

Suzuki, Shigetake (鈴木重威)(1903-76)

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Prof. Shigetake Suzuki was born in Tokyo, Akasaka in 1903. He was educated at Tokyo Furitsu Dai Ichi Chugakko, Tokyo Dai Ichi Kotogakko, and graduated from the Faculty of English Literature of Tokyo University. In 1953 he became a Professor of English Literature at Tokyo Metropolitan University after holding a professorship at Dai Ichi Kotogakko, Rikkyo University (1946-51), and Chiba University (1951-53). In 1967 he retired from Tokyo Metropolitan University and became a professor emeritus. In the same year he took up another professorship at Dokkyo University. In 1975 he received the Third Order of Merit (Kun Santo Kyokujitsu Chu Jusho), but tragically died from lung cancer the following year at St. Luke's International Hospital.

His main works of translation include Östberg's *Appellatives in English* as 『人名の普通名詞化』 (Kenkyusha, 1934), C. L. Brook's *A History of English Dialects* as 『英語の方言』 (Senjo, 1976), and selected Old English poetry as 『古代英詩』 (Gloria Press, 1978). His greatest contributions to the study of Old English in Japan are the trilogy of editions of Old English Poetry in parallel texts with a Modern English translation on facing pages, which included copious notes : 『古代英詩 哀歌』 (*Old English Poetry: Elegy*) (Kenkyusha, 1967), 『古代英詩 ベオウルフ』 (*Old English Poetry: Beowulf*) (Kenkyusha, 1969), and 『古代英詩 宗教詩』 (*Old English Poetry: Religious Poetry*) (Kenkyusha, 1972). These books have been very helpful in enabling students to enter the wonderful world of Old English poetry. It is worth mentioning that these

books have few misprints. He was known for carefully proofreading all of his works in the quiet hours of the early morning.

He also contributed to the study of Early Middle English in Japan. In 1958 he won a Fulbright Scholarship to Michigan University, where he studied *Ancrene Wisse* for one year under the supervision of Professor Kuhn by reading the microfiche of the MS before the EETS publication of Tolkien's *Ancrene Wisse* in 1962. As a result of his study of this work Professor Suzuki published *The Language of The Ancrene Wisse* (Tokyo Metropolitan University, 1967). The contents of the book consist of five parts: Part I Phonology, Part II Accidence and Syntax, Part III Pronouns, Part IV Verbs, and Part V Negation. The book treats all the linguistic aspects of the manuscript of *Ancrene Wisse* from the historical viewpoint of the transition from Old English to Early Middle English. This study deserves to be called an original and pioneering work. Especially the descriptions and explanations of syntax were highly valued. During his stay in Michigan University he often contributed some examples from *Ancrene Wisse* to Professors Kurath and Kuhn, the then editors of *Middle English Dictionary*.

In his thirties he joined the compilation of 『研究社 英語学辞典』 (*The Kenkyusha Dictionary of English Philology*) (Kenkyusha, 1940). His assistance was indispensable to Dr. Sanki Ichikawa, the chief editor of this large one-volume dictionary, who had also been Professor Suzuki's teacher when he was a student at Tokyo University.

From 1954 Professor Suzuki concentrated on the study of Old and Middle English and published English papers on various themes of that genre in *Studies in English Language and Literature* and *The Journal of Social*

*Sciences and Humanities*, both journals of Tokyo Metropolitan University, *Anglica* of Kansai University and in the monthly periodical 「英語青年」 (*The Rising Generation*). The following is a list of his papers during this period

‘A Note on the Style of *Beowulf*, *Studies in English Language and Literature*, III (Tokyo Metropolitan University, 1955).

‘Cædmon’s Hymn’, *Anglica*, II, 4 (Kansai University, 1956).

‘*Ancrene Riwe*’, *Studies in English Language and Literature*, V (Tokyo Metropolitan University, 1957).

‘Biblical Latin quotations in *Ancrene Wisse*’, *Studies in English Language and Literature*, VIII (Tokyo Metropolitan University, 1960).

‘The Language of the *Ancrene Wisse*—Introduction’, *The Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 28 (Tokyo Metropolitan University, 1962).

‘Old English Elegies—Deor and The Ruin’, *The Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 46 (Tokyo Metropolitan University, 1965).

‘On Wulf and Eadwacer’, *The Rising Generation*, CXII, 9 (1966).

In his classes of the graduate course at Tokyo Metropolitan, Aoyama Gakuin, and Dokkyo Universities he used 市川三喜著『古代中世英語初歩』 (*A Primer of Old and Middle English* edited by Sanki Ichikawa), Sweet-Onions’ *An Anglo-Saxon Reader in Prose and Verse*, Mossé-Walker’s *A Handbook of Middle English*, Sisam’s *Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose*, Wrenn’s *Beowulf, Pearl, Troilus and Criseyde*, etc. and trained his students with a close reading of original Old and Middle English using these textbooks and insisting on precise translations. After the severe teaching in classes he often treated his students to a cup of coffee at the campus cafés, and devoted time to their personal development through pleasant chats. He often offered them his

advice on future plans of study suitable to the interest and inclination of each of them. Several students of his class became specialists of their own fields as a result of Professor Suzuki's suggestions.

