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CONTENTS

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ISHIGURO Taro	Two Features of the Translation Style of the Old English <i>Bede</i>	1
INOUE Yoshiyuki	The Dream in Beckett's <i>Ohio Impromptu</i>	13
TAKANO Kazuko	Current Issues in Teacher Education in Japan	29



## **Two Features of the Translation Style of the Old English *Bede***

**ISHIGURO Taro**



# Two Features of the Translation Style of the Old English *Bede*

ISHIGURO Taro

## 1. Introduction

The *Historia ecclesiastica gentis anglorum* which Bede completed in 731 was translated into English towards the end of the ninth century. It was long believed to have been a work by King Alfred the Great, based upon the attribution to Alfred by later medieval sources<sup>1</sup>, until the end of the nineteenth century (Bately, “Alfred” 114–15). Whether the translation was produced by one translator or more than one translator and whether the translation work was carried out in connection with Alfred’s education program remain vexed questions (Rowley 37–46). Even Dorothy Whitelock changed her mind regarding this Old English (OE) work, who had stated in her lecture read in 1962 that “a single mind was responsible for the form of the work. It does not read like team-work” (“The Old English Bede” 232), and yet she wrote in her 1974 paper that there is a strong possibility that three translators were responsible (“The List” 284). She also retracted her statement about the connection with the king’s program, in a note saying “I would now modify my statement in *After Bede* (Jarrow Lecture 1960), p. 11, that ‘there can be no doubt’ that the translation of Bede was part of the king’s scheme” (“The Old English Bede” 250). The translator of the *Bede* is thought to have been of Mercian origin, from the high frequency of words in the work that are peculiar to Mercian (Lapidge et al., “Bede, OE”; Rowley 37). It is far beyond the scope of this paper to conjecture the identity of the translator or the place of the production, but it will be possible to present one or two aspects of the style of the translation that may help contrast the OE *Bede* with other OE prose translations that are thought to have been made in the same period, at the end of the ninth century or at the beginning of the tenth. This paper reports two such features of the translation style of the OE *Bede* that have been found during my two-year research supported by the Institute of Humanities.

## 2. Ascension phrases

Much of the first book of Bede’s *Historia* is copied from Orosius’s *Historiae*, where the events in imperial Rome are described. Many of the adopted passages are repeated word for word. Both the Latin histories were then translated or adapted into OE separately by two different translators or two groups of translators sometime around the end of the ninth century<sup>2</sup>. Some of the passages shared by the two Latin works were also separately translated, producing two different versions of the same Latin. Comparisons of the wording in the shared passages in the two OE works will evince a contrast in the style of translation between them.

The shared passages mostly set the scene at the beginning of an episode with the formula stating the year after the foundation of Rome and the name of the emperor during whose reign certain events took place. Along with the names of emperors often come expressions meaning that a certain emperor ascended the throne. There are four instances of such formulas found in the passages of Orosius which are copied by Bede:

- (1) Anno ab Vrbe condita DCCXCV Tiberius Claudius ab Augusto quartus *regnum adeptus est* mansitque in eo annis quattuordecim (OROS. Hist.adv.pag. 7.6.1)<sup>3</sup>
- (2) Anno ab Vrbe condita DCCCCXI, Marcus Antoninus Verus quartus decimus ab Augusto *regnum cum Aurelio Commodo fratre suscepit* mansitque in eo annis decem et nouem (OROS. Hist.adv.pag. 7.15.1; BEDA. Hist.eccl. 1.4.24)<sup>4</sup>
- (3) Anno ab Vrbe condita DCCCCXLIII, Seuerus, genere Afer, Tripolitanus ab oppido Lepti ... septimus decimus ab Augusto destitutum *adeptus imperium XVII annis tenuit* (OROS. Hist.adv.pag. 7.17.1; BEDA. Hist.eccl. 1.5.24)<sup>5</sup>
- (4) [Carausius quidam] a Maximiano iussus occidi, *purpuram sumpsit* ac Britannias occupauit (OROS. Hist.adv.pag. 7.25.3; BEDA. Hist.eccl. 1.6.26)<sup>6</sup>

Bede omits the formula in his borrowing from (1). (4) which is not about one of the Roman emperors but about a certain usurper of the imperial power in Britain, still uses a similar formula. (1)-(4) are translated in the OE *Orosius* and the OE *Bede* as in (5)-(8):

- (5) a. Æfter þæm þe Romeburg getimbred wæs vii hunde wintra & xc[v], þa *feng* Tiberius Claudius *to Romana onwalde* (Or 6 4.136.11)<sup>7</sup>  
 b. Ða æfter þon Claudius se casere, se wæs feorþa fram Agosto eft fyrde gelædde on Breotone, & þær butan hefegum gefeohte & blodgyte mycelne dæl þæs landes on anweald onfeng (Bede 1 3.30.16)<sup>8</sup>
- (6) a. Æf[ter] þæm þe Romeburg getimbred wæs dcccc wintra & iii, *feng* Marcus Antonius *to Romana onwalde* mid his breðer Aureliuse (Or 6 13.141.1)<sup>9</sup>  
 b. Ða wæs fram Cristes hidercyme hundteontig & fiftig & six gear, þæt Marcus, oþre naman Antonius, se wæs feowerteoþa fram Agosto þam casere, se *onfeng Romwara rice* mid Aurelia his breðer (Bede 1 4.32.1)<sup>10</sup>
- (7) a. Æfter þæm þe Romeburg wæs getimbred dcccc wintra & xliii, *feng* Seuerus *to Romana onwalde* & hiene hæfde xvii ger (Or 6 15.142.6)<sup>11</sup>  
 b. Ða wæs ymb hundteontig wintra & nigan & hundeahtatig wintra fram Drihtnes menniscnyse, þæt Seuerus casere, se wæs Æffrica cynnes, of þære byrig ðe Lepti hatte, — se wæs seofonteogeða fram Agosto — þæt he *rice onfeng*, & þæt hæfde seofontyne gear (Bede 1 5.32.11)<sup>12</sup>
- (8) a. On þære tide wæron Dioclitie iii cyningas on winnende: Caucarius on Bretlande, & Achileus of Egypta londe, & Marseus of Persum (Or 6 30.147.2)<sup>13</sup>  
 b. & he *onfeng cynegewædum* & com on Breotone (Bede 1 6.32.25)<sup>14</sup>



(5b), (8a) and (8b) do not mention the ascension to the imperial throne. The imperial power is expressed by either *regnum* or *imperium* in (1)-(4), and the act of seizing the power by the verbs *adipisci*, *suscipere*, or *sumere*. The translator of Orosius uses *anweald* for the imperial power and *fon* for the verb with the preposition *to*, forming a phrase in the past tense, *feng ... to Romana anwealde* in (5a), (6a) and (7a). The translator of Bede, on the other hand, employs *rice* for the power and *onfon* for the verb without the preposition *to*, forming *rice onfeng* in (6b) and (7b). He uses the same verb with *cynegewædu* in (8b) though the power usurped here is only that over Britain. These instances from the translations of the shared passages, if small in number, reveal predilections on the part of the OE translators. The tendency is corroborated by examples from the other parts of the works.

The construction *feng to Romana anwealde* is indeed favored by the *Orosius* translator. The sixth book of the OE *Orosius* covers the history of the Roman Empire, in which a number of imperial ascensions are mentioned. The construction *feng to Romana anwealde* in fact predominates in this final book of the translation, numbering 28 occurrences, in comparison with the other form *feng to rice* which is found five times as in (9):

- (9) Æfter þæm þe Romeburg getimbred wæs m wintra & viii, *feng* Gallus Ostilianus *to rice* & hit hæfde ii ger (Or 6 23.144.12)<sup>15</sup>

The *Orosius* translator in either case uses the prefixless verb *fon* instead of *onfon* when he forms the construction. This does not mean, however, that the *Orosius* translator avoided using the prefixed verb *onfon*. He uses it three times in book 6, but not in places where ascension, whether imperial or not, is described. It should also be noted that the use of the reflexive pronoun in dative in the ascension construction is peculiar to the OE *Orosius* as in (10):

- (10) Þæs on þæm seofepan monðe hiene ofslog Othon an mon & *him* to þon anwalde *feng* (Or 6 6.138.2)<sup>16</sup>

The OE translator of Bede, on the other hand, appears to prefer the prefixed verb *onfon* to the prefixless verb *fon* when he records imperial or royal successions, as far as (5)-(8) are concerned. But the first book of the OE *Bede* in which the shared passages are contained has, in addition to four examples of *onfeng (Romwara) rice* including (6b) and (7b), four examples of *feng to rice*. The latter four describe the succession to the throne by a Roman emperor or an Anglo-Saxon king, even though the prefixless verb appears only six times in book 1 while there are 23 occurrences of the prefixed verb in the book. The imperial power is represented by the noun *rice* whether or not the verb has the prefix *on-*.

Now, let us look at the whole work. There are 28 phrases in Bede's entire *Historia* that describe imperial or royal succession to the throne. The Latin phrases vary as the following list with the numbers of occurrence shows, which includes (2) and (3) cited above:

<i>regnum suscipere</i>	7
<i>in regnum succedere</i>	6

regnum accipere	3
in imperium succedere	2
imperium suscipere	2
regno potiri	1
in regnum peruenire	1
in regnum creari	1
regnum adipisci	1
regnum percipere	1
imperium adipisci	1
gubernaculum imperii accipere	1
regnare coepisse	1

Although there is a wide variety in wording, the majority are grouped into two categories, either “to seize the power” (*regnum suscipere/accipere/adipisci/percipere* and *imperium suscipere/adipisci*) or “come to power” (*in regnum succedere/peruenire/creari* and *in imperium succedere*). The noun for the imperial or royal power is either *regnum* or *imperium*. The verb, in contrast, varies significantly.

The OE translator of the work, however, does not diversify in the face of such variety in the Latin. He has translated 25 of those Latin phrases with one of the following three OE phrases:

fon to rice	17
onfon rice	7
becuman to rice	1

The following pairs of examples illustrate the three types:

- (11) a. *Successit autem Sigbercto in regnum Suidhelm* (BEDA. Hist.eccl. 3.22.284)  
 b. *Ƣa feng æfter Sigeberhte to Eastseaxna rice Swiðhelm* (Bede 3 22.228.27)<sup>17</sup>
- (12) a. *Ecce regnum, quod desiderasti, ipso largiente percepisti* (BEDA. Hist.eccl. 2.12.180)  
 b. *& þu þurh his sylene & gife þæm rice onfenge, þe ðu wilnadest* (Bede 2 12.132.25)<sup>18</sup>
- (13) a. *sed etiam eum ut in regnum perueniret adiuuit* (BEDA. Hist.eccl. 2.12.180)  
 b. *ac eac swylce him gefultumade, þæt he to rice becwom* (Bede 2 12.132.03)<sup>19</sup>

The OE phrase in (13b) can be said to be the result of word-for-word translation, the Latin *peruenire* being translated by *becuman*.

The choice of verbs in the ascension phrase shows the same tendency in the OE *Bede* and the OE *Orosius*. The translator of Bede employs *fon* more often than *onfon* as the verb in the phrase. His style is the same as that of the *Orosius* translator in this respect.

The difference appears in the choice of the noun for imperial power. All the books of Bede’s

*Historia* use either *regnum* or *imperium* in the ascension phrase as shown above. The meanings of the two nouns do not seem to differ from each other as far as they are used in a phrase that expresses succession to the throne. No distinction can be observed between a passage where the succession of a Roman emperor is described and one where that of an Anglo-Saxon king is described. Compare the use of *regnum* in (14a) and (14b), and *imperium* in (15a) and (15b):

- (14) a. Marcus Antoninus Uerus ... *regnum* cum Aurelio Commodo fratre suscepit (BEDA. Hist.eccl. 1.4.24)  
 b. Osuald ... *regnum* suscepit (BEDA. Hist.eccl. 3.3.218)
- (15) a. Seuerus ... *imperium* adeptus (BEDA. Hist.eccl. 1.5.24)  
 b. succedens in *imperium* ... Osred (BEDA. Hist.eccl. 5.18.512)

To translate either of these Latin nouns, the OE *Bede* always uses *rice* while the OE *Orosius* uses *anweald* in addition to *rice*. The predilection shown by the OE *Bede* is thus in contrast with the OE *Orosius* in this respect, but it does not make the OE *Bede* a unique work in the choice of the word.

The oldest version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is said to have been compiled at the end of the ninth century, probably in the range of time when the OE *Bede* and the OE *Orosius* are thought to have been produced. The oldest manuscript of the *Chronicle*, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 173, in which the first hand is responsible for the annals up to 891 (Ker 58), was probably written down “at the court of King Alfred the Great” (Lapidge et al., “*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*”). The *Chronicle* naturally contains a number of annals that record the succession of kings. Annals 449–891 record 42 successions, and the majority are expressed by the following four phrases:

fon to rice	34
onfon rice	6
fon to	1
onginnan rixian	1

It is surprising that the *Chronicle* uses the same two phrases that the OE *Bede* uses to express ascension to the throne, and *fon to rice* more often than *onfon rice*. It is also remarkable that the noun that denotes kingship is the same *rice*. The alternative noun *anweald* that denotes the same concept in the phrase and is used by the OE *Orosius* also appears in the same manuscript of the *Chronicle*, but it does so only in the annals of the tenth century (twice each in the entries for 912 and 917), which are found in the portion of the manuscript after that by the first hand. The OE *Bede* is closer to the contemporary portion of the *Chronicle* in the choice of words to express royal ascension.

### 3. Action nouns

In Present-Day English (PDE), the suffix *-ing* is by far the most productive in forming action nouns out of verb stems. It can theoretically affix to any verb stem, from native verbs of Germanic origin as in *singing*, *playing*, and *reading*. The extraordinary productivity of the suffix owes to its

own grammaticalization into the verbal inflectional ending as a sign of gerund. The gerundial use of the *-ing* form is thought to have developed during the 14th century (*OED*, “-ing, suffix 1”)<sup>20</sup>. Almost any verb can form its gerund by affixing the suffix to itself. The gerund may immediately be turned into the verbal noun, though the distinction between the gerund and the verbal noun is not clear-cut<sup>21</sup>. The *-ing* form used as a noun is a gerund if it can take a direct object and if it can be modified by an adverb. The verbal noun often occurs with a prepositional phrase that expresses what would be either the subject or the object of the verb from which it has been derived.

The suffix *-ing* did not have such predominant productivity in OE. It was merely one of the few suffixes that formed action nouns by affixing to verb stems. OE inherited those suffixes from Proto-Germanic. Some had already ceased to be productive long before OE came into being and only their traces can be seen in OE words. Seiichi Suzuki mentions one such suffix, *\*-þi-*, which was “a productive deverbal action noun forming suffix” in Proto-Germanic. The final dental consonants in OE *forwyrht* “sin” and *gemynd* “remembrance” are fossilized forms of the suffix (cf. Gothic *frawaurkjan* “to sin” and *gamunan* “to remember”). Suzuki says many of the derived action nouns underwent concretization (197). PDE has *gift* and *seed*, which were originally action nouns formed from their corresponding verbs, *to give* and *to sow* in PDE forms.

The suffix *-ness* is still a very productive suffix today that forms abstract nouns by affixing mainly to adjectives and participles. Theoretically any adjective, of either Germanic or non-Germanic origin, can take the suffix, in many cases creating such doublets as *clarity—clearness*, *largess—largeness*, *passivity—passiveness*, etc. But it was also one of the more productive suffixes that formed deverbal action nouns in OE, in which the representative spelling is *-nes*. It seems to have been as productive as *-ing*. There are pairs of synonyms extant in the OE corpus that end either of the two suffixes. The *-nes* form is more frequent in some pairs as follows:

ālȳsing (2x)	ālȳsnes (50x)	“redemption”
gecwēmīng (5x)	gecwēmnes (27x)	“satisfaction”
cȳþīng (1x)	cȳþnes (650x)	“testimony”
gehȳring (2x)	gehȳrnes (70x)	“hearing”

Other pairs have the *-ing* forms more prominent:

bærning (15x)	bærnes (6x)	“burning”
cenning (30x)	cennes (9x)	“birth”
fremming (40x)	fremnes (2x)	“doing”

One form is as frequent as the other in one pair: *gȳming* (30x)—*gȳmnes* (28x) “care”<sup>22</sup>.

There are several action nouns formed upon the stem of the verb *byrnan* “to burn” in OE. *Brand* occurs about 50 times in the extant corpus. The word is found “disproportionately freq[uent]ly in poetry” as the *Dictionary of Old English* notes (s.v.), but is not used in early OE prose works including the OE *Bede*. *Bærnet* is another cognate noun that does not appear in early OE, as all of its examples are found in works from the tenth century or later. The most common word for “burn-

ing” in OE seems to have been *bryne*, which occurs about 200 times in both early and late OE. It is found in the OE *Pastoral Care*, the *Gregory’s Dialogues*, the *Orosius*, and the *Bede*. There are also “burning” words formed with *-ing* and *-nes*. The *-ing* form, *bærning*, appears four times in the OE *Gregory’s Dialogues*, and in a few other later works. The *-nes* form, *bærnnes*, however, is only found in the OE *Bede*.

The last two words often translate the same Latin word *incendium*.

- (16) a. ita illic in uno igne non unus est modus *incendii* (GREG.MAG. Dial. 4.45.2)  
 b. swa eac þær in þam hellefyre ne byð na an gemet *þære bærnunge* (GD 4 (C) 45.333.21)<sup>23</sup>
- (17) a. uentus, qui a meridie flans urbi *incendia* sparserat (BEDA. Hist.eccl. 2.7.158)  
 b. se wind sona, se ðe ær suðan bleow & *þa bærnnisse* in þa burg strægd (Bede 2.7.118.12)<sup>24</sup>

There may be some tendency in the OE *Bede* to opt for the *-nes* forms. The OE work is the sole authority for the following *-nes* words: *clypnes*, *(ge)frignes/(ge)frigenes*, and *(ge)hrinenes*. Again, they present a sharp contrast with the *-ing* cognate words used by the *Gregory’s Dialogues*. The hapax legomenon *clypping* “embracing” is used in the *Dialogues* while the only example of *clypnes* is in multiple manuscripts of the *Bede*<sup>25</sup>. The *Dialogues* translator uses *fringing* “questioning” four times, and the *Bede* translator uses *frignes* five times, *gefrignes* once, *frigenes* three times, and *gefrigenes* once. *Hrining* “touch” does not appear in the *Dialogues*. Although limited in number and variation, there seems to be some difference in choice of action nouns on the part of the OE translators. The fact that Werferth, a Mercian bishop of Worcester, is believed to have been commissioned by King Alfred to translate the *Dialogues* makes the contrast with the OE *Bede* even more interesting, since the latter is also believed to be a work by someone with a Mercian background (Lapidge et al., “Werferth” and “Bede, OE”).

#### 4. Conclusion

I have reported above two of the features observable in the OE *Bede* which may suggest the translation style of the OE work. One is that the idiomatic phrases that express ascension to the throne in the OE *Bede* uniformly use *rice* to denote the imperial or royal power that is going to be seized. The phrases are the same as those found in the oldest portion of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. The other remarkable feature is that the OE *Bede* seems to prefer *-nes* words among the options available for action nouns formed out of verb stems, unlike the OE *Gregory’s Dialogues* in which *-ing* forms are chosen to translate the same Latin word.

### Notes

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1. Ælfric writes, about a century later, “*historia anglorum ða ðe Ælfréd cyning of ledene on englisc awende*” (“the *Historia anglorum* which King Alfred translated from Latin into English”) (72). It is William of Malmesbury in the early twelfth century who lists the *Historia* among “the greater part of Roman writings” that he attributes to Alfred (Whitelock, “Prose” 69).
2. Both the OE works are much shorter than the originals, with much of the material having been excised in the “translation” processes. For the general characteristics of the OE *Bede* and *Orosius*, the entries “Bede, OE” and “Orosius, OE Translation of” in Michael Lapidge et al.’s *Encyclopedia* give concise descriptions.
3. Examples are cited according to the method used by the *Dictionary of Old English*. References to Orosius’s *Historiae*, and to Gregory’s *Dialogues* cited below, are indicated by the book, chapter, and section numbers, and those to Bede’s *Historia* by the book, chapter, and page numbers following the editions. All the translations of the examples given in this report, and emphases, are mine. Orosius very often presents chronology and names awry. For example, Claudius started his reign in 794 AUC or AD 41, and the emperor he gives by the name “Marcus Antoninus Verus” in (2) is in fact Marcus Aurelius who jointly reigned with Lucius Verus. For historical accuracy, see A. T. Fear’s notes to his translation of Orosius. OE translations below provide more erroneous information. I translate examples just as they are written in OE: “In the 795th year after the foundation of Rome, Tiberius Claudius assumed the imperial power, the fourth from Augustus, and remained on the throne for fourteen years.”
4. “In the 911th year after the foundation of Rome, Marcus Antoninus Verus took the imperial power with his brother Aurelius Commodus, the fourteenth from Augustus, and remained on the throne for nineteen years.”
5. “In the 944th year after the foundation of Rome, Severus, an African by birth, a Tripolitan from the Town of Leptis ... having assumed the imperial power which had been left abandoned, the seventeenth from Augustus, held the power for seventeen years.”
6. “[A certain Carausius], since Maximianus had ordered him to be killed, seized the purple and ruled the British Isles.”
7. “795 years after the City of Rome was founded, then Tiberius Claudius succeeded to the rule of the Romans.”
8. “Then after that Emperor Claudius, who was the fourth from Augustus, led the troops again into Britain, and there seized the rule of much of the land without heavy fighting and bloodshed.”
9. “903 years after the City of Rome was founded, Marcus Antonius succeeded to the rule of the Romans with his brother Aurelius.”
10. “Then it was 156 years from Christ’s Advent that Marcus, or Antonius by the other name, who was the fourteenth from Emperor Augustus, succeeded to the rule of the Roman citizens with his brother Aurelius.”
11. “943 years after the City of Rome was founded, Severus succeeded to the rule of the Romans and held his power for seventeen years.”
12. “Then it was around 189 winters after the Lord’s incarnation that Emperor Severus, who was of the African race, from the city that was called Lepti, who was the seventeenth from Augustus, succeeded to the throne and held it for seventeen years.”
13. “At that time three kings were fighting against Diocletian: Caucasius in Britain, Achilleus from the land of Egyptians, and Narseus from Persia.” The spellings of these three men are those given in the “Glossary of Proper Names” of Bately’s edition.

14. “And he seized the royal robes and came to Britain.”
15. “1008 years after the City of Rome was founded, Gallus Hostilianus seized the imperial power and held it for two years.” The other four examples are found in Or 6 2.134.11, Or 6 14.141.25, Or 6 16.142.15 and Or 6 20.143.15.
16. “In the seventh month after this, Otho killed a certain man and seized the imperial power.”
17. “Then Swithhelm succeeded Sigebert as king of the East Saxons.”
18. “And you assumed the power which you had wanted, through his gift and donation.”
19. “But it moreover helped him that he came to the throne.”
20. The gerundial use of the verbal noun is beyond the scope of this article. For more detailed observation of its development during the 14th century, see Tajima.
21. For example, Sidney Greenbaum defines the gerund as a “traditional term for a verbal noun, in English a word ending in *-ing*,” but he at the same time writes that the verbal noun is a “category of non-countable abstract noun derived from a verb, in English by adding the suffix *-ing*” and that verbal nouns “contrast with the gerund, which also ends in *-ing*, but is syntactically a verb.”
22. The examples are garnered by going through all the entries in the published portion of the *Dictionary of Old English (DOE)*. The numbers in parentheses are their numbers of occurrence in the extant corpus.
23. “Thus there is not one particular way of burning in the hell fire.”
24. “The wind, which had blown from the south and spread the fire into the city, immediately ...”
25. For the locations of the examples, see the *DOE*, s.vv.

