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REVIEW ARTICLE

The *Man'yōshū* in English

ERIC RUTLEDGE
University of California, Berkeley

The Ten Thousand Leaves: A Translation of the *Man'yōshū*, Japan's Premier Anthology of Classical Poetry, Volume One *by Ian Hideo Levy.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981. Pp. 409. $25.00.

The world of Japan when she was more than a millennium younger has an abiding fascination for us, and there can be no better introduction to that world than the poetry of the *Man'yōshū* 萬葉集. Compiled ca. 759, it is the first and greatest of Japan's poetic anthologies. The breadth of its scope and the variety of poetic voices it preserves are astonishing, and unique in the Japanese tradition. The *Man'yōshū* is a massive work, containing more than 4,500 poems, over half of which are anonymous. The named authors represent all levels of court society, from emperors to low-ranking functionaries; those from outside the court are principally religious figures and border guards. The thirty-one syllable *tanka* 短歌 (short poem) is the dominant poetic form, but the number and quality of *chōka* 長歌 (long poems) are among the most distinctive features of the *Man'yōshū*. The total number of *chōka* (265) forms only a small percentage of the poems in the anthology, but these poems and their associated *hanka* 反歌 (envoys) occupy fully one third of the anthology's total number of lines. The *Man'yōshū* preserves stratigra-

phically, as it were, the natural history of the *chōka*'s prosodic and poetic evolution, from rise to decline. The *Man'yō chōka* range from early poems with irregular syllabic rhythm and an even number of lines to later poems which are standardized to the point that even the Chinese characters used as phonetic script (*Man'yōgana* 萬葉假名) are five or seven to a line. Between these two extremes falls the poetry of Hitomaro and others, which some consider the finest poetry in the Japanese language.

Western scholars have not always held this view. In 1880 Basil Hall Chamberlain translated sixty-six poems from the *Man'yōshū*, nearly all of them *chōka*, in a volume entitled *The Classical Poetry of the Japanese* (London: Trübner). The study of folklore was at that time a new and very fashionable discipline in England. It is not surprising, therefore, that Chamberlain gave first place in his collection to poems based on folktales and legends, or that he called them "ballads." Chamberlain used a variety of meters and rhyme schemes in his translations—including the unrhymed trochaic meter of Longfellow's "Hiawatha"—choosing for each poem the English verse form which seemed to suit it best. He considered some of the most important Japanese poetic devices—prefaces (*joshi* 序詞) and pillow words (*makura kotoba* 枕詞)—to be in all cases purely euphonic, unrelated to the meaning of the poem. Japanese poetry was, in Chamberlain's opinion, best when simple and natural; its artifice he characterized as empty prettiness and conceit.

Subsequent translators have endeavored to provide readers of English with a more adequate picture of the *Man'yōshū*. Frederick Victor Dickins's *Primitive and Mediaeval Japanese Texts* (2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906) contains transcriptions and translations which approximate the original syllabic rhythm of nearly all the *Man'yō chōka*. The Dutch scholar Jan Lodewÿk Pierson's *The Manyôśú* (20 vols. in 17; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1929–1963) was the first complete translation of the anthology; it provides texts, transcriptions, and a voluminous critical apparatus. The next attempt was H. H. Honda's *The Manyoshu: A New and Complete Translation*, which recasts the poems in iambic feet (Tokyo: Hokuseidō Press, 1967).[1]

[1] Kenneth Yasuda's earlier work, *Myriad Leaves* (*The Manyōshū*) (Japanese title: *Eiyaku Manyōshū*. Tokyo: Hosokawa Shoten, 1949), bears the subtitle "Complete English

To these works, all in some sense complete, must be added the Nippon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai translation, *The Manyōshū: One Thousand Poems* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1940), hereafter referred to as NGS. This work was photographically reprinted by the Columbia University Press in 1965 with the addition of a foreword; the romanized text, pages 315–453 in the hardcover edition, was unfortunately omitted in the softcover edition. This representative selection, which includes most of the *chōka* and perhaps a quarter of the *tanka*, has reached a far wider audience than any of the other works named. Finally, there is Ian Hideo Levy's much acclaimed *The Ten Thousand Leaves: A Translation of the* Man'yōshū, *Japan's Premier Anthology of Classical Poetry*. It is the appearance of the first volume of this projected complete translation which prompts the present overview. Since Levy's work will no doubt replace all earlier translations for most readers, this is an opportune time to discuss its strengths and weaknesses with respect to them.

To illustrate the translators' respective styles I have chosen a relatively straightforward *chōka* of moderate length, one which nevertheless demonstrates the variety of poetic techniques found in the *Man'yōshū*: "A poem of reproach by Lady Ōtomo Sakanoue," *MYS* 619. The discussion of Dickins, Pierson, and Honda will be largely confined to this poem; NGS will serve as a counterpoint to Levy in a more detailed examination of a number of poems and topics. *MYS* 619 is a representative poem in that it begins with a preface (*joshi*), contains a number of pillow words (*makura kotoba*), and employs parallelism. All transcriptions are romanized from the text given in Omodaka Hisataka's 澤瀉久孝 *Man'yōshū chūshaku* (20 vols., Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Sha, 1957–68), which seems to be the base text for the Levy translation. The translations, appearing on pages 267–69, are not in chronological order, but in the order of their subsequent discussion. The parenthetical numbers in the Pierson translation refer to the corresponding lines in the original text; the original text is given to the left of the Levy translation. The translations appear in the respective works as follows: Honda,

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Translation in Twenty Books in Original Metre with Text in Manyō Characters and Rōmaji." Unfortunately, only the first volume of this very creditable translation was ever published.

page 55; Pierson, IV, page 136; Dickins, I, page 83; NGS, page 125; and Levy, pages 289–90.

From the standpoint of completeness and accuracy, only the Honda translation is inadequate. Five of the seven pillow words have been omitted, and the preface—the geographical and emotive ground of the poem—has been ignored. The syntactic and conceptual parallelism of lines 17–24 and 27–38 of the original is lost. Gone too are the syntactic frames which structure the entire body of the poem between preface and conclusion: the subordinating couplets of lines 5–6, 15–16, 25–26, each of which introduces an eight line segment ending with a verb in the negative continuative form. In short, none of the poet's careful craftsmanship comes through. The Honda translation is much more concerned with English meter than with Japanese poetic technique, and has little to recommend it.

