

A Book of
POETRY: "MICHİ"
HIROSHI HAMADA

MICHI: "THE PATH"

A BOOK OF POETRY

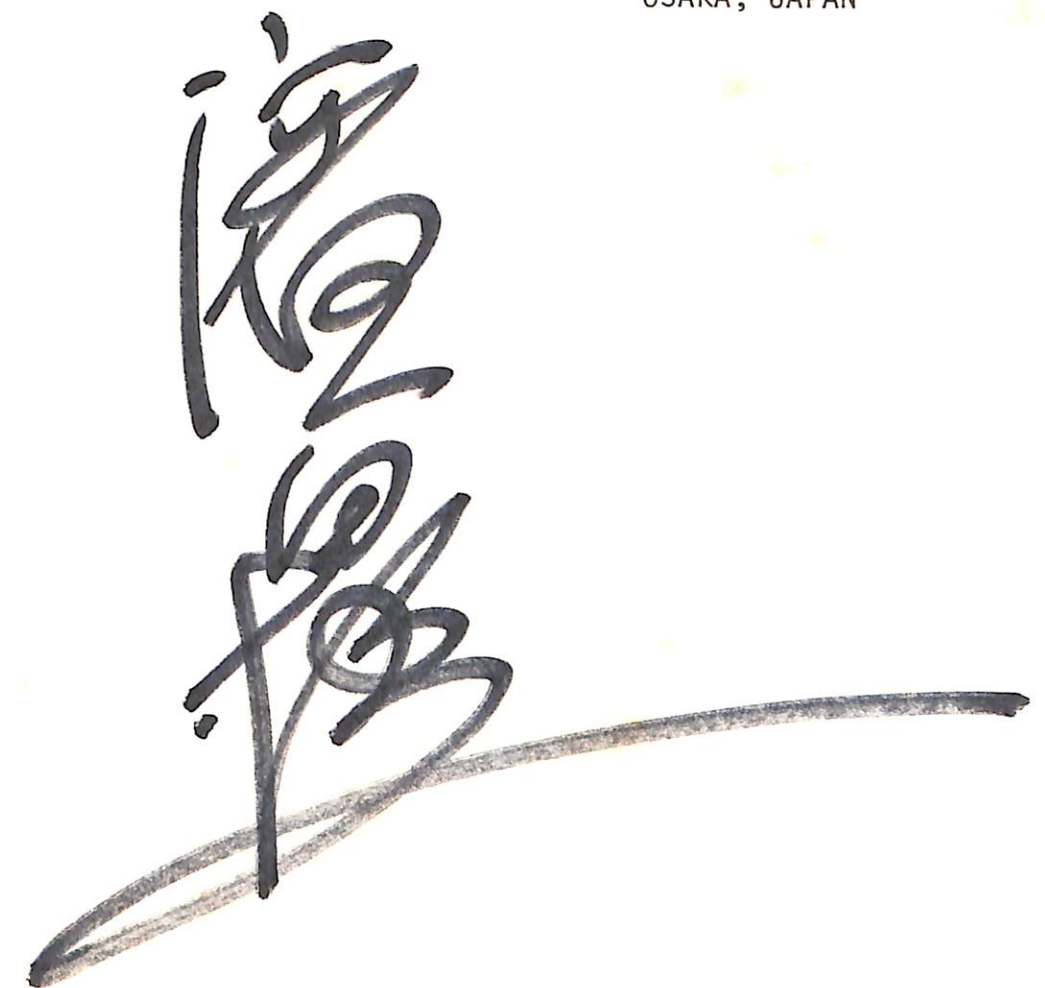
A BOOK OF
POETRY: "MICHİ"
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OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA
CALLIGRAPHIES BY
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Calligraphies and Photographies are author's possession
photographs by John Sakata

