



MORIO HAYASHIDA

Six Poems

EXTREMES AND MODERATIONS:
EARLY SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA POETRY

Six Poems

Morio Hayashida

A Critical Reading Edition

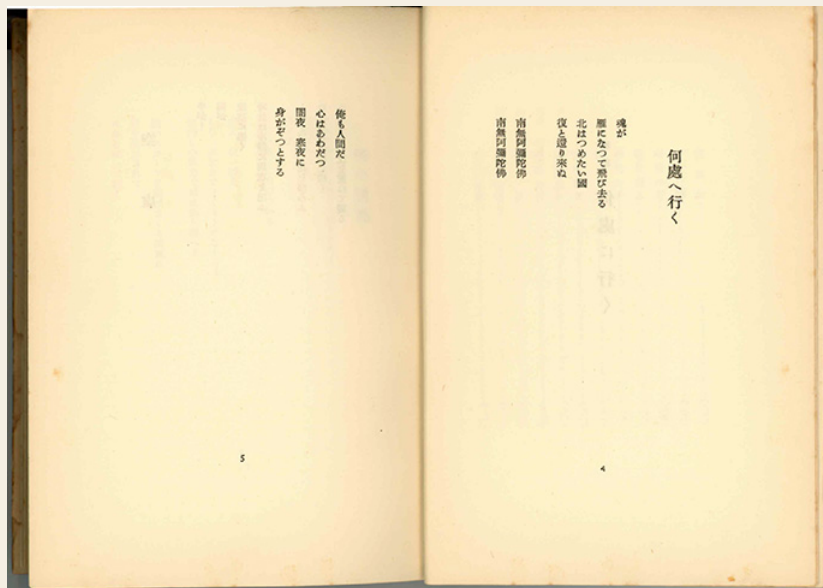
Edited by Brian Kim Stefans

The Text-Tech Papers

Extremes and Moderations: Early Southern California Poetry

Archival Images

A short selection from the source record



A page from Hayashida's Japanese-language source record, later translated in the recovered six-poem portfolio.

Editorial Note

This is a reset reading edition, not a facsimile. The poems were transcribed from the original book and periodical scans in the local archive rather than from earlier reader PDFs. Narrow source-page wraps have been rejoined; stanza divisions, purposeful line indents, subtitles, epigraphs, and internal section headings have been retained. Unavoidable display wraps use a hanging indent. Obvious scanning debris was removed without silently modernizing diction or punctuation. Book and periodical titles are italicized in editorial matter, and every poem begins on a new page and ends with a source note.

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Introduction

Morio Hayashida crossed the Pacific as a teenager and spent much of his life in Los Angeles, writing for Japanese-language newspapers, working as a gardener, and joining the literary clubs that made Issei culture far richer than the surviving English record suggests. War uprooted that life; after leaving California during World War II, he farmed near Salt Lake City with his brother before returning to Southern California. These six poems, translated by Kenji C. Liu, are jagged, visionary pieces in which a foreign street, a broken mirror, illness, blood, and the glare of the sea become forms of estrangement and endurance. They are a small surviving English window onto a much larger Japanese-language career.

Biography

Morio Hayashida was born in Fukuoka, Japan, on August 25, 1904. He came to Los Angeles at about nineteen and entered the city's Japanese-language print culture, writing for *Rafu Shimpō* and *Kashū Mainichi* while supporting himself in gardening and related work.

Hayashida participated in prewar literary clubs and belonged to a transpacific artistic world that connected Japanese immigrant writers in California with figures such as Yone Noguchi, Sadakichi Hartmann, and Takehisa Yumeji. The Japanese-language archive of this activity remains only partly identified in English-language scholarship.

During World War II Hayashida left California and farmed near Salt Lake City with his brother. The available biographical account does not yet establish the exact legal mechanism or chronology of that move, so it should not be flattened into a generic incarceration narrative without further records.

After returning to Southern California, Hayashida remained active in community life. In the 1970s he served as president of the Southern California Gardeners' Federation and helped found the Japanese American Community Credit Union. These roles join literary labor to the cooperative institutions built by Japanese Americans after wartime displacement.

Hayashida died in Los Angeles on April 23, 1993. Kenji C. Liu's 2021 translations in *Asymptote* recovered six poems for English-language readers. Their compressed, surreal images suggest a much larger original-language body

of work whose books, newspaper appearances, and manuscript witnesses still require Japanese-language bibliographical research.

Six Poems

Recovered Issei poems | English translation, 2021

Six poems by Morio Hayashida, translated from Japanese by Kenji C. Liu.

Sparkling Sea

Boom boom boom boom booom
Boom boom boom boom booom
Answering the wind hidden among clouds
the ocean tide swings and holds up its white hair
Hóhóhóhóhō
Háháháháhā
From the pier's shadow
Red white heads line up and swell on the sea
Annoying
Annoying
Glittering sea
Bathing in the sand, what should I do

Publication. First published in *Six Poems. Asymptote*, January 2021, p. 1.

Autumn in a Foreign Country

Suddenly stopped—
shoulder-to-shoulder, strolling
profiles of alien faces to stare at
After all it isn't as thought
doesn't look like home
Toward a nostalgic burning sunset
wandering quietly in the autumn night
Japan
Japan
Japan
While lost in memories of home
A faltering
exchange of greetings in an irritating foreign tongue
Smirks hidden behind smoke rings
forcing open the bag of illusions
and so
a line of strolling white people's complexions to slap

Publication. First published in *Six Poems*. *Asymptote*, January 2021, p. 1.

Broken Mirror

Evil spirits do you blame me?
After three years' hardship, the mirror backing peeled off
That's why (I) carry a truly torn shape
build a castle of memories
Buffalos eating green grass forever
For a while I dream

Publication. First published in *Six Poems. Asymptote*, January 2021, p. 2.

Bloody

In the watermelon field pulling on heavy boots
Azure water shifting dead vines
I shade my gloomy face
The autumn sun is silent, unfriendly
With an ei!
aim for a big one and kick it
I meditate on the cleaved red pieces

Publication. First published in *Six Poems. Asymptote*, January 2021, p. 2.

Illness

Fighting fatigue at 2 o'clock

Awful!

White-hot pressure nesting in the pupil

The milk cart's horseshoes strike at 3 o'clock

Why can't I sleep!

The 4 o'clock window begins to faintly peek

Aah aah

Through this gloomy heart, arms meander endlessly

Publication. First published in *Six Poems. Asymptote*, January 2021, p. 3.

Where to Go

The soul
becomes a goose, flies away—
the north is a cold country—
to leave and not return
Namu Amida Butsu
Namu Amida Butsu
I'm human too
The heart bubbles
Dark night wintry night
the body shudders in it

Publication. First published in *Six Poems*. *Asymptote*, January 2021, p. 3.

Bibliography

Selected primary and secondary sources

Book and periodical titles are italicized throughout.

Works by the Author

“Six Poems.” Translated by Kenji C. Liu. *Asymptote*, January 2021.

Works About the Author

Liu, Kenji C. Translator’s note to “Morio Hayashida: Six Poems.” *Asymptote*, January 2021.

“Taken by the Wind: Issei Poetry Between the Wars.” *High Country News*, 2023.

Colophon

Publication and production notes

This critical reading edition was edited by Brian Kim Stefans for The Text-Tech Papers, Los Angeles, in 2026, as part of *Extremes and Moderations: Early Southern California Poetry*. The poems were reset from the source pages identified in the publication notes and datasheet. The book was composed in EB Garamond on a cream field at 6 × 9 inches. The cover uses original abstract artwork prepared for this edition.