The Pierson translation is complete and generally accurate. The future perfect translation of *sakekemu* and *sakuramu* (as lines 18 and 20 of his text end) is not justified, but other differences between Pierson and the remaining versions are all matters of interpretation. Pierson includes the preface and all pillow words, though his prose format obscures the roles of syntax and parallelism in the poetic structure. The English is rather awkward, for Pierson (like Honda) was translating into a foreign tongue. The Pierson translation is not poetry by any stretch of the imagination, but his edition is still very useful for the scholar. His format provides the reader with the *Man'yōgana* (i.e., the original script) and an interlinear transcription, a full translation, and a wealth of historical, textual, and grammatical notes. Pierson also published four supplementary volumes: a table of contents (1964), a list of *makura kotoba* with glosses (1964), a character dictionary (1967) and a general index (1969), all from E. J. Brill in Leiden. It is important to note that Pierson provides us with the *rufubon* 流布本 ("vulgate text"), the Kan'ei 20 (1643) printed text, available in a Meiji-period edition. Although no recent Japanese edition of the *Man'yōshū* takes the vulgate as its base text, nearly all prewar scholarship refers to it. It is thus a very important text in the history of *Man'yōshū* scholarship, and the Pierson edition remains a valuable reference work.

The Dickins, NGS, and Levy translations are not only accurate,

(Honda)

You vowed you would be true,
and won my heart that I had tried
to keep clear as a mirror.
Since then I have relied on you
as one relies upon a lofty ship.
But oh! what is amiss?
By the divine will are we separated
or by mortal men?
Anyway you come not to me,
nor does your messenger,
and all day long, the livelong night,
not knowing what to do,
Like 'a weak woman' they call me I only weep,
vainly waiting word from you.

(Pierson)

(4) My Lord, behaving to me (3) kindly and gently (*nemokoro ni*) (2/1) minding of the roots (*ne*) of the reeds of shining, sparkling Naniva, (6) as you told me you would be faithful to me (5) for many years, (10) from that day, on which (9) I let go (8) my spotless heart (7) like a polished mirror (14) having no intention to make love (to others) so lightly and easily like (12) the fine seaweed that bends down (11) together with the waves (13) on this side and on that side... (16) while I thus relied on you (15) as on a big ship (17) the thousand-rock-smashing (18) Gods will have turned away (20) or will others (19) men of this world (20) have hindered us? (22) You my Lord (21) who frequently came and went (22) donot [*sic*] come anymore (25) and as it has come to be that your (24) messenger too cannot be seen (23) bearing a fine adzusa-rod, (26) though it is painful, there is no help for it. (27) The black (28) night all through (and all day) (30) until the setting of the (29) bright (20) sun, (31) though I mourn (32) there is no sign; (33) though I long (34) I donot know any means and (36) the fact that they will say that I am (35) but a weak woman (36) is conspicuous. (37) Like a young babe (38) crying loudly (39) I wander about; (41) shall I still wait, in pain, for (40) my Lord's messenger?

(Dickins)

With constancy
firm stablish'd as the sedges
that grow deep-rooted
in the pools of wave-worn
Naniha,
he spoke and promis'd
through all the years to
love me—

and I my heart gave
unflecked as polished mirror,
and leaned upon him,
and all my faith put in him
as in tall ship
his trust the sailor putteth,
nor from that day forth
as drifting sea-fronds wave
once wavered I—

yet—is't the gods almighty
us twain have parted!
or slanderous word of mortals,
that who so often
came, cometh now no more,
nor sceptred messenger
e'en sendeth to me ever—

ah! sad my lot is,
where help to seek I know not,
thro' the drear darkness
as black as pardanth berry,
and all the day thro'
until the shades of night fall,
I weep unholpen,
unhoping still and hopeless—

a hapless woman
'tis plain I be to all folk,
and like a child
I weep the while I wander
nor dare a word wait
from him [.]

(NGS)

At wave-bright Naniwa
The sedges grow, firm-rooted—
Firm were the words you spoke,
And tender, pledging me your love,
That it would endure through all the years;
And to you I yielded my heart,
Spotless as a polished mirror.
Never, from that day, like the sea-weed
That sways to and fro with the waves,
Have I faltered in my fidelity,
But have trusted in you as in a great ship.
Is it the gods who have divided us?
Is it mortal men who intervene?
You come no more, who came so often,
Nor yet arrives a messenger with your letter.
There is—alas!—nothing I can do.
Though I sorrow the black night through
And all day till the red sun sinks,
It avails me nothing. Though I pine,
I know not how to soothe my heart's pain.
Truly men call us 'weak women.'
Crying like an infant,
And lingering around, I must still wait,
Wait impatiently for a message from you!

[2] The verb in line 4, *kikasu* (MJ *o-kiki ni naru*, "to inquire") is read *kikosu* (either "to inquire" or MJ *ossharu*, "to say") by most editors, including Nakanishi Susumu 中西進, Levy's second authority. Levy seems to follow Nakanishi here.

[3] Most editions, including those used by Dickins, Pierson, and NGS, read this verb

(*MYS* 619)	(Levy)
(oshiteru)	You spoke to me
Naniwa no suge no	with feelings fine as the sedge
nemokoro ni	at Naniwa,
kimi ga kikashite[2]	where sunlight sweeps
toshi fukaku	across the bay,
nagaku shi ieba	and told me we would be together
(masokagami)	"deep and long, through the years,"
togishi kokoro o	and so I yielded you my heart
yurushiteshi	that I had burnished
sono hi no kiwami	slick as a true, clear mirror.
nami no muta	Since that day
nabiku tamamo no	my mind has known no pitch and roll,
kani kaku ni	no seaweed's swaying with the waves.
ko koro wa motazu	And now that I trust in you,
(ōfune no)	as I would in a great ship—
tanomeru toki ni	Oh is it the raging gods
(chihayaburu)	that rend us apart
kami ka sakuramu[3]	or is it the men of this world
(utsusemi no)	who obstruct you?—
hito ka sauramu	my Lord, who came back and forth to me,
kayowashishi	you cease to come.
kimi mo kimasazu	And lately I do not even see
(tamazusa no)	your messenger,
tsukai mo miezu	with his jewelled catalpa staff,
narinureba	and I am helpless in my terrible despair.
ita mo sube nami	All through the pitch-black nights
(nubatama no)	and through the days
yoru wa sugara ni	till the red-trailing sun yields to dusk
(akara hiku)	I grieve,
hi mo kururu made	but there is no use,
nagekedomo	I long,
shirushi o nami	but there is nothing I can do.
omoedomo	Just as they say—
tazuki o shirani	"a frail-limbed woman"—
tawayame to	I wander about,
iwaku mo shiruku	weeping and crying aloud like a child.
tawarawa no	How long, I wonder, can I wait
ne nomi nakitsutsu	for your messenger?
tamotōri	
kimi ga tsukai o	
machi ya kanetemu	

sakekemu (indicating conjecture about the past) rather than *sakuramu* (indicating conjecture without specifying time). Omodaka and Nakanishi emend to *sakuramu* on the basis of the parallelism in lines 18 and 20.

they are also poetry in their own right. Dickins's work is a remarkable achievement. Queen Victoria died only five years prior to its publication in 1906; Emperor Meiji still had five years to live. Captain Frank Brinkley's Japanese-English lexicon and *Kotoba no izumi* were the standard dictionaries, and reference works, other than Edo-period commentaries, were few. The first translation of the *Man'yōshū* into Modern Japanese (by Origuchi Shinobu 折口信夫) was still twelve years in the future. Despite all this, if we exclude such outmoded interpretations as "wave-worn" for *oshiteru* (line 1), Dickins's translation is as accurate as any. He omits only one pillow word (*akara hiku*, line 29); on the other hand, he is the only translator who attempts to convey the image in *nubatama no* (line 27): "as black as pardanth berry."[4] He is also the only translator to produce a version which, like the original, is essentially one long sentence. The major structural divisions of the poem are skillfully marked with dashes.