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CONTENTS

Preface.....	ix
Acknowledgements.....	x
 The Path.....	2
A Single Laughter of the Great Sea.....	4
The sword and the way.....	6
The Seeking Mind.....	8
Enlightenment.....	10
The Samurai Warriors.....	12
Single Light in the Darkness.....	14
The Mask.....	16
Soundless Sound.....	18
Good and Evil.....	20
Heaven and the Great Sea.....	22
Moon and Water.....	24
Truth of the Universe.....	26
Spirit.....	28
Camp.....	30
Ki.....	32
Koan Public Case.....	34
The Pain.....	36
Four Greatest Truths.....	38
Truth.....	40
Delusion.....	42
Cause and Effect.....	44

Mind.....	46
Experience.....	48
Regrets.....	50
Beauty.....	52
Rain.....	54
Original Aspect.....	56
The Stars.....	58
Spring Visit.....	60
Homecoming.....	62
Memories.....	64
Death Song.....	66
Wind and Sand.....	68
The Path and The Great Sea.....	70
Ruined Castle.....	72
Origin.....	74
Mother.....	76
The Waves.....	78
Pure Mind.....	80
First Meeting.....	82
Friend.....	84
Happiness.....	86
Meeting and Farewell.....	88
Love Song.....	90



I dedicate this book of poetry to my father - Kazuo Hamada



PREFACE

I consider myself as neither a poet nor literary critic. I am no virtuoso in judging or appreciating the classical meaning of poetry. Furthermore, I possess no talent in expressing the intricacies or complexities of human experiences in abstract forms like contemporary poetry. It is my sincerest hope that the spirit of the eastern mind reflecting the many spheres of Japanese culture will be sensed by my readers. I am neither a master martial artist nor an expert practitioner. However, it is my deepest wish and desire to be spiritually self-actualized in the proper domain.

Therefore, I am subject to any criticisms insofar as poetry titles could be abstractions of people, places, or things of the past, present and future. I received the spirit of life a long time ago. In search of "the way" though a lifelong journey. I yearn to discover a glimmer of happiness in the midst of a chaotic world of reality. If a reader finds some positive meaning in life through this humble offering, I would feel most appreciative and rewarded.

August 14, 1978
Osaka, Japan

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For the publication of this book, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all dedicated martial artists of the College of William and Mary, Christopher Newport College, Old Dominion University and many other institutions, who supported me greatly for a period of ten years.

I am greatly indebted to my father, Kazuo Hamada Hanshi (master swordsman) who did all the calligraphy for the poetry titles. His martial spirit and feelings were shown in the flow of the ink brushes as though they were alive in their own ways. Tenderness and softness are all inclusive in each character. I find perfect harmony and tranquility in his art work.

I am also greatly indebted to Dr. Patrick K. Tow, professor at Old Dominion University, for his editing and valuable suggestions. I would also like to extend appreciation to John Sakata at the College of William and Mary for his photography and Sylvia Charron at Old Dominion University for the typing of the manuscript.

道

THE PATH

The path has a way
of leading us from darkness.

The enlightened soul points at
no direction to follow,
yet it can be plainly seen.

He who experiences the transcendence
of a non-discriminatory mind
sees the path.

He who perceives the intuitive truth
will be enlightened.



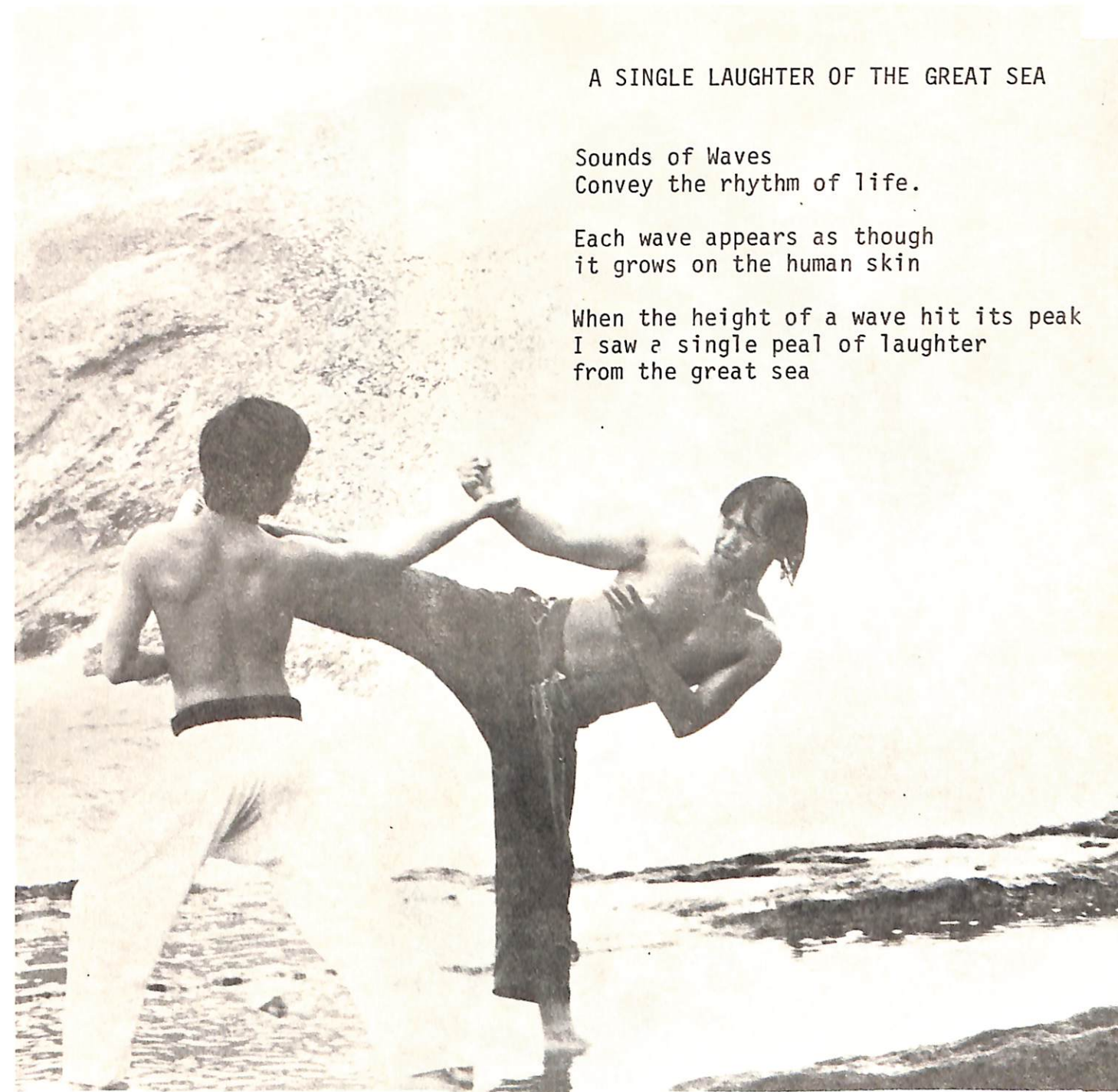
大海の笑

A SINGLE LAUGHTER OF THE GREAT SEA

Sounds of Waves
Convey the rhythm of life.

Each wave appears as though
it grows on the human skin

When the height of a wave hit its peak
I saw a single peal of laughter
from the great sea



劍
之
道




THE SWORD AND THE WAY

What is the sword of the truth?
It is beyond mind and body.

What is the truth of the sword?
It is beyond words and letters.

He who knows this essence shall be
free from the mortal destiny of mankind.

求
心
卷
心
と



SEEKING MIND

Seeking absolute freedom
I find chaos within the dust of a storm.

Seeking absolute happiness
I find serene beauty in the aged tree.

Seeking peace of mind
I find fear of sudden departure from this reality.

