clear sky, nothing obstructed the strong sunshine. Fewer shops had air-conditioners and taxis were also not equipped with air-conditioners. Such a hot climate in the past and today are illustrated as in the following:

*Kasha tōru shadanki ni tatsu enshokana!*

(Sekiyō, 1974, Ntbk., vol. 10)

Waiting at the barrier to cross the road,  
a freight train passes,  
sweltering heat!

In Thailand people are not accustomed to waiting for trains at the barrier across the roads, for trains do not pass very often. Nothing stops the midsummer sun.

*Sekizai no tsumareshi mamani gokushokana!*

(Fumiko, 1975, Ntbk., vol. 11)

Piled up building stones  
 have been left as they are,  
 in the sizzling heat!

Building stones being kept and left outside for a long time are heated by sunshine. The sizzling, hot day is described clearly by focusing on the stones.

*Seifuku no hitokatamari ni ensho kuru*

(Midori, 1975, Ntbk., vol. 11)

Upon a group  
 of uniformed pupils,  
 a burning heat hits

In May, the new semester starts at Thai schools. School children, maybe the poet's little daughter is among them, walking in a group which have to suffer the burning sun. A small group of school children wearing white shirts and navy blue or red skirts or pants comes to our minds, when reading this.

*Kokusho kuru agohige nobasu wakamono nimo*

(Midori, 1974, Ntbk., vol. 10)

Sweltering heat hits  
 upon a young man  
 with a beard

We seldom see Thai men with beards in Bangkok. Those who have beards are often members of ethnic groups, like Sikh Indians, who are long-term residents of Bangkok. The younger generations of such Indian people in Thailand have assimilated into Thailand as foreign residents or as Thais. The poet is wondering how hot it must be to spend these sweltering days with a beard.

*Nettaiya ponto hajikeru bin no futa*

(Yōko, 1995, Ntbk., vol. 19)

On a sweltering night,  
 a bottle lid burst off  
 with a pop

Some reaction is caused by heat. It is hot, and the lid of a bottle bursts off by itself. A tropical night is mysterious.

*Sotsumon no mada nakabanaru jokusho kana!*

(Sekiyō, 1973, Ntbk., vol. 10)

Yet half way  
through sutra-chanting,  
perspiring heat!

Listening to Buddhist sermons is a common experience in Thailand. Although many Japanese people are not as religious as people in Thailand, they still pray and pay respect to sermons. There are many chances for foreign residents who have been living in Bangkok for a long time to take part in Buddhist ceremonies. Most temples offer cool places, such as windy halls, cool, stone-tile floors, with ceiling fans installed. In spite of these efforts, half way through sutra-chanting, a perspiring heat hits the poet.

*Entenka rōboku naomo wakame fuki*

(Inpin, 1981, Ntbk., vol. 13)

Under the burning sun  
an old tree  
still buds

Because of the heat, or in spite of the hot climate, an old big tree still buds. It is a new discovery for poets to find that in the hottest season trees still bud. Springtime is the only season in the four seasons in Japan when this would occur.

A dry, hot season often causes drought in the rural areas, particularly in the northeastern region of Thailand. Drought has a serious affect on farmers. Drought is illustrated as in the following:

*Kanbatsu no koto o bosorito uzukumaru*

(Midori, 1970, Ntbk., vol. 1)

Telling of the drought  
in a subdued tone,  
a man crouches down

A suffering farmer is not talkative. The seriousness of the situation is seen in him. Drought is fatal for farmers who have had no other irrigation methods.

*Hakkotsu no gotoki ushi yuku hideri kana!*

(Gania, 1999, Kanryo)

An ox thin like a white bone  
passes by  
in the drought

Both animals and people are suffering from the difficulty of life, as well as drought and starvation. White oxen are thin like skeletons. Not only human beings but animals also have to endure the hot season as the next example indicates.

