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In this issue

Of Eggs and Accents: Translating Kawakami Mieko, Alison Watts

Already a Year—Only a Year, Ginny Tapley Takemori

Journeying with *J-Boys: Kazuo's World, Tokyo 1965*, Avery Fischer Udagawa

Stories from Inspiration to Publication, Suzanne Kamata

Writing in Japan: Publishing Alternatives, Alex Shishin

Our Story in Print: The SWET Newsletter 1 to 130, SWET Editorial Team

SWET's New Online Look, Richard Sadowsky

Japan Style Sheet Updates: Kanji and Macrons

Book Reviews: William Wetherall on *Is That a Fish in Your Ear*

and Deborah Iwabuchi on *The Routledge Course on Japanese Translation*

Table of Contents



Translating from Japanese to English

Of Eggs and Accents: Translating Kawakami Mieko • Alison Watts 3

March 11, 2011: Continuing Stories

Already a Year—Only a Year • Ginny Tapley Takemori 14

SWET Events

Journeying with *J-Boys: Kazuo's World, Tokyo 1965* • Avery Fischer Udagawa 21

Stories from Inspiration to Publication • Suzanne Kamata 33

Writing in Japan: Publishing Alternatives • Alex Shishin 39

From the Steerage

Our Story in Print: The *SWET Newsletter* 1 to 130 46

SWET's New Online Look • Richard Sadowsky 58

SWET Style

Kanji in English Text 61

Macrons and Other Diacritics 68

Book Reviews

Translating Translation: David Bellos, *Is That a Fish in Your Ear*
• William Wetherall 72


Hasegawa's Course in Translation: Yoko Hasegawa, *The Routledge Course in Japanese Translation* • Deborah Iwabuchi 86

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Of Eggs and Accents: Translating Kawakami Mieko

By Alison Watts



Alison Watts reviews lessons she learned about literary translation while tackling Chichi to ran (Breasts and Eggs) by Kawakami Mieko at the Summer School Workshop held by the British Centre for Literary Translation in July 2011. This article is based on a presentation given at a conference organized by the Japan Association of Translators in Nagoya, November 2011.

IN JULY 2011 I was privileged to take part in the literary translation summer school held by the British Centre for Literary Translation at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, Norfolk. It was the second time a Japanese group had been included. (For a report of the first Japanese-English workshop, see Ginny Tapley Takemori's article on translating Tawada Yoko in the SWET Newsletter, Number 126 [November 2010].)

The workshop was a stimulating, thought-provoking, intense, and fun experience. We tackled a text with difficult translation issues, and in the course of discussions and collaboration that greatly raised our awareness of available translation strategies, became inspired with the sense that nothing is impossible. I would like to share that experience and pass on something of what I learned there.

The basic timetable of the BCLT summer school was to attend workshop sessions every morning and afternoon, during which students worked on a collaborative translation of a text with a tutor and the author. From five o'clock every day there were panel discussions featuring translators, publishers, and authors; followed by delicious three-course dinners with plentiful wine, where we had the opportunity to meet and converse with students, authors, and tutors from all the other groups. As you can imagine, it was a



multicultural and varied crowd, and an extremely convivial atmosphere prevailed. The week finished with a presentation of each group's translation, which was attended by visiting publishers and editors.

We ten participants worked with author Kawakami Mieko, translating excerpts from her Akutagawa-award winning novel *Chichi to ran*, under the guidance of Michael Emmerich. Kawakami-san is multi-talented—a singer, songwriter, poet, award-winning actress, and author—and her sharp intellect and dynamic personality greatly enlivened the classroom. Having

the author on hand to clarify things for us whenever we wanted was an enormous luxury. Kawakami-san sat in with us every day, even when exhausted from jet lag or coming down with a cold, happily answering all our questions and reading out the passages we chose to translate.

Michael Emmerich, an assistant professor in Premodern Japanese Literature and Cultural Studies at the University of California Santa Barbara, is an experienced and award-winning literary translator. Each morning he would start the day with a short but always stimulating discussion, laced with erudition and humor, after which we'd get to work on our collaborative translation of the text, first in pairs and then as a group. Emmerich mainly listened to our discussions, stepping in at judicious moments to help us focus by mentioning pertinent issues, and gently encouraging us to make some decisions. He never imposed his opinion of what was the best choice, merely pointed out what would be lost or gained by any particular choice of translation, and always left us to find our own group voice.

I found the text hard to grasp at first, with its long stream-of-consciousness-style sentences in Osaka dialect, with which I'm not familiar, but after some long, concentrated stretches of reading, I became accustomed to both. Even-

tually I came to enjoy the strong, almost hypnotic, rhythm of the writing, and felt pulled along by it.

The story takes place over three days in Tokyo, where the narrator lives, having moved there from her native Osaka. Her sister Makiko, and Makiko's daughter Midoriko, come from Osaka to stay. Makiko is a bar hostess who, approaching forty, has become obsessed with the idea of getting a breast enlargement.

The topic dominates her conversations, and the purpose of the visit to Tokyo is to check out a clinic where she's thinking of undergoing the procedure. Meanwhile, Midoriko hasn't spoken to anyone in six months. We learn what she is thinking through her diary entries, which constitute part of the text, and through the notes she writes to communicate with people. On the verge of puberty, Midoriko feels confused and insecure about the changes in her body, about language and the relationship of words to the real world, about who her real father is and about her relationship with her mother. The book explores the themes of beauty, the role of language in conceptualizing our relations with others and with our selves, and our own relationships with the self and with our bodies. There are frequent mentions of breasts, and of eggs, as the title suggests.

As a reader, I enjoyed the work, but I couldn't imagine how those dauntingly long sentences in Osaka dialect could be translated. Some were well over 1,000 characters long, as can be seen below. But that is exactly what made translating them a worthwhile challenge, and it turned out to be the perfect text for this workshop.

How did we go about trying to translate the text, then? On Day One we didn't attempt to translate it at all. After self-introductions, Emmerich had us do something called homophonic translation, which, in retrospect, I real-



Michael Emmerich, leader of the 2011 BCLT Workshop.

ize was an exercise in limbering up our brains for the challenge ahead. We each had sections of a review in English of Kawakami's book which we translated phonetically into Japanese using any combination of kanji, hiragana, katakana, or romaji, resulting in "translations" that were sometimes amusingly apt, such as one which had Ishihara Shintaro getting out the knives.

On Day Two we got down to translating the text. We chose to start with a sentence that comes a few pages in and sets the scene very neatly (hardback edition, page 11, *Bungei Shunju*, 2002):

巻子はわたしの姉であり緑子は巻子の娘であるから、緑子はわたしの姪であって、叔母であるわたしは未婚であり、そして緑子の父親である男と巻子は今から十年も前に別れているために、緑子は物心ついてから自分の父親と同居したこともなければ巻子が会わせたという話も聞かぬから、父親の何らいっさいを知らんまま、まあそれがどうということもないけれども、そういうわけでわれわれは今現在おなじ苗字を名のっていて、ふだんは大阪に住むこの母子は、この夏の三日間を巻子の所望で東京のわたしのアパートで過ごすことになったわけであります。

We tackled the translation by first working on it in pairs. Then we listed those five translations, compared them, and voted on which one to use as the working draft to hammer out the final version. It took us a whole day to translate that sentence.

I loved working with partners. We changed partners every day and thus got to know different people's styles of thinking and working. The other participants were American and British, except for myself (an Australian) and a Danish woman the only two not in those camps. Seeing how others set about the process of translating, usually such a solitary activity, was enlightening. When it came to deciding on our final translation as a group, inevitably the discussion was long and animated. But on that first day, as on the days that followed, it was our focus on the process and what we gained in the course of the discussion—the wrangling over word choices and punctuation at one level, and wider issues at another—that contributed most to our own individual development as translators during that week.



From left: Takami Nieda, Gitte Marianne Hansen, translated author Mieko Kawakami, Lydia Moed, Katherine Lundy, Louise Heal, and Alison Watts.

This is the final version that we came up with for the first sentence:

Makiko is my older sister and Midoriko is Makiko's daughter, so Midoriko is my niece and I'm the unmarried aunt, but Midoriko's father and Makiko split up a good ten years ago when Midoriko was too young to remember living with the man, and I've never heard of Makiko having them meet, which means she knows nothing about him—not that any of this really matters, but anyway, we all go by the same name now, and since Makiko wanted to, they've come from Osaka this summer to spend three days in my apartment in Tokyo.

One of the first issues we had to consider was how to handle the Osaka dialect. What kind of English would we turn it into? Kawakami-san told us that in her opinion one of the main differences between Osaka dialect and standard Japanese is the lilting up-and-down intonation, as compared to the flat, straightforward sound of the standard version. Since some members of our group were from parts of the world with strong regional accents, we played with the idea of translating into different variations of English, a Deep South (American) version and a Mancunian version (Mancunian being the dialect of

Manchester). But we came to the conclusion that the English spoken in Georgia and its relationship to that spoken in Washington, say, is not one-to-one in equivalence with the Japanese spoken in Osaka and Tokyo. Likewise for the English spoken in Manchester and London. We realized that every regional dialect carries with it cultural specificities for the readers of the English translation, which may or not evoke the appropriate effect the translator is trying to achieve in the translation. In the end we decided to go with the kind of standard, global English that most people are familiar with. As Emmerich remarked with pointed irony in his introduction to the presentation of our collaborative translation, “as reviewers of translations often point out, and as most of us know, translators need to make their work equally, identically comprehensible to everyone.” This would not necessarily preclude, however, the possibility of translating the whole book into Mancunian, for example. In experimenting with these regional accent translations we did get a glimpse of their exciting potential. But one would probably choose to do that for a particular reason, with a particular audience or market in mind.

Then there was the question of what “standard English” is, and in a room with an even split of Brits and Americans, this was also a slightly contentious issue. You will notice that the American word “apartment” is used in the above example sentence, not the British-English word “flat.” I think that is an indication of the unspoken consensus we reached.

Having made the decision to jettison a regional accent in favor of standard English, we tried to preserve the flavor of Osaka dialect in other ways—not perhaps readily apparent from this single example—by focusing on tone, word choice, and by reproducing the orality of the text.

That decision was one that for me, personally, illustrated one of the most important lessons I learned from these sessions: that some things simply cannot be conveyed. Literary translation, Emmerich told us, is all about *kirisuteru* (cutting out). You can never get everything in and produce perfectly fluid prose, so you are always having to decide what to leave out. The important thing is to translate the book or story as a whole, not simply individual characters and words, and—hopefully—the sacrifices will make for a stronger translation.

Renowned Japanologist and translator Ivan Morris made the same observation in an article he wrote in 1964 (ironically brought to my attention by a student in the Chinese group at the summer school!):

Certain nuances that have no equivalent in one's own language will have to be left out of the translation. Such omissions may be construed as laziness. And so, no doubt, they sometimes are—but not usually in the case of good translators. For it is far easier to give a mechanically exact translation of one's text than one in which deliberate sacrifices of words and phrases have been made in the interest of creating good literary English. It is lack of style and courage, not lack of linguistic knowledge, that produces most flat and unsatisfactory translations.¹

Having become more accustomed to working together on the first two days, we were able to speed up the pace of our deliberations on the third and fourth days. Our group interaction evolved remarkably over the course of a few days. It was as if we had coagulated into one brain, with the connections growing stronger and the neurons transmitting information ever faster day by day. The process of translation that ordinarily goes on inside one person's head—the sorting of words, mixing and matching, and winnowing out of clunky choices—became externalized in that room, and we were all excited by that. We all also became a lot more adept at compromise and sublimating individual preferences in the interests of achieving the best possible translation as a whole.

The next excerpt I would like to share comes well into the novel. Rather than do a continuous translation from the beginning, we chose to do excerpts of key scenes that would also present us with different challenges. This passage gives a sense of the kind of text that this book is, and the specific translation issues we addressed.

緑子は再び、お母さん、と、大きくはっきりした声ですぐ隣の卷子を呼び、卷子も驚いた顔で緑子を見た。体はぶるぶるとして顔は張りつめにつめ、ちょっと押せばぐらっ

と崩れる瞬間のなか、鼻で震える呼吸をしながら緑子は、お母さん、ほんまのことを、ほんまのことをゆうてや、と搾り出すような声でそう云った。お母さんは、ほんまのことゆうてよ、と緑子はそれだけを云うのがやっとなで、うつむいてそのまま体中に力を込めて立ってるといふことに、いま何かがみなぎっていて、卷子はそれを聴いて、ちょっとした間を置き、は、ははははっはっはあ、と大きな声で笑い出した。ちょ、いややわ、なによ、ほんまのことって、いったいなにをゆうてるのんよ、... ほんとにぶわりと噴き出して、それを自分の頭に叩きつけた。ぐしゃわ、っていう聞き慣れない音とともにしぶきのように黄身が飛び散り、それから、お母さん、お母さん、と連呼しながらすでに叩きつけたのをさらに何度も叩きつけ、手のなか髪のなかで泡だった...

The paragraph that begins here on page 102 continues for five pages. And the sentence that begins on line 3 of page 103, 「ぐしゃわ、っていう聞き慣れない音...」, continues for 46 lines, or just over three pages. We translated from the beginning of page 102 up to the end of the sixth line on page 103 「耳の穴から黄身が垂れ」. At that point we ran out of time.

This was our translation:

Mom, Midoriko repeats in a loud, clear voice, even though Makiko is right next to her. Makiko looks at her with a stunned expression. Midoriko's face is taut and her body is trembling—one touch and she'd crumble. She breathes unevenly through her nose. *Mom, tell me*, she says, barely managing to wring the words out, *tell me something real. You have to tell me, Mom*. Midoriko drops her gaze and stands there, rigid. Something is about to give. Makiko listens, falters a moment, then bursts into hysterical laughter. *What—what the hell? I mean, what are you talking about, something real?* She gives Midoriko an exaggerated smile, then turns to me and laughs again, theatrically. *You hear that? Are you hearing this? Something real, does that make any sense to you? You're gonna have to translate for me*. Makiko is painting over the shock, the unease, the indignation with her laughter—I hate it. Midoriko stands silent amidst the laughter, head still lowered, shoulders heaving as if she's about to cry,

then suddenly she lifts her face, draws in a breath, rips open the carton of eggs sitting on the counter waiting to be thrown away, grabs one with her right hand, and raises it into the air. Oh my god, she's going to—and at that moment tears spill from her eyes, really gush out, and she smashes the egg against her own head. It slaps with a strange, wet crunch, the yolk splattering. Midoriko repeatedly smashes the remains into her head to the rhythm of her words, *Mom, Mom, Mom*. The egg begins to froth in her hand, in her hair, the shell bits dig in, yolk drips from her ear.

The first thing to note here is that there is no exact correspondence between the sentence length in the source text and our translation. The first sentence on this page we broke into two English sentences, the second we broke into three, and so on. Of course we'd started out with a one-to-one sentence translation, but gave up as it gradually became clear that this was not creating the same effect as the original. This is a key scene of confrontation; Midoriko speaks for the first time, emotions are running high, and the atmosphere is extremely tense. We tried many different arrangements of direct translations for these sentences, but they just did not have the same impact or convey the same level of tension. Eventually we felt that maintaining tension should take priority over faithfulness to sentence length and packaging of information and decided to break the sentences up. As Ivan Morris also observed, "Literary translation is a long slow process of compromise; the art consists in discovering the most satisfactory compromises."²

Something else that emerged from a close reading of the text was that we could not grasp the precise positioning of the characters in this scene: who was standing where and in what direction they faced. This was important for making word choices—should it be look over, turn back, next to, turn to, etc.—and was crucial to the sequence of events. A surface reading of the text and our first draft revealed no problems, but the section we'd already translated on the previous page gave some indication of positioning that didn't quite gel with what was on this page when we really thought about it. So we asked Kawakami-san, and went through the sequence of events with her, using

students to physically act it out while she mapped the characters' movements on a whiteboard. Hence we discovered that the text was indeed misleading, something you might expect an editor to have picked up.

This was another lesson in the importance of reading at several levels. A close word-by-word reading and understanding of the text is necessary, of course, but so is being able to think about each segment in the wider context, in order to craft the details that create verisimilitude.

Another issue that emerged from this passage was how to handle the dialogue, which is unconventional. It is woven into the sentence structure by the narrator, not set off by quotation marks as direct speech would be, but neither is it reported speech. We decided to basically do the same, but used italics to make it more easily distinguishable. Differentiating shades of tone in dialogue is difficult, but according to Emmerich, it can be done by recasting or changing completely the way something is said, not just by choosing different words.

The last issue I would like to mention in connection with this section is translating onomatopoeiac and mimetic language, and the word *gushawa* in particular. There are a few such words in this passage: *buwari to*, *buwatto*, and *buruburu*. Generally we deal with this in translation by turning them into adverbs or adjectival phrases, and most of these words didn't cause us too much difficulty, but it was *gushawa* that stopped us in our tracks, and we endlessly debated different ways of handling it. As you can see from the text, it is an onomatopoeic rendition of the sound of an egg smashing on someone's head. When we asked Kawakami-san about it, she told us that she had stood in the bathtub and repeatedly smashed eggs on her own head, in order to accurately transcribe the sound. This gave us the idea of writing "gushawa" into the translation as a word, since it was a completely accurate transliteration of that particular action. But Emmerich advised us against doing that because it would be too experimental. He told us that the translator has to establish trust with the reader and show that he/she knows what he/she is doing, and only then can the translator try something unconventional, (for example with punctuation or dialogue). To do something like using a made-up

word towards the end of the translation, with no precedent, was more likely to come across as if we hadn't known what else to do. Experiments should be methodical—not random—and not erode the reader's trust. So we abandoned the idea and settled for the more conventional choice of “slaps with a strange, wet crunch.”

We also discussed, heatedly and at length, things such as what were the meaning and implications of “honma no koto” and whether men can convincingly translate female voices and experiences. We never got to the end of that three-page sentence, and I can't help wondering how our translation would have evolved if we had.

The week culminated with all groups giving a presentation of their text to an audience that included visiting publishers. In this final presentation we had the opportunity to give a graphic illustration of the knotty translation issues we had worked through. For translators to be suddenly transformed into entertainers was a novel and exhilarating experience—a moment of pure joy and something we will all never forget. For me, the whole week was an exercise in pushing the boundaries of my own set patterns of thinking about translation, and I would encourage anyone with a passion for literary translation to apply for this workshop.


“Eggs in Translation,” a video excerpt of the presentation, interviews with Michael Emmerich and Kawakami Mieko, and scenes from the Japanese-English study group, can be viewed on the BCLT You Tube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFeaINQPXl4>.

¹ Ivan Morris, “Notes on Literary Translation from Japanese into English,” *The Journal-Newsletter of the Association of Teachers of Japanese*, 2:1/2 (May 1964), pp. 1–3. Published by the Association of Teachers of Japanese Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/488699>.

² Morris, “Notes on Literary Translation,” p. 1.