Although Dickins has sacrificed some of the poem's clear parallelism—not to mention the norms of English syntax—in his attempt to preserve the syllabic rhythm meter of the original, the attempt succeeds wonderfully. One need only read Dickins's version aloud to see just how well his translation works. No doubt Dickins's archaism will bother some readers; if he needs a one-syllable word for "also" he does not hesitate to retrieve *eke* from Middle English. His work is best when read as a *tour de force*, comparable to Pound's translations of the troubadours. Consider the first lines of Arnaut Daniel's most celebrated poem and Pound's rendition of them:

L'aura amara	The bitter air
Fals bruoills brancutz	Strips panoply
Clarzir	From trees
Quel doutz espeissa ab fuoills	Where softer winds set leaves,
Els letz	And glad
Becs	Beaks
Dels auzels ramencs	Now in brakes are coy,
Ten balps e mutz	Scarce peep the wee
Pars	Mates
E non-pars	And un-mates[5]

[4] Etymology aside, this is still the accepted interpretation for the *Man'yō* period. See Omodaka's notes to *MYS* 89, line 27.

[5] *Ezra Pound: Translations* (New York: New Directions, 1963), pp. 160–61.

It should be obvious that Dickins and Pound held very similar ideas with regard to translation, though Pound is more rigorous in preserving verse form. No diction or syntax is too peculiar if it is required to preserve the original rhythm, and if the original sound patterns cannot be maintained, alliteration and consonance will step into the breach. Of course Dickins is no Pound; but then Lady Ōtomo Sakanoue is no Arnaut Daniel. On behalf of the Japanese poet and the English translator, we must add that each of them wrote first. Lady Sakanoue was active in the second quarter of the eighth century, Arnaut Daniel from approximately 1180–1210; Dickins's translation appeared in 1906, Pound's in 1920. Pound's earliest translations date from 1910, but his interest in Japan evidently did not begin until 1912, when he received Ernest Fenellosa's manuscript notebooks. I can find no evidence that he knew Dickins's work, though this is obviously a possibility. Why their styles of translation should be so similar is a topic worth investigation. Dickins's work has long been out of print, but it merits rescue from an undeserved obscurity.[6]

The translation referred to as NGS was made by a committee of Japanese scholars, members of the Nippon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai. The list of committee members, which begins with Sasaki Nobutsuna and ends with Takeda Yūkichi, could not be more impressive. Their English version was revised with the advice of the poet Ralph Hodgson before publication in 1940; the result is a translation at once accurate and elegant, as the poem quoted earlier shows. The seventy-page introduction remains indispensable. It covers not only history and poetics, but also the life, customs, and beliefs of ancient Japan. NGS's annotation of individual poems is also excellent.[7] One

[6] Dickins's introduction, nearly 100 pages long, is very interesting reading. Although his remarks on Japanese poetics betray a bias in favor of European classical literature, who else could tell us the equivalents of various pillow words in Homeric Greek?

[7] In contrast, Levy's 33-page introduction is very slender. The analyses of individual poems, particularly those of Hitomaro, are interesting, as are Levy's comments on ritual vs. aesthetic and public vs. private modes of composition. However, the reader who desires more concrete information on historical background, the *Man'yōshū*'s compilation and textual history, its prosodic and rhetorical techniques, its poetic categories, the characteristics of individual books, or the history of *Man'yōshū* scholarship (to mention only the most important topics) would do better to read the introduction to NGS. Similarly, NGS provides many explanatory notes that clarify or deepen our appreciation of the

feature which distinguishes this selection of poems from the complete translations is its chronological arrangement. The poems are grouped into three periods, within which they are arranged by author, when known. There is a separate section for poems of unknown period, and a finding list to show the *Kokka taikan* numbers of all poems translated. NGS, like Dickins and Pierson, follows the readings of the vulgate text.

The NGS translations emphasize rhetorical structure (exclusive of pillow words), particularly figurative articulations and the movement of imagery. The preface of Lady Sakanoue's poem, for example, is very well handled: "The sedges grow, firm-rooted— / Firm were the words you spoke, / And tender, . . ." This captures the bivalence of *ne* ("root") in *nemokoro ni* and clearly shows the connection between the preface and the body of the poem. The simile in lines 10–14, here as in Dickins's version, is also nicely done: "Never, from that day, like the sea-weed / That sways to and fro with the waves, / Have I faltered in my fidelity, . . ." Moreover, the parallelism so evident in the original is better preserved here than in the other translations examined thus far. The care with which the suffixes *kemu* and *ramu* (lines 18, 20) have been distinguished in translation— "Is it the gods who *have divided* us? / Is it mortal men who *intervene*?"—is a measure of NGS's concern for accuracy.

Of the seven pillow words, only the most problematic (*chihayaburu*, line 17) is omitted. This, however, is not typical of the NGS translations. Indeed, the treatment of pillow words is the greatest source of dissatisfaction with this work. They are often omitted; an extreme example is the NGS version of Hitomaro's poem on passing the ruined capital of Ōmi (*MYS* 29), in which only one of seven pillow words is translated. When NGS does translate these epithets it is far more likely to give connotation than denotation. An example in *MYS* 619 is "with your letter" for *tamazusa no* in line 23. Modern Japanese translations, beginning with Origuchi Shinobu's, have usually omitted pillow words. Perhaps the Japanese translators

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poetry; Levy's annotation is much too sparse. Given the cultural and temporal distance that separates us from the *Man'yōshū*, many of the poems can no longer "speak for themselves." Who, for example, could guess that the loose weave of a fisherman's garment in *MYS* 413 actually refers to long intervals between meetings with a lover?

of the NGS edition felt that inclusion of too much decorative language impeded the primary flow of images and ideas. This approach to pillow words is not an indefensible one, since in many cases their meanings and manner of modification are no longer understood. NGS's de-emphasis of pillow words does streamline the poetry: by eliminating highly conventional attribution, the conception and the principal figurative articulations of any poem stand out in relief. But there can be a lamentable loss of poetic density, as we shall see, and most readers would no doubt prefer that some attempt be made to render the pillow words in English.

