Terasawa, Yoshio (1928-2016)

Tanabe, Harumi

Professor Emerita, Seikei University

Professor Yoshio Terasawa, Professor Emeritus at the University of Tokyo and Gifu Women's University, and the third President of Nihon Chusei Eigoeibun Gakkai (the Japan Society for Medieval English Studies) (1988–1991), was one of the pioneering members who established the society, succeeding its more informal predecessors, Chusei Eibungaku Danwakai (the Society of Medieval English Literature) based in Eastern Japan and Chusei Eibungaku Kenkyukai (the Medieval English Literary Society) based in Western Japan. His contributions were not limited to this society but extended to other organizations related to English studies, where he played a vital role in promoting philological research, particularly in the history of the English language, English Bibles, Medieval English, lexicography, and English language teaching.

Born in Asakusa, Tokyo in 1928, he entered Tokyo Metropolitan High School in 1946. In 1949, he was admitted to the Department of Literature at the University of Tokyo, where he studied English philology under Professors Fumio Nakajima, Masao Hirai, Tateo Kanda, and Harushige Kozu. With a focus on English Bible translation, he even took Hebrew and Arabic as extracurricular subjects. His graduation thesis, "Imagery of the Old Testament: A Preliminary Study of Hebraism in the Authorised Version", reflected his early interest in biblical language. In 1953, while beginning graduate studies at the University of Tokyo, he was also appointed as an assistant at the International Christian University, supporting seminars led by Professor Kanda, who had transferred to ICU, and Professor Takeshi Saito.

Professor Terasawa began his teaching career in 1956 at Tokyo Metropolitan University, where he lectured on the history of the English language until 1969, when he moved to the University of Tokyo's College of Arts and Sciences at the Komaba campus. For the next nineteen years, he taught English philology, English linguistics, and the history of the English language, and from 1975 onward, he also supervised graduate students majoring in English linguistics and philology at the Hongo campus.

From 1965 to 1967, he was a Fulbright Research Fellow at Yale University, where Professor Marie Borroff served as his supervisor. During this time, he became acquainted with E. Talbot Donaldson, Robert D. Stevick, and Fred C. Robinson.

After retiring from the University of Tokyo in 1988, he continued teaching at Tokyo Woman's Christian University until 1995 and later at Gifu Women's University until 2006. In total, his teaching career spanned more than fifty years, dedicated to the study and teaching of English language and literature.

His scholarly achievements covered a wide range of fields: the history of the English language, medieval English literature, English Bible translations (particularly the Wycliffite and King James Bibles), and English lexicography. He also served as editor-in-chief of major reference works such as the nine-volume *Eigogaku Bunken Kaidai* [*Kenkyusha Bibliographical Guide to English Linguistics and Philology*].

Among these, his lifelong study of English Bible translation stands at the center of his academic legacy. His interest began in high school, where he attended Bible lectures by Tadao Yanaihara, former professor and president of the University of Tokyo and a leading disciple of Kanzo Uchimura, who advocated the Non-Church Movement (Mukyokai). In 1950, while recovering from lung surgery, he joined Mukyokai Bible study meetings at the Komoro Sanatorium. His biblical scholarship was rooted not only in rigorous philological research but also in deep Christian faith. His major works include the chapter *"*Eigoseisho no Gengo [*The Language of the English Bible*]*"* in the volume *Eigo no Seisho* [*The English Bible*] (Fuzanbo, 1969); *Kinteiyaku Seisho—Sono Seiritsu to Shoshigakuteki Kaisetsu, Fu AV Yougoshu*, [*The Authorised Version of the English Bible: Philological and Bibliographical Exposition, with AV Glossary*] (Nan'undo, 1982); *Honkokuban Kinteiyaku Seisho—Bunkengakuteki Shoshigakuteki Kaisetsu,* [*A Philological and Bibliographical Introduction to The Holy Bible, a Reprint of the Edition of 1611*] (Kenkyusha, 1985); and *Meiku de Yomu Eigoseisho—Seisho to Eigobunka* [*Reading Famous Phrases in the Bible: The Bible and English Culture*] (Kenkyusha, 2010), all dealing with the language of the King James Bible. It is particularly noteworthy that in his chapter *"*Eigoseisho no Gengo*"* in *Eigo no Seisho,* he moved beyond the traditional focus on morphological variations such as second-person pronouns or verb endings and provided a more comprehensive and modern account of syntax, word order, and other linguistic features of biblical English, while in the other works he offered valuable resources for better understanding of the King James Bible.

As a medievalist, his interests extended to the collation of extant Early Version Wycliffite manuscripts. In 1976 and 1983 he conducted paleographical research in the libraries of Wolfenbüttel, West Germany, and of Oxford and Cambridge. During these periods, he made surveys of more than thirty manuscripts of various Books with a special emphasis on Judges, Ruth, Baruch, Psalms, the Epistle to the Ephesians, and the Book of Amos. He identified inaccuracies in Forshall and Madden's 1850 collated edition, stressing the need for a precise

diplomatic edition of reliable manuscripts and a systematic collation of the rest (*Rising Generation* CXXXVI 6, 1984).