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## **The Dream in Beckett's *Ohio Impromptu***

**INOUE Yoshiyuki**



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### Introduction

When one discusses the dreams represented in the late works of Samuel Beckett, there are at least two important literary movements that must be considered. One of these is German Romanticism, which regarded the dream as an important source of artistic creation<sup>1</sup>, and the other is French surrealism, in which André Breton defined man as ‘*Ce rêveur définitif*’<sup>2</sup>.

When Beckett arrived in Paris in 1929, ‘the work of the Surrealists and other experimental writers was still being published’<sup>3</sup>, including Breton’s 1930 *Second manifeste du surréalisme*. It was during this era that Beckett began writing his first novel, *Dream of Fair to middling Women*. Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake* was also published in 1939, a monumental work which, according to William York Tindall, is ‘a dream’ itself<sup>4</sup>.

During a period such as this, how did Beckett read German Romanticism? More precisely, how did Beckett react to a contemporary of that era? One can conjecture based on his critical study *Proust*, which was strongly influenced by Schopenhauer<sup>5</sup>. We can infer Beckett’s reaction to this philosopher based on a short passage in *Proust*, ‘the world being a projection of the individual’s consciousness (an objectivation of the individual’s will, as Schopenhauer would say)’<sup>6</sup>. The alternation of ‘an objectivation of the individual’s will’ into ‘a projection of the individual’s consciousness’ is vital here, because Beckett adopted film imagery for his modernistic rewriting of Schopenhauer’s ‘veil of Mâyâ’:

The ancient wisdom of the Indian philosophers declares, ‘It is Mâyâ, the veil of deception, which blinds the eyes of mortals, and makes them behold a world of which they cannot say either that it is or that it is not: for it is like a dream; it is like the sunshine on the sand which the traveller takes from afar for water, or the stray piece of rope he mistakes for a snake.’<sup>7</sup>

1 See Eugene Jolas, ‘Romanticism and the Dream’, *transition: a Quarterly Review* No. 24 (June 1936): 109–11. To the same issue, Beckett contributed three poems, ‘Malacoda’, ‘Enueg II’ and ‘Dortmunder’ (*transition* No. 24, 8–10).

2 Qtd. in Sighle Kennedy, *Murphy’s Bed: A Study of Real Sources and Sur-Real Associations in Samuel Beckett’s First Novel* (Lewisburg: Associated UP, 1971), 219–20.

3 Enoch Brater, *Why Beckett* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1989), 18.

4 William York Tindall, *James Joyce: His Way of Interpreting the Modern World* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1950), 51.

5 James Knowlson, *Damned to Fame: The Life of Samuel Beckett* (London: Bloomsbury, 1996), 118.

6 Samuel Beckett, *Proust* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1931), 8.

7 Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea*, R.B. Haldane and J. Kemp, trans. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1883), bk. I, sec. 3.

Beckett's *Ohio Impromptu* itself is comparable to a dream projected on a screen. For instance, instead of curtain, he uses 'fade'<sup>8</sup>, a technical cinematographic term, the modern usage of which is only found in the 'Supplement' volume of the first edition of *The Oxford English Dictionary*<sup>9</sup>.

Another important feature of *Proust* is the question of 'a mobile subject'. Beckett observes, 'The observer infects the observed with his own mobility'<sup>10</sup>, an idea from the most advanced theoretical physics of that era: quantum mechanic's Uncertainty Principle. Beckett began writing *Proust* during the summer of 1930, while an entry for Uncertainty Principle first appeared in *The Oxford English Dictionary* in 1928. A 1931 citation from the *Times Literary Supplement* of the dictionary (the year *Proust* was published) shows this theory's close connection with atomism, 'Perhaps the most remarkable discovery that has been made in connexion with atomic theory is the so-called Uncertainty Principle'<sup>11</sup>. The classical principle that the observed is separate from the observer collapses in the world of atoms. The new theory stated that the observer cannot be detached from the observed; rather, their relationship becomes inseparable. Consequently, plural subjects are formed with the passage of time and corresponding plural objects come into being. Beckett applied this way of thinking to his analysis of 'the multiplicity of Albertine' in *Proust*:

Even this new Albertine is multiple, and just as the most modern application of photography can frame a single church successively in the arcades of all the others and the entire horizon in the arch of a bridge or between two adjacent leaves, thus *decomposing the illusion of a solid object into its manifold component aspects*, so the short journey of his lips to the cheek of Albertine creates ten Albertines, and transforms a human banality into a many-headed goddess.<sup>12</sup>

He goes on to write that this multiplicity does 'not bind into any positive synthesis'<sup>13</sup>, using photography terms and invoking ideas consistent with cubism. It is unknown whether Beckett was interested in that artistic style, but connections have been made with his works. James Knowlson pointed out both that Beckett had an 'interest in the painting of Cézanne'<sup>14</sup>, whose influence on cubism was huge, and that Beckett, in a letter to Thomas McGreevy dated 8 September 1934, mentioned two painters connected to this movement, Cézanne and Georges Braque, 'Cézanne seems to have been the first to see landscape and state it as material of a strictly peculiar order, incommensurable with all human expressions whatsoever'<sup>15</sup>. In the same letter, Beckett compared

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8 Samuel Beckett, *Ohio Impromptu, Collected Shorter Plays* (London: Faber, 1984), 285, 288.

9 See *OED*, Supplement volume, under the entry 'Fade', 7.

10 Beckett, *Proust*, 6.

11 *OED*, 2nd ed., under the entry 'Uncertainty'.

12 Beckett, *Proust*, 34; emphasis added.

13 Beckett, *Proust*, 65.

14 Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 98.

15 *The Letters of Samuel Beckett, 1929–1940*, Vol. I, eds. Martha Dow Fehsenfeld, Lois More Overbeck, George Craig and Dan Gunn (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009), 222; qtd. in Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 196. See also Deirdre Bair, *Samuel Beckett: A Biography* (London: Picador, 1980), 419.

the linoleum floor of his room with 'Braque seen from a great distance'<sup>16</sup>.

In the final chapter of *Mnemosyne*, the art critic Mario Praz, referring to Picasso, Braque, Dali, Eliot, Joyce, etc., illustrated parallels between literature and the visual arts, in which cubism is a central concept. In the case of Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger* (1911), Praz remarks that 'Cézanne told Emile Bernard to "see in nature the cylinder, the sphere, the cone". Picasso represented a figure both *en face* and *en profile* in the same view'<sup>17</sup>. This description by Praz corresponds not only to the geometrical figures that often appear in Beckett's oeuvre but also to two male figures on stage in the play, showing their 'front' and 'profile', respectively<sup>18</sup>.

### Multiplicity of the Dream

The dream scene in *Ohio Impromptu* is recounted as:

In his dreams he had been warned against this change. Seen the dear face and heard the unspoken words, Stay where we were so long alone together, my shade will comfort you.<sup>19</sup>

One of the most fascinating aspects of this scene is its connection with Joyce. One manuscript version includes, 'Stay where you are, Aloysius, my ghost will comfort you'<sup>20</sup>. 'Aloysius' is in fact one of Joyce's middle names. Other elements in the play also seem to allude to Joyce. The two men sitting at a table, one reading, the other listening, recalls the famous dictation scene of Beckett and Joyce depicted by Richard Ellmann in his biography of Joyce<sup>21</sup>. Further, 'a wide brimmed hat' at the centre of the table bears resemblance to a description of Hermes's hat *petasus* in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 'a broad-brimmed hat'<sup>22</sup>. Hermes is 'a dream-god'<sup>23</sup> who plays the role of messenger to the gods, conducting souls into Hades, or *Seelenführer*. Joyce's god was the god of letters, 'Thoth, the god of writers'<sup>24</sup>. The Egyptian Thoth is equivalent to the Greek Hermes, identified by the Romans as Mercury, and Hermes is referred to by Beckett in 'Dante... Bruno. Vico.. Joyce' as 'the prototype of the Egyptian inventor'<sup>25</sup>. This god is also Murphy's god, "'Because

16 *The Letters of Samuel Beckett, 1929–1940*, 220; qtd. in Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 199. See also Samuel Beckett, *Le Monde et le pantalon* (Paris: Minuit, 1990), 33.

17 Mario Praz, *Mnemosyne: Parallels Between Literature and Visual Arts* (London: Oxford UP, 1970), 191.

18 Beckett, *Ohio Impromptu*, 285.

19 Beckett, *Ohio Impromptu*, 286.

20 Samuel Beckett, UoR MS 2259/1, Beckett International Foundation, University of Reading (U.K.), in 'Transcription of the *Ohio Impromptu* Holograph', Morris Beja, S.E. Gontarski, and Pierre Astier, eds. *Samuel Beckett: Humanistic Perspectives* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State UP, 1983), 193.

21 Enoch Brater, *Beyond Minimalism: Beckett's Late Style in the Theater* (New York: Oxford UP, 1987), 129.

22 *The Encyclopaedia Britannica: A Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, Literature and General Information*, 11th ed. (Cambridge: the University Press, 1910), under the entry 'Hermes'. This edition of the encyclopedia was kept in Beckett's personal library (Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 454; Bair, *Samuel Beckett*, 418).

23 *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, under the entry 'Hermes'.

24 William York Tindall, *A Reader's Guide to James Joyce* (New York: Syracuse UP, 1995), 82.

25 Samuel Beckett, 'Dante... Bruno. Vico.. Joyce', *Our Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress* (London: Faber, 1961), 11.

Mercury,” said Murphy, “god of thieves, planet *par excellence* and mine, has no fixed colour”<sup>26</sup>. Indeed, this dramatic space in the play might be reigned over by this god.

The protagonist ‘he’ suffered from insomnia in his youth, the symptoms of which are described on ‘Page forty paragraph four’<sup>27</sup>. The world premiere of *Ohio Impromptu* was in 1981, forty years after Joyce’s death. Joyce had, according to Beckett, ‘the preoccupation with the significance of number’ four<sup>28</sup>. He also, ‘expected the ideal reader suffering from an ideal insomnia to spend his life deciphering’ *Finnegans Wake*<sup>29</sup>. The ‘white nights’ (*nuits blanches*)<sup>30</sup>, are thus another allusion to Joyce. Finally, the ‘joyous eddies’ in the play invoke the symbol of Joyce as drawn by sculptor C. Brancusi: the eddy<sup>31</sup>. In addition, the word ‘Ohio’ itself appears in *Finnegans Wake*<sup>32</sup>, in what is called ‘night lessons’ (part II, chapter II); in this section, we also find a passage alluding to *Our Exagmination Round His Factification For Incamination Of Work In Progress*<sup>33</sup>.

Though these details invoke the shade of Joyce, the dream scene in *Ohio* is not limited to Joyce. Another important aspect of the dream is Ovidian. In considering this point, I have taken inspiration from John Pilling’s *Beckett’s ‘Dream’ Notebook*. It is easy to interpret from the lines, ‘as though turned to stone’ and the two male figures on stage ‘as alike as possible’ that *Ohio* may be related to the story ‘Narcissus and Echo’ in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. Actually, Beckett noted passages from that story in *Notebook*; including, ‘[1101] Echo’s bones were turned to stone. [...] [1103] [...] a body he takes it to be, a shadow it is’<sup>34</sup>. In the Loeb edition of that work, the second passage reads, ‘That which you behold is but the shadow of a reflected form and has no substance of its own’<sup>35</sup>, suggesting that the Listener and the Reader in the play are shadows of one another. Narcissus, looking upon his reflection in the water’s surface, tells it, ‘My becks you answer with your nod; and, as I suspect from the movement by your sweet lips, you answer my words as well, but words which do not reach my ears’<sup>36</sup>. These lines bear a striking similarity to ‘the unspoken words’ in *Ohio*. In a French version of the story, Narcissus even refers to his reflection as ‘*ton visage chéri*’<sup>37</sup>, closely related to the ‘*cher visage*’ in the French translation of *Ohio*<sup>38</sup>. In addition, several lines are reiterated in the play itself. Consequently, one might say that this piece, like *End-*

26 Samuel Beckett, *Murphy* (New York: Grove, 1957), 31-2.

27 Beckett, *Ohio Impromptu*, 286.

28 Beckett, ‘Dante... Bruno’, 21.

29 Tindall, *James Joyce*, 51.

30 Beckett, *Ohio Impromptu*, 286; Samuel Beckett, *Impromptu d’Ohio, Catastrophe et autres dramatiques* (Paris: Minuit, 1986), 63.