The treatment of pillow words in the Levy translation, on the other hand, is one of its greatest strengths. Almost every pillow word is either translated or, if deemed untranslatable, annotated;[8] in Lady Sakanoue's poem, all seven are translated. Of course, since many pillow words are not fully understood, no translator can be sure of how best to handle them. *Oshiteru*, the first line of *MYS* 619, is a case in point. Its etymology is uncertain; in fact, its original meaning was evidently no longer understood in the eighth century. There are various theories concerning its significance and its relationship to Naniwa, the place name it modifies, so the translator must choose for himself, relying on context and the characters with which the scribe recorded it. There is little doubt that it signified brightness or shining for the *Man'yō* poet, hence NGS's "wave-bright Naniwa." The Levy translation is considerably more daring. Following an entirely plausible Edo-period interpretation,[9] he translates: "at Naniwa, / where sunlight sweeps / across the bay, . . ." Where NGS provides an image, Levy gives us a panoramic scene of force and beauty. One feels that Lady Sakanoue must have intended her poem to begin this way.

[8] See for example Levy's note on *koto saeku* (*MYS* 135), a "purely formal pillow word" which he chooses not to translate. Omitted pillow words which came to my attention (I made no particular search for them) include *tamakiharu* (*MYS* 4), *tsumagomoru* (*MYS* 135) and *koto saeku* (*MYS* 199). The distinction between formal and semantic modification is mentioned again in Levy's note to *MYS* 891 (inappropriately: if *futatabi* is understood to mean "again"—cf. MJ *nido*—the modification is seen to be semantic). The distinction between formal and semantic modification is an important one; but it is equally important to realize that these are not mutually exclusive concepts.

[9] By the scholar and poet Tayasu Munetake (1715–71), son of the eighth Tokugawa shogun, Yoshimune. See Omodaka's discussion of *oshiteru* (III, 577–78).

Prince Ikusa's poem describing a solitary journey to Sanuki shows Levy's skill with pillow words to great advantage. In this passage four pillow words are concentrated in as many couplets (excerpted from *MYS* 5):

5	(murakimo no)	my heart,
	kokoro o itami	these twines of inner flesh,
	(nuekodori)	in pain,
	uranakioreba	weeping,
	(tamatasuki)	like the tiger thrush,
10	kake no yoroshiku	inside my soul—
	(tō tsu kami)	like a strand of jewels,
	waga ōkimi no	it's fit to set this into words:[10]
	idemashi no	
	yama . . .	My Lord,
		that distant god,
		passes through the mountains, . . .

In NGS these same lines are reduced to: "Like the 'night-thrush' I grieve within me, / As sorely my heart aches. / Then across the hills where our Sovereign sojourns, / Luckily . . ." Only the pillow word *nuekodori* is translated; "sorely" may be a weak-kneed equivalent for *murakimo no*, but the remaining two pillow words are ignored. Levy's version, except for the error in translating line 10, does full justice to the original.

The Levy translation does not always handle prefaces as well as it does pillow words. Often, as in the translation of *MYS* 619, the preface is placed after the phrase modified: "You spoke to me / with feelings fine . . ." (lines 3–4 of the original). The pillow word that delineates the scene against which the poem will unfold loses its initial position, a change which seems entirely unnecessary.[11]

[10] This handsome line is unfortunately incorrect. *Kake no yoroshiku* means something like "how welcome is the word." This refers to the word *kaeru*, "to return home," embedded in a later line in which the wind blows back the traveler's sleeves. This is an omen of a safe return home, as NGS explains in a note. NGS's translation of line 10 is "luckily."

[11] When the order of preface and statement in a *tanka* is inverted, the poem suffers far more. *MYS* 502 (quoted and discussed below), *MYS* 530 and 711 are examples of particularly interesting poems which fall flat when stood on their heads. These brief vignettes are convincing because the poet is inspired by something in his environment—deer in summer fields, the tightly bound paling of a corral, autumn leaves floating in a duck pond—to find something within himself or his life which corresponds thereto. To reverse this procedure produces mere solipsism, a malady which does not afflict many poets of the *Man'yō* period.

The pivot between preface and statement is obscured, because the double function of *ne* in *nemokoro ni* is not translated. The image of sedge roots—in this context a symbol of intricate and loving entwinement—is lost. The third major rhetorical feature of this poem, its parallelism, is much better preserved. Both the translation itself and the typographical format show this parallelism more clearly than did any of the previous versions.

A predilection for direct discourse which is characteristic of the Levy translation can be seen in Lady Sakanoue's poem. The lover's promise at the beginning of the poem to remain with her "deep and long, through the years" and society's view of her at the end of the poem as "a frail-limbed woman" are both set off by quotation marks as reported speech. This conveys a sense of drama missing from the other translations, which treat these lines as indirect discourse. The difference is a subtle one in this poem; but when the reported speech extends to several lines, the use of direct discourse creates a startlingly new version of the poem. Compare the opening lines of *MYS* 420, a lament for Prince Iwata, in the NGS and Levy versions:

(Levy)

"Our Prince, graceful
like the soft bamboo,
our red-cheeked Lord
is dead,"
spoke the messenger
with his jewelled catalpa staff,
"and enshrined as a god
in the mountains of Hatsuse,
the hidden land."

(NGS)

My prince, graceful as the pliant bamboo,
My lord, with beauteous ruddy face,
Was enshrined as a god
In the hills of secluded Hatsusé:
So a messenger has told me.

The NGS translation treats the entire poem as a soliloquy delivered in the speaker's own words. The Levy translation, with its use of direct discourse, evokes the messenger's actual presence.[12] The words *to . . . zo iitsuru* with which the message ends in the original support the Levy version.

There are numerous differences of format and style between the

[12] For the best example of this type, too long for quotation here, see *MYS* 443, in which a warrior is depicted taking leave of his family. Dickins, Pierson, and Levy treat its long opening passage as direct discourse; NGS does not.

NGS and Levy translations. If we look at each sequence of five-seven syllables—each pair of lines in the original text—as a couplet, the strength of the syntactic bond within each couplet is normally much greater than that between couplets. The NGS translation reflects this fact in its tendency to render each couplet as a single line in English. As a result, the number of lines in translation is reduced to almost half that of the original, and a very uniform rhythm is produced. The Levy translation prefers the greater rhythmic variety generated by a more line-by-line translation. The effect is very pleasing in a straightforward poem like Lady Sakanoue's *MYS* 619. In poems of greater rhetorical and conceptual complexity, however, the primary figurative links may become strained in extension. The following lines from Hitomaro's first poem on parting from his wife in Iwami (*MYS* 131) better illustrate these differences between the Levy and NGS translations:

	(*MYS* 131)	(Levy)
	(isana tori)	the wind, with morning wings,
	umibe o sashite	and the waves, with evening wings,
	Nikitazu no	carry over those whale-hunted seas
	ariso no ue ni	to the desolate beach in Nikita harbor
15	kaao naru	green, sleek seaweed,
	tamamo oki tsu mo	seaweed from the offing,
	asa hafuru	and the memory of my wife,
	kaze koso yoseme	whom I left there
	yū hafuru	as mist and frost
20	nami koso kiyore[13]	are left on the ground,
	nami no muta	who swayed to my side in sleep
	ka yori kaku yoru	like sleek seaweed
	tamamo nasu	swaying to and fro with the waves.
	yorineshi imo o	
25	(tsuyu shimo no)	
	okiteshi kureba	

(NGS)

Upon Watazu's rocky strand,
Where I travel by the whale-haunted sea,
The wind blows in the morning,

[13] Contrary to Omodaka's text and commentary, Levy translates *kiyore* of line 20 as a transitive verb. It seems that he follows Nakanishi's text (which reads this same verb *kiyose*) and/or translation here.