Already a Year—Only a Year

By Ginny Tapley Takemori



Translator and book editor Ginny Tapley Takemori writes how the triple disaster that hit eastern Japan last year connected her in unexpected ways to her local community in Tsukuba, Ibaraki prefecture, and to a community in Ishinomaki, Miyagi prefecture, that was devastated by the tsunami. While volunteering in the reconstruction effort, she has been impressed by how survivors have found the strength to pick up the pieces of their shattered lives with warmth and humor. “It has been a defining experience in my own life,” she says.

ON THE OCCASION of the one-year anniversary of the March 11, 2011 disaster, I found myself reflecting on how my life has changed in the past year. I was at the Minato Bunkan, a small community hall in Ishinomaki, helping out at a weekend of concerts and soup kitchens held for local tsunami survivors. The pain is still palpable here, and the physical wreckage still very much in evidence, but there is also much warmth and laughter. I live in Tsukuba, Ibaraki, and had never been to Ishinomaki before the disaster, so how did I end up here? If I had to sum it up in one word, I would say “community”—which is not so far removed from the kanji chosen to symbolize the year: *kizuna* 絆, or social bonds. I’ve always had close friends whom I might not see often, but with whom the bond of friendship has continued over years and decades, yet I had never really felt the need to be socially involved with those around me. That all changed on March 11, and in the days and weeks afterwards, for the first time in my life, I felt the need to be connected to my local community—and as a result I have met some amazing people. The same urge also led me to volunteer in Ishinomaki, where entire communities were utterly decimated—first in just cleaning up, and increasingly to help the fractured communities

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come back together, reaching out to people to let them know they haven't been forgotten.

There has been a lot to learn over the past year, as well as much heart-break, much laughter, and many, many stories. From the day itself, I have some amusing memories. We experienced the quake at an intensity of lower six in Tsukuba, and I was at my work desk in my third-floor apartment when it hit.

The moment I could physically stand up, I ran outside and down the still-swaying staircase to encounter my neighbors all standing there staring at me—you were inside during *that*?! One guy told me he'd arrived that morning on his first visit to Japan, to which I quipped that he was lucky to have arrived in time for an experience of a lifetime. Hearing one neighbor who I'd always spoken Japanese with speaking Spanish with some other friends, I naturally joined in . . . it took her a few minutes before she suddenly realized. And that's when I learned her name was Julia (how come I'd never made the connection between "Furia-san" and Julia before?) and she was from Madrid. Comforting a young mother who was huddled with her three small children, I told her boys I was impressed by how calm they were—and they have greeted me with a friendly smile and *konnichiwa* ever since. For the first time ever, I felt *connected* with my neighbors.

A couple of hours later my husband turned up on a borrowed bicycle. Keeping our shoes on to protect our feet against broken glass and crockery, we went back into our apartment and grabbed some spare clothes, packed some bedding into the car, and then drove back to the university to help with the evacuation of international students from the dormitories. I didn't have any particular role to play, but some students recognized me from our hiking club and came over to chat, evidently happy to see a familiar face. One said he and his wife were due to travel to Kyoto that evening, and asked whether the trains



We can't help wondering what happened to the family lying amidst the debris of single-story apartments that were totally destroyed.

were running—of course I didn't know, because the phones weren't working, and I realized how important *information* is in a disaster.

Once we were sure the evacuation was going smoothly, we drove to check on my husband's parents, both in their late eighties, in Nagareyama—normally only a half-hour drive away, but with the expressway closed and main roads jammed, we took back roads, noticing a few damaged roofs or collapsed walls here and there, sometimes driving through blacked-out neighborhoods and non-functioning traffic lights. It was then that it occurred to me to check my email—I could still access the Internet through my phone—and I was astonished to find my inbox overflowing with panicked messages from family, friends, and acquaintances all over the globe. We realized then that it must be a pretty big disaster, although it didn't feel much like one at that point. But it certainly did when we walked into the family home at about 10 p.m. and saw the horrendous images of the tsunami being endlessly repeated on TV. For the next days and weeks I obsessively watched the coverage at mealtimes, trying not to let my tears show too obviously. My husband and father-in-law, meanwhile, were intently following the developments at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant. They both have the science and engineering backgrounds to be able to read between the lines and make sense of what little and often-conflicting information was coming out. It became my husband's favorite pastime to scan the late-night online news columns, since that was when they tended to bury bad news.

We had been due to fly out on holiday on March 17, but my husband could not bring himself to leave and I refused to go without him (I would just have been sick with worry for him anyway), so amidst the stampede of people trying to leave the country, we called Narita Airport to tell them to give our seats to someone else. Instead we went to help in the Emergency Room at Tsukuba University, where I made myself useful translating announcements for the webpage. Tsukuba at this time was without water, and many parts of the city were still without electricity. At the university, we were getting buckets of water from the pond just to be able to use the toilets. And gasoline was beginning to run out, so once the Tsukuba Express (TX) was running again, we left

our car at home and used the train for our daily commute from Nagareyama to Tsukuba. Due to the rolling blackouts, we had to check for when the trains would be running, and on a couple of occasions ended up walking from the TX station to our local station on the Tobu line. Radiation levels at this time were still high, so we kept our hoods up and wore face masks, and showered as soon as we reached home.

In Tsukuba, other than at certain facilities in the university and research institutes, damage appeared to be minimal. But the Ibaraki coast we knew so well had been inundated by the tsunami. Just that New Year we had visited the Kitaibaraki home of Meiji-era statesman Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913), who famously wrote *The Book of Tea* in exquisite English; now we saw that his celebrated Rokkakudo had been washed away. We wanted to go to the disaster area to help, but joining a big group in a tour bus from Tokyo was not an option (my husband is allergic to diesel fumes on buses), and we had heard that individual volunteers were being discouraged and often turned away. Instead I spent much of my time volunteering as a translator, rendering emergency information into English for various aid groups working in animal as well as human rescue operations. Then in June, a local friend announced the formation of Team Tsukuba to go and volunteer in Ishinomaki, and called for other volunteers to join. We jumped at the chance.

That first trip we arrived in the less damaged part of the city, where we could see one or two businesses beginning to reopen here and there. We stayed at the volunteer campground at Senshu University, and the next morning headed to the coastal Watanoha district. Here the devastation was shocking. The entire area was strewn with debris amidst which remained the broken shells of buildings and houses. Cars, trucks, boats, and even railway carriages were scattered everywhere, some jammed between—and some even inside—houses. The stench was overpowering: silt flung up from the ocean floor, mixed with rotting fish and worse. The air was thick with swarms of black flies. As we drove past endless rows of gutted houses filled with mud and debris, we sometimes saw fish carcasses up on the roofs. And we noticed fresh laundry hanging out on some second-floor balconies—astonishingly, people were living here!



Our early trips were all spent cleaning debris out of the drainage gutters alongside the roads.

We joined forces with other volunteer groups operating out of the Koganehama community center and were put to work digging mud and the remnants of people's lives out of drainage gutters. It was back-breaking work in the blazing heat, and everybody was made to stop for regular breaks and encouraged to drink plenty of fluids to prevent heat stroke. But there was a good sense of camaraderie, and plenty of banter to keep everyone's spirits up. On one of the breaks, Toshihiko Fujita, the leader of the volunteer effort

at Koganehama, came over to talk to us. He told us that he had survived the tsunami on the second floor of his home in this neighborhood, but his mother and aunt had perished. Even now, he said, he couldn't quite believe they were gone—one moment they had all been healthy and happily living together, the next moment they had been taken from him. He thanked us for coming to volunteer, and told us they would need the help of volunteers for a long time to come since they could not rely on the government to help them. We were moved by his frankness, and especially by the humanity and warmth we felt from him. We decided then and there that we had to come back.

We have since been going back a couple of times a month, sometimes taking up groups of Team Tsukuba volunteers, sometimes filling up our Estima van with supplies. When we heard that local people had eaten very little in the way of fresh vegetables or fruit since the disaster happened, we twice filled up our van with heavily discounted fresh produce courtesy of our local JA farmers' cooperative outlet, purchased with money donated by Tsukuba residents. On another occasion, we responded to a call for drivers by Rescue Japan to drive items from their Tokyo warehouse to the summer festival at Kogane-

hama. When winter set in, due to the icy conditions on the roads we left our car at home and went up by train. Over the months we have come to know many people there. From the beginning we were hearing snippets of their individual stories relating to the disaster, and over time we are finding that more and more people are keen to talk about their experience in more and more detail. Their stories are important, since they give a picture of the disaster and the reality that people lived through that is quite different from all the coverage we have seen in the media. We are now recording some of these stories to collect into a book documenting the experience of this particular community, which we hope will not only provide a record but also be of use in preparing for future disasters.

A few weeks after the one-year anniversary, Fujita-san came to visit us in Tsukuba on a brief detour from a Tokyo schedule. At the fundraising BBQ we held to welcome him, he mused upon how such a strange twist of fate had brought us together. Never in a million years would it have occurred to him to come to Tsukuba before—yet here he was, coming to visit the people who had been helping him and his community in Ishinomaki. His message to us was clear: make your community a strong one, because you never know when disaster will befall you, and when it does, you will need the people around you. We should bear in mind that community is not necessarily restricted to our physical area—I have a number of communities that I feel a part of, in three different countries, and they often overlap with each other. Here in Japan, there is the local Tsukuba community, which includes my hiking club



In Onagawa, just a 10-minute drive from Watanoha, the tsunami reached 17.42 m, inundating the first floor of the hospital. People standing beside this little shrine all perished. Concrete buildings like the one shown below it were ripped from their foundations and hurled onto their sides several meters from where they once stood.



Kaoru Arai (harp) and Yasuyuki Yamazaki (*shinobue* flute) created the soundtrack of the *Then and Now* film. Their concert on the memorial weekend held the audience in thrall.

and, more recently, our local writers group called Literary Tsukuba, an informal affair set up in the wake of the disaster, as well as Team Tsukuba. There is also the wider volunteer community and the friends I have made in Ishinomaki. Then in my professional sphere, I have the translation, editing, and publishing communities—which of course includes SWET. Our profession by its very nature tends to be solitary, but we should not lose sight of the fact that we can achieve much more together than we can on our own. As we celebrate this last issue of the *SWET Newsletter* and prepare for the new phase in our existence, let's all take some time to reflect on how we can make the SWET community a strong one.




On our last trip to Ishinomaki (April 21-22), we saw many carp streamers swimming in the breeze all over the city. This impressive display is in Kadonowaki, which was completely wiped out by the tsunami.

You can see Fujita-san and other survivors talk about their experiences in an excellent video, *Then and Now*, shot on 11.11.11 by Paul Johannesen and produced at Jeffrey Joussan's Studio J in Tsukuba: <http://vimeo.com/43324086>.

I translated a short story, *Lover on the Breeze* (original *Kaze no koibito*) by Murata Sayaka, for a charity anthology anthology entitled **Shin-sai to fikushon no kyōri** (Ruptured Fiction(s) of the Earthquake, Waseda Bungaku, April 2012.)

Journeying with J-Boys: Kazuo's World, Tokyo, 1965

Avery Fischer Udagawa



Shogo Oketani, author of *J-Boys: Kazuo's World, Tokyo, 1965* (Stone Bridge Press, 2011), and his wife, Leza Lowitz, spoke to members of SWET and SCBWI Tokyo on December 6, 2011. Avery Fischer Udagawa, the translator of *J-Boys*, joined via Skype in the exchange, which was moderated by Holly Thompson at the Wesley Center in Minami Aoyama, Tokyo. The conversation traced the development of *J-Boys* from linked stories in Japanese for teens and up to a novel in English for middle-grade (upper-elementary) readers. Udagawa reflects further on the education the project afforded her in middle-grade historical fiction.

1941: IN HAWAII, a Japanese-American boy kills his father's racing pigeons to avoid charges of subversion after Pearl Harbor. 1942: In Long Beach, California, a girl watches her mother smash family china rather than sell it before being forced to leave home. In Berkeley, a girl worries about her father, who is being held in Montana, and about leaving her dog when the family "evacuates." Meanwhile, in Korea, a girl teaches a neighbor to count in Japanese, to avoid punishment at neighborhood roll calls. In Pyongyang, a girl struggles to sing *Kimigayo* at a school assembly, as her teacher jabs her with a ruler. 1945: In Hiroshima, a girl watches the horrors of the atomic bomb. Ten years afterward, a girl much like her folds hundreds of paper cranes to ward off death from leukemia.

The novel *J-Boys: Kazuo's World, Tokyo, 1965* tells the story of a nine-year-old boy who lives in working-class Tokyo in the mid-1960s. As the translator of this book by Shogo Oketani, I fully expected to learn about public bathhouses, *kamishibai*, the Tokyo Olympics, and cultural imports like the Beatles and *Leave It to Beaver*. I did not anticipate exploring other historical periods from the perspective of Asian and Asian-diaspora children—a task that began some



three years after translating, when the editorial team tailored *J-Boys* for the North American middle-grade (MG) book market. The process of focusing *J-Boys* for English-language readers ages eight to twelve prompted a look at MG editorial requirements, existing historical MG titles related to Asia—from which the images opening this article were taken—and the titles for youth that are (and are not) coming out of Japan in English translation. In this article I will recap the journey of *J-Boys* and share a few discoveries made along the way.

From Inspiration to Translation: The Journey of *J-Boys*

As Shogo Oketani described in his presentation to SWET and the Tokyo chapter of SCBWI (Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators) on December 6, the book *J-Boys* began with a single story about tofu that grew into fifteen tales about Kazuo Nakamoto, a boy whose life illustrates the differences between Japan in the 1960s and Japan today. Oketani showed a chart of increases in Japanese people’s animal protein intake from the mid-twentieth century through the early twenty-first century, and discussed other tangible aspects of life that he worked to capture through his stories about Kazuo. Oketani continues to live on the property in Shinagawa ward where he grew up in the 1960s, and which he chose as the setting of *J-Boys*, so he has personal experience of the changes experienced there. He shared several archival photos of Shōwa-era working-class Tokyo to highlight contrasts between life then and life today.

Oketani’s wife, Leza Lowitz, described how she had encouraged him to write the initial stories, which he then developed into the collection that she hired me to translate in 2008. She pitched my translation to Peter Goodman at Stone Bridge Press, who accepted the manuscript in 2010 and published the book in 2011. In the pre-publication phase, Lowitz sought key input from Japan-based authors Holly Thompson and Suzanne Kamata,

who urged the team to shape *J-Boys*—potentially a teen or adult work—for middle grade readers, due to the main character’s age and the MG-appropriate voice and point of view threaded through much of the book. This feedback led Lowitz to request a significant yet sensitive reshaping of the text by author and editor Susan Korman. Oketani, Lowitz, Goodman, and I then conducted editorial passes to follow up on Korman’s changes.

Further details of the group effort to develop *J-Boys* from story to collection to novel in translation can be found in the Spring/Summer 2011 issue of *Carp Tales*, the newsletter of the Tokyo chapter of SCBWI (www.scbwi.jp/newsletter.htm), beginning on page 4.

Shortening, Lightening Up, and Speeding Up

A close look at the editorial changes to *J-Boys* reveals that a lot, and little, happened. The editors worked to reduce the length of the book from more than 64,500 words to about 40,000, and to make the narrative speedier, lighter, and consistently told from a child’s point of view. Korman advised that the MG market required shorter sentences, simpler words, reduced backstory and details, and avoidance of overly adult observations. Some tweaks to titles were suggested to make them more kid-friendly; for example, a story originally called “Kazuo’s Dirty Mind (Keiko Sasaki’s Story),” about a girl in Kazuo’s class, became simply “Keiko Sasaki.” Also recommended was a change in the main character’s age: Kazuo went from age eight to age nine so as to attract more grade-schoolers, who tend to “read up” about characters older than themselves.

The cuts and changes to the text did not sacrifice many significant story developments, but they imparted a slightly different overall feel. To “show

Changes in Japanese Animal Protein Intake (per day)

Year	Eggs	Milk/Dairy Products	Fish	Meat
1946	1.4	2.1	43.8	4.2
1950	9.9	11.7	76	7.8
1955	11.5	13.4	77.2	12
1960	18.9	32.9	76.9	18.7
1965	35.2	57.4	76.3	29.5
1970	43	72.6	84.2	47
1975	41.5	103.6	94	64.2
1980	37.7	115.2	92.5	67.9
1985	40.3	116.7	90	71.7
1990	42.3	130.1	95.3	71.2
1995	42.1	144.5	96.6	82.3
2000	39.7	127.6	92	78.2
2005	34.4	125.1	84	80.2
2008	33.6	111.2	78.5	77.7

Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare



Stories of World War II involving Korea: *Year of Impossible Goodbyes* and sequel *Echoes of the White Giraffe* by Sook Nyul Choi, and *When My Name Was Keoko* by Linda Sue Park.



Stories of World War II involving Japan: *Hiroshima no Pika* by Toshi Maruki and *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr.

rather than tell” about the differences, following this article are several endings of stories given first in my original translation, and then in the edited version. Lowitz read these excerpts aloud with Thompson on December 6 and graciously provided them for use here.

J-Boys among MG Historical Books Related to Asia

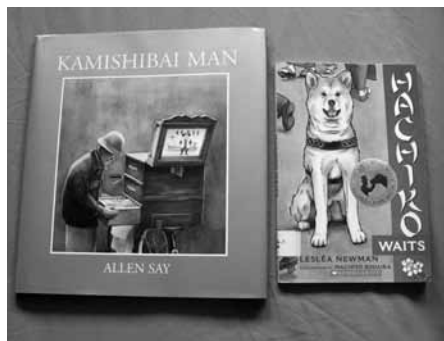
In the process of preparing *J-Boys* for market, it became necessary to read other MG historical books related to Asia, both to identify a “niche” and to find authors from whom to request cover endorsements.

In this reading stage, I was delighted to find a wealth of material portraying certain moments in history from the perspectives of Asian children, fictional and real. For example, I found a number of stories set during and after World War II that complement the famous child’s-eye view of Anne Frank. I was pleased also to encounter moving stories set in my native United States that explored Japanese-American children’s experiences. Finally, I learned of short, highly focused books about aspects of life in early- to mid-twentieth-century Tokyo such as the Shibuya statue Hachiko and the storytelling form of *kamishibai*, both of which appear in *J-Boys*.

I soon discovered, however, that *J-Boys* stands alone as a realistic historical MG book about Japan centered in the non-conflict period of the 1960s. It is also unique in that it is lengthy enough to encompass multiple social and



Stories of Japanese-Americans: *Under the Blood-Red Sun* by Graham Salisbury, *Journey to Topaz* by Yoshiko Uchida, *Farewell to Manzanar* by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston, and *Kira-Kira* by Cynthia Kadohata.



