
Taneda Santôka

Asa tsuyu shittori
ikitaihô e iku

*Totally covered
By the morning dew
I go where I want to*

I am nothing else than a wandering monk. There is nothing that can be said on me excepted that I am a mad pilgrim who has spent his entire life here and there, like plants floating on the water that flows from one bank to the other.

It seems pathetic but I found happiness in this miserable and quiete life. Water flows, clouds pass by, never stopping, never settling.

When the wind blows, the leaves fall. Like the fishes swim or the birds fly, I walk and walk, and go ahead... (Diary)

Taneda Santôka (1882-1940)

Son of a mother who committed suicide and of an alcoholic father. Married on an arranged-base marriage. At the head of a sake factory, being alcoholic. Intellectual socialist imprisoned. Hit by passengers of the train where he wanted to commit suicide. The list of failures, rejections and defeats of Taneda Santoka only seem to stop when he is ordained Soto Zen monk in 1929. But shortly after he left the monastery and gave himself to the absolute detachment of walking, accepting what was put in his bowl, writing amazing haikus, which, with humour and freedom, sprang from the heart of solitude.