Who has an answer that must be questioned?
Who has a question that must be answered?

Seeking mind and finding mind are the
discursive mind.

Truth lies in the universal emptiness.



ENLIGHTENMENT

Zen Master Dogen speaks of the true passage to "The Way;" "To study the self is to forget the self."

Master Hakuin demands his disciples to hear "the sound of one hand."

Sword Saint Musashi shouted, "Void is nothingness."

The intuitive truth of the great masters has shown nothing but absolute simplicity in accord with such perfection.

武

士



SAMURAI WARRIOR

Like the wind which blows in every direction

Like the wild flowers which bloom in every
corner of the earth

Where there is a cry for mercy,
such soldiers will embrace them
with compassion.

Where there is a need for compassion
he will bestow mercy .

This soldier of humanity is truly
The lord of lords.

暗
黒
の
一
光



SINGLE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

I saw a tiny light amidst the darkness.
It separated into countless pieces of light.

Where is the origin of this light?
How does this light come about?

Suddenly it disappeared into the darkness
and becomes absorbed into the countless
numbers of shadow:
Where is the origin of this ultimate darkness?

The same eyes have observed the truths of two sides.
All of a sudden, I experienced a
deterioration of body and mind in the
midst of light and darkness.



THE MASK

Who dares to kill his mask?
He who is afraid of his own shadow.

Who carries the empty skin bag?
He who is free knows his own shell.

Who knows the beginning and the end?

He who destroys his mask and ego
will know no beginning and no end.

無音



SOUNDLESS SOUND

Soundless sounds are the true sounds,
Standing on the peak of a mountain, I shout,
"who am I?"
The mountain echoes back "who am I?"
I shout again "Answer me!" The echo
returns, "answer me!"

The way has many paths to follow.
The numerous paths have a way of being
discovered.

Echoes of the mountain are the true voice of all sounds,

Such will torment the desperate cries of all,
yet unenlightened souls of man

善

惡



GOOD AND EVIL

On a starless night,
I saw the countless reflections of crystal dew.

On a starry night,
nothing but clouds of the galaxy came into my eyes.

Thinking neither good nor evil -
it is said to perceive the ultimate truth.