Stories about elements of life in Shōwa-era Tokyo: *Kamishibai Man* by Allen Say and *Hachiko Waits* by Lesléa Newman.

cultural themes from that time and show how they intersect. In addition, I learned from librarians and teachers that *J-Boys* could fill a gap in classrooms as a work of non-U.S.-based historical fiction; as a book involving complex social issues (such as anti-Korean discrimination in Japan) that has vocabulary simple enough to accommodate ESL readers; and as an MG book about a boy, since many MG books feature female protagonists. In addition, *J-Boys* contributes through being a translated work written by a Japanese man who grew up in its setting, versus a work originally written in English by a non-Japanese author.

As a translator and co-leader of the SCBWI Tokyo Translation Group, a network of children's literature translators, I had been aware that acclaimed translations of children's books from Japanese include few historical titles. The Japan-born winners of the prestigious Batchelder Award, for example, include just one historical title, *Hiroshima No Pika*, by Toshi Maruki, which is a picture book. I doubt most Japan-watchers would say the Batchelder winners from Japan represent a balanced sampling of Japanese children's literature or a comprehensive look at the Japanese experience; while excellent, they also highlight what remains to be filled in by authors, translators, and publishers who are motivated to shape Japan-centered texts for the U.S. youth market.

For the above reasons I found it heartening, from the standpoints both of marketing and of seeking to bridge cultures, to see that *J-Boys: Kazuo's World, Tokyo, 1965* would fill a gap.



Japan-born winners of the Batchelder Award for children's literature in English translation: *Hiroshima No Pika* by Toshi Maruki; *The Friends* by Kazumi Yumoto, translated by Cathy Hirano; *Brave Story* by Miyuki Miyabe, translated by Alexander O. Smith; *Moribito: Guardian of the Spirit* with sequel and Batchelder Honor winner *Moribito: Guardian of the Darkness*, by Nahoko Uehashi, translated by Cathy Hirano.

Middle Grade ... and Up?

One question that remains in my mind after the editing and reading processes is whether *J-Boys* will now reach middle grades *and up* in English, as indicated on its cover. As a parent I find that reading children's books is often enriching for me as an adult, but the child-to-adult market that seems well established in Japan is not always present in North America. Did preparing *J-Boys* as MG help it reach English-reading teens and adults as well as children? Do the changes that make it appropriate for eight- to twelve-year-olds make it a more accessible read for over-twelves, as well? Time will tell. This period of examining market response is the current stage on the journey of *J-Boys*.



J-Boys: Kazuo's World, Tokyo, 1965 Before and After

Below are excerpts from endings of several stories in *J-Boys*, first in the original translation by Avery Fischer Udagawa and then as edited for publication by Stone Bridge Press as *J-Boys: Kazuo's World, Tokyo, 1965*.

From "The Tofu Maker"

Kazuo was remembering what Mr. Yoshino had told him, that growing up strong so his parents wouldn't worry was the most important thing he could do

for them. He pictured the tofu maker's red, swollen hand drawing out the tofu.

His hand was like that because even in the cold, it had brought the tofu up very carefully so as never ever to break it.

"From now on, I'm going to chew my tofu when I eat it. And I'm going to do my homework without Okaasan telling me," Kazuo thought to himself as he brought his food to his mouth.

But he couldn't help regretting that he could never again eat tofu drawn out of the water for him by Mr. Yoshino's red, puffy hand. And he felt bad that he had never eaten that tofu while realizing just how good it really was.

Edited:

Kazuo suddenly remembered what Mr. Yoshino had said: that growing up healthy was the most important thing he could do. He pictured the tofu maker's red, swollen hand drawing out the tofu.

From now on, I'm going to remember to chew my tofu when I eat it, thought Kazuo. And I'm going to try to do my homework without my mom telling me to do it.

He felt bad that he'd never realized just how good Mr. Yoshino's tofu really was until now.

From "Yasuo's Big Mouth"

"Did you know all the time why that lady was holding the doll?"

"Of course I did," Yasuo answered, tilting his head slightly toward Kazuo.

"Then why did you ask its name?" Father asked, looking over at his younger son.

"Because the two of them looked so lonely! I figured they wanted to talk to somebody, so I decided to say something."

"Really?" The three others nodded as though persuaded, and once again turned their eyes to the city lights that were passing by.

Maybe Yasuo wasn't as much of a child as he'd thought, Kazuo reflected. He wasn't just saying the first thing that came to mind, like when he was little. He was thinking about how to address other people. Just as Kazuo was begin-

ning to think of himself as no longer a child, Yasuo must be growing up in his own way, Kazuo thought.

And he hoped that for the four people in his family, and that white-haired couple, the coming year would be a good one.

Edited:

“Then why did you ask its name?” Father wanted to know.

Yasuo shrugged. “Because the lady looked so lonely. And you know me,” he added with a sly grin. “I like to talk!”

“That’s for sure!” exclaimed Kazuo, and everyone laughed. Then once again Kazuo turned to the bright city lights that were streaming by. Maybe Yasuo wasn’t as much of a child as he’d thought, Kazuo reflected.

Kazuo silently wished his family, and that white-haired couple, a happy New Year. Another year had come upon them, and things were already changing, right before his eyes.

From “What Wimpy Ate”

While feeling somehow disappointed, Kazuo looked around at the crowd in the shopping district. Within that crowd, he saw a girl about the same age as Yasuo holding hands and walking alongside a man who looked to be her father. The girl seemed pleased to be walking with him, and was chattering on and on with him while wearing a big smile.

Kazuo happened to think that even Mother had been a little girl like that once, and that she had probably held hands with Grandfather happily and walked along smiling at him, just as the child in front of him was doing. That would have been a natural thing for them to do as parent and child.

And even though there were ill feelings between them now, surely they would make up someday, he thought. Because, after all, he was her father and she was his daughter.

But just as the *hanbaagaa* that Wimpy ate remained a mystery to him, he had no idea when such a thing might come to pass.

Edited:

Kazuo suddenly spotted a girl in the crowd who was about the same age as Yasuo. She was walking alongside a man who was probably her father, holding his hand. She was chattering on and on while wearing a big smile. Her father smiled back.

Mother was a little girl like that once, Kazuo realized suddenly. And she had probably held hands with Grandfather and walked along smiling at him, too. So maybe someday they would make up because, after all, he was her father and she was his daughter.

But Kazuo did not know which thing would happen first. Would he eat a real hamburger, the kind that Wimpy liked? Or would Okaasan and Ojjiichan finally begin talking to each other again?

From “Kazuo’s Journey” (Originally “Spring: *Enfance finie*”)

With the same look as that young traveler in the clouds overhead, Kazuo gazed steadily up at the sky.

Would he, too, be able to catch a fleeting glimpse of foreign countries far away? Feeling a mixture of expectation and anxiety, he stared into the blue of the sky as the young traveler drifted away astride the cloud camel. The blue of the sky was pure as far he could see, and seemed to engulf him. There was nothing but the blue of that sky.

Supposing that somewhere beyond the sky he could see the scenery of a foreign country far away, it would probably be very different from the images of foreign countries that he had seen on television.

Vivid green grass carpeting the garden, a living room with a fireplace and roomy sofa, a private room and bed for each person, a huge refrigerator stuffed with more food than you could eat. Jugs of milk so big that you would have to wrap both arms around them to pick them up, gigantic cars, freeways that went on forever, the *hanbaagaa* that Wimpy ate . . .

Those images were like a mirage that always floats in the air, moving further away even as you follow and gain ground on it, Kazuo thought. He knew he was beginning to understand that foreign countries were more than a

world in which everything was larger than life and people's homes overflowed with stuff. Up until the previous year, he had always thought of countries overseas as places where tall people with white skin lived—lands of skyscrapers so tall they stuck through the sky, quiet and beautiful townscapes, abundant food and spacious houses and cars.

But he was beginning to see that foreign countries were not places filled with only beautiful scenery. He thought of Vietnam, where there were air raids almost every day and people were running for their lives; Africa, where children his own age were starving and dying one after another, their stomachs grossly distended; and North Korea, where Minoru had “returned” with his family. Those were foreign countries, too.

And in those places, it was not the case that everything was always beautiful and wonderful. Suffering and sorrow had existed, and probably continued to exist, as daily realities, just like they did here—no, far more than they did here.

Kazuo stood up and brushed some slightly damp earth, which smelled of new grass, from the seat of his pants. The cloud camel and traveler that had passed over his head had at some point lost their shape, and now looked like a fish with a prominent dorsal fin. But that young traveler was definitely still somewhere in the sky, continuing his journey toward the foreign land he could not yet see—even if the land he dreamed of, full of untold beauty and repose and prosperity, did not exist. And that is as it should be, Kazuo thought, gazing with the young traveler's look upon the city where he lived, which certainly could not be called beautiful.

Low wooden houses, packed close together as if holding each other up, stretched on and on, looking like beasts with dull, black hides quietly huddled together. Here and there in their skin were a number of openings, and the wind that blew inside them passed straight through the stiff, aging joints in the animals' legs, making a whistling sound like a small flute.

But that would only last as long as winter did. Now that the cold, long winter was coming to an end and spring was arriving with its warm rays of sunlight, the beasts would probably breathe a sigh of relief and slowly stir, then

depart for lands to the south that offered abundant grass and water.

“Someday I, too, will leave this town, and this country.”

Kazuo looked at the part of town where roof overlapped roof in the most densely built area of all, full of dark black shadows.

“Maybe the world outside of here isn’t as full of beautiful places as I dream it is. Still, I imagine I will go away from here, and maybe in a foreign country I will meet up with many other people who left the places where they were born, like me, and have the same look as that cloud-traveler in their eyes.”

Thinking about it made Kazuo’s heart leap a little in his chest.

Maybe at that time, his father would no longer get drunk and tell him to enter a national university, earn a degree at graduate school, and work at a top corporation. And maybe his mother would no longer say “during the war,” and would have mended her ties with Kazuo’s grandfather. And just maybe, Yasuo would finally be raising the dog he had waited and waited for. And as for Kazuo himself . . .

*Today the flag of memory comes down, and like a river, I take my leave.
On the floor are my footprints, in my footprints a faint dust . . . sadness.*

*I will . . . I must . . . leave on a journey far away.**

Kazuo, still but ten, did not yet know the sorrow of leaving home.

Edited:

Kazuo gazed at the sky and pictured himself as a questing traveler.

Though he imagined that somewhere beyond the sky he could see the landscape of a foreign country, he knew that it was probably very different from the far-off countries shown on TV. In those images, each home had vivid green grass in the yard, a living room with a fireplace and roomy sofa, a private room and a bed for each person, and a huge refrigerator stuffed with

*Lines of poetry by Tatsuji Miyoshi

more food than you could ever eat. There were jugs of milk so big that you would have to wrap both arms around them to pick them up, skyscrapers so tall that they stuck through the sky, gigantic cars, freeways that went on forever, and the *hanbaagaa* that Wimpy ate . . .

But Kazuo was beginning to realize that foreign countries had disturbing as well as beautiful scenery. He thought of Vietnam, where there were air raids almost every day and people were running for their lives; of Africa, where children his own age were starving and dying one after another, their stomachs grossly swollen; and of North Korea, where Minoru had gone with his family, and had mysteriously fallen out of touch. Those were foreign countries, too.

And in those places, it was not true that everything was always pleasant and wonderful. Suffering and sorrow had existed, and probably continued to exist, as daily realities, just like they did in Japan—or even far more than they did here.

Kazuo stood and brushed the seat of his pants, sweeping away moist earth that smelled of new grass. The cloud camel and traveler had passed over his head and at some point had lost their shape. He stared in their direction.

“Someday, I will leave this city and this country. I’ll meet many other people who left the places where they were born, like me.”

Thinking about it made Kazuo’s heart leap a little in his chest.

Maybe by that time, his father would no longer get drunk and tell him to enter a national university, earn a degree at graduate school, and work at a top company. And maybe his mother would no longer say “during the war,” and would have mended her ties with Kazuo’s grandfather. And just maybe, Yasuo would finally be raising the dog he had waited and waited for. And as for Kazuo himself . . .

For now, he still lived in a world called Tokyo.

He looked out at his city. The small houses huddled closely together, like a group of animals still sleeping on a meadow in early spring. Soon, they would feel the warmth of the sun, and they would start their journey toward a new, green field.

Kazuo felt he could run as fast as a four-legged animal, perhaps a gazelle. He took a breath of fresh spring air and sprinted off toward the horizon.

Stories from Inspiration to Publication

Suzanne Kamata

*Suzanne Kamata spoke to SWET Kansai on September 11, 2011, about writing, editing, and publishing short stories, using her own experience. She discussed how she comes up with ideas for her short stories, and suggested how aspiring writers might come up with their own; how she selects markets for her work; and how she found (and lost and found again) a traditional publisher for her work. Her collection, *The Beautiful One Has Come*, won a Silver Nautilus Award and was a winner for best short story collection in the Next Generation Indie Book Awards.*

IN THE SUMMER OF 2011, my first short story collection, *The Beautiful One Has Come*, was published by Wyatt-Mackenzie Publishing, a small press in Deadwood, Oregon. Although the book was preceded by a novel, a picture book, and three anthologies I organized, in many ways I think of it as my first book. Many of the stories collected here were written before I started writing my novel, and my short-story collection was actually accepted for publication as a book (albeit in somewhat different form) before the novel was finished. In total, from inspiration to publication, it was some twenty years in the making.

Inspiration

People often ask me how much of my writing is autobiographical. Although I would prefer that readers marvel at my fertile imagination, the honest answer would be that all of my writing is autobiographical, in that it reflects my interests and obsessions.

Some of the stories in my collection, such as “You’re So Lucky,” a story about the extremely premature birth of twins to an expatriate mother, are based on personal experience. However, as real life tends to be messy and lack

a definite narrative arc, I often “edit” events. I consolidate characters and events, and shape them so that a story has a beginning, middle, and end.

Ideas for stories come from a variety of sources—my daily life in Japan, motherhood, folk tales from traditional cultures, newspaper headlines, lives of the saints, and conversations with others. I keep a clip file of images and articles cut from magazines and newspapers for inspiration. Some examples that I shared with SWET members include articles entitled “Okayama town adopts dead rock star,” “I-Fairy robot leads events at Tokyo wedding,” and “Killer crows dine on Kamakura squirrels.” This last article (which served as fodder for my story “Blue Murder,” recently published in the *Asia Literary Review*), was about a farmer who, while having trouble fending off crows in his orchard, becomes infatuated with a kingfisher. It was inspired by, among other things, the Japanese folktale “The Crane Wife,” a children’s song about crows, and a couple of anecdotes from adult students in a community education class that I was teaching. One student worked in his family’s pear orchard, and spoke of having trouble with birds. Another had captured a kingfisher, a bird uncommon to the area, on video. The newspaper article about crows bullying and eating baby squirrels helped to enrich the avian theme of my story. Although one idea may not yield enough material for a full-blown story, I often browse through my notebooks and clippings for supplemental matter.

For example, the story “The Rain in Katoomba,” began with the title. My husband and I took a trip to the Blue Mountains of eastern Australia several years ago. I was interested in this area because I knew that many artists and bohemian types had settled there. One of my husband’s friends had told him that the Three Sisters, a rock formation in Katoomba, was a “must-see,” so we



added it to our itinerary. Unfortunately, we had only a long weekend in Australia and the day of our outing was misty and rainy. We stood at the edge of a canyon and saw only fog. “The rain in Katoomba,” I muttered to myself.

I liked the euphonious names of the towns on the map, and I especially liked the sound of “The Rain in Katoomba” and thought that it would make a good title. But a title isn’t enough, of course, to create a story. I had some other ideas on file, however. At the time, I was teaching advanced English to adults at the local town hall. At the beginning of every class, each student shared a story or anecdote. One man told us that he hadn’t gotten any sleep the night before because he was a volunteer fireman, and he’d been searching for an elderly woman who’d wandered off. She was finally found unharmed a couple of towns away. I was struck by this incident and I wanted to use it in a story.

“The Rain in Katoomba” ultimately became a story about an elderly Japanese woman who goes for a walk in the rain and loses her way while lost in memories of her youth in Katoomba with her wannabe-artist father. I wove in an aboriginal tale about the formation of the Three Sisters, the rock formation that I never actually got to see in person.

Publishing in Magazines and Journals

Before I thought of putting together a collection of stories, I submitted individual stories to journals and magazines, starting with publications in Japan. When I first arrived on these shores, in 1988, there were a number of literary journals in Japan open to short fiction, such as *Printed Matter*, *Pawsprint* (in Nagoya), the *Abiko Literary Quarterly*, *Being a Broad*, and *The Plaza*. My early stories were published in these journals and in *Kyoto Journal*, ANA’s *Wingspan*, and the now defunct *Kansai Time Out*. Most of these journals are now out of print, or no longer publishing fiction, but there are a great many literary journals abroad and on the Internet which are receptive to literary fiction set in Japan. I often consult the website New Pages (newpages.com), the classified section of *Poets and Writers Magazine* (pw.org), and the annual *Novel and Short Story Writers’ Market* to research possible markets for my work.

Although some beginning writers ask me to recommend Japan-focused markets for their fiction, I encourage them to submit to journals with a broad focus. A Japanese setting or theme helps set a story apart from the hundreds of other stories that journals in the U.S. and elsewhere tend to receive. My stories have been published in many non-Japan-related print journals such as the *Crab Orchard Review*, the literary journal of Southern Illinois University at Carbondale; *Calyx*, a well-respected feminist journal published by a collective in Corvallis, Oregon; and *Pleiades*, out of the University of Central Missouri, which has published some of my favorite writers, including Sherman Alexie and Edith Pearlman.

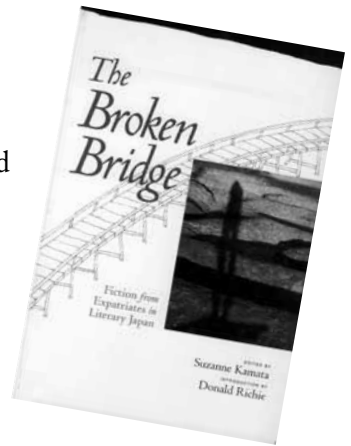
I also advise beginning writers to share their work with a peer writing group, or one or two select readers, and to be persistent. In the beginning, I would sometimes send out a story dozens of times, but as I became a better writer and better at marketing, I sometimes placed a story right away. I sent the story “Hawaiian Hips” out about 16 times before finding a good home for it, but “You’re So Lucky” was accepted by the first (and second) journals to which I submitted. All of the stories in *The Beautiful One Has Come* have been previously published in literary journals and magazines.

Assembling a Collection

As a beginning writer, I thought that as soon as I had written enough stories to make a book, I had a viable collection. Later I realized that this wasn’t true. These days, especially, publishers look for short-story collections with a unifying theme.

In my case, I gathered stories about the expatriate experience, and being a foreigner. The name of the book itself refers to an expatriate who figures in the title story—Nefertiti, a princess from another land who became queen of Egypt. Her name means “The Beautiful One Has Come.” I felt that this title was both apt and evocative. The stories are arranged to show a progressive involvement with the foreign country in question. In the first story, “Havana,” the foreign characters—a Japanese family and an American woman—are in Cuba only temporarily. The final story, “Between,” is about a bicultural family with deep roots in Japan.

