

Fascinated by Philology for Almost Half a Century

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I am 69 years old now and on 18th March I will soon attain the age of seventy, which is our retiring age at Aidai. By my retiring age 47 years, that is to say, nearly half a century, will have passed since I started my career as a teacher of English. A kaleidoscope of memories not only of my teaching/research years but also of my childhood and schooldays pass before my inward eye.

[My Childhood]

When I was a kindergarten child, there was a bully, who was much bigger than I, and I did not want to go to the kindergarten because of him. On the other hand my mind ordered me to go to the kindergarten because my going to the kindergarten delighted my mother. One spring day, I succeeded in escaping from the kindergarten, and I was enjoying hunting killifish (or *medaka*) swimming in a brook of the field in warm spring sunshine. In a little while there stood in front of me my mother who looked like a raging demon. No sooner said than done. A blow of her abnormally big palm on my crown made me dizzy and I felt as if I saw something like a flash. Immediately I noticed I was returned to the kindergarten. My mother caught education fever; when I came back home from my primary school, mother-made homeworks of *kanji* drills and arithmetical problems were waiting for my arrival.

[My Middle School Days]

We started to learn English at middle school. As most other pupils were, I was interested in learning it. Of course, it was my first experience of a foreign culture. I was very lucky that Mr Sato was in charge of my English class. I was fascinated by his pronunciation of American English, or his way of speaking American English. He taught us English songs, some easy, others difficult (with longer words). My favorite song was known as

‘Old Texas’, ‘Texas Song’, or ‘The Cowboy’s Lament’, which goes ‘I’m going to leave old Texas now, they’ve got no use for the long horn cow...’ This is now regarded as one of the ‘easy piano songs’ at American schools, but I, a middle school pupil with experience of learning English for a year or so, needed great effort to memorize the song. However, to my surprise I remember it even now.

[My Senior High School Days]

I liked English best of all subjects. Mr Sasamori, Mr Sato, Mr Uchiyama . . . they all taught my classes of English, and I respect them. Their teaching methodology was excellent and their personality was wonderful. I would like to smile my thanks to their generous advice and help for students’ performance of an English play. Our performance was that of Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice*, Act IV, Scene I, Venice, a court of justice. I acted the role of ‘the Duke’. I gradually came to be determined to specialize in English.

[Tsuru University of Liberal Arts]

At Tsuru University I concentrated almost all efforts on traditionalist’s grammar, which I studied under Professor Yasuhisa Mikami. Of course I read English and American novels and poems as a student of the department of English Literature, but my interest tended to centre on linguistic studies, or rather I had great respect for Professor Mikami as a researcher of language. Professor Mikami helped me read grammars of Curme, Jespersen, Onions, Zandvoort, Fries, etc. I also liked learning French and Greek. Unfortunately I did not find a chance of learning Latin, which I regret. I wrote graduation thesis under the title ‘A Study of Adverbials’. Incidentally, the days at Tsuru were also those of training in Shorinji-kempo.

[Waseda University]

I studied for only one year at Waseda. I belonged to Special Course for English and English literature, which is a one-year course. The students attended the course aiming to get a higher qualification of teaching English. I had already acquired some knowledge of historical study of English when I studied at Tsuru with Professor Mikami, who kindly helped me read all the pages of Baugh’s *History of the English Language*, and therefore I could enjoy historical researches of English in the class of Professor Ueda. His classes stimulated my interest in historical researches into the English language as my special field.

[Teaching at Senior High Schools]

My experience as a teacher of English began at Kashiwa Nittai Senior High School in

Chiba Pref. Students there welcomed me as a teacher of Shorinji-Kempo rather than a teacher of English. After five years' teaching at the senior high school I moved to Takeno-dai Senior High School, which is one of Tokyo Metropolitan High Schools, and at the same time I was to make researches at the graduate course of Sophia University.