*Shamaneko no monokage suginu jokusho kana!*

(Keison, 1973, Ntbk., vol. 10)

A Siamese cat  
darts past  
in the sweltering heat

Gigantic columns of clouds, and towering clouds in the sky are symbols of summer from Japanese peoples' eyes. Thus, such clouds are illustrated as in the following:

*Kumo no mine aogite kirin no ōakubi*

(Midori, 1984, Ntbk., vol. 14)

Looking up at the gigantic clouds,  
a giraffe  
gives a big, long yawn

The tall giraffe with a long neck gives a yawn, looking up into the sky. People are looking at the giraffe and at the gigantic columns of clouds. The high autumn sky with clouds is felt.

*Kumo no mine mangurōbu no morituzuki*

(Jisuke, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 20)

Gigantic clouds continue,  
 a mangrove forest spreads  
 on and on

This haiku shows a natural resource, a mangrove forest under gigantic clouds in the sky. A mangrove forest protects important inhabitants, offering food in the water near the sea to such inhabitants as crabs and others. In recent years there have been many cases where the construction of shrimp ponds as industrialization has destroyed mangrove forests in Thailand. The poet who was sent to Kasetsart University as an expert from JAICA, and is Honorable Professor of Hokkaido University in Japan, was observing nature through a scientist's eyes as well as a poet's ones.

In the summertime, day breaks earlier than in other seasons which means that days are longer than nights. An article of The Bangkok Post dated May 15, 1999, reported that the sun rose at 05:52, and set at 18:37, while the newspaper dated November 3, 1997 reported that the sun rose at 06:14, and set at 17:53. It indicates that the sun on the morning of May rose 22 minutes earlier than in November.

In Japan, the difference in time between the summer and autumn sunrise is greater. Poets in Thailand catch a little earlier dawn as phenomena in Thailand and express as in the following:

*Iebune no retsunasu Menamu akeyasushi*

(Takako, 1984, Ntbk., vol. 15)

House boats float in rows  
 dawn is swift  
 upon the Menam

Houseboats have long been a familiar landscape on the canals and main streams in Thailand, although later these boats were forbidden to lie in main streams. People on the houseboats are the first people to face dawn from the river in summer.

*Mijikayo wa kawa yori akete ugozumono*

(Takashi, 1987, Ntbk., vol. 16)

In a short summer night,  
 dawn starts from the river

and moves

This view is from a towering residence along the Chao Phraya River. This haiku indicates that rivers play an important role in people's lives. People carry out their daily activities on rivers like the Chao Phraya River and canals, from morning to night every day.

Charles Buls (1837-1914), in his book, Siamese Sketches in 1901, refers to the Chao Phraya River as in the following:

In the canals, all along the banks, there generally is a row of floating house constructed entirely in wood, consisting of fushels of bamboo. ... In the Menam, there are up to three rows of such houses. Sometimes, one can observe the removal of such living quarters, which are towed by a barge. They are moved at the convenience of its owner. (Charles Buls, 1994: 26, translated by Walter E.J. Tips)

Since the pre-modern times, rivers and canals have been a part of people's lives for they were tools of transportation and communication, essential for life. Houseboats were more often observed in the rivers until they were restricted and forbidden.

An evening glow over the sky caught the poet's attention. People's enjoyment of the views of skies, like an evening glow, is described in the following:

*Yuyakete kanban no uma odori-izu*

(Midori, 1970, Menam. vol. 1)

An evening glow,  
a horse in the signboard  
leaps out

A big signboard draws the attention of passers-by at the center in Bangkok. It illustrates leaping horses on the advertisement board. An evening glow and the illustrated horses are remarkable in the town near Pratunam in the 1960's.

*Yūyake ni kubi o furifuri tagaki-ushi*

(Inpin, 1984, Ntbk., vol. 14)

At sunset  
a cow is ploughing a rice field

with its head swinging to and fro

The scene is in the rice field showing part of farming life. For a long time Thai farmers cultivated rice fields using water buffalo. Today “iron buffalo”, or “Kubota” (as farmers call them), tractors have replaced such water buffalo in many places. Through this haiku we feel the farmers’ important companions and friends, the water buffalo, working all day together.