31 Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (New York: Oxford UP, 1959), 627. See also the frontispiece of the biography, in which one finds a sketch of eddy by Brancusi, and Joyce’s letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, 27 May, 1929, in which Joyce refers to *Our Exagmination round his Factification* by the sigla  $\circ$ , the ‘Symbol of J.J.’, namely, an eddy by the sculptor, and the name of Beckett (Stuart Gilbert, ed. *Letters of James Joyce*. London: Faber, 1957, 279-80).

32 James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake* (London: Faber, 1939), 305. See also Brater, *Minimalism*, 126-7.

33 Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 626.

34 John Pilling, ed. and annot. *Beckett’s ‘Dream’ Notebook* (Reading: Whiteknights Press, 1999), 156-7.

35 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Frank Justus Miller, trans. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1984), 155.

36 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 157.

37 Ovide, *Les Métamorphoses*, Joseph Chamonard, trad., tome I (Paris: Garnier, 1936), 145.

38 Beckett, *Impromptu d’Ohio*, 62ff.

game, was composed based on 'the echo principle'<sup>39</sup>.

Another important aspect of the dream in *Ohio* is a connection to Dante, in which we again consider the hat on the table. As described above, if this hat were worn by Hermes, it may signify a traveller<sup>40</sup>. The hat laid at the centre of the table may suggest the end of a journey. The Listener and the Reader, who are 'as alike in appearance as possible', would thus be Dante the poet and Dante the pilgrim, after the journey, respectively. Reading a book is a highly suitable representation of 'the thinker' from the Middle Ages. In *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, Ernst Robert Curtius contends that:

For the Middle Ages, all discovery of truth was first reception of traditional authorities, then later – in the thirteenth century – rational reconciliation of authoritative texts. A comprehension of the world was not regarded as a creative function but as an assimilation and retracing of given facts; the symbolic expression of this being reading. The goal and the accomplishment of the thinker is to connect all these facts together in the form of the 'summa'. Dante's cosmic poem is such a summa too.<sup>41</sup>

The 'dear face' in the dream predicts, 'My shade will comfort you' ('*mon ombre te consolera*')<sup>42</sup>. This 'shade' can be compared with Virgil in *The Divine Comedy*. When Dante first sees the poet (in the first canto of the *Inferno*), he cannot tell whether it is a living man or a shade. At that moment, Dante speaks to it the word '*ombra*' (*Inf.* I, 66)<sup>43</sup>. Furthermore, in sending Virgil as a guide for Dante, Beatrice orders him to 'console' her by helping Dante (*Inf.* II, 69). The line 'My shade will comfort you' gives the impression that these episodes were compressed into Beckett's sentence. Near the end of the play, the two men, after reading through 'the sad tale' again, sit 'as though turned to stone'. As mentioned above, this line could be an allusion to Ovid. Alternatively, it might allude to the tragic love of Paolo and Francesca depicted in the 5th canto of the *Inferno*. A reading scene is recounted there, too, which is described by English translator Henry Francis Cary as a 'sad tale'<sup>44</sup>. A copy of this translation was kept in Beckett's personal library<sup>45</sup>. These form the Infernal elements of *Ohio Impromptu*.

There are also Purgatorial aspects to the play. 'He' in the book read by the Reader saunters on the 'Isle of Swans' with 'slow steps'. After gazing at the stream, 'he' turns and slowly retraces his steps. Note that the phrase 'slow steps' was translated by Beckett into '*à pas lents*' in the French edition<sup>46</sup>. This way of walking can be found in *Commedia*, but only in *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, where it appears three times each; specifically, from the 28th canto of *Purgatorio*:

39 Ruby Cohn, *Back to Beckett* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1973), 142.

40 See *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, under the entry 'Hermes'.

41 Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, Willard R. Trask, trans. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953), 326.

42 Beckett, *Ohio Impromptu*, 286; Beckett, *Impromptu d'Ohio*, 62.

43 Dante Alighieri, *La Divina commedia* (Firenze: Adriano Salani, 1927), 38.

44 Dante, *The Vision; or Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1869), 22.

45 Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 841.

46 Beckett, *Impromptu d'Ohio*, 61-2.

Already my slow steps [*i lenti passi*] had carried me  
 Inside the ancient wood, so that I could not  
 Look back to the point at which I had entered it;

And there was a stream which stopped me going further;  
 It bent towards the left, with its little waves,  
 The grass which sprouted along its bank.

[...]

With my feet I came to a stop, but with my eyes  
 I crossed the little river, in order to gaze  
 At the variety of May-time flowers;

And there appeared to me, as there appears,  
 Suddenly, something which, for the wonder of it,  
 Sets every other thought one may have off course,

A girl by herself, who went along  
 Singing, and picking flower after flower,  
 Her entire path being coloured with them. (Purg. XXVIII, 22ff.)<sup>47</sup>

Pay attention to Dante's slow steps, the stream<sup>48</sup>, the girl's picking flowers, and a reference to yellow little flowers '*i gialli fioretti*' (Purg. XXVIII, 55-6). Comparing this scene with passages from Beckett's other works from around the time when *Ohio* was written, a similar picture emerges. The pieces in question are 'One Evening' and *Mal vu mal dit*. The genesis of each occurs in close proximity, the former an early version of the latter<sup>49</sup>. Part of *Ohio* was presumably composed during the period when Beckett was writing *Mal vu mal dit*<sup>50</sup>.

The woman in 'One Evening' loses her way 'in search of wild flowers' and finds a man lying on the ground. The man, like 'he' in *Ohio*, wears a coat and a hat, his hair white:

He was found lying on the ground. No one had missed him. No one was looking for him. An old woman found him. [...] She was straying in search of wild flowers. Yellow only. With no eyes but for these she stumbled on him lying there. [...] He wore greatcoat in spite of the year. [...] Near the head a hat lay askew on the ground. At once on its brim and crown. [...] To catch

47 Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, C. H. Sisson, trans. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993), 320-1.

48 On this stream, the editor Enrico Bianchi notes: '*il rio è il Lete, fiume dell'oblivione*' (qtd. in Dante, *La Divina commedia*, 441). This might have a connection with the 'mindlessness' in *Ohio*.

49 See Samuel Beckett, *The Complete Short Prose*, ed. S.E. Gontarski (New York: Grove, 1995), 291.

50 Cf. Pierre Astier, 'Beckett's *Ohio Impromptu*: A View from the Isle of Swans', *Modern Drama* 25, no. 3 (Sept., 1982): 332-3.



an eye searching from afar there was only the white head. [...] It is to reflower the grave she strays in search of the flowers he had loved.<sup>51</sup>

As far as the flower and the grave are concerned, the experience of the old woman in *Mal vu mal dit* is similar to that of the woman in the prose. The setting of the novel is described:

The cabin. Its situation. Careful. On. At the inexistent centre of a formless place. Rather more circular than otherwise finally. Flat to be sure.

[...]

The two zones [of stones and pastures] form a roughly circular whole. As though outlined by a trembling hand. Diameter. Careful. Say one furlong. On an average. Beyond the unknown.

[...]

From the stones [the old woman] steps down into the pastures. As from one tier of a circus to the next.<sup>52</sup>

In the 28th canto of *Purgatorio* quoted above, Dante sees the girl Matelda, in the Terrestrial Paradise. Comparing this place with the land of *Mal vu mal dit*, one can infer that the concentric fictional place may be located nearby (cf. Botticelli's drawing for *Purg.* I). It may be that Beckett, while composing these pieces, bore in mind this Terrestrial Paradise, and 'decomposed [it] into its manifold component aspects'. Thus, the play has Purgatorial associations.

Finally, I will illuminate the feature of *Paradiso* in *Ohio*.

The tones of God are faintly perceptible in 'the unspoken words' of the dream, a phrase recalling *Of the Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis. Mary Bryden has described Kempis's importance in *Samuel Beckett and the Idea of God*, observing that Beckett copied passages from that book in his 'Dream' *Notebook*. For example:

[589] {God's sounding (whisper)  
 {Venas divini susurri

Kempis, III, i; Ingram, 64.<sup>53</sup>

51 Samuel Beckett, 'One Evening', *The Complete Short Prose*, 253-4.

52 Samuel Beckett, *Ill Seen Ill Said* (London: Calder, 1982), 8, 9, 27.

53 Pilling, *Beckett's 'Dream' Notebook*, 85; cf. Mary Bryden, *Samuel Beckett and the Idea of God* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), 84-7.

Thus, Beckett regarded the words of God as low, gently humming and murmuring sounds<sup>54</sup>, close to ‘the unspoken words’.

The phrase ‘heard the unspoken words’ strongly resembles *the Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, which recounts the story of a man who saw heaven, where the words of God must not be uttered, ‘How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter’<sup>55</sup>. In the image of a man trying to thread a needle in an initial *Ohio* manuscript<sup>56</sup>, another element of the Kingdom of God is discernible, ‘And again I say to you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God’<sup>57</sup>. These details hint at the kingdom of God in the line ‘heard the unspoken words’.

A decisive element evoking *Paradiso*, however, is the two uses of the word ‘volume’ in the play<sup>58</sup>. It is obvious that this ‘volume’ is the equivalent of a spool from a tape recorder manipulated by Krapp in *Krapp’s Last Tape*, because ‘volume’ originally meant a roll, and in the holograph of *Ohio*, a man resembling Krapp reads a book while sipping<sup>59</sup>. Beckett must have known that the roll also symbolises the heavens, because:

Belacqua at one point looks up and sees that ‘the night sky was stretched like a skin’ (*DFMW*, p. 27). In the corresponding passage in *Confessions* (which Beckett copied into his notebook), Augustine states: ‘For heaven shall be folded up like a scroll; and now is it stretched over us like a skin’ (*CONF*, Book 13, p. 321). Given his knowledge of the scriptures, Beckett would also have been alive to the many biblical quotations and resonances which underpin the *Confessions*. In this case, the cross-textual echoes are with the Books of Isaiah – ‘The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll’ (Isaiah 34:4) – and Revelation: ‘And the heavens departed as a scroll when it is rolled together’. (Revelation 6:14).<sup>60</sup>

Once ‘volume’ is put into the context of *Paradiso*, it stands for a sphere of the heavens:

From the heavens of the fixed stars [Dante] looks out upon the planets and, lowest of all, the earth. The tellurian and sublunary shrink to an insignificant part of the universe, to a quire in the volume of the cosmos. [...]

In comparison with this ‘quire’ the several celestial spheres are ‘volumes’. The ninth – the *Primum Mobile* – wraps them all round like a royal mantle (*Par.*, XXIII, 112f.):

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54 Such whispers surface again in *Nacht und Träume*: ‘Softly hummed, male voice, last 7 bars of Schubert’s *Lied, Nacht und Träume*’ (Beckett, *Nacht und Träume, Collected Shorter Plays*, 305). In this television play, too, dreams have an important role.

55 *2 Corinthians* 12: 4; emphasis added.

56 Samuel Beckett, UoR MS 2930, The Beckett International Foundation, Reading, U.K.

57 *St. Matthew* 19: 24.