Hitoshi Kodama began to study Frisian and later published 『フリジア語文法』 (*A Frisian Grammar*) (Daigakushorin, 1992). He single-handedly compiled *A Frisian-Japanese Dictionary* (Daigakushorin, 2004) and *A Japanese-Frisian Dictionary* (2015).

Hidetaka Mohri studied various morphosyntactic aspects of Old English and published many high quality articles in the journal of his department of Aoyama Gakuin University, *Thought Currents in English Literature*.

Tadakatsu Miyazaki wrote many papers on the poetic dictions of Old English poetry, and also published 『ことばから観た文化の歴史—アングロ・サクソンの到来からノルマンの征服まで』 (*Cultural History as Seen from the Language, from the Coming of the Anglo-Saxons to Norman Conquest*) (Seagull Books, Yokohama City University, 2001).

Tsunenori Karibe studied the phonology of Old English, especially palatalization, and published some papers on this subject. As a result of the continued study of *Beowulf* he published an edition entitled 『古英語叙事詩ベーオウルフ 対訳版』 (*The Old English Epic Beowulf: A Bilingual Edition*) (Kenkyusha, 2007) with the collaboration of Ryoichi Koyama, who was his student, and a collected papers 『「ベーオウルフの物語世界」』 (*The Narrative World of Beowulf*) (Shohakusha, 2006).

Noriko Matsui continued her study of *Sir Gawain and Green Knight*, which resulted in a doctoral dissertation entitled “Realistic Detail in Poetry of the Alliterative Revival” (2011).

Keiko Ikegami became a specialist of the study of *Ancrene Wisse* MSS and joined the editorship of parallel texts published as *Ancrene Wisse: A Four-Manuscript Parallel Text* (Studies in English Medieval Language and Literature, 2003) and *The Katherine Group: A Three Manuscript Parallel Text* (Studies in English Medieval Language and Literature, 2011).

Hisaaki Sasagawa presented his master's thesis on concord of number in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* under the supervision of Professor Suzuki. Afterwards he became a Chaucerian and published papers on Chaucer's English, focusing on such items as word order and stylistic techniques.

Atsushi Ajiro concentrated on the textual criticism or comparative study of various editions of *Beowulf* based on its manuscript study and published many papers on it in his department journal, *Daitobunkadaigaku Eibeibungaku Ronso*.

Yoshiharu Ida and Yoshiko Ohta were Professor Suzuki's first students in the graduate course at Tokyo Metropolitan University. The former was awarded Toyota Prize for his long-running contributions to 日本英学史学会 (Historical Society of English Studies in Japan), and the latter published a book of English grammar at a young age and later became one of the editors of the parallel texts mentioned above in reference to Keiko Ikegami.

As suggested earlier, it can readily be seen from the contributions of Professor Suzuki's disciples that he was eminent as both a teacher and a scholar.

Professor Suzuki was a member of Japan Society of Medieval English Studies until his death. He did not take up any office of this society because of his advanced age. However, he often attended the general meetings and freely

gave advice to the young scholars who were there to present their papers.

Prof. Suzuki's wife, Motoko, attended his class at Aoyama Gakuin University to study Old English in her old age. A few years later in collaboration with her husband she completed the translation of the above-mentioned trilogy of Old English poetry in refined and vigorous literary Japanese as 『古代英詩』 (*Old English Poetry*) (Gloria Press, 1978). This book represents a work of love from their marital collaboration.

Obituaries for Professor Suzuki were written in Japanese by Hitoshi Kodama in *Dokkyo University Newspaper*, 3 December 1976 and by Tsunenori Karibe in 「はしがき」 (Afterword) of the above-mentioned book 『古代英詩』 published after the death of Professor Suzuki.

Professor Suzuki had a companionship with such foreign scholars as Prof. Norman Davis of Oxford University, Prof. Peter Clemons of Cambridge University, and Prof. Martin Lehnert of the Humboldt University of Berlin. The correspondence between Professor Davis and him began when he sent some comments on *Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Primer*, which Professor Davis had newly revised in 1953. In 1975 he attended the International Shakespeare Association's World Congress in New York to meet Professor Lehnert, but it was there that Professor Suzuki's health began to decline, and after returning home he was taken to hospital for treatment for cancer. When Professor Clemons visited Japan to give lectures on Old English Literature in 1977, he read aloud a passage from *Beowulf* before the portrait of the deceased Professor Suzuki in memory of him. This moving scene continues to be remembered even today by those who were there to witness it.