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Preface

Hisayo OGUSHI and Isamu TAKAHASHI

Professor Keiko Kawachi retires from her full professorship at Keio University at the age of sixty-five in March 2018. Her former students and colleagues intend to mark this occasion by presenting a collection of new essays in the form of a special issue of the *Geibun Kenkyu* (Keio Journal of Arts and Letters), all reflecting their high esteem and sincere gratitude. Keiko Kawachi has taught at the Department of English in Keio University for more than thirty years and her academic contributions as a specialist of English novels in general and Oscar Wilde in particular are widely known; this preface therefore will focus upon her less public life.

Keiko was born as the elder daughter of Takeshi Nakamura and his wife Eiko. She spent her childhood in Kobe, Hyogo Prefecture, before she moved to Tokyo on finishing her second year at Stella Maris Elementary School. After graduating Sarugaku Elementary School in Shibuya, Tokyo, she successfully entered into Joshigakuin Junior High School, a prestigious private school for girls. She was always diligent, industrious, and fond of studying; for her parents encouraged their daughters to study because they believed that education was something that nobody could take away from them, and Keiko responded her parents' expectation very well.

Keiko's school life at Joshigakuin, however, lasted only one year. Since her father, who was working for Kawasaki Kisen Shipping Company, was appointed president of its Hong Kong branch, her family moved to the Pearl of the Orient. She attended Royden House School and then transferred to King George V School, where she learned classic English literature more deeply while she was studying for the GCE (General Certificate of Educa-

tion). She also started reading English translations of Russian literature such as Dostoyevsky when she could find a spare time.

After staying four years in Hong Kong, her family came back to Tokyo. It was when student protest movements swelled in full swing. Keiko was re-enrolled in Joshigakuin, starting preparation for entrance examinations for colleges and universities. By then she was an avid reader of novels and her book case was filled with the works by Japanese novelists including Toshio Shimaō, Kazumi Takahashi, Hiroshi Noma, and Takehiko Fukunaga. Those literary works, she recalls, gave her an ample opportunity to think about the meaning of life while keeping up her motivation for entrance exams.

In the spring of 1972 Keiko was on Hiyoshi Campus of Keio University as a freshman of the Faculty of Letters. She was then undecided about her major, vaguely thinking of Japanese or English literature (Russian literature was her third choice, but Keio does not have an appropriate department). It was when she first read a novel by D. H. Lawrence that she felt it was destined. Unfortunately (or fortunately), she experienced a campus lockout almost for a year from the latter half of her freshman year, which gave her time to read novels to her satisfaction. When the campus lockout was over, she was back to Keio to spend the rest of her sophomore year on Mita Campus. She declared her major in English and eventually belonged to the advanced seminar class instructed by the late Professor Shinsuke Ando, a renowned medievalist, but her graduation thesis was, of course, on Lawrence.

In her senior year, Professor Ando advised that she should keep on studying literature at the graduate school, and she followed her mentor's advice. She chose Victorian literature for her research topic as she realized that she needed knowledge on 19th-century literature in order to truly understand the significance of modern English literature. Even though Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy were among her favorites, it was Oscar Wilde that she eventually took up as the target of her literary research. 'Unintelligibility' was the word that occurred to her when she first read Wilde's *De Profundis*; this unintelligibility made Wilde even more attractive to her. During her days as a graduate student, she studied English literature under the tutelage of Professor Shinsuke Ando of Keio University as well as Professors Yoshiyuki Fujikawa and Shigeru Koike, who were invited from another university to teach at Keio; Professor Kichinosuke Ohashi guided her into the world of American literature; this experience widened her perspectives on literature. She finished her doctoral course in 1981,

and started her teaching career as tenured full-time lecturer at the Department of English in the Faculty of Letters, Keio, from April 1982. She was one of the first women lecturers in the almost-one-century-long history of the Faculty.

These years were perhaps the most turbulent period in her private life. She married Masakazu Kawachi in 1980; the eldest daughter was born in 1982; and the younger daughter in 1986, just after she came back from a sabbatical leave in London. Now she cannot even imagine, she says, how she managed to balance her private and public lives — an experience that would help her later when she was appointed a member of the committee for promoting work-life balance in the University.

Keiko has been a teacher of high principles. Her classes are always full of information, and her students cannot possibly forget how rapidly the blackboard got filled with words, both English and Japanese, by her hand, and then how quickly they were erased. Whereas she is strict towards herself, she expects much from her students. It is disciplines, academic as well as social, that she repeatedly emphasized; this was a teaching of her mentor, Professor Ando.

The term which would best describe Keiko as a colleague in the Department of English should be a ‘mediator’. When she joined her own former teachers in the Department, she was not afraid of giving her opinions in staff meetings; on the contrary, she was found very good at ‘reigning’ senior professors’ often wandering talk. After these professors retired, she kindly and properly guided her younger colleagues and, while never hesitant about necessary reforms, was keen on passing down the good old tradition of the Department which had been inherited through generations.

Outside the literary pursuits, Keiko is a great lover of sports. She has been an enthusiastic fan of Softbank Hawks Baseball Team, and always enjoys watching other kinds of sports games. It might be of no great surprise that her two daughters have both been selected members of the national lacrosse team of Japan, though no one could tell whether the mother’s spirit has brought up such daughters or vice versa. Her love for dogs is also very well known among her friends and students. She has never lived without one or more dogs, and her knowledge about them is enormous. She is so devoted to dogs that she once appeared on Mita Campus dressed in black shortly after a former favourite dog had died: she said, with a serious demeanor, ‘for I’m in mourning’.

Professor Kawachi's contributions within and without Keio as a scholar and teacher are widely acknowledged by her students, friends, and colleagues. Above everything, however, she has been a 'reader' of books; she is always found with one in her hand. 'If one cannot enjoy reading a book over and over again, there is no use in reading it at all': so would Keiko proudly declare in one voice with Wilde. She has always enjoyed the profound magic of words, and the overall title for this issue, 'The Decay of Lying?', was first given by herself. The contributors thus explore various aspects of 'lying', 'fake', or 'fabrication', but their admiration for Keiko expressed in this way is sincere and, of course, not a lie.

KEIKO KAWACHI

Date of Birth: 17 February 1953

Education:

Keio University, 1978–1981, PhD candidate

Keio University, 1975–1978, MA in English

Keio University, 1972–1975, BA in English

Joshigakuin High School, 1969–1972

Position Held:

Professor, Faculty of Letters, Keio University, 2005–2018

Associate Professor, Faculty of Letters, Keio University, 1987–2005

Lecturer, Faculty of Letters, Keio University 1982–1987

Related Positions:

Expert Member of the Screening Committee for Research Fellowships for Young Researchers of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, 1999–2000

Judging Member of the Screening Committee for Research Fellowships for Young Researchers of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, 2000–2002

Member of the Board of Directors of the Mita Bungaku-kai, 2007–

Member of the Board of Directors of the Victorian Studies Society of Japan, 2009–2016

President of the Oscar Wilde Society of Japan, 2012–2014

President of the Keio Society of Arts and Letters, 2014–2016

Member of the Editorial Board of the Mita Bungaku-kai, 2017–

(compiled by Isamu Takahashi)