

Kōjō no Tsuki 荒城の月 (The Moon over the Ruined Castle, 1900)

Music by TAKI Rentarō 瀧廉太郎 (1879-1903)

Text by DOI Bansui 土井晩翠 (1871-1952)

1.

はる こうろうの はなの えん
Haru kōrō-no hana-no en
(spring high tower of flower of party)

春高樓の 花の宴
(In spring, blossom-viewing party on a high tower)

めぐる さかづき かげ さして
Meguru sakazuki kage sashite
(circulating sake-cup light casting)

めぐる盃 かげさして
(Casting light on circulating sake-cups)

ちよの まつがえ わけいでし
Chiyo-no matsugae wake-ideshi
(thousand year of pine-branch parted-came out)

千代の松が枝 わけいでし
(Parting millennial pine boughs, [the moon] came out,)

むかしの ひかり いま いづこ
Mukashi-no hikari ima izuko
(old days of light now where)

むかしの光 いまいづこ
(Light of the olden days, now, where is it?)

2.

あき じんえいの しのもの いろ
Aki jin'ei-no shimo-no iro
(autumn battle camp of frost of color)

秋陣營の 霜の色
(In autumn, color of the frost in battle camp)

なきゆく かりの かず みせて
Naki-yuku kari-no kazu misete
(cry going geese of number showing)

鳴き行く雁の 数見せて
(Showing the number of crying geese flying by)

うる つるぎに てりそいし
Uuru tsurugi-ni teri-soishi
(plabted swrds on shone along)

植うるつるぎに 照りそいし
([The moon] shone on the old swords stuck in the ground)

むかしの ひかり いま いづこ
Mukashi-no hikari ima izuko
(old days of light now where)

むかしの光 いまいづこ
(Light of the olden days, now, where is it?)

3.

いま こうじょうの よわの つき
Ima kōjō-no yowa-no tsuki
(now ruined castle of night of moon)

今荒城の 夜半の月
(Now, over the ruined castle, the moon at night)

かわらぬ ひかり たが ためぞ
Kawaranu hikari ta-ga tame-zo
(changing not light whom for)

かわらぬ光 たがためぞ
(Unchanging light, for whom is it?)

かきに のこるは ただ かずら
Kaki-ni nokoru-wa tada kazura
(hedge on being left are only climbing vine)

垣にのこるは ただかずら
(Left on the hedge are climbing vines only)

まつに うたうは ただ あらし
Matsu-ni utau-wa tada arashi
(pine to sing is only storm)

松に歌うは ただ嵐
(What sings to the pine trees is only a storm)

4.

てんじょう かげは かわらねど
Tenjō kage-wa kwaranedo
(sky light is change not though)

天上影は かわらねど
(Although the light in the sky never changes)

えいこは うつる よの すがた
Eiko-wa utsuru yo-no sugata
(glory-ruin shift world of appearance)

栄枯は移る 世の姿
(Glory and ruin shift, the image of the world)

うつさんとてか いまも なお
Utsusan-toteka ima-mo nao
(reflect as if now also still)

写さんとてか 今もなお
(As if to reflect it even now)

ああ こうじょうの よわの つき
Aa kōjō-no yowa-no tsuki
(ah, ruined castle of night of moon)

嗚呼荒城の 夜半の月
(Ah, over the ruined castle, the moon at night!)

-This song was composed for a music textbook for middle schools for elite young men. It is regarded as the very first Japanese art song that combined a high quality Japanese poem and the Western music style successfully.

-The composer did not write piano accompaniment. It is most often sung with the arrangement by Kōsaku Yamada.

-IMSLP contains a cappella scores in two keys (with Rōmaji), an arrangement by Shin'ichirō Yokoyama in two keys (with Rōmaji), and Yamada's arrangement in two keys (without Rōmaji).

-This poem is in the 7-5 mode and imitates the style of ancient Chinese poems.

-All letter **g**'s in the text are pronounced [ŋ], soft and nasal sound.

- Kage---Although it means “shadow” in the modern Japanese, in the old poetic Japanese it also meant “light”.
- This song has several syllabic *n*’s, which must be elongated. You may use [ŋ] for *n* in “jin’ei”.

Marking

あまり速くなく

Not too fast

- This song was first published as a Dōyō (children’s song).
- Each line of the poem is in 7-5 mode.
- This is about a baby bird that is looking for his parents.