And the waves wash at eve
The sleek sea-tangle and the ocean weed,
All limpid green.

Like the sea-tangle, swaying in the wave
Hither and thither, my wife would cling to me,
As she lay by my side.
Now I have left her, and journey on my way, . . .

In the Levy translation care is taken to preserve all the imagery of the original: the etymological meaning of *hafuru* (lines 17, 19), "wings beating," is retained; and the pillow word *tsuyu shimo no* (line 25), which NGS omits, is nicely translated. *Ariso* (line 14) takes on emotive connotations as a "desolate beach," though NGS's more literal "rocky strand" is perhaps more accurate. NGS's "whale-haunted" for the pillow word *isana tori* (line 11) is well put, but Levy's "whale-hunted" is more literal. The principal difference between Levy and NGS, however, is the order of presentation.

Lines 15–24, the crux of this 39-line poem, are at the literal level an objective description of the natural scene dominated by the image of seaweed. Rhetorically they form the end of a 23-line figurative preface unique in its complexity (see Omodaka's analysis, II, 149, 151–52), all of which leads up to *yorineshi imo* ("wife who swayed to my side in sleep," line 24). This is the principal poetic articulation of the poem, and it depends for its power on the cumulative seaweed images. NGS preserves the original order of presentation: the locative lines 11–14, the seascape of lines 15–23, the clear transition to the poet's wife and the fact that he has had to part from her. In the Levy translation the wind and the waves come before the locative lines, and the poet's separation from his wife becomes part of the preface, interrupting the seaweed imagery. To avoid having the poet leave his wife before she appears in the poem, a line not in the original has been added: "and the memory of my wife." As in *MYS* 619, the figurative link between preface and statement is obscured, apparently through carelessness. The explicit mention of "memory" creates an intellectual distance in the translation which is contrary to the intent of Hitomaro's poem. The "presentness" and the drama are attenuated.

There is throughout the Levy translation a tendency to personalize or individualize the poetry more than previous translators have

done. For example, in the Dickins and NGS translations of Lady Sakanoue's *MYS* 619 the pronoun "I" is used six and seven times, respectively; in the Levy version it appears twelve times. The effect of this greater "personalism" is to make the poet's presence more strongly felt and to emphasize her tone of plaintive insistence. Just as the use of direct discourse makes others dramatically present, frequent repetition of the first person singular pronoun brings the persona of the poet into dramatic relief. Although the Japanese text contains no first person pronouns, Levy's translation is certainly justified in this poem. In other cases, however, the reader may consider "personalizing" detrimental. The poet's presence is obtrusive in Levy's translations of the envoys to Hitomaro's poem on passing the ruined capital of Ōmi (*MYS* 30–31):

Sasanami no Shiga no Karasaki sakiku aredo ōmiyabito no fune machikanetsu	Cape Kara in Shiga at Sasanami by the rippling waves, you are as before, but I wait for courtiers' boats in vain.
Sasanami no Shiga no ōwada yodomu to mo mukashi no hito ni mata mo awame ya mo	Waters, you are quiet in deep bends of Shiga's lake at Sasanami by the rippling waves, but never again may I meet the men of ancient times.

The subject of the final verbs in these envoys is not the poet; it is Cape Kara that waits in vain for the courtiers' boats,[14] and the waters of Shiga's lake that will never again meet the men of ancient times. Omodaka (1, 268) clearly states that both envoys personify their inanimate subjects. Furthermore, to have Hitomaro wish to meet *again* the men of ancient times is to dispel the mists of antiquity.[15] Hitomaro invests nature with an animus which, precisely because it outlasts the human span and even palaces of stone, endows places themselves with a more-than-human sense of longing or

[14] Note however that Levy's translation of *MYS* 152, which contains this same conceit, is correct.

[15] For Hitomaro to have known the men of the Ōmi court is a poetic, though perhaps not a historical, impossibility. Surely Hitomaro intends in *MYS* 29–31 to evoke a distant, irretrievable past.

regret. It is this technique which distinguishes these envoys from the bathetic poem on the same subject which follows them. The original headnote (which Levy emends silently) names Takechi Furuhito as the author of *MYS* 32, adding in smaller characters that some sources attribute the poem to Takechi Kurohito:

inishie no	Am I one of the ancients
hito ni ware are ya	that, gazing on the ruined
Sasanami no	capital of Sasanami
furuki miyako o	by the rippling waves,
mireba kanashiki	I am filled with sorrow?

In Levy's translations, the poetic voice in Furuhito's *tanka* is indistinguishable from the poetic voice in Hitomaro's envoys. It has, in effect, been standardized along the lines of "direct personalism." This is not the case with the NGS versions of these three poems, which better capture the tone and technique of the originals:

Although it lies unchanged,
The cape of Karasaki
Of Shiga in Sasanami,
It waits and waits in vain
For the courtiers' barges.

Though the vast waters stand still
At Shiga in Sasanami,
Could they ever meet again
The people of the former days?

Am I a man of the days gone by,
That, when I see, in Sasanami,
The ruined Imperial City,
My heart grows heavy?

The most extreme case of "personalizing" in the Levy translation is in Yamanoue Okura's celebrated poem on the impermanence of life (*MYS* 804). The poem is too long for quotation, but perhaps it is familiar enough not to require that. As I read it, the body of the poem (lines 9–52) is a description in three clear movements of young girls, young warriors, and their interaction, from youth to age. The introduction and conclusion (lines 1–8, 53–57) are statements of a more general order. The original language and the poetic context seem to require a third person translation throughout, which is what both Omodaka and Nakanishi provide. The Levy version, however,

changes to first person narration in the third movement, at line 39. It will come as something of a shock (at least to readers familiar with the original poem) to find Okura, rather than his young warriors, pushing through those wooden doors to sleep, albeit in memory, "arm in jewelled arm" with the young girls. A comparison of the versions of Dickins, Pierson, NGS, and Levy, shows the last to be at the end point of a trend toward increasingly first-person translation. The only first person pronoun in Dickins's translation is in the first line, "In this our world"; otherwise the poem is entirely third person. Pierson renders only the last five lines ("Will not (life) be only thus for most of us? . . .") in the first person plural. NGS translates "we" in the introductory lines ("We are helpless before time . . .") and "I" in the conclusion, leaving only the body of the poem in the third person. Levy translates the introduction in the first person plural, adds another "we" in the first movement of the body of the poem, adds a line between the first and second movements ("We have let time go.") which has no counterpart in the original, and then translates the last quarter of the poem in the first person singular. Levy's interpretation is certainly novel, but it violates the poem's grammar and rhetorical structure.