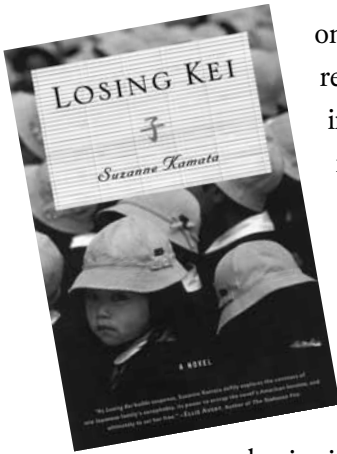
I eliminated some stories from my original compilation, even though I had felt they were particularly strong, because they didn't fit the overall theme, or because they echoed themes in other stories and would have seemed repetitive. I've come to realize that putting together a collection is not a process of accumulation, but of winnowing. Ideally, the stories in such a book will represent a writer's "greatest hits" while riffing on a particular theme.



Finding a Publisher

Since I knew that most agents are reluctant to handle short-story collections, I figured I would try to sell the book by myself. I started shopping around a somewhat different collection of my short fiction several years ago, entering contests and querying small presses. I was a runner-up, along with Edith Pearlman (whose recent collection of stories was reviewed on the front page of the *New York Times Book Review*) in one contest, and a semifinalist in another well-known contest, but I was always the bridesmaid, never the bride. I also gathered some very complimentary rejections from some of my favorite presses, ending with "I'm sure you'll find a publisher" or words to that effect. But I was starting to get discouraged. Finally, the editor of a small press that I liked and respected accepted my collection for publication. At the time, they were apparently working on fundraising, so no definite publication date was set. I sent along new work from time to time, but nothing happened. In the meantime, I published my first novel, two anthologies, and a picture book. Then, the editor who had acquired my short story collection died, and his successors weren't interested in publishing the collection. And then shortly thereafter, the press basically dissolved. I was back to square one, sort of. But by this time I'd developed something of a platform, and the publisher of one of my anthologies had started to publish fiction.

Nancy Cleary (of Wyatt-Mackenzie Publishing) published a literary novel by Chandra Prasad, a writer whose work I love, called *Breathe the Sky*. Based



on the last flight of Amelia Earhart, it was well reviewed and received national media attention, including a mention in *USA Today*. This impressed me, and I felt that my book would be in good hands if I went with Wyatt-Mackenzie. I proposed a collection of stories to Cleary, and she said “yes.” We got to work. I knew that she would design a gorgeous book. I had a long-standing fantasy of having Claude Monet’s painting “La Japonaise” on the cover, and she was very enthusiastic as well. Her design exceeded my expectations.

Publication

To publish a book is not only to print it, but to make it publicly known. Small publishers, especially, expect authors to help out with marketing. In fact, some publishers require a marketing plan, detailing potential reviewers, professional affiliations and public speaking opportunities, among other things, as part of a book proposal. I compiled a list of outlets for promoting the book and Wyatt-Mackenzie kindly submitted my book for review to trade journals such as *Foreword Magazine* and the other titles on my list. They have also entered the book in contests, such as the Foreword Book of the Year, the Frank O’Connor International Short Story Award, and the Nautilus Book Awards competitions. Additionally, I have learned to use social media to get the word out about my work. By posting brief notices via Facebook and Twitter, I can let readers know of positive reviews, book awards and public appearances. I’ve also held giveaways on the sites LibraryThing and GoodReads in order to generate interest and reviews.

I would like to think that this collection would appeal to expatriates, fans of short fiction, and those interested in Japan. If it finds some readers outside of these groups, I would be pleased. With the Internet, hundreds of TV stations, and game apps on smart phones, it’s getting harder and harder to attract readers. However, in this day of diminished attention spans, the short story may be the perfect literary form.

Writing in Japan: Publishing Alternatives

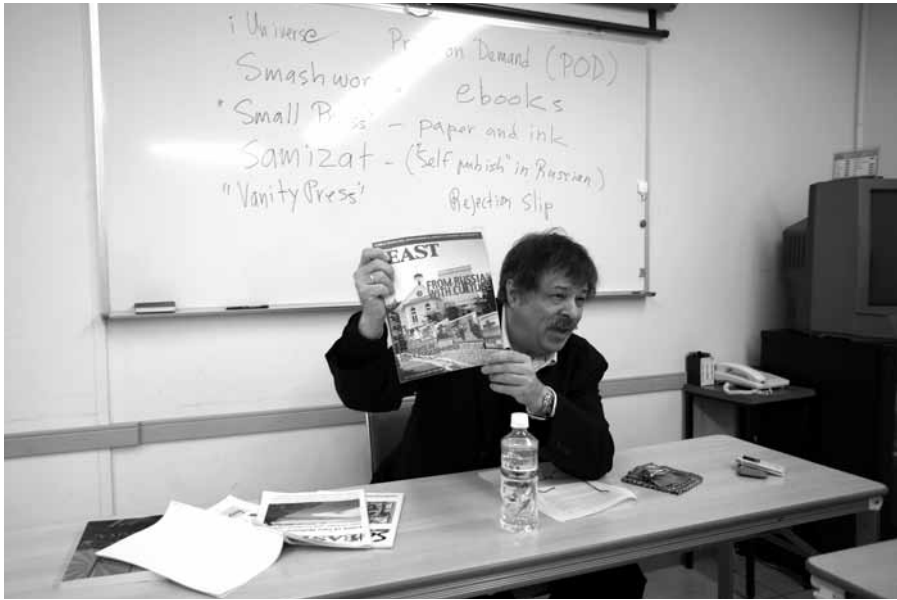
Alex Shishin

Describing experiences with publishing fiction and nonfiction over three decades, Alex Shishin's March 11, 2012 Kansai SWET talk recalled the opportunities available to writers in Japan during the print-dominated era and the new conveniences and opportunities now available via the Internet. Shishin is a professor at Kobe Women's University, where he teaches literature and writing.

AMID THE POUNDING of vintage sixties music at my last high school reunion, a former classmate shouted in my ear, “Alex, you’re a real writer. I try to write stories and novels but I’m not a real writer. I just write for myself.” I was moved that this struggling author had read my work, and shouted into his ear, “You’re a real writer too, brother! Send the stuff out. Don’t leave it in the desk drawer.”

In the past, “Send the stuff out” only meant trying the quirky, limited-circulation literary print quarterlies or the equally quirky small press book publishers, or trying to ingratiate yourself with corporate publishers, preferably through an agent. If this were still the case, I would have tempered my encouragement, adding something cautionary about coping with rejections, the ordeal that writers in manic moments will tell you to laugh off while knowing all too well how rejections hurt and can drive you mad if you are not careful. Sad stories about neglected worthy writers and the vicissitudes of corporate publishing are many.

The Internet has transformed circumstances since the ink-and-paper-dominated days. Options have expanded for writers to publish fiction and creative nonfiction, online or as ebooks. This includes self-publication.



Alex Shishin speaking at SWET Kansai event in March 2012.

It is good news for writers of English in Japan—particularly creative writers in Japan’s hinterlands—who are, generally speaking, out of the English language publication mainstream. People in our respective countries are not waiting with bated breath for our tales of exotic or cutting-edge Japan; interest has waned since the economic bubble burst here over 20 years ago.

Being away from a major publishing center like New York, London or Tokyo can be a handicap. Japan’s only English language publishing house that accepts original creative literary books is the Tokyo-based small press Printed Matter Press.

Until about the mid-2000s, Japan had a viable periodical English language press where writers in English found many opportunities to publish nonfiction and creative work, but today that market has significantly diminished—especially for creative work.

From the 1980s to the mid-2000s, I wrote essays and book reviews for all the English language dailies, but primarily for the *Asahi Evening News* and the *Mainichi Daily News*. I also wrote for the *Japan Quarterly* (book reviews),

Kyoto Journal, the *East* and the *Abiko Literary Rag* (later the *Abiko Quarterly*). The latter three published my fiction.

The *Abiko* deserves special and reverential mention. It was edited and published single-handedly by Laurel Eileen Willis Sicks (a.k.a. Kate of the Slops, Anna Livia Plurabell and Biddy the Hen) and her partner. The task of putting together, financing and distributing the *Abiko* was onerous, and it died a few years ahead of periodicals like the *Asahi Evening News*, the *Japan Quarterly*, the *East* and *Kansai Time Out*.

The Internet was at least partially responsible for the decimation of Japan's English publications. The quarterlies suffered the most. One of the last of the last, *Kyoto Journal*, which depends on unpaid freelance work, is now published online only.

In the Internet's new world, almost anyone can be a published writer through blogging, social networking, ejournals and ebooks. Internet publishing is relatively easy. And just as the Internet has connected the hinterlands to mainstream world information and services, it has made the distribution of information from the hinterlands easier.

Before the advent of the Internet, if you wanted to publish outside of Japan you needed to scrounge up foreign stamps or buy international money orders for your self-addressed and stamped return envelopes. Now you can send your material through email to a plethora of online journals and some print journals.

The Internet is packed with millions of niche publications with relatively small audiences. This is the continuation of a tradition started by small-scale publishers of generally limited-circulation books and journals. Individuals, groups, or institutions such as universities may run these presses. The most famous small-press venture was the publishing of James Joyce's *Ulysses* in 1922 by Sylvia Beach's bookstore Shakespeare and Company in Paris. In spite of such scattered success stories, however, small-press publishing was once looked down upon by establishment writers, critics, and publishers in general. A writer I studied with in the 1970s compared small presses to minor baseball leagues. Today, ironically, he is publishing with small-press publishers. This

suggests that the corporate publishers are no longer receptive to his work. That he has been favorably reviewed in major New York journals indicates the literary establishment's increased recognition of small press publications.

Eventually what happened to the small paper-and-ink small presses will happen to the Internet's small presses. Writers who publish on the Internet, meanwhile, have to accept that their work will not be considered for the O. Henry Prize for short fiction, the William Faulkner Award, the Pushcart Prize, the Best Short Stories of the year anthology, the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, and a host of lesser awards. Agents will not contact you. The National Endowment for the Arts probably won't consider you. The situation is changing, but slowly.

There is very little money to be had from Internet publishing, but that is hardly different for most print publishing of creative works. *Harry Potter* is an exception, not the rule. For most writers, including myself, writing's material rewards come from secondary benefits, like secure university posts, but that is another story.

Disadvantages aside, the great thing is that, with a few exceptions, Internet journals do not charge reading fees for emailed submissions, unlike a fair number of print journals. The response time and publishing time is generally faster than with print journals. This makes multiple submissions easier, which in turn makes rejections easier to bear. The best thing is that you can self-publish online at little or no cost.

The biggest advantage to self-publishing books on or through the Internet is that you can publish your book exactly as you want it, while leaving behind all the sometimes shortsighted gatekeepers you must pass in the commercial book publishing industry before you find someone reasonable, if you ever do. The biggest problem you will have is the stigma attached to self-publication, which presumes that self-publishers are ipso facto bad writers.

"Vanity press" is a term that establishment publisher Jonathon Clifford claimed to have invented in 1959, though it may have been used earlier. It is primarily used to define rip-off printing establishments that lure would-be writers, fill them with unrealistic expectations, soak them for tens of thou-

sands of dollars, often renege on the promises they make, and print books whose physical quality matches their abysmal contents. But the “vanity press” stigma haunts talented self-publishing authors. Reviewers avoid self-published books. Even the liberal-minded storySouth, which awards the yearly Million Writers award for outstanding Internet short stories (my story “Bulldozer” received this award in 2005), will not consider self-published stories.

We can take courage, however, in knowing that many good writers have self-published. Walt Whitman self-published the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*. Gertrude Stein published much of her work through a subsidy publisher. Anaïs Nin published novels with her own printing press. Howard Fast self-published *Spartacus*. Ernest Vincent Wright published his 50,000-word novel *Gadsby*, a lipogram that omitted the letter “E,” in 1939 with a subsidy publisher. In 1975, at the age of 52, Milton Murayama self-published *All I Asking for Is My Body* after decades of rejections. (It was eventually picked up by the University of Hawai‘i Press, which has published his subsequent novels.) You do not ordinarily think of the great nineteenth-century poet and novelist William Morris as a self-publisher because he published with the prestigious Kelmscott Press. Well, he owned Kelmscott Press.

The Internet, where much self-publishing occurs today, has eased the stigma of self-publishing. Services available via the Internet have either mitigated or eliminated many of the logistical problems of self-publishing. Besides simplifying the mechanics of publishing, they have also eased the problems of distribution. You no longer need a pushcart, the route taken by Shimazaki Tōson with his novel *Hakai*, to sell your self-published books. Nor is there the need to fight for space in brick-and-mortar bookstores. Distribution is done over the Web.

Now to my own experiences.

In 2006 I self-published *Rossiya: Voices from the Brezhnev Era*, about my travels in the Soviet Union and Poland, with iUniverse (which, incidentally, is now the sole publisher of Ezra Vogel’s one-time bestseller *Japan as Number One*). I paid altogether \$3,600, which included extensive proofreading, a cover design, and distribution to Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble, plus many similar sites worldwide. I was fortunate to be assigned a great editor with whom I

developed instant rapport. This editor found a dreadful red-in-the-face error in my book that made every penny I spent worthwhile. iUniverse uses the print-on-demand (POD) method. When a book is ordered on the Web, an order goes out to iUniverse's printer and the book is immediately printed and mailed through an Internet distributor. My sales have been small. Simply having a book advertised is not enough to sell millions of copies.

The foregoing is not an endorsement of iUniverse. Read the current Internet feedback on the company if it interests you. At the same time, consider that the rise of ebooks and publishers like Smashwords has made subsidy publishers unnecessary.

In 2008 the ebook publisher Smashwords, the brainchild of a frustrated writer, came to life. It will publish almost anyone and do it for free; although, unless your book is free of charge, they will collect a percentage of your sales price. You send Smashwords a Word file that has been formatted according to the publisher's detailed guidelines, and what they call their "meat grinder" program will format it to work in most if not all ebook readers and in html and Adobe PDF. If you do everything Smashwords wants you to do with the formatting, you get Premium status, meaning your distribution is more extensive. Various book-finder websites put your book online. Smashwords gives you detailed instructions on how to design elegant or simple ebooks that can be revised and republished any time.

Since 2010 I have published four ebooks under my name and one as second author. All are free of charge. My co-authored book with Stephan F. Politzer, *Four Parallel Lives of Eight Notable Individuals*, costs \$2.00.

My first ebook, consisting of two short novels, "Predators" and "The Bridge of Dreams," was published in May 2010. I next published my utopian novel, *Nippon 2357: An Ecological Utopian Tale*, in July 2010. It is my "best-seller" by default and has garnered several reader reviews, most positive.

I followed that with *The Cyber Dust Stories: Lost Internet Essays and Short Stories Centered on Japan* in December 2010. This book contains fiction and nonfiction once published on now-inactive websites. Responsible webmasters archive their material when deactivating a site. My story "Fish," which was

published at *InterText* about a decade ago, is still online, although that literary journal is inactive. When *Fiction Warehouse* was a viable Internet literary journal it published a good number of stories, including my “Bulldozer” in 2004. But when it closed, all of its contributions vanished (became “cyber dust”). My essays (2000–2001) from the now-dead *Japan Observer* were put on Japan Watch, part of ZNet’s website. ZNet did not archive Japan Watch when they killed it. One of those essays, “Slapstick on the Precipice: The Ascent of Koizumi Jun’ichiro?” was cited by Wikipedia in its article on Fumihiko Joyu. Another essay, co-authored with Jens Wilkinson—“Is There Depleted Uranium in Japan’s Future?”—was cited by several websites. These went into my *Cyber Dust Stories*. I did my best to update their Internet links. My last ebook, *Fidelity: Episodes from Three Lives in Japan*, is a collection of short stories that form an episodic novella. I published it in January 2012.


I am sure the number of independent ebook publishers will grow. One new ebook enterprise is Books to Go, based in Seattle. I learned about it through a friend whose novel they accepted after he had spent years sending it around to established publishers and agents.

There is one bit of advice I wish I had given my old schoolmate: find a community of writers and start a publication. No matter how small it is, it can lead to better things. I’ll give you one example out of my experience.

When I initially published my short story “Shades” in the first (1993) issue of *Sunday Afternoon*, the obscure annual journal of the Kansai Writers’ Association (publication ceased in 1997), I considered it buried. Then Suzanne Kamata picked it for her *Broken Bridge* anthology, published by Stone Bridge Press in 1997. I got good reviews, but that wasn’t the end. One day I got a phone call from the editor of *The East* who said he wanted to republish my story and pay me ¥50,000 for it. It was published with a Japanese translation by my wife Sawako Taniyama and our friend Nana Tsuji.

Kansai needs a literary journal. I propose publishing it on Smashwords, like a number of other literary journals, and possibly using Facebook for a website. It would cost next to nothing. Any takers?

Our Story in Print: The SWET Newsletter 1 to 130



To mark the publication of the 130th issue of the SWET Newsletter, and the transition to new means of information sharing in SWET, members of the Editorial Team contributed to this Q&A about the Newsletter's past and present. We hope this exchange will both add to the record of an era in SWET's history and help readers appreciate the professionalism and sense of mission of the many volunteers and contributors over the years since the first issue was published in 1981.

THIS ISSUE PLACES a period to the 32-year history of the *SWET Newsletter* as a periodical in print. Ever since its first issue in early 1981, the *Newsletter* has brought news and reports of events, professional advice, tips on technology, and other items of interest to English wordsmiths connected with Japan; and its conception, design, editorial policy, and tone were set by the traditions of print culture. We complete this 130th issue with faith in these traditions: attention to detail, devotion to good writing, consistency in style, care with layout and design. We celebrate the printed page, knowing that it gives a good reading experience and a reliable record.

SWET members have over the past three to four decades met and overcome almost every situation a writer, editor, or translator faces in working with English words in an international publishing environment, and the *Newsletter* has recorded their experience and wisdom. We hope its pages will not only prove useful to those who continue to work in Japan in coming decades, but also encourage colleagues working elsewhere in the world where English is an adaptable and useful lingua franca.

Translation, especially literary translation, gets a lot of attention lately,

but as every translator knows, the actual work of translation involves writing, editing, proofreading, even copywriting, as well, so an organization like ours stands at the convergence of these professions.

Tell us about the first Newsletter.

The *Newsletter* began in the days of “snail mail”—before email, the Internet, or any sort of online communication. If you wanted to communicate with a group, you needed to put your information on paper; make as many copies as you needed by photocopying, mimeograph, offset printing, or typeset printing; staple the pages; fold them; and mail them out by post. At the very early stages, the layout was done by typing the text in narrow columns on an IBM Selectric typewriter, cutting the paper, and pasting the columns onto A4 layout sheets. Our newsletter logo, created right at the start, gave us an identity. The first volunteers managed with amateur production skills, but one of our more experienced members—editor and book designer Becky Davis—soon took charge and gave us the professional look that SWET has sought to



No. 5 issue with pages laid out in columns typed on an IBM Selectric.