58 Beckett, *Ohio Impromptu*, 287.

59 See ‘Transcription of the *Ohio Impromptu* Holograph’, Beja, *et al.*, eds. *Samuel Beckett*, 192–3.

60 Bryden, *Samuel Beckett and the Idea of God*, 88–9.

*Lo real manto di tutti i volumi*  
*Del mondo [...]*<sup>61</sup>

The word 'volume' is used by Dante almost exclusively in *Paradiso*. An exception is when Dante refers to the writing of Virgil in the first canto of *Inferno* (I, 84). So, with his use of 'volume', to which canto of the *Commedia* is Beckett hinting? In my view, it is the final canto of *Paradiso*, in which Dante ultimately sees God but cannot express this with earthly words. At that moment, and for the last time, the poet uses the book as a symbol, comparing his experience to the sweetness of dreams:

And from then on my vision rose to heights  
 higher than words, which fail before such sight,  
 and memory fails, too, at such extremes.

As he who sees things in a dream and wakes  
 to feel the passion of the dream still there  
 although no part of it remains in mind,

just such am I: my vision fades and all  
 but ceases, yet the sweetness born of it  
 I still can feel distilling in my heart. (Par. XXXIII, 55ff.)<sup>62</sup>

Following this passage, Dante illustrates his beholding of God using a book as a symbol:

I saw gathered there in the depth of it,  
 Bound up by love into a single volume,  
 All the leaves scattered through the universe. (Par. XXXIII, 85ff.)<sup>63</sup>

Curtius stresses the vital importance that the book-as-symbol assumes at this crucial moment:

A series of spiritual illuminations – the river of light, the sea of light, the heavenly rose, the Virgin Mary – leads upward to the beholding of the Eternal Light. Here Dante's vision is consummated. It shows him a spiritual cosmos held together by the bond of love. What he sees is at once a simple light and the wealth of all ideas, forms, and beings. How is he to describe it? Once again and for the last time, in the highest and most sacred ecstasy, Dante employs the symbolism of the book. All that has been scattered throughout the entire universe, that has been separated and dissevered, like loose quaderni, is now 'bound in one volume' – by love. [...] The book – *in quo totum continetur* – is the Godhead. The book is the symbol of the

61 Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, 331.

62 Dante, *Paradise, The Divine Comedy*, Mark Musa, trans. (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1986), 392.

63 Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, Sisson, trans., 498.

highest salvation and the highest value.<sup>64</sup>

This view of the ‘volume’ is indisputably opposite to Beckett’s ‘Profounds of mind [...] Whither no light can reach’<sup>65</sup> in the play. Nonetheless, it seems wrong to argue that *Ohio* has no relationship with *Paradiso*, because Beckett, as a parody of Dante’s ‘*rosa sempiterna*’<sup>66</sup>, expressed ‘sempiternal penumbra’ in the ‘Addenda’ to *Watt*<sup>67</sup>. This corresponds precisely with Beckett’s vision of the dark in his play.

## The Centre Lost

Herein, we have explored the heterogeneity of the dream in *Ohio Impromptu* in connection with Joyce, Ovid and Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, suggesting Beckett’s predisposition with avoiding ‘neat identifications’, which causes great difficulty in determining the centre in his world. This attitude is suggested by Beckett’s paradoxical view of Purgatory in ‘Dante... Bruno’, in which he compares Dante’s Purgatory with Joyce’s:

A last word about Purgatories. Dante’s is conical and consequently implies culmination. Mr. Joyce’s is spherical and excludes culmination. In the one there is ascent from real vegetation – Ante-purgatory, to ideal vegetation – Terrestrial Paradise: in the other there is no ascent and no ideal vegetation. In the one, absolute progression and a guaranteed consummation: in the other, flux – progression or retrogression, and an apparent consummation. In the one movement is unidirectional, and a step forward represents a net advance: in the other movement is non-directional – or multi-directional, and a step forward is, by definition, a step back. [...] Sin is an impediment to movement up the cone, and a condition of movement round the sphere. In what sense, then, is Mr. Joyce’s work purgatorial? In the absolute absence of the Absolute.<sup>68</sup>

This conceptualisation of Purgatory seems strange indeed, because sphericity is usually attributed to the nature of God. Beckett certainly knew this, because ‘All centre and no circumference’<sup>69</sup> in *Murphy* is a variation on the famous definition of God in *Hermetica*, ‘*Deus est sphaera cujus centrum ubique, circumferentia nusquam*’<sup>70</sup>. He must also have been aware that in the Pythagorean construction of the sphere, the dodecahedron ‘of all the regular solids, approaches most nearly to the sphere’, in a source book on early Greek philosophy for *Murphy*, John Burnet’s *Greek Philos-*

64 Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, 332.

65 Beckett, *Ohio Impromptu*, 288.

66 *Par.* XXX, 124.

67 Samuel Beckett, *Watt* (London: Calder, 1963), 248; qtd. in Rubin Rabinovitz, *The Development of Samuel Beckett’s Fiction* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1984), 167.

68 Beckett, ‘Dante... Bruno’, 21–2.

69 Beckett, *Murphy*, 60.

70 Qtd. in Georges Poulet, *Les Métamorphoses du cercle* (Paris: Plon, 1961), III.

ophy<sup>71</sup>. Beckett's discussion of the dodecahedron in 'Les Deux besoins' is based partly on Burnet's treatment of Pythagoras in the book<sup>72</sup>; in referring to this in his essay, Beckett renders it a 'divine figure'<sup>73</sup>. Despite this, however, he assigns the sphere to Purgatory, at which point Beckett's divinity diverges markedly from Dante's.

In *Les Métamorphoses du cercle*, Georges Poulet has brilliantly shown that Dante's deity consists of a circle and its centre. 'La divinité dantesque', according to the critic, is symbolised by an absolute centre and an absolute circle:

Au chant XIV du *Paradis* Dante se sert de l'image suivante:

"Du centre à la circonférence, et de même de la circonférence au centre, l'eau se meut dans un vase rond, suivant que celui-ci est frappé du dedans ou du dehors."

Comme l'eau d'un vase se meut indifféremment vers la périphérie ou vers le centre, l'âme du poète se meut vers un Dieu qui circonscrit tout, ainsi que vers un Dieu qui est au centre de tout. Ce double caractère de centralité absolue et de circularité absolue que possède la divinité dantesque, se manifeste dans une série de passages qui aboutissent finalement à la vision béatifique de Dieu sous la forme d'un cercle et d'un point. Dieu, dit Dante, est *il punto, A cui tutti li tempi son presenti*, le point auquel tous les temps sont présents; *Ove s'appunta ogni Ubi ed ogni Quando*, auquel s'appointent chaque lieu et chaque moment.<sup>74</sup>

The two passages above in *Paradiso* which Poulet quotes are *Par.* XVII, 18 and *Par.* XXIX, 12. Interestingly, the latter was copied by Beckett himself into his 'Dream' *Notebook*<sup>75</sup>. Nevertheless, he did not ascribe the absolute centre to the Dantesque point, making the Absolute non-existent<sup>76</sup>. In other words, keeping the divine form of the sphere unbroken, Beckett instead introduced flux. Hence the description of the third zone of 'Murphy's mind':

The third, the dark, was a flux of forms, a perpetual coming together and falling asunder of forms. [...] The dark neither elements nor states, nothing but forms becoming and crumbling into the fragments of a new becoming, without love or hate or any intelligible principle of change. Here there was nothing but commotion and the pure forms of commotion. Here he

71 John Burnet, *Greek Philosophy* (London: Macmillan, 1968), 43. I have pointed out this fact in my essay on Beckett and Pre-Socratic and Middle Ages philosophers, 'Three Dialogues on Samuel Beckett', *Tosho-no-fu* (Tokyo: Meiji University Library, March 1998), 129-32.

72 Burnet, *Greek Philosophy*, chap. II, sec. 37. A diagram in Beckett's essay, however, is not a pentagram as can be seen in *Greek Philosophy*, but Solomon's seal (Samuel Beckett, 'Les Deux besoins', *Disjecta*, 56).

73 Beckett, 'Les Deux besoins', 56.

74 Poulet, *Les Métamorphoses du cercle*, VI.

75 Pilling, *Beckett's 'Dream' Notebook*, 153.

76 In *Watt*, a picture depicting a circle and a centre is on the wall of Arskine's room, in which the circle is broken, with the centre wandering (Beckett, *Watt*, 126-7). Regarding this passage, Lucien Dällenbach points out 'the inability to fix the point' and 'the image of a "fallen" centre' in the novel (Dällenbach, *The Mirror in the Text*. Jeremy Whiteley with Emma Hughes, trans. Cambridge: Polity, 1989, 104-5).

was not free, but a mote in the dark of absolute freedom. He did not move, he was a point in the ceaseless unconditioned generation and passing away of line.

Matrix of surds.<sup>77</sup>

This ‘zone’ has already been discussed; I simply emphasise the importance of the pre-Socratic philosophers: Heraclitus, Democritus and Pythagoras<sup>78</sup>. Empedocles is negatively referred to, ‘without love or hate’<sup>79</sup>. Beckett’s admiration for Heraclitus is obvious in *More Pricks Than Kicks*<sup>80</sup>, and the notion of flux in ‘Dante... Bruno’ surfaces again here. His philosophy denies identity, because one ‘cannot step twice into the same river’<sup>81</sup>. Heraclitus also states that, ‘the way up and the way down [are] one and the same’<sup>82</sup>. Consequently, an ascending step toward *Paradiso* is simultaneously a descending step toward *Inferno*. Opposite directions coincide, combined ‘On this earth that is Purgatory’<sup>83</sup>.

With regard to Democritus, scholars have noted the importance of his atomism<sup>84</sup>. In this case, the word ‘mote’, according to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, is an obsolete term for atom<sup>85</sup>. More importantly, Michael Mooney has indicated that Democritus belongs to the genealogy of scepticism<sup>86</sup>. It is worth emphasising that Lucky’s words in *Waiting for Godot*, ‘divine apathia divine athambia divine aphasia’<sup>87</sup>, are based on the same sceptical tradition<sup>88</sup>. Beckett’s attitude in which he, quoting St. Augustine on two thieves, ‘take[s] no sides’<sup>89</sup>, implies a kind of aphasia, ‘refusal

77 Beckett, *Murphy*, 112.

78 Cf. Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 218–9.

79 Cf. Archibald B.D. Alexander, *A Short History of Philosophy* (Glasgow: James Maclehose and Sons, 1907), 24–5. See also John Fletcher, *Samuel Beckett’s Art* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1967), 123–4.

80 Samuel Beckett, *More Pricks Than Kicks* (London: Calder and Boyars, 1970), 176.

81 Burnet, *Greek Philosophy*, 50. See also Beckett, *Le Monde et le pantalon*, 36. Estragon in *En attendant Godot* says: ‘On ne descend pas deux fois dans le même pus’ (Samuel Beckett, *En attendant Godot*. Paris: Minuit, 1968, 102).

82 Burnet, *Greek Philosophy*, 48.

83 Beckett, ‘Dante... Bruno’, 22. Beckett also puts forth a similar idea in his German letter: ‘Himmelfahrt und Höllensturz sind eins und dasselbe’ (Beckett, ‘German Letter of 1937’, *Disjecta*, 53).

84 Alice and Kenneth Hamilton, ‘The Guffaw of the Abderite’, *Condemned to Life: The World of Samuel Beckett* (Grand Rapids: William Eerdmans, 1976), 59–73; Sylvie Debevec Henning, ‘The guffaw of the Abderite: *Murphy* and the Democritean universe’, *Journal of Beckett Studies*, Number 10 (1985): 5–20; Matthew Feldman, *Beckett’s Books: A Cultural History of Samuel Beckett’s ‘Interwar Notes’* (London: Continuum, 2006), 57–62; Peter Fifield, ‘“Of being—or remaining”: Beckett and Early Greek Philosophy’, Matthew Feldman and Karim Mamdani, eds. *Beckett / Philosophy* (Stuttgart: *ibidem*, 2015), 127–49.

85 See *OED*, ‘Mote’, 1, d, and Samuel Beckett, *Murphy* (Paris: Minuit, 1965), 84–5.

86 Michael E. Mooney, ‘Presocratic Scepticism: Samuel Beckett’s *Murphy* Reconsidered’, *ELH*, Vol. 49 (1982), 214–34.

87 Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot* (London: Faber, 1956), 42.

