

はしがき

ちょっと軽薄に訳せば『そうだったのか、イギリス』とでもなるでしょうか。この *Realise Britain* というタイトル、とてもよく本書の中身を映しています。

もちろん、イギリスで生まれ育った著者 Colin Joyce さんにいろいろ教わって、「そうだったのか」という面も大いにあります。しかし、それだけではありません。ページをめくってごらんになると、I realised ... とか、I now realise ... とか、(イギリス最良の人間には嬉しいイギリス綴りの) realise が頻出することに気づかれるでしょう。つまり、これはジョイスさんによる母国再発見の記録でもあるのです。

ジョイスさんは1970年、ロンドンの中心から20キロほど北東の Romford という町で生まれました。オックスフォード大学で歴史を専攻して卒業すると、ジョイス青年は奨学金を得て、日本語の勉強のため神戸にやってきます。それが1992年。約15年にも及ぶことになる日本暮らしの始まりでした。埼玉の県立高校で2年教えたあとは、日本在住のジャーナリストとして週刊誌『ニューズウィーク日本版』に4年、イギリスの新聞 *The Daily Telegraph* に7年勤務。その後フリーのライターとなり、2007年から3年ほどをニューヨークで過ごし、2010年にイングランドに戻りました。現在は、ロンドンとロムフォードを結んだ延長線上、ロムフォードから北東に約60キロ先、Essex 州の Colchester に住んでいます。

つまり、ジョイスさんはこれまでの人生の4割ちょっと、また成人してからの年月の大半を海外で過ごした計算になります。その間、よその国の人がイギリスをどう見ているのかを知り、ご自身も文字どおり距離を置いてイギリスを見ていたわけです。当然、ジャーナリストとしても観察していた。そして本当に久しぶりに自分の国に帰った。そんな人ですから、いろいろと気づきますし、考えます。そしてご自分の国をもっと知りたくなっ

たジョイスさんは、多くの歴史の本を読み、多くのイギリス映画を見たそうです。なるほど、ジョイスさんのエッセイは個人の経験と所感を綴りながら、歴史の文脈を忘れません。お蔭で、わたしたちが信頼して読める現代イギリス論になりました。

話題はバラエティ豊かです。イギリスの天気や食べ物といったお馴染みのテーマ。君主制や階級制といった保守的なイギリスを象徴する制度。シェイクスピアやビートルズも出てきます。商店街の店の入れ替わりや、広まりつつある入れ墨についてのエッセイからは、変化してゆく今のイギリスを垣間見ることができるでしょう。戦闘機スピットファイアについて的一篇からは、イギリスから見た第2次世界大戦が立ち上がってきます。

ジョイスさんは、ものの考え方が知的で誠実です。ステレオタイプや偶像崇拜を鵜呑みにしない批判精神を持ち、しかも自説に固執しません。「あれ？ステレオタイプにも一理あるかな？」と考え直す展開になったり、偶像視されているものの素晴らしさを再認識する結果になったりします。そうした思考のダイナミズムが、読んでいて面白い。

英語もきちんとした書き言葉だけれど気取らないスタイルで、よいお手本になります。それに *centre* とか *colour* とかの綴りにも、*daft* とか *twee* とかの語彙にも、*mutton dressed as lamb* のような表現にも、イギリス英語の色が鮮明に出ているのが（イギリス最良には）また嬉しい。

というわけで、本書に注を付け、また **Exercises** を考えるのは、じつに楽しい仕事でした。

ちょっと褒め過ぎでしょうか。欲を言えば、もっとユーモアがあってもよかったかもしれません。でも、これは教科書ですからね。ジョイスさんも遠慮したのでしょうか。イギリスに関心のある方は、是非、ジョイスさんの *Let's England* (NHK 出版) という本も読んでください。もっともっとユーモアがあります（そのぶん難しくもなりますけれど）。

真野 泰

Preface

For several years as the Tokyo correspondent for a British newspaper I was in an unusual situation. My job was to explain Japan to British readers but in my private life I was often being asked by Japanese friends and colleagues to explain about Britain. I sometimes found myself in a pickle not only because I didn't know Japan as well as I might, but also because I didn't know my own country as well as I should. At least with Japan I had made a conscious effort to read and learn about it, to travel around and to interview people. With Britain, I was expected to know about it by virtue of having come from there. In fact, since my teenage years I had been far more interested in studying about other countries and other cultures. I was rather ambivalent about my country: I was born and bred in Britain but I didn't think it defined me as a person.

Little by little, though, I became more curious about Britain. Other people's interest in Britain was infectious. When people asked me, for example, how the British monarchy differed from the Japanese imperial family I would find it perplexing but thought-provoking. When people told me that Englishmen always carry umbrellas I was initially confused. I wondered if I was a rare exception in that I rarely use one and I would ponder why that might be. Oddly, it was while I was living in Japan that I began to think more about my own country.

I compulsively watched British films and ordered copies of British comedies in an attempt to see what preoccupations

“we British” have and to attempt to stay current. I read a lot; my book collection bears a hefty section that might be labelled “*Igirisu-ron*”. I listened to English music of all sorts. One particular song from Gilbert and Sullivan stuck in my head: “ ... in spite of all temptations, to belong to other nations, he remains an Englishman”. The words seemed to apply to me because I had been interested in other countries but had found myself drawn back to the inescapable fact that I was British.

I returned to England in 2010 with some trepidation. I wasn't sure if I wanted to stay in Britain but I did want to find out more about this strange country that I had not lived in for 17 years. It was an affecting experience: I found Britain by turns surprising and familiar, sometimes fascinating and sometimes disappointing. The chapters of this book reflect my experiences since I came back to Britain and form a belated attempt to answer some of the questions that were asked of me in Japan.

In places, it is a rather personal take and another person would surely have very different experiences and viewpoints. I hope that my observations provide some insight into Britain today. Even more I hope that readers are inspired to learn further about Britain from other observers and ultimately to visit Britain and develop their own opinions.

Colin Joyce

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A Fortunate Accident

イギリス人はアンフレンドリー？

イギリス人は歩きながら考える。フランス人は考えた後で走り出す。そしてスペイン人は走ってしまった後で考える。この種の国民性論は、面白いけれど危ない。危ないけれど面白い。十把一絡げの論法だから眉唾だと分かっているけれど、やっぱり当たっている気もする。明るいアメリカ人と対比されて根暗だと言われ、日本人に似て insularity (島国根性) が強いと言われるイギリス人。でも、きっといっているのでしょうかね、明るくて大陸的なイギリス人も……？

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Shortly after returning to live in England in 2010, I suffered a small but annoying injury. I pulled a leg muscle quite badly while playing football and had to be carried off the field by my teammates. It was terrible timing as a friend was arriving on holiday the next day and we had a busy week of sightseeing 5 planned – but now I could barely walk a few hundred yards.

I hoped the injury would miraculously heal overnight, but in fact the leg muscle was stiffer and sorer after sleeping. I knew it wasn't a serious injury and it would heal naturally, but I felt

incredibly unlucky.

When I look back on it now, though, I actually feel it was a lucky accident. Yes, it was a major inconvenience during my friend's visit, but it was also a wonderful way to be reacquainted
5 with my fellow countrymen, the English, because suddenly everybody was incredibly nice to me.

Generally speaking, I didn't previously think of the English as particularly nice people. I have met a lot of unpleasant ones over the years, partly because I grew up in a town famous for
10 not being very friendly or polite. In the years I lived in Japan, I couldn't help but notice how much more polite the Japanese were compared to the English. And in the US, I found people open and friendly in a way that I never found the English to be. The longer
15 I was away from home, the more negatively I came to think of the English and, to be honest, I wasn't entirely looking forward to living among them again.

But that changed with the accident. I would only have to hobble onto a train and people would leap up to offer their seats. I would be struggling through a station and someone would
20 come running up to tell me where the lift was. In bars, complete strangers would offer to carry my drinks back to my table for me. Sometimes people would cautiously ask if I was alright, and what had happened. Unexpectedly, my injury served as an ice-breaker.

As my limp gradually got better, after about 3 weeks,
25 people could only tell that I had an injury because I was still using crutches. Once, I left my crutches with a female friend for a few minutes and someone came over and offered to help her. When I no longer needed the crutches, I was slightly sad to return them to the hospital because I knew I would also be
30 losing touch with that helpful and warm side of the English. Sure

enough, once the crutches were gone, people retreated back into silence and anonymity.

It is often said that the English are “reserved”. We don’t talk to each other on tube trains, or even make eye contact. The usual theory is that we are not unfriendly – we just place great 5 importance on the privacy of others, so we don’t start talking to them in case they are deep in thought. Now I come to think of it, it sometimes annoyed me when Americans would start up a conversation while I was trying to quietly read a book on a train or on a park bench. 10

When I lived in Japan, I found people to be a bit reticent like the English. But there was one particular situation in which people would initiate conversation: if I was eating Japanese food. In restaurants, people would ask me if I liked *natto*, or whether I preferred sake or beer. Other times people would say how 15 good I was at using chopsticks (actually, I am not particularly dexterous). This would be followed by questions about how long I had been in Japan, where I was from, a compliment about how well I spoke Japanese, and some questions on how I felt about Japan... In other words, the initial question or comment was just 20 a “gambit” to start a conversation.

The famous “English reserve” seems to disappear once people have a clear reason to talk to you or offer help. Soon after my leg muscle injury, I read that the OECD had rated Britain as one of the top five countries in terms of “pro-social 25 behaviour” (helpfulness, basically). One British newspaper despatched reporters to test this, getting a young woman to pretend to struggle with a heavy suitcase at the bottom of a steep set of steps, for example. The result was that people of all sorts volunteered to help, some of them running over despite being 30

headed in a different direction.

If I had read that story before my accident, I would probably have cynically assumed that the people had offered to help the undercover reporters because they were attractive young
5 women. But from my own experience I am now aware that people were also keen to help me. That accident helped me realise that behind the sometimes grumpy appearance of the English, they are secretly very nice.

Exercises

I. Match each word with its definition.

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 1. hobble | a. the state of being unknown to most other people |
| 2. anonymity | b. bad-tempered and easily annoyed |
| 3. reserved | c. skilful with your hands |
| 4. dexterous | d. to walk with difficulty, typically because of pain |
| 5. grumpy | e. unwilling to express your emotions |

II. Complete each sentence by choosing the correct answer.

- The author describes his injury as “a lucky accident” because
 - it miraculously healed overnight.
 - he could still walk a few hundred yards.
 - it gave him a chance to see English people in a new light.
- The author felt a bit sad about returning the crutches to the hospital because
 - he was getting fond of their cool, smooth feel.
 - he would cease to encounter English helpfulness any more.
 - they had enabled him to walk faster than before the accident.
- The author found that Japanese people didn’t initiate conversation much, but
 - the exception was when he was reading on a train.
 - the exception was when he was reading on a park bench.
 - the exception was when he was eating Japanese food in a restaurant.

III. After reading the essay, think about the following questions.

- Where do you think Japan might rank on the OECD “pro-social behaviour” index?
- Can you think of something (e.g. a joke) that could serve as an ice-breaker?