Although the general trend of the Levy translation is to bring the poetic "I" into the foreground, there are a few clearly personal poems which have been "communalized," so to speak. The most striking example is *MYS* 79, a poem about moving from Fujiwara to the new capital of Nara. Again considerations of space prohibit quotation, so I shall synopsize. The speaker describes the hardships of his journey and his nostalgia for Fujiwara (lines 1–14), counterbalancing this with a breathtaking description of Nara's natural beauty and grandeur (lines 15–28); he concludes with a brief encomium of his lord and a vow to serve him loyally (lines 29–33). The first person singular pronoun (*waga, ware*) appears three times in the text (lines 8, 19, 33), once in each section of the poem. There can be little doubt that the subject of the entire poem is "I." Both Omodaka and Nakanishi gloss it so, and Omodaka's remarks on the poem's dramatic situation (as a retainer's intimate address to his lord; see I, 448–49) argue for a consistently first person singular translation. This is how Dickins and NGS handle the poem. The Levy version, however, translates "we" for almost every verb; "I" is then

made the subject for the final verb. Neither the language nor the poetic context seems to warrant such an interpretation. On the other hand, Levy is not the first person to interpret the poem thus: Origuchi Shinobu translates these pronouns in exactly the same way.

Inattention to overall poetic structure has, in my opinion, caused Levy to misconstrue several other important poems. Another instance in which verbs are assigned the wrong subject is *MYS* 50, attributed to the builders of the Fujiwara Palace. Beginning with praise for the imperial command to build, the poet describes first the contributions of heaven and earth (*ame tsuchi mo*, line 13), which prepare the timbers and float them downstream; then the poet describes the efforts of the people (*sawaku mitami mo*, line 26) who gather the lumber together, and so forth. In its poetic structure, this is an extended version of Hitomaro's second Yoshino poem (*MYS* 38), which opens with praise for the palace raised in accordance with imperial will and goes on to describe the tributes offered by the gods of mountain and river. In each of these poems, the depiction of nature's servitude to the imperial will is crucial. In the Levy version of *MYS* 50, however, it is men alone who perform all the work, including that which the original text clearly assigns to heaven and earth. I can find no authority for such a reading in any edition. Such an interpretation violates not only the logic of the poem, but also the universal order in which it is grounded. Although the NGS translation fails to convey the poetic density of the original (because it omits pillow words), it correctly specifies the subject of each section.

Levy also misconstrues the conception and dramatic situation of Empress Jitō's lament for Emperor Temmu (*MYS* 159). The poem begins as follows:

	(yasumishishi)	Scarlet leaves on Kami Hill
	waga ōkimi no	that our Lord, sovereign
	yū sareba	of the earth's eight corners,
	meshitamaurashi	gazed on when evening came
5	ake kureba	and went to view when morning came—
	toitamaurashi	if he were here
	Kamioka no	he would go view them today,
	yama no momichi o	he would gaze on them tomorrow.
	kyō mo ka mo	
10	toitamawamashi	

asu mo ka mo
meshitamawamashi

The problem is with the interpretation of the verbs and suffixes. The first two verbs have been translated in the past tense, presumably because the emperor is in fact dead. Neither the grammar of the poem nor the concept of the soul which underlies it warrants such a commonsense approach. There are no past tenses in this poem. The verbs in lines 4 and 6 are uninflected, adding only the suffix *rashi* to indicate positive conjecture: "Surely he gazes on / goes to view [the autumn foliage] . . ." would be a proper translation. The same two verbs are repeated with chiasmus in lines 10 and 12, where they are followed by the conjectural or presumptive suffix *mashi*. This suffix is normally translated "would" because it usually follows a hypothetical statement; but the line "if he were here" has no counterpart in the original poem.[16] These last four lines should therefore be read: "Perhaps even today he goes to view them; perhaps even tomorrow he will gaze on them." Tense is all-important here, because the underlying conception of the poem is that the emperor's spirit is alive, present, and somehow participating in the life of this world. The empress is not, as Levy's translation implies, simply remembering what her husband did in the past; she is thinking of what he must be doing now, and will do tomorrow. He remains alive not only within her, but in the world about her as well. Such a reading conveys the full emotional and spiritual impact of the poem. NGS's version translates only the verbs in lines 10 and 12 correctly; this poem has never, to my knowledge, been accurately translated into English.

Although I have not examined the *tanka* of the Levy translation with the same care given the *chōka*, there were errors in the former as well. The meaning of a playful poem by the Priest Tsūkan is reversed because the translator did not recognize a rhetorical question in (*MYS* 327):[17]

[16] Levy probably follows Omodaka here. Omodaka's translation of this poem adds a similar line, though there is no compelling reason to do so. Neither Omodaka nor Nakanishi, however, translates lines 3–6 in the past tense.

[17] Another contrary translation is "name-telling" for *nanoriso* in *MYS* 509. *Nanoriso* has this meaning in *MYS* 362 and 363, in which a suitor tries to make a girl reveal her name; but in *MYS* 509 the poet regrets that he left home without saying goodbye to his wife. The poetic context thus shows that we must understand *nanoriso* as the negative

watatsumi no	Why, when I take this
oki ni mochiyukite	out to the offing
hanatsu to mo	and toss it in the ocean
uremu zo kore ga	does it come back to life?
yomikaerinamu	

"This" refers to dried abalone (*hoshi awabi*) and not, as Levy has translated the headnote, to "dried bonito." NGS translates correctly: "Even if you bore them to the deepest sea / And cast them into the water, / How could these come to life again?"

Insufficient attention to the articulation of preface and statement caused an awkward mistranslation in this *tanka* by Hitomaro (*MYS* 502):

natsuno yuku	How could I forget
oshika no tsuno no	my wife's love
tsuka no ma mo	for as little as the inches
imo ga kokoro o	between the deer's antlers
wasurete omoe ya	as he walks across the summer fields?

The effect of inverting preface and statement has already been discussed (note 11): a charming sentiment becomes a jejune protest, as here. The mistake in this poem is that it is the length of the deer's antlers (which are new and thus short), not the space between them, to which Hitomaro refers. The pivot phrase *tsuka no ma no* has been misinterpreted, it would seem, as *tsuno no ma no*. NGS does not include this poem, but Pierson translates it correctly.

The following poem by Princess Niu (*MYS* 554) is mistranslated:

inishie no	Men of ancient times
hito no oshitaru	raised the wine of Kibi to their lips.
Kibi no sake	But I am ill,
yameba sube nashi	and it does me no good.
nukisu tabaramu	Give me, instead, a screen
	of bamboo treliss (*sic*) from your domain.