88 See *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, under the entry ‘Pyrrho of Elis’. The word ‘aporetics’ in *Malone Dies* (London: Calder, 1958, 3) is etymologically applied to this father of scepticism, Pyrrho. See *OED* under the entry ‘Aporetic’. See also Pierre Larrouse, *Le Grand dictionnaire universel* (Paris: Administration grand dictionnaire universel, s.d.), under the entry ‘Atomisme’, in which ‘athambie’ is described as a ‘détachement de toute crainte’ in connection with Democritus, and André Lalande, *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie* (Paris: Alcan, 1932) under the entry ‘Ataraxie’. The latter was kept in Beckett’s personal library (Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 843).

89 Qtd. in ‘A Personal Chronicle’, in Alan Schneider, ‘Waiting for Beckett’, anon. ed. *Beckett at 60: A Festschrift* (London: Calder and Boyars, 1967), 34.

to speak, non-committal silence'<sup>90</sup>. Therefore, Democritus is crucial for not only atomism but also scepticism. In addition, the name Democritus, along with 'little wearish old man', cited by Beckett in his 'Dream' *Notebook* from Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*<sup>91</sup>, recalls Krapp, as he depicts this character as 'a wearish old man'<sup>92</sup>. It is a curious coincidence that the word 'den', in which Krapp dwells, means atom in Democritus<sup>93</sup>. These details clearly show the importance of Democritus in Beckett's writing. Consequently, instead of the Dantean centre, Murphy holds in mind the Democritean scepticism with an infinite number of atoms moving about 'in a tumult of non-Newtonian motion'<sup>94</sup>.

Nor should we neglect the significance of Pythagoras. Although we have herein examined the multiple meanings of 'the unspoken words' in *Ohio*, there is yet another potential interpretation. Beckett translated this line into '*mots muets*' in the French version: they cannot be heard. Suitable notions for sense are Lat. *surdus* or Gr. *αλογος*. The heavenly words of God are thus incommensurable with earthly ones; they are beyond human words and, speechless, cannot be heard. *Surdus* and *αλογος* are also irrational numbers. The dramatic space of *Ohio* is therefore thronged with the 'Matrix of surds', suggesting that the play is performed in the third zone of 'Murphy's mind'. Moreover, the deepest areas of the minds of the two men in the book are rendered as 'mindlessness'<sup>95</sup>. When memory is denied, 'Nothing is left to tell'<sup>96</sup>. This nothingness agrees perfectly with the 'hollow sphere' of 'Murphy's mind', suggesting the Democritean void or *κενόν*.

From the beginning of his writing career, Beckett was deeply imbued with scepticism:

Take the word 'doubt': It gives us hardly any sensuous suggestion of hesitancy, of the necessity for choice, of static irresolution. Whereas the German 'Zweifel' does, and, in lesser degree, the Italian 'dubitare'. Mr. Joyce recognises how inadequate 'doubt' is to express a state of extreme uncertainty, and replaces it by 'in twosome twiminds'.<sup>97</sup>

When the two men on stage look at one another with 'expressionless' faces at the end of the play, they are in stark contrast to, for instance, the jubilant reaction of a young child discovering its reflection in a mirror<sup>98</sup>. Presenting the men in their 'twosome twiminds' in the last moment of the play, Beckett briefly displays his deep-seated scepticism.

90 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, under the entry 'Pyrrho of Elis'.

91 Pilling, *Beckett's 'Dream' Notebook*, 104.

92 Beckett, *Krapp's Last Tape, Collected Shorter Plays*, 55.

93 See Diels und Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1956), A. 49; Kathleen Freeman, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1946), 303-4.

94 Beckett, *Murphy* (1957), 113.

95 Beckett, *Ohio Impromptu*, 288.

96 Beckett, *Ohio Impromptu*, 288.

97 Beckett, 'Dante... Bruno', 15; emphasis added.

98 See Jacques Lacan, 'Le Stade du miroir comme formateur de la fonction du Je, telle qu'elle nous est révélée dans l'expérience psychanalytique', *Écrits* (Paris: Seuil, 1966), 94.

## Conclusion

The Heraclitian flux, the Pythagorean surds and the Democritian atoms and scepticism are all deeply ingrained in Beckett's works. Consequently, the Dantean centre is removed from the circle, giving rise to ceaseless atomic particles and dissonances in the cracked Godhead. The observer is destined to infect the observed with his or her own mobility, as in *Proust*. Hence, there is a fragmentary multiplicity with no centre. The 'dear face' in the *Ohio* dream can be Joyce's, a self-reflection as on the surface of the water, Beatrice's, God's, or none of these. By investigating the coexistence of the multiple elements of his play's dream, I have endeavoured to show Beckett's modernistic treatment of the dream in *Ohio Impromptu*.

\*This paper was originally delivered at the Beckett Seminar, held by the Beckett International Foundation, the University of Reading, U.K., in June 2000. It is totally revised with notes added.



## **Current Issues in Teacher Education in Japan**

**TAKANO Kazuko**



# Current Issues in Teacher Education in Japan

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In Japan, teacher education has been a part of every education reform, because any reform cannot be brought to realisation without the work of teachers who share time with children in schools. The position of teachers in education reforms inevitably has a duality- they are the bearers of education reform implementation at the margin and the targets of education reform (Kudomi, 2008).

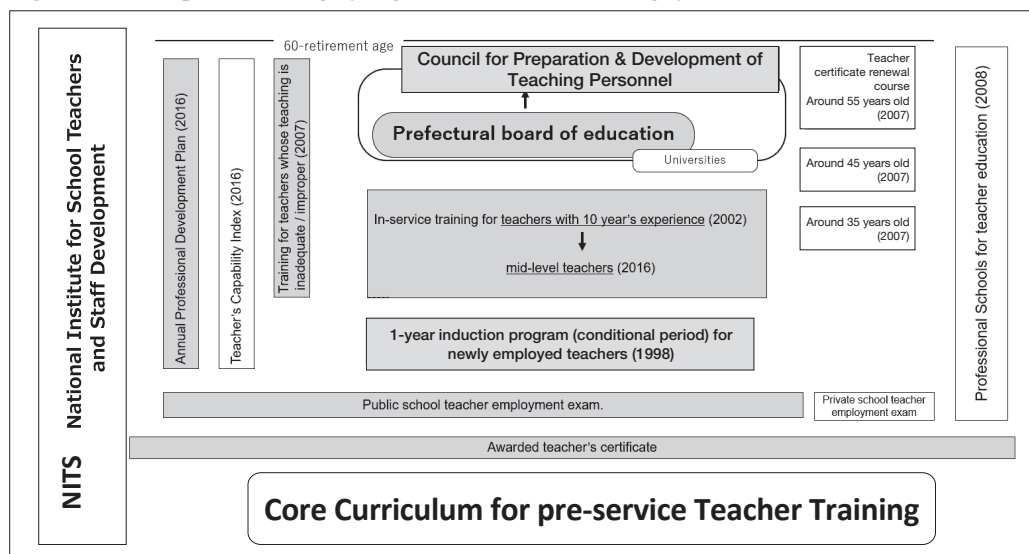
This article is composed of three parts. First, I will overview the reforms implemented in the teacher education system over the past three decades, which were brought about mainly by the amendments to the Educational Personnel Certification Act and the Act for Special Regulations Concerning Educational Public Service Personnel. Second, based on the data, I will explain how both the shape of the teaching profession and teachers' working conditions have changed. Finally, I will highlight the current problems we are facing and discuss what is needed to address them.

## **I. The reforms implemented over the past three decades**

In Japan, a student teacher receives their teacher certificate usually when they graduate from university, at the age of 22. On passing the teacher employment examination, they enter the teaching profession. The retirement age of public school teachers is set at 60 years, and therefore, a teaching career is for nearly 40 years.

In the past 30 years, a highly organised system of in-service training that covers a teacher's entire teaching career has been steadily developed (Figure 1). This system includes a one-year induction programme (conditional probation period) for newly employed teachers (1988; Act amendment year), in-service training for 'teachers with 10 years' experience' (2002; altered to in-service training for 'mid-level teachers' in 2016), a systematic plan for the development of in-service teachers (2002), teacher certificate renewal system (2007), additional training for teachers whose teaching is found to be inadequate or improper (2007), and professional schools for teacher education that provide high-level professional training at both pre- and in-service stages (2008).

**Figure 1. Development of a highly organised in-service training system**



Apart from the teacher certificate renewal system and the development of professional schools for teacher education, the remaining (=shaded parts) fall under the responsibilities of those who appoint teachers and teachers in public schools are appointed by the prefectural boards of education. Thus, the prefectural boards of education have become very important for teachers' in-service training.

Moreover, following the 2016 Act amendments, each prefectural board of education establishes the Council for Preparation and Development of Teaching Personnel, identifies the Teachers' Capability Index (Capability Index for the Enhancement of the Quality of School Principals and Teachers) after consulting with the Council, and formulates an annual professional development plan that corresponds with the Teachers' Capability Index. Such a highly organised system is now established for public school teachers.

Now I will examine the history of teacher training in Japan. Since the post-war reform, the teacher training system in Japan has been based on two principles: 'teacher training in universities' and the 'open system'. These principles were confirmed after a reflection on the pre-war 'closed' Normal School system.

The principle of 'teacher training in universities', which means not in normal schools, came with the ideal or desire for the following:

- Academic freedom and autonomy, and
- Degree-level subject knowledge and pedagogical knowledge.

The 'open system' allows any higher education institution to conduct pre-service teacher training, provided that the Minister of Education approves the course offered by the institution. This means that the provision of pre-service training should not be limited to normal school-type institutions as it was before and during World War II. The curriculum for teachers' pre-service

training was set by the Act and other regulations, and these specify the mandatory subjects and the required number of credits, and today, the newly introduced Core Curriculum, which I will mention later.

The ‘open system’ is comprised of a large variety of pre-service training providers. As for the education level, they can be graduate schools, universities, or junior college, and for institution type, they can be national, public, or private. Depending on the institution type, gaining a teacher’s certificate is either obligatory for the students or an option at graduation, and all of the institutions can provide teacher training.

According to Professor Iwata, there are two types of teacher training providers: Type A and Type B (Iwata, 2013).

Type A institutions, which originated as pre-World War II normal schools, are funded by the national government and specialise in teacher training. Type B institutions include private or public universities with optional courses for pre-service teacher training. Type A national universities are regarded as core or mainstream teacher training providers in Japan, remain strongly present in all prefectures, and there are 44 Type A institutions in Japan. The teacher training policy was formed with Type A institutions in mind, and their admission quota has been directly and strongly controlled by the national government.

Conversely, there has been no national control of the number of Type B institutions providing teacher training. Table 1 illustrates the number of pre-service teacher training providers. The overwhelming majority of the teacher training providers are private institutions. National universities comprise both Type A and Type B institutions, so the total number is more than 44. It is easy to see that the 44 Type A national universities are the minority type of teacher training provider.

**Table 1. Number of pre-service teacher training providers (May 2016)**

Graduate Schools (Master’s degree)	National	78	Total 433
	Public	40	
	Private	315	
Universities (Bachelor’s degree)	National	76	605
	Public	60	
	Private	469	
Junior Colleges (Associate degree)	National	0	241
	Public	10	
	Private	231	

Source: MEXT

As a result, under the ‘open system’, there has always been a major gap between the annual number of teacher certificates conferred and the number of newly employed teachers. One example is illustrated in Table 2.

**Table 2. Number of teacher certificates conferred and the number of applicants who passed the employment exam.**

	Number of teacher certificates conferred <sup>※1</sup> (FY2016)	Number of applicants who passed the public school teacher employment exam and were hired <sup>※2</sup> (FY2017)
Elementary school	28,648	15,019
Junior high school	50,077	7,757
Senior high school	62,666	4,827
Special needs school	11,008	2,797

※1 Special licenses and provisional certificates are not included.

※2 Number of hired teachers by June 1, 2017.