His final book, *Seisho no Eigo no Kenkyu* [*A Study of Bibles in English*] (Kenkyusha, 2016), submitted just a week before his hospitalization, represents the culmination of his research on the King James Bible. This collection of revised articles includes studies of the philological and bibliographical significance of the King James Bible, comparisons of its different editions, Noah Webster's revision, the linguistic features of King James Bible English, and a chronological overview of major English Bible translations. Particularly notable is his balanced evaluation of Webster's revision, in which he highlighted both its merits and shortcomings.

Beyond his work on Bible studies, Professor Terasawa made lasting contributions to lexicography. He was one of the chief editors of *Kenkyusha Shin Eiwa Daijite*n [*Kenkyusha's New English-Japanese Dictionary*] (5th ed., 1980; 6th ed., 2002), responsible for the etymology section. In 1983 while he was a Visiting Fellow at St. Peter's College, Oxford, his expertise in etymology assisted R. W. Burchfield in editing the *Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary* in the area of Japanese loanwords in English. Terasawa's collaboration with Kenkyusha began when Professor Nakajima invited him to work on *Eigo Gogen Shojiten* [*Kenkyusha's Little Dictionary of English Etymology*] (1970), co-edited with Professor Nakajima, the first etymological dictionary of English published in Japan. (For more detail, see the biography of Fumio Nakajima.) Building on this foundation, Terasawa as the editor-in-chief largely expanded the entries from approximately 2,000 to 50,000 and refined the entire framework of the project, which culminated in *Eigo Gogen Jiten* [*The Kenkyusha Dictionary of English Etymology*] (1997). The dictionary sought to provide a balanced account of origins of words and their subsequent historical developments. The support of specialists in Proto-Indo-European, Proto-Germanic and Semitic languages enriched the scholarly account of etymology. It also tried to avoid the simple label 'unknown etymology', instead offering the best available explanation. Its uniqueness lies in providing the first citation year for different definitions of a word and incorporating words and usages in Shakespeare and the Authorized Version of the Bible. This landmark publication was made possible by his exceptional scholarship, leadership and generosity in organizing and managing a large team of lexicographers, as well as Kenkyusha's patience in completing such a long-term undertaking. Shortly after its publication, the dictionary won international recognition: the late Professor Emerita Christian Kay of the University of Glasgow (then director of the Historical Thesaurus of English) drew on its etymological descriptions when editing the thesaurus, praising the dictionary for its accuracy and reliability.

A related publication was *Kotoba no Sono—Eigo no Gogen o tazunete* [*Garden of Words: Exploring English Etymology*] (2004), a collection of essays originally published in journals

such as *Gendai Eigo Kyouiku* [*Modern English Education*] during the 1980s. He also co-edited important reference works such as *Eigoshi Sougou Nenpyou* [*A Comprehensive Chronology for the Study of the English Language*] (Kenkyusha, 1993) and *Eigo Yogo Jiten* [*The Kenkyusha Companion to the English Language and Linguistic Terms*] (2002).

Equally important was the role he played in maintaining the Centre for Medieval English Studies, established by Professor Miyabe at the Komaba campus. His excellence was evident in integrating both academic and administrative work. After succeeding Miyabe as director, he secured government subsidies to run the centre almost every year from 1977 to 1988, collecting publications including microfilms and photocopies of manuscripts, editing and publishing the *Medieval English Studies Newsletter*, and producing bibliographies and keyword studies of Old and Middle English. His ability to take a bird's-eye view of the field was outstanding, as seen in his numerous reviews of newly published dictionaries and series on English language and literature, as well as his state-of-the-art articles on the history of English language studies. He also worked as an editor of *POETICA* and as director of Gogaku Kyouiku Kenkyujo (the Institute for Research in Language Teaching), and served on the Ministry of Education's Textbook Screening Committee, among many other commitments.

Always immaculately dressed in formal suits with a tie and cufflinks, Professor Terasawa embodied the ideal British-style gentleman-scholar. At first glance, he may have appeared stern and distant. While it is true that he was a man of integrity with the utmost academic sincerity and accuracy, never compromising easily, he was in fact gentle and kind to everyone—showing generosity to those who missed deadlines and offering guidance to ensure that no one was left behind.

Professor Terasawa's family also shares a devotion to English. His wife, Nobuko, taught English at Jiyu Gakuen Junior and Senior High Schools. With a range of academic knowledge, including her graduation thesis ("A Short Study of the English Bible: the Poetic Images in the Saying of Jesus"), Nobuko was an unseen collaborator behind much of her husband's work. Their daughter, Coco, worked for Kenkyusha, and their son, Jun, is Professor Emeritus at the University of Tokyo and currently a professor at Aoyama Gakuin University, specializing in English philology—the same field as his father.

(This biography is based on "Yoshio Terasawa—A Biographical Note" in *Philologia Anglica*, 489–494, 1988; Yasuyo Saito, "On the Retirement of Professor Yoshio Terasawa," *Essays and Studies,* 46(1), 207–208, 1995; Harumi Tanabe, "Obituary for Professor Yoshio Terasawa," *MES Japan Newsletter*, 65, 20–21, 2017; *Eigoshi Shinbun* [*The HEL Herald*]*,* Keio History of the English Language Forum, Sept. 8, Extra Edition, 2024, keio.app.box.com/s/kgnffr7xtbckiyegro88x3b4pmqy0y9p.)