天
大
命
海
と



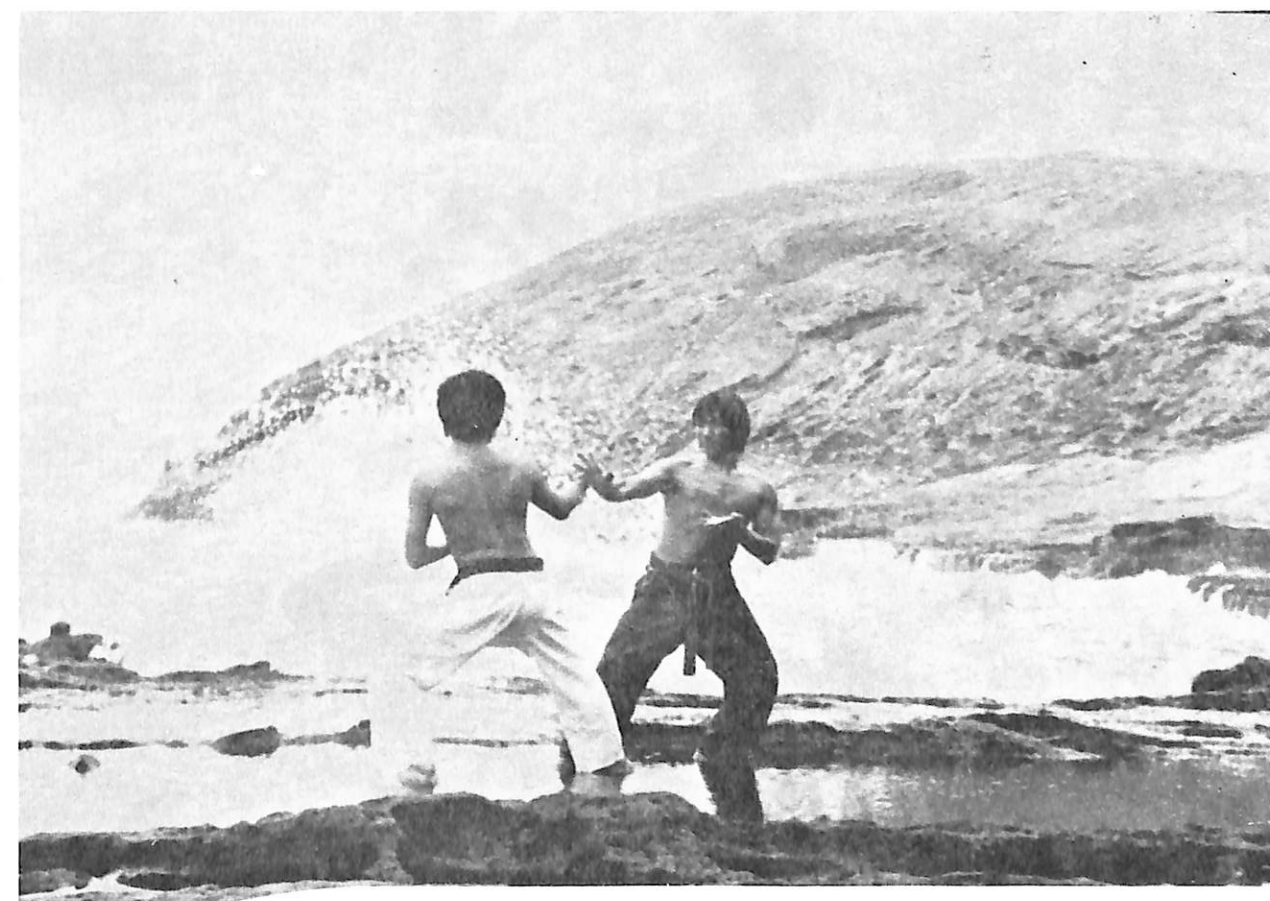
HEAVEN AND THE GREAT SEA

Who dares to be revered alone in heaven and earth?

Who has a heaven soaring spirit that penetrates the sky

Even the hardest rock can be moved by the great sea
like the most fragile of flowers moving empty
sorrows of the past.

May this earth be a paradise for those who
experience such oneness



水月鏡花



MOON AND WATER

Let your eyes like the moon reflecting in the water.
No need for grasping or holding onto show the eternal present.
No need for wants or desires to show the beauty.
Universal beauty in such eyes is beyond measure.

万
空
一
指



TRUTH OF THE UNIVERSE

Someone asked who can determine the
truth of the universe.
Someone answered, "There it is!"

You had better grab it fast
, or the truth will lash your ego into pieces.

SPIRIT

How profound it is to see the creator's spirit!

Without any sign or intention. The beauty
of absolute present is manifesting itself.

A single glimpse of brightness
appears through the rain clouds.