Source: MEXT

This situation has been criticised because of factors such as an over-supply of teachers' certificate holders, wasteful resource expenditure, and a reduction in the supply of high-quality teachers. Subsequently, there has been a call for 'quality assurance'. The main target was Type B institutions, which are private universities as the main source of teachers' certificate.

As for 'quality assurance', there were two main measures until 2016. First, the minimum conditions for acquiring the teacher certificate have increased over the past 30 years. Second, from the 2000s to the mid-2010s, management reinforcement for the course approval system was set as a mechanism for nationwide 'quality assurance' (Iwata, 2015). Furthermore, in 2017, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) introduced the first nationwide standards for pre-service teacher training course curriculums. The course re-approval under this standard was carried out in 2018-2019.

**Table 3. Where did the newly employed public school teachers come from?**

	1979	2016
Type A	41.6%	26.6%
Type B	42.9	61.8
Graduate schools	3.1	2.3
Junior Colleges	12.4	9.3

Source: MEXT

Table 3 indicates the academic backgrounds of newly employed public school teachers. It is clear that the Type A institutions are now not the main public school teacher providers in terms of quantity.

This is the result of teacher training and higher education policies as a whole. Difficult circumstances have continued for Type A institutions over the last 30 years because higher education policies have targeted Type A institutions for the reduction of admission quotas in national universities.

Until the late 1980s, the higher education policy in Japan adopted 'higher education planning'. In the 1990s, this turned into 'market principles' with deregulation and competition, and be-

tween 1998 and 2000, the admission quota for Type A institutions was reduced by 5,000. In 2004, the national universities were turned into independent administrative corporations, and since then, the financial situation has worsened every year. After 2004, the reduction of admissions for national universities as a whole has been mostly accomplished, and most were for single department colleges of education, a form of Type A institution. In 2005, the restraint measures for elementary teacher training, which made Type A institutions the main provider of elementary teachers, was abolished. This deregulation enabled many private universities to start providing elementary teacher training.

In 2008, the Professional Schools for teacher education were established. In 2013, the mission for each national university was redefined and, after that, Type A graduate schools of education were converted to Professional Schools for teacher education. Currently, there are 54 Professional Schools for teacher education, of which 47 are national, and seven are private. The Professional Schools for teacher education is a system introduced because of the criticism against the existing teacher training courses or graduate schools of education. The criticism charged that existing institutions had failed to foster practical teaching skills. Professional Schools for teacher education are now expected to be at the centre of an integrated and consistent system of pre-service and in-service training in each prefecture.

Now, there exists an elaborate system of in-service training (Figure 1). The prefectural boards of education establish the Council for Preparation & Development of Teaching Personnel and identify the Teacher's Capability Index. In 2017, the Core Curriculum for pre-service teacher training was introduced and also in 2017, the National Institute for School Teachers and Staff Development (NITS) was established (through the conversion of the former National Center for Teacher Development). As an incorporated administrative agency, this institute carries new responsibilities, enabling holistic professional development not only for school teachers but also for support personnel. NITS also takes 'concrete action as the core institution to bridge compartmentalised bodies of teacher preparation, teacher hiring, and their professional development' (NITS).

Thus, the possible future is that pre-service training, employment examination and in-service training of teachers are all integrated in the line of the Teacher's Capability Index under the initiative of NITS. Subsequently, the landscape of teacher education is now dramatically changing.

There is one more thing to note. Although teacher training has a relatively tighter central control, compared to other university courses (Ota, 2000), concerns regarding teacher education have, nevertheless, been 'dealt with within the larger framework of university problems' (Kobayashi, 1993) owing to the introduction of the 'open system' in the post-war reform period. However, at present, the situation seems to be changing; following the organisational restructuring of MEXT in October 2018, matters concerning pre-service training, certification, and in-service teacher training, which had been undertaken in both the Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau and the Higher Education Bureau, were transferred to the new General Education Policy Bureau. This implies that the administration of teacher education is now separated from higher education. There is a concern that this organisational restructuring will render pre-service teacher training as a more isolated area within higher education, although pre-service teacher training courses are provided

by universities.

## II. Changes in the shape of the teaching profession and teachers' working conditions

As a result of the principle of 'teacher training in universities', the academic achievements of Japanese teachers have improved (Table 4).

**Table 4. Academic achievements of Japanese Teachers**

		1989	2016
Elementary	Graduate Sch.	0.6%	4.8%
	Universities	73.9	86.9
	Junior Colleges	22.8	7.8
Junior High	Graduate Sch.	1.8	8.8
	Universities	85.0	86.7
	Junior Colleges	12.3	4.4
Senior High	Graduate Sch.	6.5	16.2
	Universities	89.4	82.0
	Junior Colleges	3.3	1.0

Source: MEXT

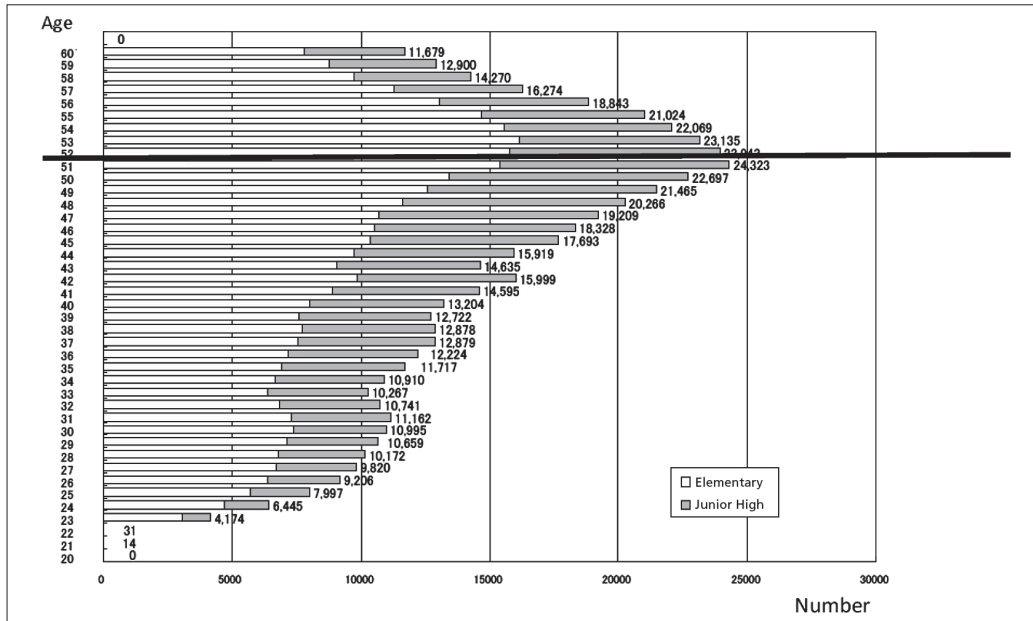
At the end of the 1980s, more than one-fifth of elementary school teachers were Junior College graduates, while today more than 90% of teachers have a bachelor's or master's degrees. However, I believe that the percentage of teachers with a master's degree is not high enough for a highly developed country such as Japan.

The percentage of female teachers has increased in all school types. The percentage changed in elementary schools from 56.0% (1985) to 62.2% (2017), in junior high schools from 33.9% to 43.1%, and in senior high schools from 18.7% to 31.9%. The results of the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2013 revealed that Japan has the lowest percentage of female teachers among OECD countries. In addition, Japan had by far the highest percentage of male principals.

Similar to other OECD countries, the large-scale turnover of the teaching workforce has continued. Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of public school teachers by age as of 31 March 2010, the last day of the school year in 2010. In 2018, the teachers above the horizontal line would have already retired, demonstrating the large-scale and rapid turnover of the teaching workforce. This makes it difficult for experienced teachers to hand over their knowledge and skills on to the next generation through everyday collaborative work in schools. This is one of the factors for the development of a highly organised in-service training system, which I have mentioned above.



**Figure 2. Distribution of Public School Teachers by Age (31 March 2010)**

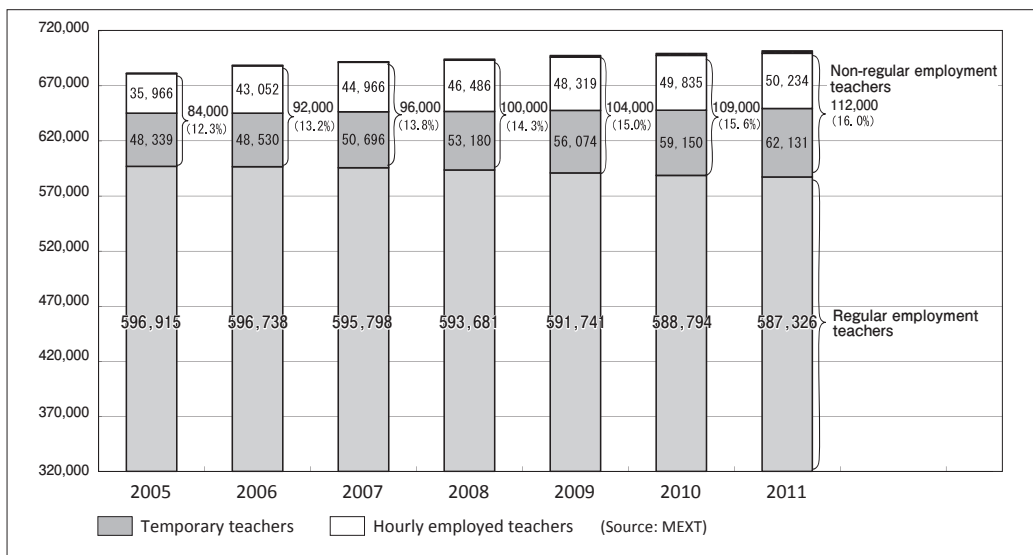


Source: MEXT

It is important to note that this turnover is occurring at the same time as a serious continued decline in the number of school-aged children. Prefectural boards of education do not always replace retired teachers with new regular employment teachers for fear of overcrowding (excess staffing) in the future. Subsequently, here emerges the problem of unstable employment.

**Figure 3. Number of non-regular employment teachers**

(Public elementary and junior high school teachers)



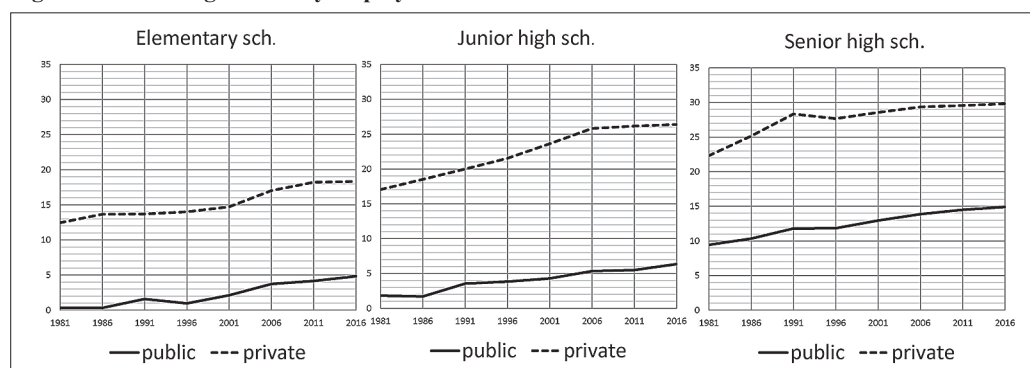
(Source: MEXT)

In Figure 3, the non-regular employment teachers comprise of temporary teachers (dark shaded) and hourly employed teachers (white). The number of teachers in non-regular employment is increasing steadily. While the number of school-aged children is decreasing, there is increased pressure on schools to improve the academic achievements of children from the government, and so schools require an increase in the number of teachers, which is extremely difficult for municipalities to achieve given the current severe financial circumstances.

During these decades, “full-time regular employment via non-regular employment” has become a career pattern of newly employed teachers.

In 2001, the so-called *Teiin-kuzushi* measure (breaking down of the quota) was adopted; this measure enables, for example, one regular teacher who works for 40 hours per week to be legally replaced with four non-regular teachers who work for 10 hours each per week.

