

On Etymological Studies of Horne Tooke and Dean Trench : Philosophical and Moral Approaches to Philology¹ in 19th-Century Britain

YOSHIDA, Akiko*

1. Introduction

This study investigates two figures who had a great influence on philology in 19th-century Britain. One of them is John Horne Tooke (1736-1812) ; another is Richard Chenevix Trench (1807-1886).

Generally speaking, Tooke is famous for his political campaign as a politician, and Trench for his activities as a clergyman and theologian. However, as a philologist, both of them published books concerning English words. Their works drew attentions in philology at that time.

In 1786, Horne Tooke published Part I of the *Diversions of Purley*. Part II of the *Diversions of Purley* was published in 1805 (Bewley & Bewley 1998 : 223). As for Trench, he published *On the Study of Words* in 1851, and *English, Past and Present* in 1855.

Britain was isolated from other European countries by its focus on philology from the late 18th century to the early 19th century, at this time Tooke published Part I of *Diversions of Purley* and Trench published *On the Study of Words* and *English, Past and Present*.

Aarsleff (1983 : 3) remarks that “To the study of language in England, 1786 is a crucial year”. In the year, Sir William Jones, a British orientalist and lawyer, gave a lecture about the existence of Indo-European language family to the Asiatic Society of Bengal in Calcutta, India. He reported that there is the close similarity between Sanskrit, and classical language : Greek and Latin. In the same year when Jones gave the lecture, Horne Tooke published Part I of the *Diversions of Purley*.

Jones' report influenced many researchers in Europe. In the 19th century, the study of comparative and historical philology increasingly developed in European countries.

* Graduate School of Literature, Doctoral Course of English Communication, Third Year Grade, Toyo University.

mainly in German. However, such modern philology as comparative and historical philology was not welcomed by scholars in Britain until 1830's. Instead, language thoughts advocated by Horne Tooke and Dean Trench took place in the study of English language in Britain. Finegan (1998 : 558) explains :

... On the Continent, where Jones already enjoyed a reputation as a translator and poet, his hypothesis of an Indo-European family of languages was greeted with excitement and launched the impressive historical and comparative philology of the nineteenth century. In Britain the story was otherwise : Jones was virtually ignored, while Horne Tooke remained the rage.

Finegan (1998 : 572) also explains "Horne Tooke's philosophy had combined with Trench's theology to undermine even the theoretical authority of usage".

Tooke attempts to establish a new system of English grammar from a philosophical perspective. Trench argues on the study of English usages using moral approach. Their linguistic thoughts and studies on English usages had a great influence on the philology in 19th-century Britain with a gaining popularity. However, their studies are criticized for using etymologies.

The etymology employed by Tooke for the practical purpose was regarded as 'speculative' with being the target of criticisms (Aarsleff 1983 ; Dowling 1982 ; Finegan 1998). Moreover, Trench has said to be a "great admirer of Horne Tooke" (Finegan 1998 : 564). Trench stressed that etymology should be considered when analysing a word's usage.

Trench and Tooke's etymological studies are considered to be similar, and they judge that Tooke and Trench's etymologies and linguistic thoughts became the cause for preventing Britain from adopting modern philology during the 19th century.

In order to explore the reason that Tooke and Trench's linguistic thoughts had such a great influences on 19th-century Britain, this paper focuses on etymologies that are employed by both Horne Tooke and Dean Trench.

The aim of this paper is to clarify three questions : (i) Are their etymologies really speculative or not? (ii) Is there a difference in approaches between Tooke and Trench, and (iii) What are the purposes of using etymology in their study?

First, Horne Tooke and the *Diversions of Purley* will be introduced. Second, Dean Trench and his two books, *On the Study of Words* (1851) and *English, Past and Present*

(1855) will be introduced. Last, this paper will show that Tooke and Trench used the same words in their studies and analyses.

2. Horne Tooke and the *Diversions of Purley*

John Horne Tooke is a British politician and philologist. Although he is famous as a politician, as a philologist he published part I of the *Diversions of Purley* in 1786. Part II was published in 1805. Tooke intended to publish part III of the *Diversions of Purley*, but it was not published².