It reached out as though it became
a golden bridge between heaven and earth

命
痛



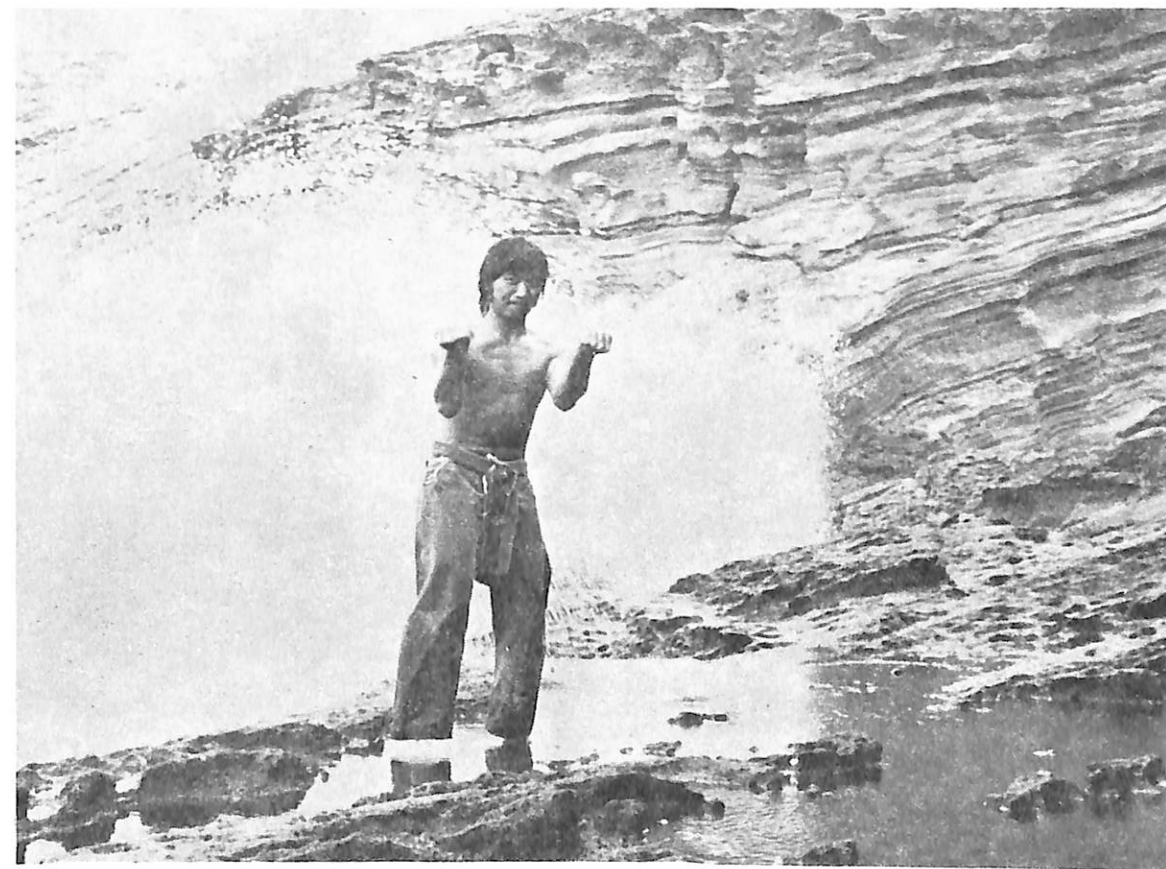
CAMP

In the ice cold ocean
I saw the separation of air, fire, earth, and water!

From the highest peak of a sand dune
I saw the agony of a struggling soul searching for an
eternal light.

Looking at my weary hands and feet
I felt nothing by frailness and fear.

To know is to overcome my small self.
It is true power that allows me to surrender
to the hands of such absolutes.





KI

They say:

In the path, there is a way to see one's Ki
In one's Ki, there is a way to see the path
Go beyond opposite and contradictions.
Being becomes time and time becomes being
For the perfection of form, art becomes artless
and form becomes formless.
Who receives the power of the absolute?
Who creates the power of the absolute?

They say:

Ki is beyond body and mind, beyond time and space,
and above all - beyond ordinary comprehension.
When you eat a rice ball next time
to be sure to count the number of each piece-
If you feel pain from the hands of peasants
in your mouth, then each water particle of the fall
can be seen so clearly.





KOAN: PUBLIC CASE

Wish to be swept away
from all of it
by the ceaseless rain.

Wish to be carried away
from every bit of it
with lightening speed.

Wish to be enlightened
by all things in nature.

Thunder hits! I blink my eyes
and missed everything.



PAIN

Who has the tender thoughts to ease the pain?
I can hear the wild goose soaring in the sky.

