MEMORIES OF TADASHIGE ISHIHARA

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It was with great sorrow that I learned the passing of Tadashige Ishihara on December 17, 2008. The sad news reminded me of our university days almost seventy years ago. In 1940, Ishihara and I were students of Department of Mathematics, Faculty of Science, Osaka Imperial University (now Osaka University). For a long time, however, I did not know that he was a student of mathematics and I did not talk with him. It seemed to me that he liked physics much more than mathematics. He always attended the lectures of physics, in particular, those of Professor Asada whose special field was experimental physics. I later came to know that he entered Department of Physics in 1939 and transferred to Department of Mathematics in the next year. Ishihara's motto was "All of the students who want to study mathematics should study physics first." There were eleven students in the class including a female student. At that time, it was very hard to find good jobs for the students who graduated in mathematics.

At the time of establishment in 1933, Osaka Imperial University had three faculties, namely Medical Science, Engineering, and Science. The Faculty of Science had three departments: Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry. The building of the Department of Mathematics was located at the place where Osaka University Nakanoshima Center exists at present, near Faculty of Medical Science and the University Hospital.

Our department had four Chairs of Analysis I, II, Algebra and Geometry. These Chairs were internationally eminent mathematicians: Tatsujiro Shimizu, Michio Nagumo, Kenjiro Shoda, and Hidetaka Terasaka. The associate professors were Kosaku Yoshida, Yukio Mimura, and the lecturer was Shikao Ikehara, and the assistants were Shizuo Kkakutani, Keizo Asano, Tadasi Nakayama, and Atuo Komatu.

They led us to the new world of abstract mathematics, and they often said that the students should forget the classical mathematics (for example, formulas in trigonometry) and that there was no need to do many exercises in elementary geometry. There was a colloquium on algebra between Kyoto Imperial University (Prof. M. Sono and his students) and Osaka Imperial University (Shoda and his colleagues). Our class produced two well-known mathematicians in Japan. They were Yozo Matusima and Hirotada Anzai. Tatuji Ogawa, one of our classmates, became an entrepreneur after about twenty years from graduation. He established a prep school and a Chinese restaurant in Osaka City, where we often held the editorial meetings of Mathematica Japonica until Ogawa's passing.

With the Pearl Harbor attack in December 1941, the World War II broke out. We graduated from Osaka Imperial University in September 1942, so our student life was very short, only three years and a half for Ishihara and two years and a half for me. Our classmates were not so healthy, except Ishihara and me, as to be conscripted. Both of us were almost assigned to the army, but luckily enough, we came to know that the navy established a new system: a system of preliminary course for students. We applied for the course and passed. From October in 1942, in Toukou in Taiwan, we (about five hundred students) had both physical and mental trainings for half a year in a method which seemed to me nonscientific. After that, we were sent to our respective places of duty. But Ishihara was appointed as teacher (professor) at the Naval Engineering School (or Kaigun Kikan Gakko

in Japanese) in Maizuru, Kyoto Prefecture. After a few years, Ishihara was invited to the Navy Institute of Technology (or Kaigun Gijutsu Kenkyusho in Japanese) as a researcher under Professor Seigo Morimoto. He worked there until the World War II ended, and then he came back to the Department of Mathematics of Osaka Imperial University.

On finishing the training in Toukou, we the trainees were ordered to write a report on the Japanese Navy in Taiwan, and I criticized in the report the absurdity of the training method of the Japanese Navy. For punishment of this, I had to have additional training for five months and was sent to the Rabaul Guard in New Britain Island in the South Pacific Ocean. After the World War II ended, I had to stay Rabaul as a detainee for half a year and came back to Nagoya. After that at last, I came back to the Department of Mathematics of Osaka Imperial University and was reunited with many colleagues. Ishihara was among them. Then I spent a life as a researcher there, where at that time many windows had been broken by the blasts of the bomb attacks by the U.S.A. In my understanding, Ishihara was a very earnest and steady person. Many colleagues, at that time, played mahjong in their research rooms from morning till night. The colleagues who liked playing mahjong were: T. Kitagawa (Kyushu Univ.), S. Kakutani, K. Shoda, H. Anzai, H. Yamabe, M. Gotou (Nagoya Univ.) et al. I joined the group and enjoyed playing it, but Kakutani never played it in the research room and Ishihara never played mahjong itself.

Mathematica Japonica (now Scientiae Mathematicae Japonicae) was first published in 1948 by Professor Tatsujiro Shimizu at his own expense. After Prof. Shimizu's retirement from Osaka Prefecture University in 1962, the editorial office of Mathematica Japonica moved to Faculty of Engineering of the university, and Prof. Shimizu attended the editorial meetings until the age of ninety. Ishihara joined the editorial committee in 1965. After Ishihara's retirement of Osaka Prefecture University, Mathematica Japonica had its own office in 1987 at the place where the present office exists. Around this time, I got involved in the publication of the journal, which has continued up to the present. Ishihara had been the editor in chief until his passing in 2008. His efforts for years in publishing our journal are invaluable and he was the editor in chief with excellent foresight and strong will that many persons involving in the publication trusted so much.

May he rest in peace.

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