*Raosu kure Tai yuyakuru Mekong kana!*

(Gania, 1999, Kanryo)

Laos side, already sunset,  
Thai side, still an evening glow,  
the Mekong River!

This is a bird’s-eye view of the Mekong River. Thailand and Laos border each other on the Mekong. The distance between the two countries is the difference of the touch of the setting sun. The comparison of the dusk to an evening glow creates an impressive picture.

Afternoon sunshine in summer is hotter than morning sunshine. After a half day is over, people’s life styles are glanced at through the afternoon sunshine as the next haiku poets describe in the following:

*Eabus no shashō kokkuri nishibi sasu*

(Yōko, 1994, Ntbk., vol. 14)

A conductress of an air-conditioned bus  
falls into a doze,  
the afternoon sun shines

A bus conductress must have had a busy morning and afternoon. In the front of a bus, near the bus driver, there is a space for the conductor or conductress to rest for a while. Even in an air-conditioned bus, the heat from the west is strong enough through the window glass to make her doze off.

*Ōtobai himo de tsunaide nishibi iku*

(Gania, Kanryo)

Bound together by tow ropes,  
motorcycles go along  
in the afternoon sun

The afternoon sun is effective for people to imagine what happened in the morning or early in the afternoon. This troubled motorcycle is pulled by another one to the right place along the way under the hot afternoon sun.

People welcome the southerly winds in summer in the hottest season. Not only for kite flying but also for sending strong enough wind to cool people and to dry washing in a short time. Thai people are known to keep themselves very clean by taking baths, *apnam*, twice a day. Such southerly winds may help people to dry clothes quickly. The example is as in the following:

*Ominami uō saō no shatsu kawaku*

(Yoshiko, 1999, Ntbk., vol. 22)

Strong southerly winds,  
a shirt flapping to and fro  
dries

A long-sleeve shirt is flapping this way and that way, being blown by strong southerly winds. It indicates the life of working people who wear white shirts in the office and whose fates depend on stronger winds, being the superiors' opinions.

During summer climates in the hot and later the rainy season, we observe the fresh green of nature, which is remarkable, and such fresh green is described in the next haiku.

*Shinryoku o sukoshi itadaki rō-taiju*

(Masae, 1974, Ntbk., vol. 10)

With a bit of fresh green  
on its top,  
an old, big tree stands

An old tree revives in summer. In the 1970s, the poet was living in a house with a lawn garden and a tree. An old tree provides a space for a swing for three children. A small girl tries to climb the tree. Thus, an old big tree is useful and important to all the family.



*Shinryoku ya susukeshi machi o moyōgae*

(Yuhsaku, 1999 Ntbk., vol. 22)

Fresh green,  
it transforms the sooty city  
into another

Today some Thai people say that Bangkok, “the City of Angels” is no more an ideal place to live in, because of polluted air and other reasons. Thai people recognize that plants play very important roles in such cities. Trees create an oasis for people on crowded roads and the fresh green coming out from trees have the power to improve the sooty polluted air of the city.

### 5.2.2 The Rainy Season

In the rainy season, squalls, thunderstorms, lightning, flash floods and other natural phenomena are often a surprising experience for foreigners in Thailand. Especially tropical squalls attract the poets’ attention regardless of time and age. Such examples are in the following.

*Sukōru ya aozora soko ni miete ite*

(Akihiro, 1980, Ntbk., vol. 12)

A squall,  
blue sky still can be seen  
This haiku illustrates the first stage of a squall.

*Sukōru no miwatasu kagiri shibuki ori*

(Suriyon Teruko, 1988, Ntbk., vol. 16)

The rain spatters  
wherever  
I look

*Sukōru ni cho no kabane no chi ni nagaru*

(Keison, 1972, Ntbk., vol. 9/10)

A squall blows  
a dead butterfly,  
drifting along the ground

*Sukōru ni roten no kasa no iro kiyuru*

(Gania, 1994, Ntbk. vol. 19)

A squall quells  
the color of  
a street stall parasol

*Sukōru no fronto gurasu ni yugamu machi*

(Fumio, 1962, Fiftieth.)