I can see the shells from the deep sea
embedded in the sand

He who is aware of pain or knows no pain
has the tender thoughts.

四
天
真
理



FOUR GREATEST TRUTHS

Master Swordsman speak of humility;

Philosophers speak of truth;

Saints and wisemen speak of the Tao of no doubt;

The moon, sun, and sea speaks for itself.

道
理



TRUTH

What is the truth of truths?

He who knows it walks in peace.

Finally, when all minds have been
cast away
be no more sadness within human sorrows.

When summer comes, to be sure,
I walk again in the familiar forest.

妄想



DELUSION

How serene to know the single power!

How simple to know the serenity!

How powerful it is to know the simple serenity!.

How foolish it is not to know
all such elements are reduced to the
same mind.



CAUSE AND EFFECT

Seeking the reason for all factors,
I found no relationship between heaven and hell.

Seeking the source of all elements,
I found no relationship between body and mind.

Without an ending of all such answers,
the artificial flowers in the concrete jungle

What will they give?

心
と
時



MIND AND TIME

Time has a past, present and future!

No mind can stop it or fight it.

Count your heart beat!

And you will find the dropping dews
from a wet leaf.

体

験



EXPERIENCE

What a burdensome life for the lady bug
to experience drought!

To feel the warm fire, lay my body
in the snow.

What a joyous life for the ignorant
to experience frost!

While enduring,
the pain of learning,
invisible in the air
shining is a winter moon.

暖

悔

REGRETS

I hear the North is warm.
I hear the South is cold.

Birds seek their new nests through the storm
from the east
Wild animals walk through the desert toward
the west where it is full of green grass

North, South, East or West
pick your direction
and never look back.



BEAUTY

Looking through the finest grain of wood

We can see its line carving out the
carefree orbit of perfect freedom

When a master carpenter touches it
with his sharpest chisel
without expression nor any sign of pain

How delicately is it shown its' eternal beauty!

雨



RAIN

It rained yesterday.

It rained today.

My mind is full of rain.

How can one be free from idle thoughts?

So I sat and received the warmest welcome
from the heaven's rain.

教

と見

性



望



THE STARS

Where are the stars to lead us to the North?
Here they stand in the Southern region of the sky.
Where are the stars to lead us to the South?
Here they stand in the Northern region of the sky.

North, South, East, and West

A lonely ship sails to find its golden path -
there she finds only a speck of brightness
from the farthest region of the sky
without a sign of direction

春

訪



SPRING VISIT

The king of Winter proclaims victory over
man's impatience.
The cold air and frostbite are nothing but
friendly attachments without change

Recently, I heard a message from a lost bird.
"Spring is waiting for the sounds of a valley stream
and color of the mountain"

So keep your heart open and fresh
as always!"

故郷

HOME COMING

Tracing footprints on the snow
Remembering the old home in Kyoto Valley
The long path, I walked alone.
Yet strangely, recognized no spin of familiar
scenery.
Sounds of the stream have lost their crystal chimes
and no rain seemed to bring back the thousand
years old beauty.
The old mouse was trying to say "Listen...this
is it...look at the harmony between the small
peddles around the rock and surrounding greens."

At this instance, I had lost all my memories
and forgot where I was...

記

憶



MEMORIES

Where are the good and bad memories?

They exist somewhere in the corner of my
heart and in my mind.

I see no trace of sound, color, or picture.

Maybe the truth lies in the hidden region of myself.

死歌




DEATH SONG

I heard a faint sound in the distant valley
It must be the whispering of a farewell message
from the deep forest

Let it fall ever so radiantly
Like the cherry blossoms in the late spring.

砂
と
風



WIND AND SOUND

Sounds of sharp wind, I can hear
My eyes are closed because of the sand

Warm heat of the early sun, I can feel

Because of such simple joy
My mind is so fully content.