No. 41 issue with pages composed by a professional designer; still pre-DTP era.

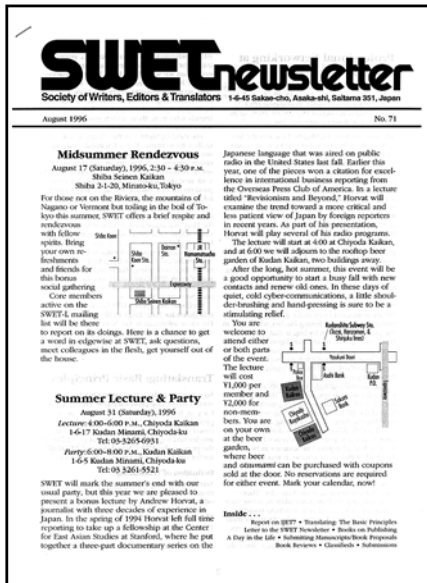
maintain ever since. A handful of other experienced editors coordinated and shaped the *Newsletter's* content.

Some idea of the rich content of the early *Newsletter* issues can be viewed in the cumulative table of contents provided on the SWET website. Selected articles are available now, and others will be posted online in response to demand. Paper copies of most previous issues are available in the archives of SWET papers at the SWET address.

In addition to writing reports and articles, core volunteers helped with production in the days before desktop publishing (DTP) software, particularly the paste-up for layout—an exacting task. This was a chance for translators to learn about editorial and design/layout tasks from experts. We learned about how to edit out “widows” (short lines at tops of columns or pages) and “orphans” (short lines at bottoms of paragraphs or pages), how to set headings (twice as much space above as below; *not* centered), and the fine points of hyphenation, drop caps, and the options for copyediting style.

Soon those with editing and publishing experience became the main coordinators, and the byword for our organization was “professionalism,”

both in the look of the finished product and in the way we went about the editing and production processes. Susie Schmidt, then an editor at the University of Tokyo Press, was the anchor and energizer for the editorial process for most of its history until 1996. Schmidt and her cohorts drew countless people into the act, persuading them to write articles, contribute regular columns, review style guides and other reference works, find interesting feature pieces, and send in classified ads. More than



No. 71 issue, with more professionally drawn graphics for maps; redesigned logo

200 writers contributed to the first hundred issues, many quite frequently. Some were long-timers, others were just passing through Japan, and many were young people learning their professions.

The *Newsletter* carried announcements of upcoming events and maps to the venues, so its publication was often timed with the planning of events. For most of the first two decades, it came out about five times a year. Many of our most pleasant SWET memories were sessions at which volunteers gathered to collate, staple, fold, and stuff the newsletter into envelopes to cart off and mail at the post office. At meetings, social events, and mailing sessions, our then-young children were invariably milling around, helping with their fast fingers or playing boisterously.

But maybe what was most memorable about the old A4 newsletter was that it was bursting with the diverse voices of translators, writers, editors, journalists, and others—some members, some not—talking about what they did and recommending good rules and guidelines, resources to rely on, pitfalls to be wary of. There was humor, irony, disdain, and indignation in inspiring

SWET Newsletter

Society of Writers, Editors & Translators 1-12-20 Minami-cho, Kojimachi, Tokyo 105-0071, Japan

October 1998
Number 82

Inside this issue

- Over Their Shoulders/Poetry • Name Order Matters
- Dear Aunt Eva • Kansai Post Party
- What Are the Three Treasures on Your Desk?
- Book Reviews
- Dictionary Essentials • Directory Update Enclosed
- Random Recommended Reading

An Author's View of Publishing

A strong stomach, a huge ego, and a lot of perseverance—the basic requirements for publishing a book or two. People often think that being a writer is romantic. In fact, writing is hard work, and once a project is started, it's even harder to finish. Kyoto's Judith Clancy has produced two books—one a self-published photo history honoring her *ieibana* teacher, the other a walking guide to Kyoto recently published by Weatherhill Publishers of New York and Tokyo. On June 20 Judith shared her publishing experiences with Kansai SWETers and friends.

The idea for *Naturescapes*, a photo book honoring Judith's *ieibana* teacher, arose when she learned of the Japanese custom of distributing small, beautifully produced books of poetry or essays at funerals or memorial services; these "memorial books" collect the works done by the deceased at a hobby during life together with tributes by family and friends and are published by the family as a remembrance. In addition to her desire to honor Tamura-sensei, a teacher in the Ohara School who was approaching retirement, and introduce his work to *ieibana* artists and others, Judith thought it

Judith Clancy came to Japan twenty-eight years ago, and upon setting foot in Kyoto she promptly fell in love with the city. A student of everything Kyoto offers, Judith has shared her knowledge through two books, the first self-published, the second a Weatherhill guidebook. On June 20 in Osaka, she spoke about her writing and publishing experiences to tens of listeners.

SWET in cyberspace: <http://www.infopage.net/swet>

SWET Newsletter

Society of Writers, Editors & Translators 1-16 Kita-Inokita, Tsubouchi-cho, Sakuma 239-0007, Japan

May 2003
Number 101

SWET on Saturdays/May 24
Teaching Translation: Theory and Practice

Three teachers of translation in university environments will talk about their experience and approaches. The panelists will be Stephen Snyder, associate professor of Japanese and comparative literature at the University of Colorado and a literary translator who has published translations of contemporary novelists; Charles De Wolf, professor at Keio University, linguist, translator, and writer; and Lynne Riggs, professional translator in the social sciences and humanities and part-time lecturer at International Christian University. Topics they will cover include the challenges of teaching literary translation, working with students who are native or non-native speakers of the recipient language, and the low status of translation in academia today.

Date: May 24, 2003 (Saturday)
 Time: 9:00–5:00 P.M.
 Place: Tokyo Azabudai Seminar House
 Osaka Keizai Hoka Daigaku Bldg. 4F
 1-11-1 Azabudai, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0047
 Access: Kamiyacho subway station, Hibiya line, exit 1 (Tokyo Tower direction)
 Cost: ¥1,000 SWET and JAT members; ¥1,500 nonmembers

Inside this issue: "SWET on Saturdays" Begins • Moving Reports • Over Their Shoulders • Thanks on SWET • Ash Aunt Eva • Buying Books Online • Rough Words • Steering Committee Report • Wireless Computer Networking Takes Off • Reading Japanese Advertising

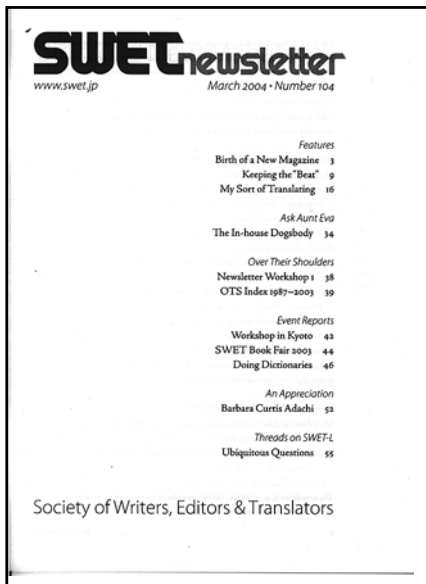
Get the latest news from SWET 24/7 at www.swet.jp

Nos. 82 and 101 show successive incarnations of the A5-size design devised by Ruth McCreery in 1998 and refined by Becky Davis in 2003.

doses—as well as plenty of information to help us answer the questions we grappled with in our work.

The *Newsletter* now seems quite different from what you just described; when did it change and why?

The format of the *Newsletter* you see now, both in design and concept, dates from 2004, with issue No. 104. The period from around 1998 to 2004 was a transition period for SWET, with changes taking place in the people leading its activities, including editing and production of the *Newsletter*. Many different people volunteered their time and professional skills to carry it on—as detailed in the “History of SWET” (see swet.jp)—but already from around 2002, SWET stalwarts had recognized that “newsletter-like” information could be transmitted to members via email and the website. Gradually the website was equipped to do many of the things that the old *Newsletter* had been doing (announcing and reporting on events, providing space for members to write



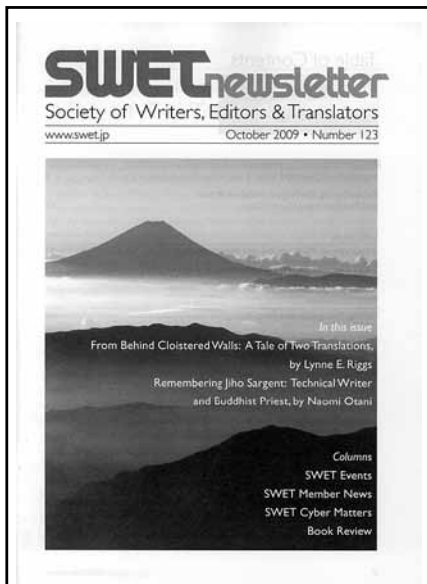
Nos. 104, 119, and 123 show further development of the *Newsletter* design between 2004 and the present done by Anne Bergasse and Kiwaki Tetsuji of Abinitio Design.

articles, etc.). Ruth McCreery, who came on as designer in 1998, redesigned the format to A5-size starting with No. 82. The period from then until No. 103 was a kind of metamorphosis stage. Since the smaller page format nicely accommodated long and substantive articles, many issues were bringing more to readers than what is a typical newsletter. And in this phase the age of the Internet was getting into full swing.

With the *raison d'être* of the early *Newsletter* having shifted partly to the website, some argued that its days were numbered. Fewer seemed able and interested in volunteering their time and effort to the publication, and in 2003 the future of the publication was up for grabs.

The time seemed ripe for the *Newsletter* to evolve into a journal-like publication. The persuasive case for this was made by Lynne E. Riggs, who served as coordinating editor at the time and has continued in that role. One, SWET had become the gathering place for writers, editors, and translators connected with Japan, especially those with literary aspirations who worked

in more than one profession. From the beginning, the *Newsletter* gave these people a voice—in fact, many voices. Their contributions to the organization and to the *Newsletter* made it a unique publication, and its professional standards made it highly respected. Two, we knew that the established name, reputation, and circulation of a periodical can be a tremendous asset, not just for the interest group of its subscribers, but for the visibility of its niche, and the advancement of the fields or professions it represents. Three, the compilation of finite sets of articles (e.g., features, event reports, how-to items,



Newsletter cover photography was all by SWET members.

reviews)—with attractive covers—helps focus energies and aspirations toward a specific goal. Fourth, and maybe best of all, the people who got involved with the *Newsletter* ended up in a kind of ongoing workshop. We learned from more-experienced members and then later passed on what we had learned to newer members.

So these were the ideas that inspired the *SWET Newsletter*'s reincarnation in 2004. Since 1999, SWET had been holding nearly monthly meetings, often with extremely interesting panel discussions and speakers. Sometimes preparing write-ups of these events was straightforward, but sometimes it was more complicated, with several editing stages required; through the editorial process, even presentations that might have been a bit disorganized were made coherent and could thereby be shared with our far-flung membership and added to the record of our professions.

The *Newsletter* thus took wing again as a journal, with long feature articles, detailed reports on events, items on practical skills development, and book reviews. For a while, in an era before going online over breakfast became the norm, flyers announcing events with maps to venues were inserted in the mailings of the *Newsletter*.

What is the editorial process like? How many drafts does an article usually go through before it is published in the *Newsletter*?

Each article usually goes through a minimum of three drafts, and sometimes seven or eight in the editorial stage, depending on the state of the initial manuscript and the enthusiasm of the author. When a manuscript comes in—these days always in electronic form—the coordinator first reads it to make sure that it is suitable to our readership, well organized, interesting, not too long, and so on.

The first thing we do is to make sure it has all its “parts”—some authors are in such haste to send off the manuscript that sometimes there is text, but no title or even an author's name on or in the file! It needs a copyright line, title, author byline, and introductory blurb (which doubles as the annotation about

the article on the SWET website). We also start thinking about what images could go with the article and whether permissions will need to be cleared to use them or any of the quoted or translated passages.

Then the article goes to an editor on our “active team” of volunteer editors and copyeditors. For articles written by authors we know or who have been specifically requested to write a piece, copyediting the text according to the *SWET Newsletter* Style Sheet—which was available on the SWET website—is the basic chore at this stage, but we also edit the piece and insert comments and queries for improvement or clarification (elaborate on parts, revise certain passages, add sources, check facts, correct spellings, etc.). Careful preparation of a manuscript from the outset assures that it flows into the layout software with every detail (including macrons, italics, and ellipsis points) in place.

Next, the manuscript file goes back to the author, with the various comments and edits to consider and resolve. We generally work in MS Word files, where changes can be shown either with colors, highlighting, and strike-outs or by using Track Changes. The coordinator checks with the author to determine which electronic method of editing suits his/her preference. Not all authors are conversant with the Track Changes or commenting functions of MS Word—indeed, some even refuse to use MS Word!—and we try to accommodate these preferences.

After the file comes back from the author, it is sent to a second editor, who will see it with yet a different editorial eye, and it is also proofread one more time. This final scrutiny of the manuscript is our chance to be sure it is in good shape. Does every word count? Have we been consistent? Do the pages look good and read easily?

Depending on the quantity of changes made in the second edit/proofreading stage, the file may go back to the author again, but if time is limited, it goes straight into the layout stage; the author will have a chance to see it in the galley proof.

When all the manuscripts are at this stage, the files are numbered and organized for the layout and production process. The image files are identified with matching numbers by article and placed in folders for access by the designer.

Captions are written for images and inserted into the text files for each article.

Everything goes to the designer at once. Ideally, printouts of all files and images are made and sent to the designer so she can have them on hand for quick reference. Notes about captions, placement of images, and other special features marked on the manuscript facilitate communication between the editor and designer.

The *SWET Newsletter's* evolving design could be the subject of a whole article in itself, but we might just add here that it was revamped by our longtime design guru Becky Davis at issue No. 104 and then adapted and revised to its present format in two or three stages by our present designer, Anne Bergasse, starting with No. 108.

What has been the most challenging task or aspect of putting the *Newsletter* together?

Probably it is the *writing* and the *coordinating*. A quarterly is a new “book” due out every three months. Occasional and regular contributors are needed, but everything is pro bono—part of our mission to the membership and community. Since we are all “word people,” standards are high: we expect the writing to be good, the design to be readable, the pages to be well proofread and tidy, and the content to be consistently interesting and informative. Organizing events is part and parcel of the momentum of the *Newsletter*, but every periodical depends on *writing*. As long as there are people willing to write manuscripts, the content comes together.

Organizing a group of authors and editors toward a common goal three to four months hence—and issue after issue—is likewise difficult. Finding people who can edit, copyedit, and proofread at the various stages of the process, replacing those who cannot for whatever reasons, and guiding people of diverse perspectives and styles in a shared vision of writing and publishing practice calls for patient and flexible management.

SWET is a group in constant flux, with many members coming and going between Japan and their home countries, sometimes shifting to other professions, busy at certain times of year, and so on. As much as we may strive to

manage a publication program on a professional schedule, these very human factors come into play. A big part of SWET's lifeblood is the diversity and flux among the active volunteers—and this is certainly something to embrace and respond to as long as the organization exists.

What are some of the most valuable articles or columns the *Newsletter* has published?

The archive of SWET is rich for those in our different professions. For example, we often refer editors to the No. 109 write-up of a workshop held in 2005, “Editing in Japan: Three Perspectives,” or to the article “Academic Editing in the Humanities” by Kate Wildman Nakai in No. 112. These are pieces that every editor working in Japan should read. For translators and editors wanting to know how to charge for their work and what units of charge to use, there is “What’s in a Page?” originally published in No. 87. (All these are available to visitors to the SWET website.)

For translators, there is the long-running series “Over Their Shoulders,” presenting translated texts in a variety of genres and offering examples of different styles and choices made by experienced translators. The write-up of the 2003 talk by Edward G. Seidensticker in No. 104 is a highlight. The series “Translating from Japanese to English,” which began in 2007, now offers more than 10 articles by veteran translators like Janine Beichman, Juliet Winters Carpenter, Rebecca Copeland, Michael Emmerich, and Meredith McKinney. Nearly 100 translation-related articles have been published in the *Newsletter*, forming a significant body of literature in the field. Few of these articles are currently available online; SWET needs to consider whether to publish a printed anthology or make them available via the website.

For writers, there are numerous contributions on journalism and writing travel pieces, fiction, and poetry by writers with established reputations. Many of the speakers at SWET events have been writers who made their mark in one genre or another, and their insights are invariably inspiring.

We have a great deal of lore about getting along as professionals working with the English word in Japan. Personal stories by members in “How We Got

Here” recount their trials and travails as they established their careers; pieces in the “A Day in the Life” series offer tips for managing one’s work. The “Dear Aunt Eva” column, which is online on the website, is a long-running tongue-in-cheek series answering questions about dealing with various kinds of professional situations. The series “Threads on SWET-L” (later “SWET Cyber Matters”) compiled at first by Holly Ueda and later by Torkil Christensen, distilled the wisdom of our professional peers shared on the open mailing list over many years from 2001 until 2010. Our series on “Professionalism,” collected together in our 1990 publication *Wordcraft*, will be available online as well.

Is there any other publication after which the *Newsletter* is modeled, or that stands in the same category?

Not really. The *Newsletter* does seem to occupy quite a distinctive niche within the wordcrafting community. The articles are chosen to give our diverse readership as much satisfaction as possible, while recording the activities of the group for the period it covers. You can trace the history of SWET through its pages as well as get a sense of what has been happening in our professions over the years.

What sort of changes can we expect now that the newsletter will be in online form?

Longish articles with substantive content such as those published since 2004 will shift “out” of the *SWET Newsletter* with this issue. SWET’s efforts to publish news and brief pieces for its members via the website will be focused in the “News” and through the “Columns” sections. “News” will be short items with links to other sites and sources of information. Hopefully numerous members will contribute news of upcoming events or other information of mutual interest. “Professional Resources” will offer a place for longer pieces—essays and articles, topical reports deriving from talks and presentations at SWET events, and book reviews—of the type edited and published in issues 104 to 130.

The previous editorial team is retiring. Members who are familiar with online publications need to be the core of a new SWET publishing team, although those who have helped put the old *Newsletter* together could still be useful in helping establish the content, editorial style, and standards of new electronic publishing endeavors.


Will the kinds of articles published in the *Newsletter* continue to be published?

Many SWET members are loath to see the old print *Newsletter* “journal” cease, and if there is sufficient support and authorship, substantive articles might continue to be published in a new “SWET Journal.” Some members have suggested the possibility of editing articles throughout the year and compiling occasional printed anthologies. We hope to continue providing the means to contribute to the literature of our professions in such a fashion.