Through the front-glass,  
the squall distorts  
the view of the town

All these haiku illustrate the vigorous power of squalls from various aspects. Only those who encounter overwhelming tropical showers are able to describe rainfall in detail; this is the privilege of people who have experienced living in Thailand.

*Sukōru ya haruka no mura o furi-tsutsumu*

(Ichizo, 1962, Fiftieth.)

A squall  
hovers over  
the distant village

*Kisha hashiru sukōru o nuke sukōru ni*

(Akihiro, 1980, Ntbk., vol. 12/13)

The train passes  
through a squall  
and into another

These two haiku show that squalls are always travelers' familiar companions wherever they go. Usually squalls start suddenly and in a short time stop.

*Yudachi no sugite nan no ki yara niou*

(Sekiyō, 1977, Ntbk., vol. 11)

After a squall,  
some tree, which I don't know  
smells

When a squall has gone, a poet notices a smell. After heated trees are cooled by a sudden squall, rain stops. Then a faint scent lingers.

During the rainy season, lightning and thunder often frightens people. At the end of the rainy season, frequent thunderbolts and lightning as well as heavy rainfall are observed, as common phenomena. These facts provide the inspiration for many Japanese to write haiku as in the following:

*Rai chikashi mugon ni sugishi hoki-uri*

(Masatoshi, 1971, Ntbk., vol. 9)

Thunder is close at hand,  
keeping silent  
a broom-vendor passes

A Thai vendor knowing what is coming in the next moment hurries somewhere to escape from the inevitable thunderstorm. He is not thinking about selling his brooms. He keeps his silence.

*Randana no koke nio raiu kuru kehai*

(Sekiyō, 1970, Menam. vol. 1)

Moss from the orchid shelves smell,  
seemingly  
the thunder rain will start

The poet, who takes care, of orchids is a careful observer of nature. He is also sensitive to natural phenomena, and he predicts a thundershower is coming.

A clap of thunder in the distance, or a variety of thunder, are illustrated as in the following:

*Juwaki yori rai no ne kikoe koe togire*

(Natsujo, Menam., vol. 2)

Through a telephone receiver,  
a clap of thunder was heard,  
then, the voice was interrupted

Although in the last decade telecommunications have much improved, it used to happen that telephone lines were cut out suddenly, or a wrong connection of the telephone often caused inconvenience in the past. Thunder also was a cause of troubles. At that time, it might have been necessary for telephone-callers to ask the receivers, "Who are you?"; or "*thi nai krap*".

*Enrai to naritsutsu kigi no yure yamazuru*

(Ichizo, Fiftieth.)

Rolls of thunderbolts decreasing  
in the distance,  
yet the wavering of trees won't cease

Thunder and lightning at night cause poets to feel that mysterious powers exist in nature. Lightning is a special force of nature. Since the old days, according to Hindu mythology, Hindu God Indra represents the function of thunderbolts. The idea is also adapted by Buddhism and by changing form, Thai people have mythological stories of thunder. Lightning at night is awful and the poet feels that there is some supernatural power, or God is giving trees the power to bear fruit at night, and writes as in the following:

*Inazuma no shikiri to nanika yo mo minoru*

(Fumio, 1968, Shuho)

The frequent flash  
of lightning,  
fruit grows even at night

Two, or three decades ago, electricity was not available in remote rural areas. In such villages, diligent farmers arose at dawn and slept after sunset. When we traveled

and passed those districts at night, true darkness wrapped everything. Facing such darkness, people recognized their existence as human beings in real nature.