The actual title is given in the name of *Epea pteroenta* which means ‘winged words’ in Greek. The work was composed of a conversation between Trench and his close friends, William Tooke and Richard Beadon³. Bewley & Bewley (1998 : 223) write that “The dialogue form was not used in grammars, but was used sometimes in philosophical studies”.

In the 18th century, the study of English grammar took the form of prescriptive grammar such as that of Robert Lowth. Being different from his contemporary grammarians, Tooke considers that the role of grammar was not in prescription but in philosophical purpose. In the introduction of the *Diversions of Purley*, Tooke (1969a : 51) states :

Indeed I spoke my real sentiments. I think Grammar [*sic*] difficult, but I am very far from looking upon it as foolish : indeed so far, that I consider it as absolutely necessary in the search after philosophical truth ; which, if not the most useful perhaps, is at least the most pleasing employment of the human mind.

As given by the title of the book *Epea pteroenta*, he uses the term ‘winged words’ which means words have wings to fly fast. According to Tooke (1969a : 26), “The first aim of Language [*sic*] was to *communicate* our thoughts : the second, to do it with *dispatch*”. He insists on not the first one but the second one.

Tooke divides parts of speech into two categories : ‘Necessities’ and ‘Abbreviations’. Nouns and verbs are classified into necessities. The rest of them such as prepositions and adjectives are classified into abbreviations. The term ‘abbreviations’ is originally invented by Tooke himself. Tooke regards abbreviations as winged words which are merely a substitution of necessities ; nouns and verbs. Tooke observes that people can communicate their thoughts immediately with abbreviations, in other words ‘winged

words’.

Even though people can express their thoughts with winged words, there still remains a problem in communication. Tooke determines the reason that there happens problem in communication is that speakers do not understand the true meaning of a word they use. To solve this problem, Tooke employs etymology in his analysis of usage. Harris & Taylor (1997 : 169) support Tooke’s arguments that his great discovery of etymological analysis made speakers seek a true meaning of a word they use.

Tooke’s philosophical approach to English grammar is called “philosophical grammar” (Tooke 1969a : 56). It was not regarded as a mode of English grammar among contemporary grammarians who are on the side of prescriptive grammar. However, Tooke’s doctrine drew much attention from philosophical grammarians and lexicographers as he engaged language study in philosophy with etymologies. Tooke himself admits (1969a : 190) that “ ... all future etymologists, and perhaps some philosophers, will acknowledge their obligation to me”.

Aarsleff (1983 : 73) says, “the reputation of Tooke’s *Diversions* is one of most remarkable phenomena in the intellectual and scholarly life England during the first third of the nineteenth century”. Also Aarsleff (*ibid.*) comments that the influence of Tooke and his work kept Britain “immune to the new philology until the results and methods finally had to be imported from the Continent in the 1830’s”.

After the publication of the *Diversions of Purley*, it affected to the stage of philology in Britain both positively and negatively. On the one hand, *Annual Review of Literature*⁴ admits the *Diversions of Purley* is “the most valuable contribution to the philology of language which literature has produced”. On the other hand, the *Critical Review* of 1806 condemned that “the etymology is a deception”, and that “the inferences ... are absolute sophisms”⁵.

For contemporary criticism on Tooke, Momma (2013 : 78) remarks that “It is possible that the school of root-oriented etymology prevailed in England precisely because it lacked systematic methods or a centralized organization”. Aarsleff (1983 : 58) states that the proof of his etymological explanation is not established “without a method of derivation which to us appears very arbitrary because he allowed meaning to be his only guide ... ”.

Afterwards, Tooke’s tradition on etymology was handed down to a lexicographer Charles Richardson (1775–1865) who is a disciple of Horne Tooke and published *New Dictionary of the English Language*. According to Aarsleff (1983 : 249), Richardson

“committed himself wholeheartedly to Tooke’s philology ...”. Also, Finegan (1998 : 560) states that “ ... [Richardson’s] dictionary largely incorporated the speculative etymologies from the *Diversions of Purley* into an alphabetical list”.

3. Dean Trench and *On the Study of Words* (1851) / *English, Past and Present* (1855)

Dean Trench is a clergyman of both the British and Irish church. After his graduation from Trinity College, Cambridge, he was a professor of theology at Kings College in London from 1847 to 1858. In 1856, he was elected as the Dean of Westminster. Ultimately, he was elected as the Archbishop of Dublin in 1864.