Not only is the word "trellis" misspelled,[18] the phrase "a screen

imperative *na nori so*. Only Levy mistranslates this; Dickins's equivalent, "wordless-wort," is characteristically ostentatious, just as NGS's "Speak-not" is typically plain.

[18] Two other misspellings were noted: "sattelite," p. 11; and "wierdly," p. 155. Other corrections: read "first two phrases" for "last two phrases" in note 3, p. 43; read "akizu-shima" for "akitsushima" in note 1 on p. 38 (unless Levy is following Nakanishi rather than Omodaka); and read "Jinki" for "Jingi" on p. 347. The only typographical error I noticed was "floatng" on p. 399. Grammatical errors were minor: read "increase" for "increases" in *MYS* 595, p. 283 (or eliminate the subjunctive); read "is" for "are" in *MYS* 904 on p. 404, line 14 (or change "or" to "and" in the previous line).

of bamboo trellis" (for *nukisu* in line 5) conveys the wrong impression. A *nukisu* is a rough-woven lid used to cover a washbasin (see Omodaka, IV, 213). Its purpose is to prevent water from splashing and to hide the contents of the basin from sight, so it is a "screen" of sorts. Even so, the Levy translation calls to mind a room divider or a garden accessory. NGS omits this poem too, but Pierson has it right.

Some words demand a variety of translations according to context; *imo* and its cognates *wagimo* and *wagimoko* are among those which appear most often. The degree of love, affection, or kinship which such terms imply is not always clear, but the tone of the word chosen as an equivalent must fit the poem in which it occurs. Levy favors "(my) woman" or even "you, woman" for *imo* and *wagimo*, expressions which jarred this reader dozens of times. "My woman" seems a particularly bad choice in *MYS* 398–99, two poems addressed by Fujiwara Yatsuka to a girl not yet ready for marriage.[19]

One word where a variety of translations does not seem to be called for is *momichi*. In Books I-V of the *Man'yōshū* this word is invariably written with the characters meaning "yellow leaves"; yet for five of the eleven occurrences of *momichi* noted, the translation is "scarlet leaves."[20] This would not be worth mentioning except that these same characters are translated "scarlet leaves" in Hitomaro's first lament on the death of his wife, and "yellowed leaves" in the two envoys (*MYS* 207–9). Color aside, these autumn leaves are the only image which links both envoys to the main poem. This inconsistency must be the result of hasty translation; there is no rationale for eliminating the continuity of imagery in one of Hitomaro's finest poetic sequences.

THE ONLY WAY to determine the accuracy of a translation is to

[19] Omodaka suggests that "my woman" in these poems may refer to the girl's mother, but the tone of the translations does not improve with this change of referent.

[20] *MYS* 38, 135, 159, 207, and 423 read "scarlet leaves"; *MYS* 16, 47, 208, 209, 543 and 623 have "yellow(ed) leaves." The reason for this distinction escapes me completely. If one must choose a color, the *Man'yōgana* point unambiguously to yellow (or perhaps "yellows"). Omodaka (I, 181) finds but four cases among hundreds of occurrences in the entire anthology where the characters used to write *momichi* or *momizu* denote red or scarlet; none appears before Book X. Yellow was undoubtedly the principal color associated with autumn, though in most cases "autumn foliage" or some such term which includes grasses and other colors is best.

compare it with the edition on which it is based. Dickins, Pierson, and NGS all provide this information, including romanizations of the texts themselves. Levy does neither. On page 32 of his introduction he cites Omodaka's edition and states: "Among all the available modern texts, my reading of the anthology has benefitted most from Omodaka's work and from the new modern translation and commentary by Nakanishi Susumu, *Man'yōshū* . . . , the first volume of which appeared from Kōdansha in 1978." This does not tell us what he used as the base text for his translation. I have compared perhaps one fourth of the poems in the Levy translation with Omodaka's text and translation while preparing this review. When there seemed to be a discrepancy between the two, Nakanishi was consulted. The Levy translation certainly follows Omodaka most of the time; it is equally certain, however, that it does not always do so. This was pointed out in the remarks on *MYS* 619 and 131 (see notes 2 and 13); *MYS* 25 is another example:

	Miyoshino no	On Mimiga Peak
	Mimiga no mine ni	in beautiful Yoshino
	toki naku zo	snow was falling,
	yuki wa furikeru	unbounded by time,
5	ma naku zo	rain was falling,
	ame wa furikeru	without interval.
	. . .	The road that I have come,
12	omoitsutsu zo kuru	. . .
	sono yamamichi o	O that mountain road!

Omodaka insists that the *keru* suffixes in lines 4 and 6 are to be understood as *present* progressives and that the verb *kuru* in line 12 must not be emended to *koshi* (past tense), as many editors have done. Omodaka's Modern Japanese translation reflects this interpretation of the poem as a description of what the poet is actually seeing at this moment. Obviously, Levy's version is at odds with Omodaka on both points. Nakanishi's edition does emend *kuru* to *koshi* ("come" to "have come" in this grammatical environment), so it would appear that Levy's translation of this poem was made from Nakanishi's transcription (*yomikudashi*) of the original text. On the other hand, Levy does not follow Nakanishi's Modern Japanese translation, which interprets the *keru* suffixes as "hearsay" (*denbun*). Yet Nakanishi's emendation of *kuru* to *koshi* was motivated solely by this interpretation of *keri*: he thinks that the "recollection"

(*kaisō*) suffix *ki* (the *shi* of *koshi*) is contrasted for poetic effect with the "hearsay" suffix. Whatever the merits of Nakanishi's interpretation, one must keep in mind that it is inseparable from the emendation itself. To choose the latter and ignore the former indicates either carelessness or unfamiliarity with the principles of textual criticism.

If Levy has in fact shifted back and forth between the Omodaka and Nakanishi texts, this is a serious matter. The Nakanishi criticism, like those in the *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* (Iwanami) and *Nihon koten bungaku zenshū* (Shōgakukan) series, is a "best manuscript" edition. All are based on the *Nishi Honganji bon*, which is considered "best" because it is the oldest complete manuscript of the *Man'yōshū* extant. Each edition is different because each one consults a different range of manuscripts and editions in making emendations, and because even when no emendations are made, most of the poems admit of more than one transcription. Still, all of them begin with a single manuscript. This is not the case with Omodaka's edition.

Omodaka's work is *sui generis*. His editorial procedure is so idiosyncratic that the vocabulary of textual criticism has no word to describe it. Rather than begin with a single manuscript, Omodaka worked from all the pre-Sengaku manuscript fragments to assemble his own. (Sengaku 仙覺 was a thirteenth-century scholar who devoted his life to editing the *Man'yōshū*; Omodaka's aim was apparently to reconstruct a version of the *Man'yōshū* which would not reflect Sengaku's editorial intervention.) Omodaka allowed the *Kan'ei bon* (the vulgate) to represent the entire post-Sengaku manuscript tradition, and used it only for emendation. The end product is of course a composite text. Each of the first five books of Omodaka's edition contains poems from no fewer than two and no more than five manuscript fragments. Some poems are even conflated from two different fragments. One could call this a "best manuscript" edition of a sort, not for the anthology as a whole, but for each individual poem.