*Tai no nono yami no fukasa yo tōki rai*

(Midori, 1970, Menam. vol. 1)

The depth of the darkness  
in the fields of Thailand,  
thunder afar

The Emerald Buddha Temple (*Wat Phra Keow*) is the most respected, royally-sponsored temple, and Thai people are very proud of it. In daytime, this beautiful, glittering temple is a famous landmark to all people. A poet finds that the same temple reflected by lightning at night is also extremely beautiful and mysterious, as in the following:

*Emerarudo jiin no ukabu raiu no yo*

(Shunichiro, 1996, Ntbk., vol. 20)

A lightning filled night,  
the Emerald Buddha Temple  
is silhouetted

*Raimei ya'enden ni mizu hibiku nari*

(Taniyama Toshiko, Tsuyu no Shiro)

A clap of thunder  
echoes on the water  
of a salt-field

A clap of thunder from the sky suddenly disturbs the quiet salt field. Amid the contrast of sounds and silence, the skies and salt fields, or ground, we watch large a view of landscape and glare at the spectacle of the moment of thunder. Salt fields are still seen near the seas such as Chon Buri, Samut Sakorn and other places.

It is commonly said that the rainy season is over by the end of October. Rather cool air is often felt in the middle of October. Such a cool season is confirmed in the following haiku.

*Uki-ake no kaze hirogetaru chokan ni*

(Shunrō, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 21)

The wind,  
just after the rainy season has ended,  
rustles the morning paper I am holding wide open

Happy, refreshing feelings about the cool season are seen. Through a window, autumn winds rustle the paper.

### 5.2.3 The Cool Season

The touch of autumn is welcomed by poets and it inspires poets to write haiku: autumn winds, fallen leaves, tinted red, or yellow leaves, rich crops, flash floods in autumn, fleecy clouds, the moon, and various subjects are illustrated as natural phenomena. Some examples to express autumnal atmosphere are in the following.

*Hada-zamu ya asa ichiban no kasha ugoku*

(Takashi, 1989, Ntbk., vol. 16)

Chilly weather,  
the first morning freighter-train  
moves

The poet traveled in the northeast and other areas often because of his job as an expert of irrigation, and this haiku written during his trip describes rural chilly weather early in the morning and the glimpse of the routine daily life of the people working on railroads.

*Asa no cha ni aki kehai seri zapon-gashi*

(Sekiyō, 1978, Ntbk., vol. 12)

Morning tea brings  
the touch of autumn,  
having candied pomelo-peels

When the poet, an artist, is eating candied pomelo-peels, traditional sweets in Thailand, at home, he feels the touch of autumn.

*Shūten ni doremi doremifa yashi no tatsu*

(Takako, 1982, Ntbk., vol. 13)

In the autumn sky,  
do, re, mi, do, re, mi, fa,  
palm trees stand

In the cool season, skies are high, clear and blue. Backing such skies, tall palm-trees are in a line. Each tree is similar and different. The poet expressed “do, re, mi” as counting these charming trees in the landscape.

*Aki-kaze ni odoroki yasuki Gogyū kana*

(Gogyū, 1988, Ntbk., vol. 16)

The water buffalo  
is easily frightened  
by the autumn wind

Water buffalo love water, and the rainy season is seemingly very well-suited to them. But, when it becomes cool, the animals must be startled by the autumn winds -- that is the feeling of the poet who has the haiku name, “Gogyū”, or “water buffalo”, for he loves water buffalo very much.

*Gyoko suru wani no sobira ya aki no kaze*

(Haruo, 1996, Ntbk., vol. 20)

The crocodile's back  
becomes solid  
by the autumn wind

Autumn winds are regarded as a warning to tell people to prepare for cold weather. The back of a crocodile is solid like an armor of *samurai*. With the tension of cool winds, the back of a crocodile becomes more and more solid—that was the impression of the poet during the autumn winds.

*Akikaze ya ori no naigai mina fukare*

(Takashi, 1984, Ntbk., vol. 16)

An autumn wind blows  
through the inside and the outside  
of the cage

At the zoo, the poet watches animals in the cages. The autumn winds blow through cages freely. Animals in the cages have no other way, but to accept the reality of their situation.

The cool autumn-like season evokes images of rich rice-harvests and red tinted fallen leaves. Such examples are in the following:

*Shikai masa ni 360 do toyo no aki*

(Takako, 1981, Ntbk., vol. 13)

The view,  
just 360 degrees around,  
rich autumn

In the great plains of central Thailand, we see rice fields in all four directions. Each field bears a rich crop of rice.