While he got a prominent talent as a clergyman and theologian, Trench had a deep and sophisticated knowledge of philology. Trench believes that there is a bond between theology and philology. Aarsleff (1983 : 231) comments on this point as the following :

Trench was, first of all, a teacher with a remarkable gift for clear and interesting exposition ; to him, theology and exegesis were bound up with philology since both served the cause of Christian instruction in the tradition of the English Church and gave promise of an ultimate reunion of divided Christianity.

He was giving lectures on the English language at a grammar-school called the Diocesan Training-school at Winchester. The series of his lectures were recorded in two books. These books are *On the Study of Words* (1851) and *English, Past and Present* (1855). In his lecture and works, Trench puts emphasis on the link between words and morality because he believes moral truths are buried in words. According to Trench (1876 : 7), “ ... words often contain a witness for great moral truths – God having pressed such a seal of truth upon language, that men are continually uttering deeper things than they know”.

He characterizes language as ‘fossil poetry’, adopted by an American romanticist Emerson⁶, ‘fossil ethics’, and ‘fossil history’. Being different from Horne Tooke, Trench believes that a matter of philology lies in words rather than in grammar. With viewing language as ‘fossil poetry’, Trench strongly emphasizes the importance of seeking after a word’s etymology. He highly recommended his students to search etymology and meaning of a word for their study. Trench says (1876 : 5) “ ... there are few modes of instruction more useful or more amusing than that of accustoming young people to seek for the

etymology or primary meaning of the words they use”.

His contribution to philology was widely accepted among the public. Both *On the Study of Words* and *English, Past and Present* sold very well not only in Britain but also in North America⁷. Aarsleff (1983 : 234-235) says, “Both books did far more than any previous publication to make language study popular”. Finegan (1998 : 567) states that Trench “credits that popularity for the ability of the *OED* to enlist readers world-wide and sustain interest in the decades-long dictionary project”.

As Finegan mentions above, Dean Trench was an important contributor in launching a project of Britain’s new English dictionary : the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* . The project of compiling the *OED*, which at first was titled the *New English Dictionary on Historical Principles (NED)* , was undertaken by the Philological Society of London⁸. Trench became a member of the Society in 1857, and in the same year he proposed to make a completely ‘new’ English dictionary for the Society. In 1857, he gave a lecture called ‘On Some Deficiencies in our English Dictionary’ at the London Library⁹. In the lecture, Trench pointed out the weakness of contemporary English dictionaries of the time.

According to Aarsleff (1983), part of the Philological Society’s motivation compiling the *NED* was to halt the speculative etymologies of Horne Tooke. Aarsleff (1983 : 165) says, “The new dictionary is unthinkable without the complete departure from the powerful Tooke tradition, from philological speculation, from random etymologizing, and from the notion that the chief end of language study is the knowledge of mind”. In terms of this point of view, the Society accepted the proposal of Dean Trench.

4. Tooke and Trench’s Studies on Etymology

In this section, etymologies employed by both Tooke and Trench will be analyzed. This paper will treat usages commonly used in both works to examine an accuracy of Tooke and Trench’s etymologies. For confirmation of etymologies, *The Oxford English Dictionary (OED²)* and Shipley (1945) will be used. The usages will be introduced in alphabetical order.

• ‘bruit’

Tooke (1969b : 307) comments that the word *bruit* was “the past tense and past participle” of the Anglo-Saxon verb *Brittian, Bryttian* as following :

BRUIT—means (something) *spread abroad, divulged, dispersed*. It is the past tense and past participle, formed in the accustomed manner, of the Anglo-Saxon verb *Brittian, Bryttian*, *distribuere, dispensare* : In English also *To Brit*.

In *English, Past and Present*, Trench (1889 : 102) gives a similar idea with Tooke on bruit when he says ‘bruit’ was once the English word but it “can scarcely now be so called” as well as other words derived from French.

According to *OED*², the noun word ‘bruit’ is from the French word *bruit*. However, there is no information that it is derived from the Anglo-Saxon or the Old English as Tooke and Trench mentions.