大海道と



THE PATH AND THE GREAT SEA

Let your body and soul be gulped by the great sea.
For, it will show you the power of infinity.

Let your fears and desires be taken away by that force.
For there is no other comparable absolute in nature.

Let everything be revealed in the order of the universe.
For there is no greater path to seek Tao.



荒城



RUINED CASTLE

A sharp sword from ancient times tells a story
like an unknown poem from the past touching
a stranger's heart.
It is a story of triumph and defeat, sorrow and
happiness, love and hate, and life and death.

In the ruined castle, there lives the spirit of a
great warlord..

When early spring comes, wild flowers will ease
the pain of lost souls from the lost battle.



ORIGIN

Where is my place of origin?

I started there a long time ago with the flashing memory of green mountains, a quiet sea, familiar faces with sad eyes, and a warm welcome with complete embracement.

I left there and never thought of returning.

Foolish dreams run through my weary mind much like broken glasses being the symbol of detachments.

Why does one seek purpose in tomorrow?

I noticed a baby boy chasing the gliding piece of paper in the sand dune.

Why does one wish perfection from imperfection and imperfection from perfection?

I noticed the cold wind gushing through the distant valley.

Someone is trying to reach me. After all, maybe that someone is only myself who left his origin a long time ago.





MOTHER

Old tiresome fingers
a weary face with strange beauty
and I saw a tiny drop of tear.

Under a foggy light
with a sign of faint loneliness
How strongly she endures!



THE WAVES

In the morning, another sun will rise.
It was so bright that no birds could see
a trace of their shadow.

O, the eternal echo of the waves
I heard a perfect symphony in the moonless night.

Night or day, without colour or form of human
imagination - indeed, its changes are so
spontaneous!



純

心



PURE MIND

Words are spoken
letters are written
to sense the unsensible
to hear the unspeakable

Spoken words cannot be heard
written letters cannot be read

A pure mind goes beyond words and letters
A winter gust lifts up the dust
Here, it goes out the last candle light!

初会



FIRST MEETING

Pick up the scented flower
and you will see the melody of perfect harmony

Touch the softest skin
and you will hear the most tender passion of
the infinite pores.

Hear the beauty, see the sounds of life
and you will discover the eternal pleasure
of the unknown



FRIEND

Lonliness is your real friend.
All of a sudden
When you see only yourself in the mirror
and nobody else.
your being becomes everything in this universe

No matter what you have, what you gain,
and what you loose - there will be a time
when loneliness enters your mind.

When it comes, smile to yourself
, and let it travel freely.



HAPPINESS

Children smile when the sun is so bright in the
playground.
They cry when their favorite toys are taken away.
Who needs reconciliation!
Whose feeling of hurt needs to be amended!
When one is true to his pure feeling -
Sobbing is so complete!
Laughing is so complete!
Be like children again
A new born baby knows the true meaning
of happiness - such simplicity!
Such directness, such singlemindedness & such joy!

別離
用合
乙

MEETING AND FAREWELL

With the sound of the rising sun
time becomes everything.
To bid the whole world a farewell
breaks the wall of emotions into pieces like shattered
crystal glasses.

By releasing the feeling of uncertainty, one lives the
meaning of lost smiles.

Not knowing the destiny of a shooting star
we render nothing but good wishes

When suddenly the horizon becomes red, the
blue sea will be motionless...to be absorbed
within its own purity.

Life as such has nothing but meetings and farewells.
who knows of such mysteries?

What a joyous life to have complete confidence
in such mysteries.

美

貴



LOVE SONG

I hear nature's beauty is utterly limitless
Here, suddenly I found the glorious passion
from the last flower on earth.

How exquisite it is in the eternal present!
I find no words and letters to express thy beauty.

There is a light of happiness in the darkest night
...and there's a feeling of compassion from
the sorrows of the past.

All is embraced with a feeling of perfect
joy.

Like I know so well - this must be
the happiest moment in my life.

