

## AN OUTLINE BIOGRAPHY OF MATSUO BASHŌ

### 1644-1666. Youth.

- Bashō grows up in a country village as a low ranking samurai under Tōdō Yoshitada (two years older than Bashō and his haikai friend)

### 1666-1680. The beginnings of Bashō as a poet.

- 1666-1672. Bashō is probably in Kyoto. He gains fame as a poet.
- 1672-1680. Bashō lives in Edo (Tokyo). He gains more fame as a poet and teacher.

### 1680-1684. Becoming a serious writer.

- Bashō moves outside the city into the first “Bashō” hut.
- He is very lonely, he studies Chinese poetry, and takes up Zen meditation.
- In the winter of 1682 his hut burns and a few months later learns his mother died

### 1684-1692. The mature poet-wayfarer.

- 1684-1685. His first journey around Japan, leading to *Journal of Bleached Bones by the Road*.
- 1685-1687. Bashō returns to Edo and lives a quiet life in a new Bashō hut, relaxed and even cheerful.
- 1687-1688. Bashō makes three trips:
  - to Kashima (autumn 1687), which results in *Kashima Journal*;
  - a long trip west ending up in Kyoto (winter 1687-8), which results in *Knapsack Notebook*;
  - and a short trip to Sarashina (midsummer 1688), which results in *Sarashina Journal*.
- 1689-1690. He takes his longest trip to the “Deep North” of Japan, ending near Kyoto..
- 1690-1692. Bashō visits various places near Kyoto. He stays at various places including Unreal Hut and House of Fallen Persimmons. He writes *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* and various important haibun.
- 1692: Bashō returns to Edo and lives in a third Bashō Hut.

### 1693-1694. Final years.

- His tranquility is disturbed by his fame as a poet master.
- An invalid nephew comes to stay with him (he dies in 1683).
- The nun Jutei comes to live with him, bringing children (she dies in 1684).
- He develops the aesthetic ideal of lightness.
- He begins his last journey, and dies in Osaka.