**Figure 4. Percentage of hourly employed teachers**



Source: MEXT

The *Teiin-kuzushi* measure reveals that the percentage of hourly employed teachers has increased in every school type, especially in private schools (Figure 4). In 2016, three out of ten teachers in private senior high schools were hourly employed teachers.

Although this measure increased the total number of teachers, it also reduced individual salaries. The employment conditions for non-regular teachers are very harsh, which discourages students who are considering the teaching profession. This is also a major problem for both the quantity and quality of education.

The fact that Japanese teachers work long hours is now very common knowledge. According to the OECD TALIS 2013 results, Japanese teachers' average working hours per week (53.9 hours) far exceeded that of teachers in the 34 countries and regions surveyed (38.3 hours) and were the longest among the OECD countries. In addition to the OECD Survey, a survey on the teachers' working conditions conducted by MEXT, also indicated that the amount of teachers' overtime increased to 34 hours in 2006 from about 8 hours in 1966. Looking at the breakdown of the teachers' entire range of work, tasks involving student guidance and clerical work have increased significantly, while the number of class hours was almost unchanged. This means that today's teachers' busy schedules are attributable to an increase of duties in addition to the class lessons.

### III. Current problems and what is needed to address them

Currently, teacher recruitment has emerged as a critical issue; despite the over-supply of teacher certificate holders, which I have discussed previously, some prefectural or local boards of education are currently struggling with severe recruitment problems. MEXT conducted the first survey on teacher shortage, which was entitled ‘About the so-called “teacher shortage”’ and this was published on 2 August 2018.

The MEXT survey comprised of eight prefectures and three designated cities, and all responded that there were teacher shortages and vacancy posts at the beginning of the 2017 school year. For factors to explain the teacher shortages, seven pointed out that the number of people registered on the temporary teachers’ list had decreased. Other factors pointed out were the increase in maternity and childcare leave (5), the increase in the number of special educational needs classes (4), and prospective teachers who were employed by other schools (4).

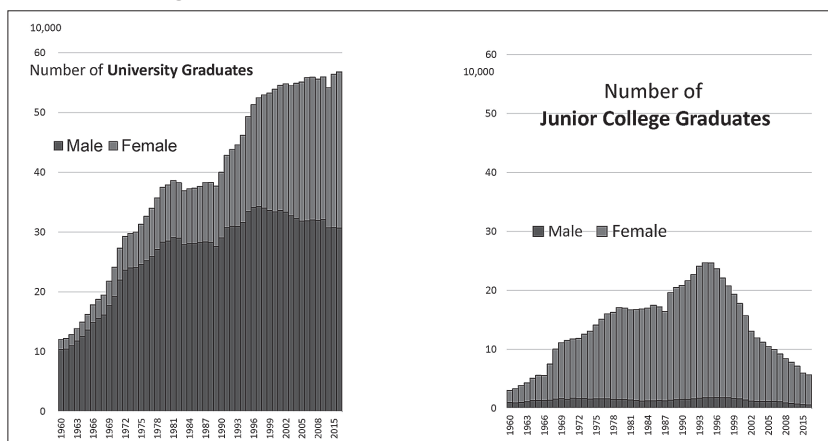
For public school teachers, employment examinations are conducted once a year, usually by the prefectural boards of education. However, in recent years, the competitive rates of these examinations are experiencing a downward trend.

Many temporary teachers accept positions because they aspire to become teachers but failed the employment examination. The temporary teachers’ registration list has been mainly composed of those who will attempt the employment examination the following year, in the next summer. With the downward trend in the employment examination competition rates, there are not as many aspiring teachers as before, indicating that the non-regular teachers’ pool is shrinking.

As the non-regular teachers’ pool is shrinking, some schools cannot secure non-regular teachers to fill vacancies, and therefore do not provide lessons in certain subjects for weeks (e.g. Nippon Television Network News24, 16 May 2018. Chugoku-newspaper, 2 July 2018). This also means that the career route ‘to full-time regular employment via non-regular employment’ is now rejected by potential teachers.

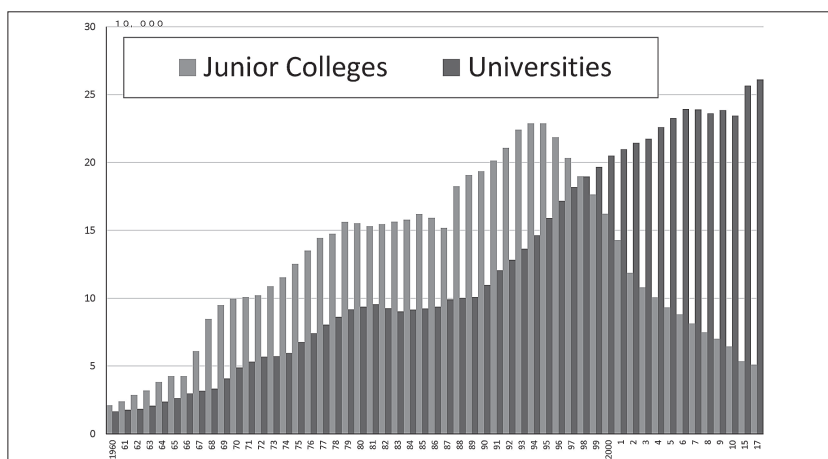
What I want to express is that teacher recruitment should be considered within the university graduate labour market as a whole. The data in Figures 5 and 6 illustrate the annual number of graduates from 1960 to 2017.

Figure 5. Number of graduates



Source: MEXT

Figure 6. Number of Female Graduates



Source: MEXT

From these two figures, the differences between men and women are very clear. For men, higher education has predominantly been a four-year university education. While for women, until the late 1990s, the dominant higher education has been a two-year Junior College education and not a four-year university education.

Figure 7 illustrates the percentage of people who became teachers among job-finders after university graduation. The grey line represents the percentage of male university graduates who became elementary, junior high, and senior high school teachers, while the solid black line is for female graduates. The black dotted line is a graph of female graduates including those who became kindergarten teachers.

Until the early 1980s, more than 30% of female university graduates entered the teaching profession. Although the real number of annual female graduates was very small, the teaching profession gained a significant portion of them. However, as the number of graduates increased,

the percentage of women who became teachers decreased.

There was no such drastic change for male graduates. This means that when there are a limited variety of jobs for female graduates to choose from, the teaching profession attracts these graduates.

**Figure 7. Percentage of people who became teachers among job-finders at graduation (universities)**

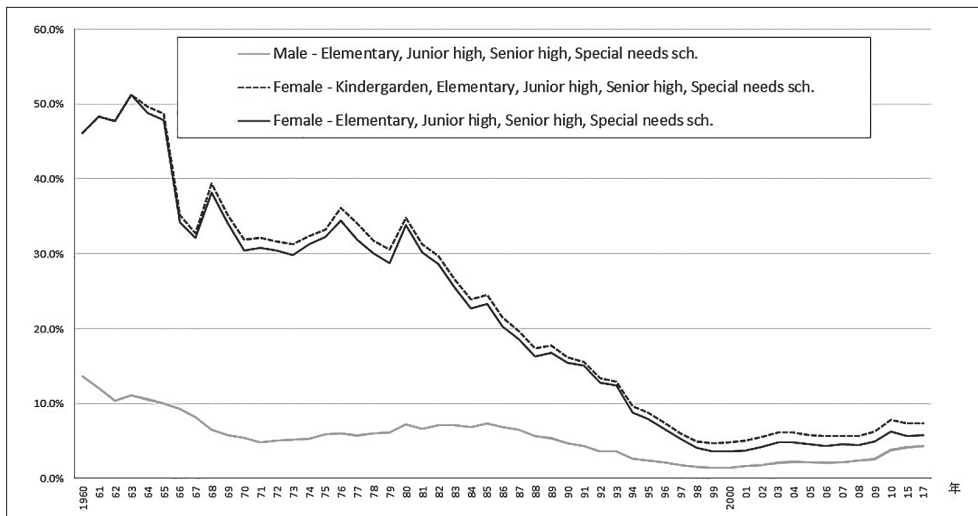
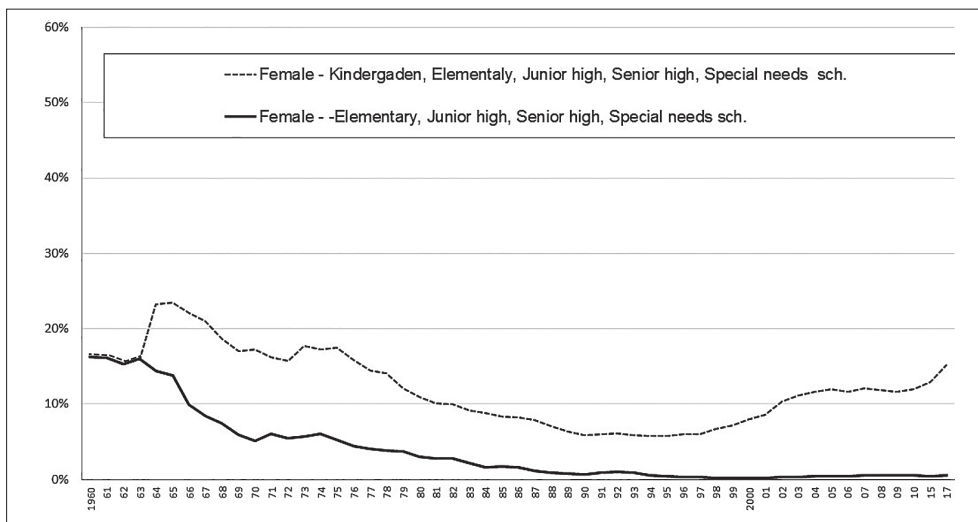


Figure 8 represents data for female junior college graduates. Although the percentage of people who became elementary, junior high, and senior high school teachers has declined, kindergarten schools retain an important position in the employment of female junior college graduates.

**Figure 8. Percentage of people who became teachers among job-finders at graduation (Junior Colleges)**



Teaching has been considered ‘a highly secure profession for both men and women’ (Kobayashi, 1993), and ‘until recently the teaching profession has been regarded as “a sacred job” with better salaries than that of other public sector workers’ (Ota, 2000). This is the case, especially for women. Equal pay for equal jobs has been a principle in education, and support systems for female teachers were established far ahead of other jobs. For example, childcare leave was ensured for teachers in 1975 (Act on Childcare Leave for Elementary and Junior High School Teachers, Clinical Nurses, and Childcare Nurses) and for workers in general in 1991 (Act on Childcare Leave, Caregiver Leave, and Other Measures for the Welfare of Workers Caring for Children or Other Family Members). This demonstrates that if teaching has more attractive conditions than other jobs, teacher recruitment becomes easier.

Although Japanese universities are eager to get mature students, the overwhelming majority of university entrants are still young people of 18 or 19 years of age. Along with the decline in the 18-year-old population, the number of annual male university graduates continues to decrease. The total number of graduates holds the status quo, with a shift of female students from junior colleges to universities (Figure 5). There is no prospect that the demand for highly-skilled human resources will decline in the future. So, the competition for university graduates will surely become severe for the teaching profession.

An analysis of the data especially for women demonstrates that we should focus on the choices made by potential teachers (i.e. those who enrolled in teacher training courses).

Unless teaching becomes a more attractive career, we will not be able to recruit high-quality, talented people as teachers. Making teaching a more challenging and worthwhile career is the responsibility of the educational administration.

What is needed now is to give teaching a higher social status, improve the working conditions, and provide greater autonomy. In order to enhance the social status, Japanese teachers need to be regarded by the public as a profession with the power to decide their own work. Teachers should have a say on the content and methods of teaching in school classrooms and also on the Core Curriculum for pre-service teacher training. Without the recruitment of talented and enthusiastic graduates, the effect of any quality assurance system and highly organised in-service training system will be limited.

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**Keywords:** Teacher education, quality assurance, non-regular employment of teachers, university graduate labour market, female graduates

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