Because of the long history of the *SWET Newsletter*, it is known as a niche periodical for certain kinds of content; it would be a great benefit to the Society and its members to sustain and develop that niche. English wordsmithing in connection with Japan—and Asia for that matter—continues to evolve in response to changes in language, views of editing, approaches to translation, needs and trends in publishing and international communication, and technological innovation. As always, there will be endless topics that can be taken up to provide information and insight on our work, help encourage and train a new generation of editors, translators, and writers, and otherwise support our unique community.

SWET's New Online Look

Richard Sadowsky



IN MAY 2012, SWET enters a new era with a visually redesigned and enhanced website at swet.jp, setting the groundwork for SWET's future development. From now on, the website will be the place to go for SWET news, articles, and information for members and others with an interest in SWET topics.

The website will continue to be based on the *ExpressionEngine* CMS (Content Management System) that our webmaster Sako Eaton developed and maintained over the last decade. As Sako steps down, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to him for his achievements in creating and maintaining a robust site. The Steering Committee agreed to commission SWET's site redesign to professional website designer Jade Michael Carter, formerly a Nagoya-area resident and president of Vancouver-based Resourcecode Media (www.resourcecode.com).

One of the many features of the redesign, in addition to its new blue-green, olive, and orange color scheme, will be an online directory that will make it easy for potential clients to find SWET members by their professional skills. In due course, we plan to extend the directory functionality from a contact form to a personal page that allows each member to maintain an online presence through SWET. From the outset, the renewed site incorporates a job board that is open to all for posting jobs, and open only to SWET members for viewing.

Under the initial redesign, two sections—"Columns" and "Professional Resources"—will give visitors and members access to SWET's expertise, both

archival (from past *Newsletters*) and ongoing as new articles are published. A front-page blog format aims to add value to this information through judicious curating that calls attention to SWET's hidden treasures. The site will facilitate a more timely publishing of write-ups, topical articles, and other volunteer contributions.

Some possible future uses of the website include posting recordings or videos of talks, hosting an interactive "Ask the Experts" section to give exposure to Japanese-English language issues, and publishing online updates of SWET's valuable print-only *Japan Style Sheet*. Long-term uses for the SWET site could include client education—pointers on language conventions for English publishing endeavors related to Japan—or professional self-training tools for wordsmiths.

The website is also linked to a SWET Facebook Page, which we will keep updated with input from members.

SWET Website Top page.

Professional Resources top page.

The *SWET Newsletter* in its recent form ceases printed publication with No. 130, May 2012. The information SWET publishes for the benefit of its members from now on will be available online, and members can sign up to receive notices of new items as they are published. Such new items include upcoming events, book reviews, pointers to timely information or relevant blog posts, short event reports, and notices of other site updates.

Longer articles will be published regularly as professional resources, and we will look into the possibility of publishing annual anthologies in some form, perhaps ebook or print. As we digitize past issues of the *SWET Newsletter*, we will also build in full keyword-search access as a perk of membership.


All of these projects, aimed at sharing SWET’s expertise and experience—the SWET “brand”—will involve many small steps and depend on the help of volunteers. Examples of small tasks include tagging articles for searching, creating hyperlinks in articles that need to be sprung up for the Web, scanning (using OCR software) and proofreading earlier newsletter articles, or guest-writing blog posts to bring attention to items of interest to colleagues in one’s field.

The launch of the redesigned SWET website will create the opportunity for more dynamic online interaction among members and other professionals, one that we hope will trigger more active involvement of members in the activities of the Society. We are excited about developing new sections that will promote mutual education, and wish to take advantage of the latent talent within SWET. Please contribute in some small (or big) way. All efforts—technical, clerical, creative—to enhance the website will be valuable and beneficial. We would like to thank everyone who has helped out so far, even by renewing your membership early, and look forward to your continued contributions.



Professional Resources inside page.

Kanji in English Text



Editors, translators, and proofreaders turn to the Japan Style Sheet (Stone Bridge Press, 1998) in making style decisions for their work related to Japan. While the editorial options and recommendations given in JSS are as reliable as ever, technology has moved on, resolving some of the difficulties regarding inclusion of kanji and macrons (long-vowel marks for romanized Japanese). The following offers an update to the discussion on “Using Kanji in English Text” and augments and corrects the advice on long vowels. Copies of the Japan Style Sheet are available at discount from SWET by contacting info@swet.jp.

SWET recommends

- **Using kanji in publications for specialists; when they are important to the content discussed; and when the intended audience includes readers of Japanese, Chinese, or Korean.**
- **Not using kanji when they create undue problems in proofreading or production.**

SWET’s *Japan Style Sheet* (JSS) touches only briefly on the use of Japanese characters (kanji) in English-language text, but rapid advances in digital publishing technology over the past decade have made it easier than ever before to include non-Latin characters in English publications. This supplement to JSS presents a wider range of recommendations and technical advice for authors, editors, and translators wishing to use kanji in their English publications.

The guidelines given here are useful for English texts that include kanji as well as Chinese and Korean ideographic characters and East Asian phonetic

scripts, all of which involve the same kinds of issues. As a general rule, texts intended for readers who are scholars in fields related to China, Japan, or Korea should include characters by adopting one of the easy-to-follow conventions described below. Texts addressing a general readership (newspapers, magazines, government reports, web news or blogs, etc.), even if they are translations, rarely include kanji, or even transliterated terms. Characters are ordinarily not needed for a full understanding of such texts and can be distracting to the reader.

Among specialist publications, the academic journal *Monumenta Nipponica* (MN) offers detailed and reliable advice for incorporating kanji in English text:

For Japanese, Chinese, and Korean terms, provide characters at the first mention of a person, place name, literary work, era name (up to Meiji), or romanized terms, with the following exceptions:

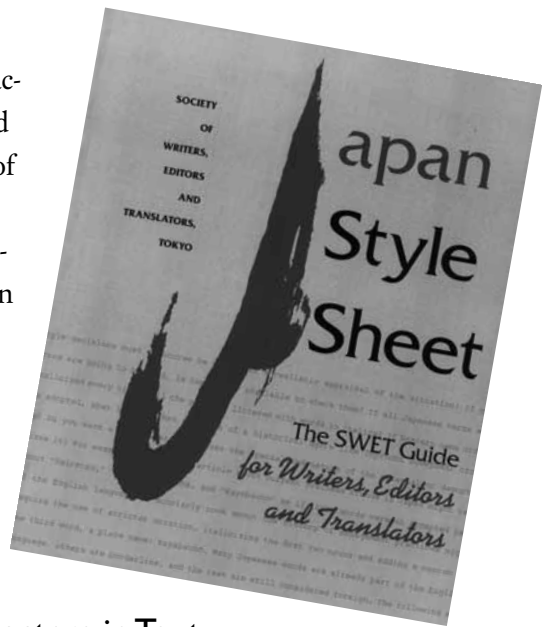
- do not give characters for anglicized terms or terms that MN treats as provisionally anglicized.
- do not give characters for prefectures, provinces, major cities, or well-known topographical names

MN incorporates characters into the main text of articles, footnotes, captions, and other features. The following example uses kanji, macrons for Japanese romanization, and diacritical marks for Sanskrit romanization.

Among the most famous in this category are the Śākyamuni at Seiryōji 清涼寺 temple in Kyoto, said to have been brought to Japan from China in 987 (or 986) by Chōnen 喬然 (938–1016) and traditionally regarded as a true-scale depiction of the Buddha made during his lifetime; and the Amida 阿彌陀 triad at Zenkōji 善光寺 in Nagano, claimed to be the first Buddhist image to arrive in Japan in 552.

(*Monumenta Nipponica* 57:3; Autumn 2002, p. 273. Note the harmonization of the English font, 10 pt, with the Japanese font, 9 pt.)

Even in texts for specialists, characters should be included sparingly and only when necessary for the benefit of the reader. An English text cluttered with kanji is best avoided. Clear criteria should be established for inclusion of characters (e.g., for names, titles, place names, special terms), such as those recommended by MN. (The MN Style Sheet is available online at http://monumenta.cc.sophia.ac.jp/MN_Style.html).



Arguments in Favor of Characters in Text

For the benefit of readers who specialize in Asian studies and those who are starting to learn Japanese, the inclusion of kanji is a definite plus. Because of the many homonyms in Japanese, even when a word, name, or title is romanized, its meaning may still be unclear (e.g., *kaidan* can mean “talks” 会談, “stairs” 階段, or “ghost story” 怪談). Moreover, for readers interested in looking up further information about the topic in original Japanese sources, bibliographic entries in their original form are often essential, and the inclusion of kanji makes the publication more useful internationally.

Arguments against Using Characters in Text

- For readers not conversant with Japanese, kanji are not meaningful and can be distracting.
- For authors, editors, and publishers, the inclusion of kanji adds to their workload and requires special care in inputting, proofreading, and dealing with typographical considerations (e.g., getting size and spacing of kanji to harmonize with the surrounding English text).

Other Considerations

- Can the author (or designated editor or designer) skillfully create a complete document, inclusive of kanji, proofread it, and assure that the characters harmonize typographically with the surrounding English text? If so, then there should be no barrier to their inclusion.
- Can the publisher handle the inclusion of kanji, proofreading, and harmonizing typography of the characters and English text in a way that is satisfactory to the author? If inclusion of characters is left up to the publisher, is the editorial staff able to check for accuracy after design and layout and advise about typographical adjustments? A publisher/printer outside Japan may not be equipped to check the accuracy of kanji text.
- When the subject matter is of a general or journalistic nature or based on non-Japanese sources, use of kanji should be avoided except where the content discusses the characters themselves.

Conventions

While the inclusion of kanji directly in the main English text is the optimal approach, there are other acceptable conventions: listing kanji in an appendix/glossary at the end of a document, or placing kanji in the margins or in footnotes/endnotes.

Another complication is traditional versus simplified characters. For modern publications, SWET recommends using the simplified Japanese form, but when quoting or citing old documents, whenever possible use the traditional (original) characters as they appear in the source document. For example, *butsuzō* 佛像 (Buddhist statue) is the traditional form, but the modern Japanese simplified characters are 仏像.

Characters in Separate Lists

Publishers not equipped to typeset kanji efficiently may ask the author to use

kanji only in a separate list, for example as front matter, as a text box of some kind, or as back matter in a glossary or index, thus avoiding potential layout and production problems. Art historians may prefer to separate the kanji from the text in the interests of the “aesthetics” of their books or museum catalogs. For whatever reason, the separate-list option allows the pages requiring special technical know-how and equipment to be handled separately.

Moving the characters to a list elsewhere in a book, however, disrupts the reading process, forcing the reader to flip back and forth to look up the kanji.

Characters in Marginal Space

Characters can be set in text boxes located in the margins aligned with the relevant text, thereby leaving the text uncluttered and allowing the characters to appear close to the text where they are discussed.

INDEX 443	
visits home of, 160, 162	xiii, 35, 48, 51, 53, 60, 200
Florence, 333–34	haircut, Western-style, 76
foreign employees, 253	Hale, Charles, 137, 138, 143, 149
foreign loan, 166	Hanabusa Yoshihata 花房義賢, 436
Forum, 325	Hashi'ichi 橋市 (橋一), 384
fox hunting, 245	Hatakeyama Yoshinari 高山義就, xxi, 153, 251. <i>See also</i> Sugiura Kōzō
France, visit to, 263–87, 341–48; judiciary, 281	Hayashi Tadasu 林董, 119, 144
Franco-Prussian War, 265, 278; exhibit on, 315	Hayashi Tomoyuki 林次幸, 384, 426
Franklin, John, 209	Hayward, Alvina, 117, 120
Franz Joseph I, Emperor, 320	Higashikuze Michitomi, Lord 東久世通通, 73, 129, 230
Frederick I, the Great, 294, 296, 303	Hirahara Heiemon 平原平右衛門: personal loans, 396
Fukubara Kazumuke 福原一介, 368	Hiroawa Saneomi 廣澤隼臣 4, 5; assassination of, 53, 314, 407
Fukuchi Gen'ichiro 福地廉一高, 47, 105, 144, 145, 166, 177, 288, 394	Hoffman, Dr. Theodor E., 97, 102, 292, 375, 392
Fukuzawa Yukichi 福澤諭吉, 371, 375, 418	Holland, 291–96
furniture, Western, 216	Hong Kong, 356
Ga Noriyuki 何禮之, xxi, 133, 144, 369; death of wife, 317	Hope, Sir James, 231
gardening, 399, 409, 411	Horsford, General Alfred, 202–203
Garibaldi, 334	horse races, 120
Geneva, 336–38	hospital, visit to, 254
Genwin, Kido proposes, 386	hot springs, 128–30; at Saratoga, 177; at Wiesbaden, 340
Germany, 296–304, 314–18	illness, 37, 242, 416, 428, 431; chest pain, 278; headache, 375–76; hemorrhoids, 128–30, 133; leg paralysis, 375; stomachache, 163
Ghent, 288	immigration, U.S., 173
Girard, Stephen, 190	Imperial Army: disidence, 395
Gladstone, William E., 257, 259	Imperial Guard, 393
Glasgow, 230–232	
glassmaking: Chance's Glass Factory, Birmingham, 243; St. Helens, 226	

Kanji in a separate glossary. From *Translating the West: Language and Political Reason in Nineteenth-Century Japan*, by Douglas R. Howland (University of Hawai'i Press, 2002).

Glossary of Translation Words	
ateji 宛字	gashū dokuritsu 合衆獨立
bankoku kōhō 萬國公法	gashūkoku 合衆國
bun 分	gashūkoku no dokuritsu 合衆國ノ獨立
bunka 文化	gimu 義務
bunmei 文明	hanken 版權
bunmeikaika 文明開化	heimin 平民
bunmei no seiji 文明ノ政治	hitobito 人人
chiken 治權	hito no kenri 人ノ權利
daikaku 大覺	

Kanji in an index. From *The Diary of Kido Takayoshi—Volume II: 1871–1874*, translated by Sidney Devere Brown and Akiko Hirota (University of Tokyo Press, 1985).

Typesetting in marginal space can be complicated for the layout and may become misaligned if the text lines shift. If marginal kanji are numerous they appear as a well-integrated part of the text, this is an acceptable strategy. But if

scattered, they may seem untidy and detract from the design.

Characters in Notes

Instead of putting the characters in the main text, they may be placed in footnotes or endnotes, a system used in some early European-language publications on Japan. Today, technically speaking, if a character can be added in a footnote or endnote, it can as easily be added in the main text.

Technical Hints

Inputting kanji on English-language computers is now relatively straightforward and no longer requires third-party add-on software. The newer Mac and Windows machines come pre-installed with input method editors (IME) that allow users to switch between English, Japanese, Chinese, or Korean (or other language) input systems. Google also offers the excellent “Google Japanese Input” IME for the Mac as a free download to replace the built-in Kotoeri. The process of “enabling” and using input editors differs between Mac and Windows, but essentially involves (1) installing the IME if it is not already on the computer; (2) selecting the input language to add it to the system settings/preferences; (3) switching to the language when typing (see also instructions in the second JSS Update below).

Another welcome technological advance is Unicode, the computing industry standard for encoding the scripts of over 100 languages. Unicode handles



Scene from Scroll One of the 16th c. work entitled *Shukunin E* (Debate over Saké and Rice). In this scene, monks and a page sit at a table. Each has two raised trays of foods, the main tray holding a huge! three side dishes, in the “vegetarian meal” (*shōjin ryōri*) style. courtesy of the Chadō Research Center, Kyoto.

work, the expression “seven- five- and three- tra refer to the number of dishes served during the dishes for the *honzen* or “main” course, five for the *san no zen*, and three for the third course (*san no zen*).

The term “*honzen*” was originally a general ex *go-san-zen* meal arrangements that represented the Muromachi-period warrior-class families. In a shift in usage, whereby “*honzen ryōri*” came to of food service that included the three courses c parned the formal saké rounds, and an array of ing the main course.

Apart from this variety of cuisine, there was variety called *shōjinmono* (lit., “abstinence thin *jinmono*,” specifically refers to vegetable dishes, a 五寸切 “*gōsūiri*,” referring to dishes made of finely chop the procedures for making meatless foods took the style of meal based on such Zen-temple en condensed into the form of meal called *kaisek* wabi style tea referred to as *shō-cha*, held in ru (60an).

Kanji in the margins. From *Chanoyu Quarterly: Tea and the Arts of Japan*, No. 78 (Kyoto: Urasenke Foundation, 1994), p. 20.

Instead, Japan was to begin treating its Asiatic neighbors as imperialist nations were doing.

Fukuzawa had been a champion of ‘enlightenment’ meant both the substantial improvement of the J for Japan’s getting accepted as an equal among civilized Japan was expected to survive in international politics nation’s survival was applied to Japan’s neighboring c In the early years of the Meiji era nobody was more inv

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¹ This study is a revision of a paper which was prepared in the fall of 1965 for Professor M. B. Jansen’s seminar at Princeton University of which the double subject was “Tokugawa Institutions” and “Meiji Japan’s Image of China”. Along with the comments and ideas that were exchanged in that seminar, actively participated in by Professor Tōru Haga of Tokyo University and Professor Kiyoko Chō of Tokyo’s International Christian University, Professor Jansen’s excellent study then in its draft stage, “Modernization and Foreign Policy in Meiji Japan”, was

most in the 85 *ichi* zenbō of Yukichi and public nani-shot thus colle printed in of the Tū quantity d be referred and JS res ² 福沢 75, 16 Ma

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Kanji in the footnotes. From *Japan’s Modern Century*, by Edmund R. Skrzypczak (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1968), p. 1.

nearly all the kanji (and diacritics) required for traditional publishers and digital publishers (websites, blogs), so font and other technical problems need not be an insurmountable or costly problem. Kanji should be input at the manuscript stage. (For more on Unicode and typography-related technology, see unicode.org/versions/Unicode6.0.0/)

One solution for providing kanji in electronic text is illustrated at the web-based handbook of Japanese religion (in German) edited by Bernhard Scheid, where the kanji equivalent appears in a pop-up note upon clicking the term: http://www.univie.ac.at/rel_jap/an/Ikonographie:Jizo

Aesthetic Considerations

Type size: In composing typography for printed texts, the standard size of kanji should be set smaller than the English text, often as much as 2 points smaller. This rule of thumb, developed by typographers and graphic designers when combining English and kanji, allows the line height of the English text and kanji to be in natural proportion.

Punctuation: Use English punctuation (commas, periods, quotation marks) for surrounding text and Japanese punctuation (commas, periods, *kagi kakko*, and *nakaguro*) within quoted Japanese material. For colons within Japanese titles of works, however, the spacing looks tidier if the English colon and spacing are used. See examples below:

English surrounding punctuation:

In its atmospherics *Shaka no honji* strongly evokes the Japanese cultural past, a world of ‘brocade cushions and jeweled screens’ (*nishiki no shitone, tama no sudare* 錦のしとね、玉の簾). (MN 62:3, p. 314)

Colon in Japanese title in English text:

Nishida Masayoshi 西田正好. *Mujōkan no keifu: Nihon bukkyō bungei shisōshi; Kodai, chūsei hen* 無常観の系譜: 日本仏教文芸思想史 古代・中世編. Ōfūsha, 1970. (MN 62:3, p. 319)

Macrons and Other Diacritics

SWET recommends

- Using macrons to represent long vowels and other diacritics in publications for specialists, or when the words are important in a linguistic sense.
- Omitting diacritics in general material or when using them causes production problems.