• ‘church’

For the noun word ‘church’, Tooke only refers it having a root in Greek, and it is an adjective¹⁰. As for Trench, he gives detailed explanations of thinking of its history as the following :

There are vast harvests of historic lore garnered often in single words ; important facts which they at once proclaim and preserve ; these too such as sometimes have survived nowhere else but in them. How much history lies in the word ‘church’. I see no sufficient reason to dissent from those who derived it from the Greek *κυριακή*, ‘that which pertains to the Lord’, or ‘the house which the Lord’s’.

(Trench 1876 : 129)

He continues to explain the process of derivation with the question, “How explain the presence of a Greek word in the vocabulary of our Teutonic forefathers?”. Trench (1876 : 129) writes that the Greek word *κυριακή* passed over from the Greek to Gothic tongue when it converted to a Christian vocabulary for the first time, and then the Goths lent the word to the other German tribes, and finally to the Anglo-Saxon forefathers.

According to *OED*² “... there is now a general agreement among scholars in referring it to the Greek word *κύριακόν*”. Shipley (1945 : 80-81) states the Greek word *kyriakon doma* means the house of Lord or Christ. In addition, Shipley comments that the Greek lent the word *kyriakon* probably to Germanic society, and then it became the English

word 'church' though a process of derivation that is uncertain.

In terms of the word origins, both Tooke and Trench's explanations are consistent with that of *OED*² and Shipley (1945). Tooke does not explain the process of how the word is derived, but Trench minutely explains the process of the derivation.

• **'crypt' / 'cryptic'**

In Part II of the *Diversions of Purley*, Tooke (1969b) argues that the adjective word 'cryptic' is introduced with other adjectives such as 'analytic' and 'apologetic'. Tooke argues all adjectives ending in *-ic* were borrowed from Greek¹¹, since he considers adjectives as abbreviations for the sake of convenience.

From the Greek—*Analytic, Apologetic, Caustic, Characteristic, Cathartic, Cryptic, Critic, Cosmetic, Dialectic, Didactic, Diuretic, Despotie, Drastic, Elastic, Emetic, Energetic, Fantastic, Gymnastic, Hypothetic, Narcotic, Paralytic, Peripatetic, Periphrastic, Prognostic, Prophylactic, Plastic, Pathetic, Prophetic, Syllogistic, Styptic, Sceptic, Synthetic, Sympathetic, &c.*

(Tooke 1969b : 506)

In *On the Study of Words*, Trench explains the derivation of the word 'crypt' telling a clergyman's story as an example.

He naturally replied in the affirmative, that 'crypt' come from a Greek word to conceal, and meant a covered place, itself concealed, and where things intended to be concealed were placed. The other rejoined that he was quite aware the word was commonly so explained, but he had no doubt erroneously ; that 'crypt', as he had now convinced himself, was in fact contracted from 'cry-pt' ; being the pit where in days of Popish tyranny those who were condemned to cruel penances were plunged, and out of which their cry was heard to come up – there called the 'cry-pit' now contracted in to 'crypt'!

(Trench 1876 : 293-294)

With the etymology of the word 'crypt', Trench refers to the misuse of the word. Trench intended to emphasize that even such people as clergymen make a mistake using a word because they do not seek the history of the word.

The *OED*² says the etymology of ‘crypt’ is derived from the Latin word *crypta* and the Greek word *κρύπτη* which means the noun ‘vault’ in English. Besides, ‘cryptic’, the adjective form of crypt, came from the Latin *cryptic-us* and the Greek *κρυπτικός*. Both Tooke and Trench’s explanation of etymology are partly consisted with that of the *OED*².

Whereas Trench shows detailed explanation of the single word ‘crypt’, Tooke did not show etymological ground that the adjective form of crypt ‘cryptic’, and the rest of the words he employed were from Greek.

• ‘insult’

In Part II of the *Diversions of Purley*, Tooke (1969b : 44) claims that the verb ‘insult’, ‘saute’, ‘assault’, ‘assailant’, ‘result’ and ‘somerset’ are all derived from the single word *salire* that is Latin. According to Shipley (1945 : 194), the English word ‘insult’ derived from the Latin word *salire* or *salt-* which mean ‘leap’. Moreover, ‘insult’ and ‘assault’ were originally the same meaning. Although there is the fact for ‘insult’ and ‘assault’ as Shipley shows, there is no convincing ground for the reasoning that all words including ‘insult’ derive from only a single word.