[Sophia University, Seirei Women's Junior College]

At Sophia my supervisor was Professor Takero Oiji, and I started to make research of relative constructions in Chaucer's works. I wrote MA thesis on Chaucer's relative constructions. It was a great shock to me that Professor Oiji died before submission of my MA thesis. I am cordially grateful to Professor Shoichi Watanabe, who kindly allowed me to work under his supervision. It took me four years to finish the MA course. After five years' commutation (four years as a graduate student but five years as a teacher) I was welcomed to Seirei Women's Junior College, which is a Catholic school, as a full time lecturer of the English Department. It was only four years' teaching at the junior college, but it seems to me it was valuable opportunity to learn about Christianity. This experience will have exerted a considerable influence upon my researches into Old English religious documents.

[Aichi University, the University of Oxford: transition from ME to OE and Latin]

I returned southwards to Aichi Prefecture. I was luckily given the position of a full time lecturer at the Department of Liberal Arts in Aichi University. I am most grateful to Aichi University for its generosity in giving me the opportunity of studying at Oxford University for a total period of three years. I used to study Chaucer, but at Oxford I changed my field. Anglo-Saxon studies attracted me.

Professor Malcolm Godden kindly allowed me to work under his supervision. I learned a great deal about Anglo-Saxon studies from Professor Godden. It was on this occasion that I proceeded to my doctoral dissertation, which I finished in 2000 and submitted it to Sophia University, and it was accepted. It is a lexical study of the Old English words, or semasiology in Old English. The dissertation is entitled 'The Old English Words Rendering *Virgo*, *Virginitas* and *Puella* in the Anglo-Saxon Gospels: Their Semasiological Background in Anglo-Saxon Literature', and it was later published from VDM in 2009 under the title *Virgin, Virginitas and Maiden in Old English: The Old English Words Rendering Virgo, Virginitas and Puella in the Anglo-Saxon Gospels: Their ... Anglo-Saxon Literature* (682 pages).

It was followed by the publication of *Learning in Mediaeval England (600–1100): A Medley of Philological Studies in Anglo-Saxon Literature* (VDM, 2010, 245 pages). In this book I discussed earlier scholars, such as Archbishop Parker, William Lambarde, Lawrence Nowell, Francis Junius, and Anglo-Latin authors, such as Aldhelm, Bede and Alcuin. This work also contains chapters on researches into Anglo-Saxon glosses, those on Anglo-Saxon poets and Anglo-Saxon prose authors, such as King Alfred, Ælfric and Wulfstan. Two chapters on studies of proper nouns are also included in this book.

While I was working on my dissertation, I happened to be interested in a very famous manuscript, which is preserved in the Bodleian Library. As soon as I finished my doctoral dissertation, I got to work on publication of the printed edition of the MS, the shelf mark of which is Oxford Bodleian Library, MS Auctarium D.2.19, and it is usually called ‘the Macregol Gospels’ or ‘the Rushworth Gospels’. Thanks to kind help of Dr. Bruce Barker-Benfield and Dr Martin Kaufmann, it came out on 15th of May 2013 from John Benjamins Publishing Company (cxxxix + 339 pages). This is a transcription and an edition of the Manuscript of the four Gospels in Latin, which was produced c. 800 at the monastery of Birr in Ireland. The manuscript was in Mercia in the latter half of the 10th century, when interlineal OE glosses were added by two Anglo-Saxon glossators. I am now working on its glossary/concordance. I am compiling an OE concordance, and when I finish it I will start to compile Latin concordance to the Gospels. While working on illuminated pages of the Lindisfarne Manuscript and the Rushworth Manuscript, I felt an interest in illuminations of insular manuscripts growing upon me.

I am also interested in Japanese literature, especially “Kojiki” (古事記), “Eiga-monogatari” (栄華物語), “Masu-kagami” (増鏡), and “Taiheiki” (太平記). I would like to edit an English explanation of old Japanese literature, culture, and sensibility.

I must add finally that in my own way I have been recognizing that my research is far smaller in scale especially in comparison with that of cosmology, history of the Earth, history of man, condition for being a man, use of language, anthropological change in culture.