SWET's *Japan Style Sheet* offers reliable advice on using macrons in English texts related to Japan, but the arguments for or against use of macrons—as well as diacritics for romanized Chinese, Korean, Sanskrit, and other Asian languages—have greatly changed. It is now as easy to input macrons for romanized Japanese as it has been all along to input circumflexes or cedillas for French or umlauts for German.

We now have easy access to the long-sound diacritics often needed in scholarly texts for romanized Japanese (vowels with macrons), as well as for the subscript and superscript dots for Sanskrit and the breve for romanized Korean. Diacritics are sometimes used for romanized Chinese to provide information on the tones (an example is Dizàng Púsà, Chinese for Jizō Bosatsu), although most China-related academic publications drop them. Texts that include macrons for Japanese, breves for Korean, and various diacritics for Sanskrit should also include diacritics for Chinese.

Inputting macrons and other diacritics from the keyboard is now quite easy, on either Mac or Windows/PC equipment:

• For Mac computers running on a system up to Snow Leopard (10.6), the U.S. Extended keyboard should be selected. A few basic input sequences are shown in Figure 1. Note that the computer’s input source should be in the correct setting (U.S. Extended “language” checked under System Preferences システム設定 →Language and Text 言語とテキスト→Input Source 入力メニュー; see Figure 2). (In Lion, 10.7, you simply hold down a vowel and a pop-up menu of diacritical characters appears.)

Figure 1. Diacritics Input Chart for Mac Users

Accent	Sample	Input sequence
Macron	Ō ō Ū ū	Option + a, letter
Breve	Ŏ ŏ Ŭ ŭ	Option + b, letter
Circumflex	Ê ê	Option + 6, letter
Subscript dot	ş ş	Option + x, letter
Superscript dot	š š	Option + w, letter
Grave accent*	È è	Option ` + letter
Acute accent	É é Ś ś	Option + e, letter

*The grave accent key may be at the far upper right next to the number 1, at the far lower right, next to the shift key, or next to the “p,” depending on the keyboard.

• Windows systems come pre-installed with a program called Character Map (charmap.exe), Figure 3, which allows users to copy/paste all manner of macrons into their documents.

Users of Microsoft Notepad and Wordpad rather than Microsoft Word may input characters and macrons, but when saving the file (select “Save As”) the proper encoding format—“Unicode”—must be chosen to retain the macrons and/or kanji (Figure 4).

Macron Character Findability in Web Documents

Some search engines (Google, Bing, etc.) “differentiate” between a macron character and the same character without a macron. So, for example, a search for the deity “Jizō” will yield different results compared to a search for the

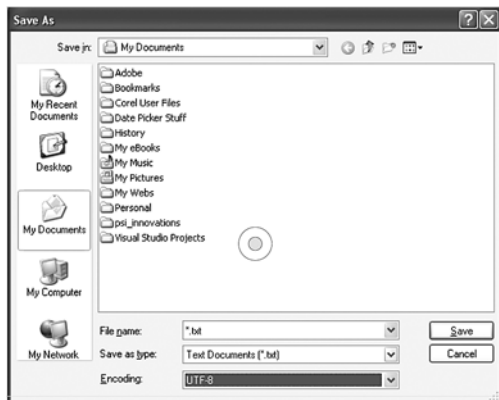
Figure 2. Mac preferences setting page. These settings allow the user to input hiragana, katakana, and kanji.



Figure 3. Windows character map, Arial font, Unicode encoding.



Figure 4. Saving a Windows Notepad file with UTF-8 font encoding.



Tips for Mac and Windows/PC Users

1. Copy and paste all the commonly used macrons and other diacritics into one text file. For example: ō ū Ō Ū ā á ă à ì ï ò ú ũ, etc. The new SWET web site (due to be launched in summer 2012) will also include a free downloadable text file with all the most common Japanese, Chinese, and Korean diacritics.
2. Save the file; name it “Common Macrons” or something easy to remember.
3. When working on a document that requires macrons, instead of opening the Character Map, finding and copying the macron onto the document, simply open the text file, and copy/paste from it.

same deity written as “Jizo.” Also, most Internet readers do not know how to use macrons to conduct searches and would search “Jizo” rather than “Jizō.” What can be done about this? Writers who want their work to be “found” by Internet searches, may use the correct spelling “Jizō” throughout the main body of the text, but also “hide” the incorrect spelling, “Jizo,” inside the document as (1) image alt-tags for each photo of the deity appearing on the page, (2) as a meta-tag keyword (needed just once), and, whenever possible or feasible, (3) as a visible note in the main body giving the two spellings. Use all three strategies on any single URL page address for best results. This technique can improve the “findability” by the general public and specialists alike if macrons are used. (For an example of a site incorporating all these strategies, see onmarkproductions.com/html/jizo1.shtml)

Editorial Note

Nina Raj, Lynne E. Riggs, Richard Sadowsky, and Mark Schumacher collaborated in the compilation of these updates. For an extended discussion of kanji in English texts, see Premodern Japanese Studies (PMJS) mailing list thread at: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/pmjs/oepIOPg3w5k>

Write to SWET for advice and information on bilingual inputting.

Translating “Translation”

Reviewed by William Wetherall

Is That a Fish in Your Ear? Translation and the Meaning of Everything, by David Bellos. (New York: Faber and Faber, 2011). viii + 373 pages.

“WHAT IS translation?”

An interesting but unimportant question, says David Bellos in the prologue to *Is That a Fish in Your Ear?*

“This isn’t a book that tells you how to translate, or how I translate” he writes, noting that there are already a lot of good ones already out there.

“Instead, it is made of stories and examples and arguments that circle around what seems to me to be the real issue—understanding what translation *does*.”

Bellos grew up in England and now lives in the United States, and this, he says, is why the book’s viewpoint is located in the English-speaking world. His main reason for writing it? “Because English is currently the dominant inter-language of the world, English speakers who aren’t involved in translation have a harder time than most others in understanding what translation is.”

A professor of French and comparative literature at Princeton University and the director of its Program in Translation and Intercultural Communication, Bellos has a lot to say in his book about French and translations from French into English, including his own. German, Russian, Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish—and Latin, Greek, Italian, and Hebrew—also get more general attention than Japanese. Korean gets one mention.

Why, though, would anyone involved in translation from or into an East Asian language want to read a book seemingly so centered on English and the languages of continental Europe? Why read even the first chapter (“What Is

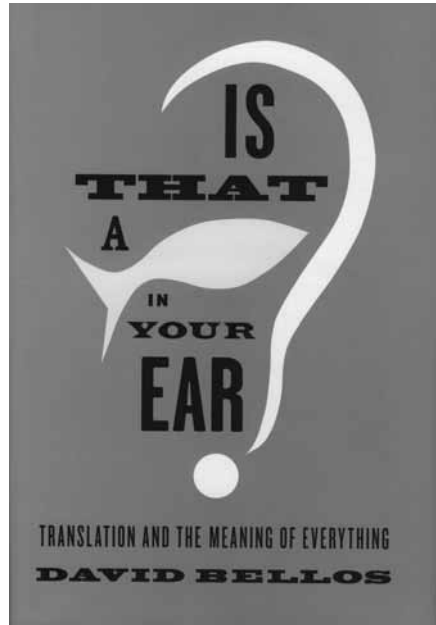
a Translation?”)—which begins with a sixteenth-century French poem, ends with an English version of it, and implies that anyone who could explain why the English version “counts” as a translation wouldn’t need to read the book?

One doesn’t have to understand a word of the French poem (I didn’t), or make more than superficial sense of the English version (I couldn’t), to appreciate Bellos’s show-and-tell—which demonstrates that the “variability of translations is incontrovertible evidence of the limitless flexibility of human minds”—hence there could “hardly be a more interesting subject.” The rest of the book’s 32 short chapters illuminate the universal conditions of human contact and exchange, past and present, with a highly enlightening and entertaining mix of erudition and humor that cannot help but provoke fresh thought about the nature of translation everywhere.

So as not to give the impression that I am killing Bellos’s book with praise, let me comment on some of the wrinkles that make it even more interesting.

What Does Bellos Mean?

Bellos observes that English, for the moment at least, has become the world’s “one central language” (p. 293), and today it has more nonnative speakers than any other (p. 19). Partly because of this, the teaching of foreign languages in the English-speaking world has precipitously declined over the past half century (p. 270). And by UNESCO’s count, English is the source language of roughly 65 percent of nearly one million books translated into thirteen languages, but the target of only 10 percent (pp. 209–10).



Still, I would think that speakers and writers of any language, who have never been engaged in translation, would have a difficult time understanding what it is. Even polyglots and veteran translators will not know what Bellos thinks it does and doesn't, and hence is and isn't, without reading his book—which circles translation issues in the manner of a roller coaster. The ride is thrilling but can leave one dizzy and disoriented.

“Beating the Bounds: What Translation Is Not” (Ch. 29) first claims that, “Like language itself, translation has no rigidly fixed limits, and similarly fuzzy borderlines can be found in other arts.” By the end, though, one side of translation “is as unbounded as the line of a shore” while “other boundaries are clearly marked.” Does this mean that even “clearly marked” boundaries are not “rigidly fixed” but somehow “fuzzy”? Does opinion matter? Bellos dislikes the “woolly use of the word *translation*” to describe such things as knitting—but also film and stage adaptations of novels.

In “Under Fire: Sniping at Translation” (Ch. 30), after criticizing the negativism he finds in a lot of commentary on translations, especially of literature, Bellos objects to the teaching of “rightness” in language classes that use translation as a tool for learning. “A translation is more like a portrait in oils” than a school quiz, he says, in the sense that whether a portrait is a “good likeness” in the eyes of someone who knows the sitter is not just a matter of being right or wrong. However, users of a translation “don’t have full access to the model (they wouldn’t need the translation if they did)”—hence have “no choice but to trust the translator.”

Much earlier, in “Meaning Is No Simple Thing” (Ch. 7), Bellos states that “the only way of being sure whether an utterance has any meaning at all is to get someone to translate it for you.” In “Words Are Even Worse” (Ch. 8), he remarks that, “A desire to believe (despite all evidence to the contrary) that words are at bottom the names of things is what makes the translator’s mission seem so impossible.” Yet “Translation *is* meaning” he declares—then asserts that metaphors and other “figures of meaning” are “fuzzy ways of holding down the irresistible desire of words to mean something else”—rhetorical “fun” he adds, but ultimately “eyewash.”

Bellos has lots of serious fun. His final chapter comes to this Thoreauesque stop (ellipses mine).

. . . the practice of translation rests on two presuppositions . . . we are all different . . . we are all the same . . . Without both . . . translation could not exist.

Nor could anything we would like to call social life.

Translation is another name for the human condition. (p. 324)

I'm sure I understand what this means—I think. In “Global Flows: Center and Periphery in the Translation of Books” (Ch. 19), Bellos asserts that “Translation is the *opposite* of empire.” But I don't think he means empire hasn't been a part of the human condition.

Bellos recognizes that some languages, including English, have initially spread through colonial expansion. He might also acknowledge that translation has contributed to the rise as well as the spread of some imperial states, such as the recent empire of Japan. However, he dismisses “economic, military, and political explanations of the translation map of the world today” in favor of cultural considerations.

At the end of “Global Flows” Bellos plunges into a linguistic solar system with “the all-mighty English sun” at its center—around which orbit a couple of major planets and a few minor outer planets, and “myriad distant satellites no weightier than stardust.” This solar structure “wasn't designed by anyone” he says—and it contradicts “the weblike network of cross-cultural relations that most people would like to see.” He then sharply banks toward another figure of speech.

But the orbital image of translation flows is only a metaphor. The structure of global translation is not a natural phenomenon but a cultural one. If enough people really want it to change—it will. (p. 216).

But isn't the "nature/culture" dichotomy not also just a metaphor? And one too often invoked to draw sharp lines between phenomena that are not so artificially separable?

Even if one links "translation" and "intercultural communication" as closely as Bellos does, much of what he writes in his book suggests that the huge disparities in the "trade" of translated works today would better be understood as a moment in the "natural" history of humankind—which appears to remain politically, economically, militarily, and even culturally very red in tooth and claw. It seems a bit romantic to reduce the prospects of changing the translation map to a democratic imperative that presupposes "most" or at least "enough" people not only wanting weblike linguistic and cultural networks, but having the means to spin and protect them.

But to rule out that Bellos's book is not just an "eyewash" of metaphors but has meaning, must I ask someone to translate it for me? Could I trust an Android that dreams of electric sheep? Bellos advises readers to use Google Translate only to render something "into a language in which you are sure you can recognize nonsense" (p. 256).

I could wait for a Japanese translation, but how would my Japanese brain know whether it would qualify as one of the "innumerable many acceptable translations" possible for "any utterance of more than trivial length" (p. 8)? Well, my Northern California English brain would have to comprehend Bellos's English. Though rapidly deteriorating, it assures me it can still grasp the drift of his prose—in which case I am not supposed to need a substitute for the original.

Alas, I am reviewing the U.S. edition of his book—not the earlier U.K. edition, and not his manuscript. I am reading what Bellos calls his "English-*minus*" what editors have changed (p. 191).

The Range of "Translation"

"Why Do We Call It 'Translation?'" (Ch. 3) introduces "translation" as the name of both a product and a process involving a "work" or "text." Some languages, though, have separate words for "the many things that in English all go by the name of 'a translation'"—Japanese, for example.

Bellos's principal guide to "translation" in Japanese is Michael Emmerich's essay "Beyond Between: Translation, Ghosts, Metaphors" in the May 2009 issue of the online "international literature" magazine *Words Without Borders*.¹ Emmerich's article is not without interest, but it takes Bellos only to places of interest to Emmerich. And Bellos snaps pictures only of places that interest him.

Bellos cites a substantial part of Emmerich's long list of *yaku* 訳 compounds for different kinds of translation with their English glosses. He does not, at this point, cite *hon'yaku*, about which Emmerich's article says a lot. Instead, he baits a hook he then warns readers not to bite.

After a brief discussion of hypernyms (*flower*) and hyponyms (*rose, camellia*), Bellos says Japanese could be seen to lack a general word for translation, whereas English lacks a "readily available set" of words for different kinds of translation. He cautions, though, that this should not be taken to mean that English—because it has a general word and "could easily accommodate new coinages to give meanings to the Japanese terms—*uptranslate, downtranslate, newtranslate, retranslate, cotranslate*, and so on"—is superior as a "thinking" language.

The "new coinages" remark, made in passing with no "Believe this at your own risk" disclaimer, is at best misleading and at worst wrong. Compounding *up-*, *down-*, *new-*, *re-*, *co-*, or anything with *translate* could not "give meanings" to the Japanese terms. Whether glosses or translations, they could only represent (or misrepresent) them.

A little fish in my ear² tells me *retranslate* and *cotranslate* are old coinages with many meanings, including those of respectively *kaiyaku* 改訳 (but also *jūyaku* 重訳) and *kyōyaku* 共訳 (and the now archaic *gōyaku* 合訳)—and that existing expressions like "new translation" and "newly translate" would obvi-

¹ See <http://wordswithoutborders.org/article/beyond-between-translation-ghosts-metaphors>. See also Emmerich, "Burning the Bridge," SWET Newsletter, No. 116, July 2007.

² To catch a small fish that, stuck in an ear, can translate the meaning of everything—even the title of Bellos's book, between all languages everywhere, including those of different species—troll the bottomless depths of Cyberspace for "Babel fish" and *The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy* (p. 270).

ate the need for newtranslate as a “loan translation” of *shin’yaku* 新訳. The same fish tells me *downtranslate* and *uptranslate* are offered as “calques” for *shitayaku* 下訳 and *uwayaku* 上訳—which it would gloss “draft” (preliminary) and “vetted and polished” (finished) translation. It also warns me not to confuse them with “translation up” and “translation down”—the terms Bellos invented (his small caps) to denote the direction of translation between tongues of higher and lower utility, authority, power, or prestige (Ch. 15)

“How Many Words Do We Have for Coffee?” (Ch. 14) raises the specter of the long discredited but still popular “Great Eskimo Vocabulary Hoax” about Inuit languages having a large number of words for different kinds of snow (p. 157). Readers who chase the fine print in the back notes will discover that Bellos thinks it “pointless” to count all the word forms another language might construct with suffixes and prefixes added to a stem word, indicating “qualities and roles that in English would be expressed by many separate words” or “complex expressions” (p. 346, n. 2).

Back, though, to Bellos’s Japanese vocabulary problem. English may not be a more thought-enabling language, yet “it is not so obvious how we could translate the general or abstract notion of *translation* into Japanese”—so one might be inclined to think that Japanese is “deficient in precisely the respect in which it is richer than English.” Closely paraphrasing some of Emmerich’s remarks, he goes on to say this.

In practice, Japanese speakers do have a way of translating the English term *translation* into Japanese. The word *hon’yaku* is used for that purpose in Japanese translations of English-language works about comparative literature and translation theory, and also in the world of publishing and the international book trade. But its range of uses makes it an imperfect match for the word *translation*. *Hon’yaku* covers translation from foreign (non-Japanese) languages into Japanese (or vice versa), sometimes more specifically translations from Europe or the United States, but not most other meanings of translation. (p. 27)

Ergo, attempts to translate “translation” using the word *hon’yaku* are “subtly” a sort of *goyaku* 誤訳 or “mistranslation” Bellos says, citing Emmerich—then ventures, in his own words, that “*Hon’yaku* is more like a term of art, whereas we think that the English term *translation* names something general of self-evident reality.”

Why, one might ask, could this be a problem?

The absence of a category term clearly makes it harder (but not necessarily impossible) to think about what a set of entities distinguished by different words have in common. In the case that concerns us, we do have a single, very general word for *translation*, whereas Japanese has many. That does not mean to say that in Japanese you cannot think about translation in general. But it does mean that European questions about the “true nature of translation” when translated into Japanese tend to ask a question about an aspect of European culture (called “translation,” or *hon’yaku*), not about what *we* think the question really is—the nature of “translation itself.” (p. 28)

Having snagged *us* with this rebaited hook, Bellos goes on to talk about his real concern—the “nature” of translation, mostly in the stream of “Western thought” about language. He has no further need for Emmerich’s article, but it is worth noting here how his use of “translation” differs from Emmerich’s.

