

## A Whistle (from the Other Shore)

—“Saying that what he wanted to capture was the sight of wind blowing and trash whirling in a midday deserted alley in Singapore, Ozu kept the camera fixed low in that alley for two days.” (Osamu Takashi, *A Dazzling Shadow Picture* p 406~407). The figure of Yasujiro Ozu “peeping into the camera every time he comes back” (so vividly depicted) persists in my imagination...

On the morning of November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2003, during the leisurely last revision of my dialogue with the writer, dear Miho Shimao (*Ronza* January, 2004)

### Ears of barley

The dear Yasujiro Ozu encountered skies ... yes, those

### High in the sky (miles away)

As though casting a glance at the skies, something precious, pressed against distance

### Bookmark

the dog-eared pages of memoranda and diaries like branches snapping across my mind

**Shadows of puppies** (*SCRAPPY* and *S* and *His Dogship*. And dear Wakabayashi... And *His Dogship* contentedly trotting along the seashore in the opening scene of *Early Summer*. The four puppies loping down the backstreet, a dirt? alley after an evening shower..., how many times have I counted them...)

### The pale shades of their mutual happiness

The sign's letters hand-written by dear Ozu himself, “Hirayama Clinic, right down this ditch”

### Left behind like bookmarks in other books, to reveal their fragrances

Told by Professor Seori Takahashi from School of Political Science and Economics at Waseda University that dear Ozu Yasujiro wrote those letters himself

### The sound of how I turn the pages of cinema has been changing

To pause there without being able to pause there—going back to pause, and going back to continue, dwelling in the eyes or pupils of Grandmother and Mother dear Chieko Higashiyama and dear Chishu Ryu is

### The sound of wind through carp-streamers in the May sky, high in the sky (miles away)

The face we tried to make out in dear Noriko's apartment room in *Tokyo Story*, the face of dear Shoji *looking dazzled*, his ears of barley coming clearer...

### “Soundless barley under the fall wind at my pillow”

The haiku by Buson and, in *the mind's eye* of dear Chieko Higashiyama, there is *Chekov's crane* which danced its way into the Ainu bear ceremony, but I've known this “scene” for a long time. It is the wasteland I've begun to walk. Yet dear friend, we will continue on through the Dying... As a small *i*. A white *i*. “Maya, I realized at that instant,

had ceased breathing..." her mother dear Miho told me of how little Maya lived, how she died...

“To die-- without the Dying / And to live-- without the Life”

Though the poem by Emily Dickinson accompanied our *dialogue* as an epigraph, it was Professor Masaki Horiuchi who made me aware that

The small *d* of die and the small *l* of live are

You see, talking with dear Kiju Yoshida, the lonesomeness of Ozu films and his partner's full-hearted exuberance are found in such places as a whistle,

Ears of barley

Wednesday, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2003, off the shore of Hayama? Zushi?, while writing a poem about a whistle (from the Other Shore),

A whistle (from the Other Shore)...

plunged-- *ears of barley whistling...whoosh*— into the depths of my earless ears while I was writing

Ears of barley

And at the *whistle's* call, four puppies loping down the dirt path of the passage, somehow I,

*So humbled*

Second by second a new *habit* forms, I'm learning *a new way of life* second by second, frame by frame from the cinema (frame by frame from Ozu), ...this is how the passage begins to create, to recreate. In *The Dazzling Shadow Picture: Yasujiro Ozu* by dear Osamu Takahashi, reading the description of the teacup wrapped in the palms of dear Chieko Higashiyama in the last scene of *Early Summer*, I had to take a new look at the scene at once, again,

A teacup, embraced, weeps

As if, you see, taking a suck from something inconceivable or from a narrow passage, an abyss in her belly...

A teacup, embraced, wept

Gozo Yoshimasu, translated by Kyoko Yoshida & Forrest Gander  
from *Alice Iris Red Horse: Selected Poems of Gozo Yoshimasu*