Omodaka's work is nevertheless a tremendous achievement; the detail of his commentary is so exhaustive that one can hardly believe it was put together in a single lifetime. Levy is right when he refers to it as "the most important work of twentieth-century [*Man'yōshū*] scholarship" (page 32). It is not, however, the best edition on which to base a translation, for two reasons: first, almost all students who

consult a text of the *Man'yōshū* in Japanese will consult an edition of the *Nishi Honganji bon*; second, Omodaka's text as a whole, as an anthology, never existed. The Nakanishi edition presents a genuine late-Kamakura artifact, the *Nishi Honganji bon*; the Omodaka edition presents a mixture of mid-Heian to early-Kamakura artifacts, and is therefore a hypothetical text. To mix two such different editions—as it seems Levy has done—is not sound scholarship.

Regardless of what text or texts Levy has translated, his readers will be most grateful for his translations of the many headnotes and footnotes added by the *Man'yōshū*'s compilers. These explain, on occasion in great detail, the circumstances of a poem's composition, naming its author and recipient when known. Not infrequently they comment on a poem's style, the source from which it was taken, its variation from other versions, and so on. Not only do these notes provide extremely valuable insights into the editorial practice of the *Man'yōshū*'s compilers; they are also the most important body of vernacular literary criticism before Ki no Tsurayuki's *kana* preface to the *Kokinshū*. Pierson only provides the footnotes (*sachū*) from Book III on, so the Levy translation is the only source in English for many of the most valuable notes.

The Levy translation does not, however, include all of the original annotation. Of the footnotes omitted, four seem important enough to merit translation here. The following note should appear after *MYS* 15:

> On present consideration, the above poem does not seem like an envoy. However, this poem is given as an envoy in an old manuscript. For this reason, we now give it in this order. Moreover, in the *Nihon shoki* it is written: "In the fourth year of the reign of the former Empress [Kōgyoku, 645], the [future] Emperor [Nakatsu Ōe, later Emperor Tenji] was made Heir Designate."

This is the longest of the footnotes omitted. It is significant because it implies a certain prescriptive literary theory, and because it shows how much weight the compilers gave to older works. The following note should appear after *MYS* 139:

> Although the poetic form (*katai* 歌體) of the above poems is the same [as in *MYS* 135–37], there are variations in the lines. Thus we give [them] here in addition.

This note is particularly interesting for its reference to poetic form and its concern with variant readings which even a modern reader

might pass over as insignificant. The note provides us with an example of the critical vocabulary used by the compilers of the *Man'yōshū*; it also shows that they approached their sources with a respect verging on reverence.

After *MYS* 260 add:

On present consideration, perhaps this poem was composed while regretting the old [capital], after the capital was moved to Nara.

This note is interesting primarily because it seems to be incorrect. Perhaps its author (Omodaka thinks it was written by Yakamochi) paid more attention to poetic decorum than to historical considerations. The note which should follow *MYS* 707 adds to the comic effect of the poem, containing as it does a pun on *katamoi* ("earthen pot," homophonous with "one-sided love"):

This poem was written inside an earthen pot.

There are also notes omitted after *MYS* 438, 440, and 480. Though not all of the notes add measurably to our understanding of the poems themselves, all bear witness to the respect of the compilers for their texts and the care with which they edited them. Without them, of course, Levy's translation is not quite complete.

The Levy translation also omits nearly all the textual variants provided interlinearly by the original compilers. This is understandable, since without transcriptions of the original texts, many of the variants would make little sense (or little difference in translation). There are a number of quite substantial variants, though, which could have been provided either in smaller print interlinearly, or in footnotes. For example, here is Levy's description of the young girls in Okura's poem on the impermanence of life (*MYS* 804, see pages 279–80 above):

> when young girls,
> to be maidenly,
> wrapped Chinese jewels
> around their wrists
> and, hand in hand
> with companions of their age, . . .

The *Man'yōshū*'s compilers supply, after "around their wrists," the following lines from another version: "and crossing their sleeves

of white mulberry cloth, trailing the hems of their red skirts." At the end of this description, just before the movement describing the young warriors, six lines are added: "their wonted smiles and drawn eyebrows have faded like flowers that bloom; thus, it seems, is the way of the world." The omission of such lengthy and substantive variants is detrimental to the anthology. Some imagery, however conventional, is lost; and more importantly, the intention of the compilers is violated. Nevertheless, only Pierson provides these variants.

One more sign of the *Man'yōshū* compilers' attention to detail is the number and precision of dates found in the headnotes and footnotes. Levy provides western-year equivalents in most cases, but these are often incorrect. The errors proceed from a number of causes. First, given the difference between the Japanese and western calendrical systems, the twelfth month of the Japanese year often falls in the subsequent western calendrical year. This necessitates the following corrections: *MYS* 6 footnote, for (639) read (640); *MYS* 8 footnote, for (637) read (638); *MYS* 446–50 headnote, for (730) read (731). Second, the Japanese year, expressed as the year of a sovereign's reign, is sometimes assigned the wrong Julian equivalent. This necessitates the following corrections: *MYS* 7 footnote, for (660) read (659); *MYS* 27 footnote, for (680) read (679); *MYS* 158 footnote, for (679) read (678). In one case, the number of years following Temmu's death is mistakenly equated with the reign year of the new sovereign: *MYS* 162, for (694) read (693), the Julian equivalent of Jitō 7.

Since many of the dates given by the compilers of the *Man'yōshū* include both month and day, it would have been a simple matter to give exact equivalents in the Julian calendar. One need only have consulted Uchida Masao's *Nihon rekijitsu genten* (Tokyo: Yūzankaku Shuppan, 1975). The translation would then have reflected the precision of the original.

In the course of this review article it has been my unhappy duty to express some serious reservations about the Levy translation. It is hard not to disagree with its choice of base text and even more with its departures from the base text chosen. There are a number of omissions and errors which can only be the result of haste, and Levy's policy of omitting all interlinear variants is unfortunate. The

annotation is inadequate, so much so that the primary meanings of some poems will escape the reader. Finally, it is hard to understand why poems correctly translated by Dickins, Pierson, or NGS are mistranslated by Levy. Nevertheless, it would be unfair to conclude without saying that most of the poems checked in the Levy translation are accurate and that many of them are beautifully executed. His best translations capture the dramatic force and poetic intensity of the original poems as no other English translation ever has. Indeed, Levy's *The Ten Thousand Leaves* has much in common with Origuchi Shinobu's pioneer translation of the *Man'yōshū* into Modern Japanese. Both are idiosyncratic, intuitive, and when successful, brilliant. *The Ten Thousand Leaves* is most satisfying when read as a book of poetry in its own right, replete with finely crafted phrases that please the ear and stimulate the mind.