Emmerich defines “translation” as “any change wrought upon a piece of writing that makes it accessible to a new audience with particular needs or preferences”—a “very broad definition” he says, and “appropriate” for him as “a scholar-translator who works with Japanese books.” This would be unsuitable for Bellos, though, who needs the word for speech as well—and opposes its use for media transformations, which would exclude film, Takarazuka, manga, and video game adaptations of *Genji monotatari*.

Bellos also seems to regard translation as conservation—not an endeavor to “change” a work to accommodate the “needs” much less the “preferences” of readers of another language—but a quest to skillfully capture its recognizable features. In “What Translators Do” (Ch. 28), he says they “find matches, not

equivalences, for the units of which a work is made, in the hope and expectation that their sum will produce a new work that can serve overall as a substitute for the source.” The English version of the French poem he introduced in Chapter 1 is a translation, he adds, because it “matches many (but not all) of the semantic, stylistic, and formal features of the source.”

The Nature of *Hon'yaku*

Bellos says he writes the way he likes and leaves the madness of deciding what is and isn't “English” to a copyeditor, who amends his prose “to make it conform to the style appropriate to the output and the target audience of a particular publishing house.” His manuscripts get “de-Britted” when edited for publication in the United States, and “de-Yanked” by British publishers—less difficult, he notes, because he uses very few Americanisms (p. 191).

How, I began wondering, might either the U.S. or U.K. editions of *Is That a Fish in Your Ear?* be “de-Angloed” and otherwise amended in a Japanese edition—assuming a publisher feels the book warrants translation? How, in the first place, could it be translated without a Japanese term equivalent to the meanings Bellos imputes to and withholds from “translation”?

Bellos understands what a translator might do.

The peculiar flexibility of human languages to bend themselves to new meanings is part of what makes translation not only possible but a basic aspect of language use. Using one word for another isn't special; it's what we do all the time. Translators just do it in two languages. (p. 89)

Could the range of *hon'yaku* 翻訳 be stretched to include speech? There are “speech-to-speech translator” applications and devices, and some Japanese terms for “machine” or “automatic” translation use *hon'yaku* inclusive of speech. But the word most commonly used in Japanese for speech translation or interpreting of the kinds that Bellos talks about at length is *tsūyaku* 通訳—which is not on Emmerich's list of *yaku* compounds, since he is concerned with literature and writing.

Tsūyaku would certainly be a better match for Bellos’s “oral translation” than what Google Translate suggests. GT’s Japanese version of “The Long Shadow of Oral Translation” (the subtitle of Chapter 11) is *ōraru hon’yaku no nagai kage* オーラル翻訳の長い影—which it literally “back” translates “Oral translation of a long shadow”—while “oral translation” alone comes out *keikō hon’yaku* 経口翻訳, implying that a translation is something to swallow like a pill. Come to think of it, some people have become addicted to translations of Murakami Haruki after just one dose.

The compounds *hon’yaku* 翻訳 and *tsūyaku* 通訳 are themselves compounded as either 翻訳・通訳 or 通訳・翻訳, with or without the middot. And these expressions are compacted as 翻通 (*hon-tsū*) or 通翻 (*tsū-hon*)—which could be verbalized with する (*do*), or prefixed to 者 (person), 業 (industry), 論 (theory), 研究 (studies), whatever. But why go to such trouble? For in principle, *yaku* and its verb forms *yakusu* and *yaku suru* also embrace both *hon’yaku* and *tsūyaku*—so they, too, could be used to translate “translate” when referring to both writing and speech.

Bellos says that users of English are “wise enough” to know when “translate” refers to some sort of transformation unrelated to “translation itself” (p. 312). True—if, in a phrase like “translate a ball of wool into a sweater,” they understand the other words. By the same token, if I were to “mistranslate” this *ke’ito dama o sētā ni hon’yaku suru* 毛糸玉をセーターに翻訳する, readers of Japanese would be smart enough to imagine that *hon’yaku* meant *nitto* ニット or *ami* 編み. To ensure they did, I could show one or both of these words as *rubi* (*furigana*) reading aids.

Savvy users of transliterations like *toransurēshon* トランスレーション and *toransurē* to トランスレート, and their *suru* verbs, are in fact able to differentiate their various meanings, including those unrelated to “translation” and “translate” in their narrower “interlingual” senses. Could *toransu* トランス and its *suru* verb be used to mean “translation” and “translate”? It means “trance”—or in chemistry, simply trans. But in specific contexts, it also abbreviates words like “transformer” (*toransufōmā* トランスフォーマー) and “transgender” (*toransujendā* トランスジェンダー). Imagine “Awesome trans!” from the mouth

of an amplifier builder, a driver shifting gears, or a reader of Banana Yoshimoto's *The Lake*.

“Understanding Dictionaries” (Ch. 9) will assure translators and editors who shrink from using new words, or old words in new ways, that even the most comprehensive lexicon can only list and restrict the meanings and uses of expressions its compilers know of and choose to include. It could expand forever, and never be able to definitively mark the limits of a language or stop its shores from changing.

The shoreline of *toransurēshon* somewhat shifted in 2003 when the film *Lost in Translation* was released in Japan as ロスト・イン・トランスレーション. The titles in Hong Kong and Taiwan were 迷失東京 (Lost [in] Tokyo) and 愛情、不用翻譯 (Love Needs No Translation). Distributors in Japan, too, undoubtedly considered several interpretive titles before concluding that a transliteration would translate into higher box-office returns.

The bottom line will also govern whether, and how, Bellos's book is translated into Japanese. Publishers in Japan, as elsewhere, have numerous options when considering localization and marketing. Anything can be reworded or deleted if deemed misleading or wrong, of no interest, boring, too complicated, politically risky, tasteless, offensive, or libelous. Production costs and pricing can impose word and page limitations, forcing cuts. Not a few translations of fiction and non-fiction from English to Japanese, and vice versa, have been retailored to fit a different body of readers.

The most radical alteration of Bellos's book for readers of Japanese would be a *chōyaku* 超訳. Bellos does not discuss this word, but it conspicuously ends his long citation of Emmerich's list of *yaku* compounds, where Emmerich glosses it “translations that are even better than the originals” of Sidney Sheldon and some other popular American writers, and adds that it is an “invention and registered trademark of the Academy Press” (p. 26).

Chōyaku, however, means “super translation” in the sense of a very liberal rendering intended to be more readable and interesting than a conventional closer one, with the object of selling more copies. Academy Shuppan introduced the term in the late 1980s, but several publishers are also now using it

in their titles of “ultra translated” early and more recent foreign and Japanese literary, religious, philosophical, and other classics.

Academy Shuppan’s website (viewed February 2012) explains in Japanese (to translate its key phrases and paraphrase the rest) that the object of *chōyaku* is “natural Japanese”—achieved by adopting the “absolute requirement” that a translation “not lose sight of the intrinsic linguistic sensibilities of Japanese”—just as one “creates a haiku within the 5-7-5 requirement.” No more “awkward Japanese” that, though it may convey meaning, strives to reproduce every past tense, adjective, and relative pronoun. Goodbye to the “roundabout translationese” that has “forced the conventions of English-language grammar and society” on readers of Japanese—while plaguing publishers, who end up selling “not even 20,000 copies of a *besutoserā* novel that sold 2,000,000 in America.”

Bellos could give a publishing house permission to freely revamp his book without being shackled by its English versions. A *chōyaku* might shorten, embellish, restructure, supplement, even change the order of chapters or chop some, or drop the notes and index. And a poetic title might boost sales.

翻訳や耳にあるのは魚かな

Hon’yaku ya mimi ni aru no wa sakana ka na

Translation: In your ear, is that a fish?

The Enemy of Community?

What else could a translation of Bellos’s book—as a naturalized product owing allegiance to the Japanese market—lose of its original identity?

In “What Can’t Be Said Can’t Be Translated: The Axiom of Effability” (Ch. 13), Bellos holds—while swinging readers around the logic of a few philosophers—that the ineffable can’t be lost in translation because it’s beyond expression, thus irrelevant to translation. Hence “translation teaches . . . that everything is effable”—especially, he says, poetry. “Translation is the enemy of the ineffable” in that “One causes the other to cease to exist.”

While in this loop, which may be a foe of translation, Bellos places “cross-species communication” in “the realm of the ineffable”—because “nobody knows how to translate ‘animal signals’ into human speech or vice versa” except for a few “noises” and “signals” that pass between some domesticated pets and their owners. When I say “Shake hands!” to my daughter’s dog Tuna, she yawns at me, then looks at my daughter as though to ask “What’s he saying?” My daughter says “Shake hands!” and Tuna extends her right forepaw—toward my daughter. I don’t speak their dialect yet, so Tuna doesn’t recognize me as a member of their community.

Humans are of the same species, but interlingual communication between groups also comes down to community—and is limited by what human languages essentially are. Bellos devotes his epilogue to this problem, which arises because human speech, he argues at length, evolved within scattered groups to “perform [some of] the social bonding functions of grooming.” This is what languages originally were and continue to be “for”—and only later did they come to be “used” to facilitate communication between groups.

Speech between individuals establishes differences between them—“I am not you but me,” Bellos proclaims. And manners of speech peculiar to individuals who share them, including regional, clan, and class dialects, may convey feelings not effable to others. Broadly understood, he says, “language is ethnicity” in the sense of “how a social group constitutes and identifies itself.”

At the end of the epilogue, Bellos avers “It’s not poetry but community that is lost in translation.” Translation does “practically everything else” but fulfill the ineffable “community-building role of actual language use,” he adds—then rests his case like this.

It is translation, more than speech itself, that provides incontrovertible evidence of the human capacity to think and to communicate thought.

We should do more of it. (p. 338)

I think I know what this means, too. And if it means what I think it does, then translations are uses of actual languages that hold out hope for a more thoughtful, less savage world community.

If I were still teaching translation, I would ask my students to put Bellos's closing lines into Japanese—as a test of their ability to convey the shared human capacity of English to be splendidly fuzzy. A starchy, clarified Japanese version would be “deficient in precisely the respect” in which Bellos's essays are richer in their aim to intellectually stimulate and delight readers by keeping them a bit off balance.

In the spirit of what Bellos reiterates throughout his book, and arguably its most important contention, a skillful translator would have lots of “elbow room” to exploit the flexibility of Japanese to keep bending in its ways—as English continues to do in similarly different ways—to portray a good likeness of the book's and his character.

*

I don't imagine Bellos intended his book to be read this way. And perhaps it shouldn't be—given that it's a collection of stories about translation as another word for what it means to be human—a condition which, as long as people are mystified by themselves and others, will inspire those engaged in translation by any name.

The Yanked and Britted editions of *Is That a Fish in Your Ear?* can be sampled through Amazon's “Look Inside!” feature (amazon.com and amazon.co.uk). The Wild Woolly Web also has an endless, if not yet quite infinite, number of reviews. And on YouTube, there's a wonderfully hilarious Penguin Books animated promotional video of Bellos talking about words for things (youtube.com).

Hasegawa's Course in Translation

Reviewed by Deborah Iwabuchi

The Routledge Course in Japanese Translation, by Yoko Hasegawa. (London: Routledge, 2012). ISBN 978-0-415-48686-6. Price ¥4,092.

WORKING ON OUR OWN, often as self-taught Japanese-English translators, we are used to being alone, developing our own practices and policies, and scrambling for resources. We occasionally communicate with other translators and share notes—only to go back to our own lairs and continue to do things our own way but with the idea that we want to find another tack or strategy. What to change, what to leave the same, what to delete, what to add? What does it mean to be loyal to the original, what “crosses the line”?

I was often at a loss to explain my translation strategies until I encountered *The Routledge Course in Japanese Translation* by Yoko Hasegawa, professor of Japanese at University of California at Berkeley. Composed of seven chapters, including “Kinds of Meaning I and II,” “Discourse Genre,” “Understanding the Source Text,” “Translation Techniques,” “Translation Studies” (history of translation), and “Translating Projects,” the book has answered my questions and explained every little thing in academic terms, including examples in Japanese and English to make it all clear. For a practicing translator, what is so welcome about this book is that it validates what we have been doing all these years and offers many, new ways to do a better job, giving multiple suggestions for every contingency along with the encouragement to be creative.

As stated in the title, Hasegawa's book is a course in translation (it should really be the “Hasegawa Course in Translation,” as the scholarly depth, pedagogical wisdom, and language sensitivity demonstrated in the book is

clearly the author's own). The author recommends her course for students with "near-native" competence in Japanese and fluency in English. I myself teach translation to seniors at a Japanese women's university that prides itself on the English competence of its graduates. The book might be too difficult for casual English learners, but I have found that it can be used in Japan with students who have a good mastery of English. Teachers of translation will be gladdened by the plethora of examples and exercises in both English and Japanese, all of which the author has used in her own classes.

Most of the young women I teach will soon be taking jobs where their English skills will be put to use by companies that do not realize the difference between language competence and ability to translate. This is where the book begins. Rather than diving into "how to translate," Prof. Hasegawa carefully explains the value of learning it as a unique skill, not only to make a living, but also as a way to more fully understand a language. By separating knowledge of a language from the ability to translate it, the author makes a nice neat spot in our brains to consider the matter, tossing out all the trash and turning off the voices insisting that knowing English equals ability to translate into natural Japanese and vice versa. She then gives a list of six abilities and skills essential for translation (see p. 22):

1. Linguistic and sociocultural knowledge of the SL [source language] and comprehension ability in it.
2. Linguistic and sociocultural knowledge of the TL [target language] and expressive ability in it.
3. Transfer competence.
4. Knowledge of the topic and related research skills.
5. Knowledge of text types and their conventions.
6. Ability to evaluate and discuss translations objectively.

Thus it is clear that mere language ability is only part of the job. College students in a translation class rightfully take pride in their English competence, and my corrections can embarrass them. I hope that if they can recognize their shortcomings early on, in the form of this list, they can better accept advice and be more open to learning.



For the professional translator, having the terminology to identify the skills we are practicing bolsters our confidence in what we are doing, although no. 6 most likely requires closer inspection. Translation is an occupation we often pursue pretty much on our own, and I for one, can be irritated and ungracious when I feel my work has been called into question once too often by a client. Prof. Hasegawa states that “strong interpersonal skills” are a requirement of a good translator, and gives a quote about the need for a “truly empathetic spirit.”

Once we understand what translation is, we move on to Kinds of Meaning I and II (chapters 2 and 3). In these riveting parts of the book, Hasegawa explains the myriad differences in English and Japanese, and the different possibilities for expression. For example, she devotes eight pages (including exercises) to six ways to deal with proper nouns that may not make sense to someone unfamiliar with the source language. I do recognize these approaches, but how often do I spend twice as much time as necessary trying to decide whether or not to translate a proper noun as it is rather than take one of the other, certainly better, recourses, to wit: (1) translate the meaning literally, (2) explain rather than translate, (3) substitute using another proper noun, (4) omit, (5) add a word or phrase identifying the category or nature of the referent, and (6) substitute a proper noun with a categorical noun (pp. 30–34).

By the time we have looked at these parts of the book, it is becoming clear to my students just how sticky it can be to translate something, but also how many ways there are to accomplish it, and always with the knowledge that the translation will never be exactly the same as the original.

I would like to conclude this review with an example of the attention given to every aspect of language in a way that will cause the reader—student or professional translator—to stop and consider each bit of source language before

deciding how to deal with it. “The Kinds of Meaning I” chapter has a section fascinatingly named “phatic communion.” We can here see how Prof. Hasegawa’s thorough explanations lead ultimately to practical solutions:

The primary function of many fixed expressions—e.g. *How are you?*, *Yours truly*—is phatic communication, rather than seeking information or conveying ideas. Writers of both business and social documents may use phatic language in order to establish an appropriate relationship with their readers, e.g., *of course, naturally, undoubtedly, as you may know*, etc. Such practice is significantly more common among Japanese writers than writers of English; therefore, the translator may need to tone down phaticisms. (pp. 59–60)

Many translators will immediately recognize this as the *yoroshiku onegaishimasu* dilemma. I for one often want to skewer this phrase and toss it into oblivion, but Professor Hasegawa calmly explains its purpose and notes that we have words like that in English—though we might not like to admit it. Then, after giving several fine examples, she states simply, “Just eliminating the phatic expressions makes the translation more idiomatic.” Amen.

Japanese bookstores offer hundreds of Japanese-language books that discuss English but there are very few in the English language that take up the differences between Japanese and English with authority, so I, for one, am deeply indebted to Prof. Hasegawa and those who assisted her in this eight-year project. I encourage anyone with an interest in translation to immediately buy a copy and benefit from the countless points I was unable to discuss here. I intend to keep my already dog-eared copy of *The Routledge Course in Japanese Translation* close at hand, both for teaching and for my own translation work, for many years to come.

Professor Yoko Hasegawa spoke to SWET Bay Area (based in Oakland, California) on November 28, 2011 on the UC, Berkeley campus, regarding her career as a Japanese-language teacher and the process that led to teach translation at Berkeley, and her writing about translation. Her detailed description of the background to the book, presentation of examples that she was at great pains to prepare but was not able to include in the published book because of copyright issues, and anecdotes from her experiences made for an entertaining and informative SWET event on U.S. soil.

A Salute

I would like to salute and celebrate all the faithful readers who have supported and encouraged the printed *SWET Newsletter* over the years. We have so far compiled a huge archive of literature about our work, expertise, and activities. I hope that this compilation process will continue, in a new guise and under new leadership.

Issues 104 to 130, the *Newsletter's* journal-like incarnation, were made possible through the collaboration of too many to list in entirety here. Still, I would like to mention those, without whose special commitment of time, ideas, professional skill, and shared purpose, a publication of this caliber would not have been possible.

Senpai editors Nina Raj, Susie Schmidt, Doreen Simmons, and Kay Vreeland were always reliable and wise supporters. Katherine (Roo) Heins, Anna Husson, Chikako Imoto, Julie Kuma, Ginny Tapley Takemori, and Avery Fischer Udagawa have been the active and faithful editorial team, through this final issue. Torkil Christensen steadily compiled and wrote the “Threads on SWET-L”/“SWET CyberMatters” column for every issue from 2006 to 2011. Among many others who were a frequent source of assistance were Janet Ashby, Hugh Ashton, Juliet Winters Carpenter, Charles De Wolf, Damon Shulenberger, Lydia Takemoto, Fred Uleman, and William Wetherall.

After Becky Davis retired in 2005, Anne Bergasse took over as designer. While maintaining the continuity of our publication, she has given us an elegant and highly professional layout and design for each issue, patiently supporting our efforts to bring readers a satisfying and enduring experience of reading on paper.

The *SWET Newsletter* journal would not have been possible without the special community that is SWET. Thank you, one and all!

Lynne E. Riggs
SWET Newsletter coordinating editor
May 2012

The Society of Writers, Editors, and Translators publishes articles and information on writing, editing, translating, and related topics of interest for professionals working with Japan-connected content, primarily through its website at swet.jp and occasionally in print.

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Please contact SWET at submissions@swet.jp if you are interested in contributing to our ongoing efforts to advance the fields of writing, editing, translating, and publishing in and about Japan.

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