

《周日談》十五：恩師格林青（1917 - 2000）之一

副題：為他的百週年誕辰而作

香港大學英文系系主任和文學院院長，格林青教授的原名是 Alan W. T. Green，那個 W 和 T 應是 Walter 和 Thomas 的字首。

系裡的中國同事間暱稱他“六叔”（粵語“六”和 *green* 的“綠”同音）。這個外號，是已故同事潘漢光兄給他起的。起的很好，既親切，也帶點幽默，但不失敬意。格師的中文名字格林青，則是和他合作探討英語發音和語調的黃勵文（Raymond Huang ? - 2001）起的。

五十年代末，港大的英文系的教授兼主任是英國浪漫主義最後一位詩人，布蘭頓（Edmund Blunden 1896 - 1974）。在他主持英文系十年間（1953—1964），系裡的教學，可以說是孵小雞式的培養精英教授法）in Evangeline Almberg's words, “gathered a small group of star pupils around them”，過分側重英國文學，與快要來臨的社會變遷脫節。格師雖然早在 1951 年到港大“加盟”，任高級講師，主管英語教學，然而在系裡頗為孤立。出人意外的，是當布蘭頓退休時，竟圈定格師為他的接班人。這位表面上看來沒什麼主見的老人，其實很有眼光和先見的。

格師不負眾望，在英語教育方面，甚至香港高等教育的改革，都有創新的貢獻。他積極投入校內的行政工作。他很明白這是實現改革的必由之路。一段時期，他身兼系主任、講座教授、文科院院長。港大的語言中心，就是在他大力支持下成立的。在他的領域裡，他已嗅覺到香港社會面臨的急劇變遷，這先見之明，可以說是，十多年後麥理浩的政改的先聲。

格師於1978年退休。獲港大董事會授予終身榮譽教授名銜。

在結束格師這段稍為官樣的生平簡介前，讓我直接按原文，引述多年前兩位同學寄來與他有關的信。

Dear Shun Chiu,

It suddenly occurred to me, why don't you write an article about Alan Green. That way, he will be known more widely. I would welcome a full picture of him.

Please think about it. Regards, Fong-ying (余晁英 Vancouver 2010)

Extract from Evangeline Almberg's [reminiscence](#):

“After my first sojourn in Sweden and subsequent return to the Department as an assistant lecturer, the professor was even encouraging me to write a Master’s thesis involving translating Lao She’s works into English, which was another surprising act of Professor Green’s in an English department in Hong Kong in the 1960’s. Similarly, I have not forgotten either that he also supported a Cantonese project conducted by Yau Shun Chiu.”(吴兆朋 2010)

After reading the quotation in the draft, Evangeline sent this additional remark:

“Incidentally, Alan Green started a new course called Contemporary English, and invited me to be a guinea pig (for I was exempted from First Year English). From the texts he selected for the course, I could see a distinct intention to broaden his students' horizon not only in language but also in current affairs of the world; they were based, many a time, on contrastive and complementary sources.

附件：格師長子 Paul 為他父親寫的訃文選段：

Alan Green b. 10.06.17 d. 16.08.00

In 1936 he went to Oxford as a Classics scholar at Merton College. In 1938 he took a First in Classics. He would have continued to complete the degree – the remainder of the course is in Ancient Philosophy. But he joined the army in 1939, and spent six years as a soldier. That year, as a soldier in Germany, while interviewing refugees, he met my mother, Petronele, who had fled from the Russian invasion of her home country, Lithuania. They married in 1946. Their first common language was German.

In 1946 though, they lived in Woolwich, and then in Oxford, where he returned to complete his degree. Because of the entirely defensible tradition of awarding the MA fifteen terms after matriculation, as long as you have eaten the requisite number of dinners in hall, he got his MA before his BA.

But now, ten years older than he had been when he began as a Classics scholar, his goal had changed. He had always been more interested in the language

aspects of Classics than in the Philosophy. He later said that Philosophy consisted of answers to questions that most people did not find necessary to ask.

He went to Hull University as a lecturer in English for three years. Then at the end of 1951 he took an appointment as senior lecturer at Hong Kong University. He spent most of his career there.

As an academic he followed especially the developing science of linguistics. His academic interests were not all technical: he taught literature as well as language. He loved Chaucer for the strength and beauty of the language. He loved Spencer and Milton. And his teaching covered a great range. He even had one pupil [Yau] for Anglo-Saxon in his thirty years at Hong Kong. The Oxford curriculum spilling over into HK. In another way, also, he brought a little bit of Oxford to HK, and entertained his pupils in his home, for he believed that there should be more than merely formal teaching contact between teachers and students in a university.

The Chinese language has a very different phonetic system from English. He studied the particular difficulties Chinese students have with English intonation and pronunciation and wrote textbooks to help with the teaching of spoken English in schools. He made a wider contribution to education in HK, in developing the syllabus for examinations in the secondary schools, as Chief examiner, for many public examinations. Hong Kong University was the first university in HK. Later he had a role in developing some of the other institutions that gained university status subsequently. Some of his former pupils became professors themselves in these universities.

He played an energetic part in the administration of his university, becoming head of the English department in 1962, and shortly afterwards Dean of the Arts faculty for many years. He had the art of negotiation and management, and was good at getting his own way in committee. The chair of English became vacant on the retirement of Edmund Blunden, the poet, in 1964, and Alan was appointed Professor. When he retired from HK in 1978, he was made Professor Emeritus by the Senate.

Paul A. H. Green, 21st August 2000