*Fukuwan bu-atsuki ochiba fumeba naru*

(Midori, 1996, Ntbk., vol. 20)

'Hu-kwang' thick fallen leaves  
sound when we step in

*Hu-kwang* leaves are rather thick and known for their tinted red colors occasionally. The poet noticed that layers of fallen leaves of umbrella trees sound when she stepped in which is familiar sound in her memory in Japanese autumn.

*Nicchu no hikari atsumete yu momiji*

(Yōko, 1998, Ntbk., vol. 22)

Collecting daytime sunshine,  
yellow tinted leaves  
in the evening

Yellow tinted leaves in the evening are beautiful enough to make the poet feel as if sunshine in daytime were gathered and change green color into yellow.



A short winter's day, fog, mango rains (mango-blossom-season rain) are used in reference to natural phenomena mainly in the cool season. Thai people make merit on many occasions. The freeing of birds, fish and other animals are merit making behaviors. Such traditional deeds conducted under a morning fog is a common phenomenon of Thai society as in the following:

*Asagiri ya hōjo no uo chirite kiyu*

(Hōjirō, 1998, Ntbk., vol. 22)

Morning fog,  
released fish disperse  
and disappear

*Tanjitsu ya koe yuruyakana noragaeri*

(Hōjirō, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 21)

A short winter's day,  
farmers' voices are heard loosely,  
on the way back home from the field

Farmers are on the way home after a day's work in the field. On the short wintry day, peaceful, not-in-a-haste voices continue.

Expressed as the season of November, December, and January, Christmas, the passing year, New Year days and others are used in haiku as in the following:

*Birugai no soko doyomekite toshi mukau*

(Yuhsaku, 1999, Ntbk., vol. 22)

Making a stir  
at the bottom of buildings,  
people welcome the New Year

People were waiting for the moment when the New Year has come. At the moment when it has arrived, a stir of people, voices, and crackers come up from the bottom of buildings. The poet is at the higher stair room, listening to people's celebrating sounds.

*Dono yashi mo umi ni kashigeri hatsuhinode*

(Shunrō, 1997, Ntbk., vol. 20)

Each palm tree  
is inclining to the sea,  
the New Year sunrise

The poet is at the seaside to spend New Year days. It is a Japanese tradition to appreciate the first sunrise at the mountains or at the seaside on New Year's Day, on January 1<sup>st</sup>. He finds that each palm tree along the seashore inclines to the sea, as if they were welcoming the newly rising sun on New Years.

*Ichigatsu no hikari ni ikoi mono urazu*

(Yoshiko, 1996, Ntbk., vol. 19)

Relaxed under sunshine  
in January,  
a vendor won't sell

Under the mild, fine sunshine, the vendor is resting for a long time, as if he had forgotten his job to vend.

### 5.3 Summary

Many plants in Thailand are depicted in haiku, indicating seasons. For example, the conditions of mangoes are described, such as the mango blossoms in February, the green mango in March, the ripe mango in April. Durians also are depicted from various aspects such as the flowers sometime in January, the smell and the spines on the skin. Other favorite fruits, such as mangosteens in June and pomelos, are also mentioned in haiku.

Thailand's trees blooming in the hot season attract people's eyes; the yellow of the golden shower trees bloom, the red of the flame trees, and the pink of the silk tree flowers. Colorful bougainvilleas and ixoras are familiar in haiku, while some fragrant flowers like jasmine, champak, and plumeria are also impressively described.

Orchid trees, crepe myrtle and coral trees are familiar in Thailand. The umbrella trees with remarkable tinged, red or yellow leaves and leaves shaped like deer's ears,

were especially attractive to some poets. The unusual kapok tree, known as panya in Japanese, with its magical production of kapok cotton, also draws the attention of some poets.

The ubiquitous water hyacinths in Thailand's water culture, especially in the rainy season, are also popular subjects for Japanese haiku poets.

The plants depicted in haiku reflect the changing Thai seasons noticed by Japanese poets in Thailand. By observing these subjects, the Japanese poets come closer to understanding Thai people as well as the Thai climate.



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