Trench (1876 : 312) states that ‘to insult’ means “properly to leap as on the prostrate body of a foe”. In *OED*² the etymology of the verb insult is from the Latin word *insultāre*, which means “to leap at or on”. Although Trench does not mention the word as originating from Latin, his explanation is consistent with the etymology of the word in *OED*².

5. Conclusion

This paper aimed to clarify three questions on the etymologies of Horne Tooke and Dean Trench : (i) Are their etymologies really speculative or not? (ii) Is there a difference in approaches between Tooke and Trench, and (iii) What are purposes of using etymology in their study?

For the first question, this paper argues that Horne Tooke’s etymology is speculative because he does not show detailed evidence or explanation of how a word is derived. Tooke’s etymological explanations can be regarded as inaccurate because most of them are groundless, or as researchers say ‘speculative’. On the contrary, Dean Trench shows etymological grounding with a detailed explanation. Tooke insists etymology as an important factor in his work, but his explanation is often incorrect. As for Trench, most parts of his explanation are more accurate and convincing than that of Tooke. In terms of

this point, this paper concludes that only Tooke's etymology is speculative.

For the second question, this paper observes that there is a difference between Tooke and Trench in each approach to etymology. Tooke's etymological approach tends to be systematic as he believes that more than single words are derived from one root. On the contrary, Trench treats each usage differently as he believes every single word has its history. Therefore, he tries to inquire into the etymology of each word.

Lastly for the third question, Tooke uses etymology merely as means for supporting a grammatical system which he creates. The central idea of Tooke is to show grammatical evidence for searching after the philosophical truth. In case of Trench, he insists history of words itself in his study. As he teaches young students in a grammar-school, Trench regards examining etymology and finding a true meaning of a word as necessary for the study of the English language.

Through the analysis of both Horne Tooke and Dean Trench's etymologies, this paper concludes that etymologies employed by Trench should not be identified with that of Tooke. This paper Trench's etymological approach to usages is more convincing than that of Tooke. If there is a problem in Trench's study, it may not be etymology he employed but his moral or religious observations. As Aarsleff (1983) notes that the purpose of compiling *NED* was to get rid of the tradition of Horne Tooke, Trench's etymology is by no means as speculative as that of Tooke.

Throughout the history of English grammar and usage, Tooke's philosophical approach and Trench's moral approach were treated as being against the tradition of prescriptive grammar. As well as their linguistic approaches, using etymology in language study was accepted only in Britain.

While Tooke and Trench's ideas were in full bloom in Britain during the 19th century, comparative and historical philology had already become a main trend on the Continent. Although etymologies of both Tooke and Trench are a crucial and inevitable factor in their influence on philology in 19th-century Britain, there might be other factors to explain why Tooke and Trench's linguistic thought prevailed only in Britain. This question will be the subject of further study.

Additionally, a good deal of etymological data of both Tooke and Trench needs to be collected to investigate this paper's argument, which is Dean Trench's etymology should not be identified with that of Horne Tooke.

Notes

1. The term 'philology' is now called 'linguistics' in the field of language study. The main difference 'philology' and 'linguistics' lies in whether it is scientific or not.
According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED²), philology is "Love of learning and literature ; the study of literature, in a wide sense, including grammar, literary criticism and interpretation, the relation of literature and written records to history, etc". There is another explanation in the entry of 'philology', which says "The study of the structure and development of language ; the science of language ; linguistics."
2. According to Bewley & Bewley (1998 : 223), "... Tooke wrote much additional material which he intended to publish as Part III. However, shortly before he died he decided to burn it all".
3. William Tooke is an "owner of an estate called Purley, where the conversation occurs", and Richard Beacon is the "Bishop of Gloucester and a guest at Purley" (Finegan 1998 : 554).
4. Bewley & Bewley (1998 : 242)
5. Bewley & Bewley (1998 : 242)
6. Trench (1876 : 5) mentions "Emerson has somewhere characterized language as 'fossil poetry'".
7. According to Finegan (1998 : 567), "These lectures found great favour among the reading public, including even a far-away California schoolmaster who edited them for school use".
8. Philological Society of London was founded in 1842 "for the investigation of the Structure, the Affinities, and the History of Languages ; and the Philological Illustration of the Classical Writers of Greece and Rome" (Aarsleff 1983 : 211).
9. Winchester (2003 : 50)
10. Tooke (1969b : 33)
11. Tooke (1969b : 505) calls this kind of adjective the "Potential Active Adjective".

REFERENCES

- Aarsleff, Hans. 1983. *The Study of Language in England, 1780-1860*. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press.
- Bewley, C., & Bewley, D. K. 1998. *Gentleman Radical : A life of John Horne Tooke, 1736-1812*. London : Tauris Academic Studies.
- Dowling, Linda. 1982. "Victorian Oxford and the Science of Language." *PMLA*, 97 (2),

160–178. <[http : //doi.org/10.2307/462185](http://doi.org/10.2307/462185)>

Finegan, Edward. 1998. “English grammar and usage” In S. Romaine (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the English Language : Vol. 4*, 536–588. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

Harris, R., & Taylor, T. J. 1997. “Horne Tooke on etymological metaphysics”. *Landmarks in Linguistic Thought 1 : The Western Tradition from Socrates to Saussure*, 155–170. London : Routledge.

Shipley, J. T. 1945. *Dictionary of Word Origins*. New York : Philosophical Library.

Tooke, J. H. 1969a. *Epea pteroenta, or The Diversions of Purley : Vol. 1. Reprint series of books relating to the English language, vol. 17*. Tokyo : Nan'un-do.

———. 1969b. *Epea pteroenta, or The Diversions of Purley : Vol. 2. Reprint series of books relating to the English language, vol. 18*. Tokyo : Nan'un-do.

Trench, R. C. 1876. *On the Study of Words ; lectures addressed (originally) to the pupils at the Diocesan training-school, Winchester*. London : Macmillan and Co.

Trench, R. C. 1889. *English, Past and Present*. London : Kegan Paul.

Winchester, Simon. 2003. *The Meaning of Everything : The Story of the Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford : Oxford University Press.

OED² : *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd edition, 1989.

ホーン・トゥックとトレンチの語源研究について ——19世紀イギリスにおける文献学への 哲学的・道徳的アプローチ——

文学研究科英語コミュニケーション専攻博士後期課程3年
吉田 明子

本稿は、19世紀イギリスの言語研究に多大な影響を及ぼした2人の人物を取り扱う。その2人の人物とは、John Horne Tooke (1736-1812) と Richard Chenevix Trench (1807-1886) である。Tookeは政治家、そしてTrenchは聖職者としての活動や功績がよく知られているが、両者とも文献学者として語の研究に関する著作を出しており、それらが当時の文献学において注目を浴びることとなった。

19世紀ヨーロッパでは、比較言語学・歴史言語学の研究が学問として確立され、主にドイツを中心として盛んに研究が行われていた。しかし、イギリスだけは、比較・歴史言語学のような近代的な言語の研究があまり受け入れられず、代わりにHorne TookeとDean Trenchによる独自の言語思想が、自国語である英語の研究の中心的存在になっていた。Tookeは哲学的観点から、新たな英文法の体系の確立を試みた。そして、Trenchは道徳的アプローチを用いた語法研究について論じた。TookeとTrenchによる語法研究と言語思想は、人気を博し、当時のイギリスにおける言語研究に影響を及ぼした。このことが原因となり、18世紀後半から19世紀前半までの間、イギリスは言語研究の分野で他のヨーロッパの国々から取り残されることとなる。

そこで本稿では、TookeとTrenchの考えが19世紀イギリスで影響を及ぼした理由を探るために、両者の研究に共通している語源に焦点を絞り、(i) 本当に根拠に乏しいものなのか、(ii) アプローチに違いがみられるのか、そして (iii) 語源を使用した目的は何かという3点を明らかにしていく。

まず初めに、Horne Tooke と *The Diversions of Purley* を扱い、Tookeの研究について紹介する。次にDean Trenchの *On the Study of Words* と *English, Past and Present* を扱い、Trenchの研究を紹介する。3つ目に、両者の著作で扱われている共通の語を用いて、TookeとTrenchによる語源を用いた語法研究のアプローチ分析を試みる。