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# Preface

## Takami MATSUDA

Professor Toshiyuki Takamiya has been with the Department of English and American Literature since 1971, first as a lecturer, as an associate professor from 1978, then as a full professor since 1985. When he retires next March, he will have served the department for 38 years. Two festschriften in English have already been published in his honour when he reached the memorial age of sixty, as *The Medieval Book and a Modern Collector: Essays in Honour of Toshiyuki Takamiya*, ed. by Takami Matsuda, Richard A. Linenthal and John Scahill (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer / Tokyo: Yushodo, Press, 2004) and as a special issue of the *Book Collector* which appeared in February of the same year. The prefaces to these two volumes touch upon Professor Takamiya as a scholar and a book collector in some detail, and another proposed volume of essays in Japanese entitled *Beyond Medievalism* is scheduled to appear by next March. This florilegium of essays by his former graduate students who now teach at various universities in Japan and abroad will carry an afterword describing Professor Takamiya as a teacher seen by his former students. It therefore seems only appropriate in this special issue of the *Geibun-Kenkyu* that carries essays by his colleagues at Keio (though many of us are also his former students) that I should speak of Professor Takamiya as a colleague.

Since Professors Ando, Iwasaki, and Yamamoto retired in 1998-99, he has led the department as a senior professor although he never

looked 'senior' as far as his outward appearance is concerned; some of us who knew him from early days find him very little changed. Whenever some delicate problem arose in the department, we have depended on him to grasp the nettle, which he did discreetly but firmly. We know Professor Takamiya as a man full of energy and dedication to academic causes. As a teacher, he was never late for his class even by one minute and lectured energetically. He was probably the first professor in the English department of a Japanese university to offer a one-year lecture class on Arthurian literature (including modern Japanese examples of the genre). This course, which he offered almost every year and always attracted a good number of students, certainly contributed to awakening an interest in the medieval world among the undergraduate students. He was also the first, in the early 1980s, to give a seminar in paleography at the graduate school when such a discipline was very difficult to acquire in Japan and most seminars in medieval English literature tended to be philological in their approach.

We cannot in any way underestimate the enormous contribution he made to Keio University as the director of HUMI Project which began in 1996. The idea of going abroad to digitize the Gutenberg Bible in European and American repositories, using a book cradle devised by the project members themselves and a team of student assistants would not have been realized without the close contacts he had established with scholars and librarians abroad. Once this digitizing expedition was successfully under way, he took up the role of a cultural ambassador or a digital 'knight errant' to give lectures on the achievement of the HUMI Project, whenever and wherever he was asked to do so, in Europe, the United States, and also in Australia on one occasion. Keio University cannot thank him enough for the international prestige he brought it when the results of digitization were received with profound thanks by

various European and American libraries, including the British Library. For this and other services to the academic community in promoting close international relationships, he was conferred a honorary doctorate from the University of Sheffield in 1998.

It would be impossible here to detail all his contributions to the academic societies which he served as president and councillor, including the English Literary Society of Japan, Japan Society for Medieval English Studies, International Arthurian Society, Early Book Society and New Chaucer Society. Suffice it to mention that he always had in mind the promotion of research among younger scholars, inviting both established and young medievalists from abroad for lectures and setting up a travel grant from the English Literary Society of Japan for young scholars going abroad to international conferences. He has been serving as the editor-in-chief of *Poetica*, a refereed international journal of linguistic-literary studies, soliciting contributions from scholars in Japan and abroad. He also started an annual academic journal of his own, entitled *The Round Table* (whose volume 23 is expected to appear soon), where the graduate students attending his class were encouraged to publish their first academic paper. For many of them, the journal became a gateway to a future academic career.

Last and foremost, he is a humble scholar. He was always generous with his knowledge and books. One of the first things I did on entering the Keio graduate school was to borrow from him a book I had been looking for some months. He placed his invaluable collection of Middle English manuscripts and early editions at the disposal of any scholars or students who were seriously interested in them, and many medievalists from abroad came to Tokyo for his collection. It was often on such occasions that they agreed to give a talk for the English Department, and thanks to Professor Takamiya's hospitality they came home

with happy memories and often made return visits. His sincerity and seriousness combined with his natural ease in speaking in both Japanese and English attracted many academics and non-academics to visit him, who knew him as a medievalist, a bibliophile, an Arthurian enthusiast, a rugby football lover, or any combination of these. Professor Takamiya was fond of a witty and warm dedicatory verse in Middle English composed by W. W. Skeat in *An English Miscellany Presented to Dr Furnivall in Honour of his Seventy-Fifth Birthday* (1901), based on the Clerk's portrait in the *Canterbury Tales*. The portrait of the Clerk applies just as well to him, who also loved more than anything else to have 'twenty books bound in red and black at his bedside' and always 'taught and learned gladly' ('gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche').