

Webster's New World Dictionary College Edition について

小 林 崇

この辞書はいわゆるニセ Webster である。New International と全然関係のない World Publishing Co. の出したものである。そのため、随分と損をしているのではないかと思われる。尤もアメリカでは New World より前に出ていた World Webster と呼ばれるものが相当広く流布していたようである。その間の事情を記した本を最近読むまでは私も New World を何となく軽視していた。その本は Donald J. Lloyd, Harry R. Warfel 両氏共著の American English in its Cultural Setting (1956, Alfred A. Knopf, N. Y.) であるが、著者の一人 Lloyd 氏が New World の Assistant Editor の一員であつたことが些か気になるとしても、一応 New World を見なおす気にしてくれた。以下は同書の一節である。少し長いが面白いので……

When somebody says "according to *Webster*....," we may well ask which *Webster* because of the complicated enterprise (some say chicanery) of the dictionary business. Just as the word dictionary passed from title of a particular book to a general name for all such books, so the name *Webster* or *Webster's* entered the public domain quite early in the United States as a synonym for *dictionary*. Furthermore, since copyright to a printed work expires in twenty-eight years (with possible renewal for another twenty-eight), the normal habit of lexicographers of working with one eye on the competitor's product is lifted into the opportunity to steal a whole book. There is also more than one way for the copyright holder to milk his old plates when he brings out a new edition. He can go on printing the old book at a lower price and under another name, or he can sell or lease it to somebody else and sit with piously averted eyes while it rampages as an amazing bargain in the low-priced field.

Merriam, having purchased the copyright to Noah Webster's *American Dictionary* from his heirs, fought again and again in the courts to keep the name *Webster* as the company's private property. In 1917 Merriam

came up with a partial victory: a federal court ruled that other publishers using the Webster name on a dictionary must print this warning: "This dictionary is not published by the original publishers of Webster's *Dictionary* or by their successors." By the use of microscopic print in advertising and by depending on dictionary buyers' not glancing at the title page, other publishers managed to nullify the decision pretty well. *Webster* continued to mean *dictionary* to the general public. The name Webster in the title has meant prosperity to publishers of some unworthy dictionaries, and its absence failure to some worthy ones.

In our lifetime the largest publisher of *Webster* dictionaries outside of Merriam has been the World Publishing Company, a concern which also prints many versions of another work in the public domain, the Holy Bible. World dictionaries and Bibles of all shapes and sizes flood the bookstores, drugstores, and department-store bookshops at prices ranging from forty-nine cents up. By various devices of bookmaking, titling, and promotion, World, concentrating on the low-priced market, placed a *World Webster* of some sort in most American homes. By nearly every standard of lexicography and scholarship these were pretty poor books; one entry described a character in a novel thus: "*Moll Flanders*, a notorious English courtesan of the reign of Charles II; she was a woman of great beauty and accomplishment." One redeeming feature of these inexpensive books was a plain uncluttered page on which the words were defined so simply and so clearly that anyone could read the definitions and understand them. Even college students with bright new desk dictionaries have been known to sneak a look at an old *World Webster* that has always been around the house, confident that it would not swamp them with bigger problems than they brought to it. The editor, an Australian, included for the American housewife a generous measure of Australian Bush slang to widen her cultural horizon.

In 1941 World decided to put out a revision of one of its popular dictionaries. It hired one of the best lexicographers, Joseph Friend, and built up a staff. In 1951 *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language* came out in a two-volume Encyclopedic Edition. For this book World successfully asserted its right to the use of Webster in the title. World issued the one-volume College Edition in 1953; the title

pages of both editions are free of the disclaimer. When in these days we say "according to Webster..." we should qualify: *Merriam-Webster* is one kind of book, and the *Webster's New World* another and not necessarily inferior kind. But you can consider it likely that any Webster bearing the forementioned warning on its title page is an out-dated and highly suspect book. (pp. 464-465)

この後に *New World*, *ACD*, *Webster New Collegiate*, *Winston*, *Funk and Wagnalls* の *New College Standard*, *Thorndike-Barnhart* の 6 辞書について述べてから、

World seems definitely superior in most counts, with *ACD* a close second choice. Both are excellent books. If neither is available, the *New Collegiate* is the next choice; then *Winston* and finally the *New College Standard*. These books all run around five dollars without thumb-indexing; about six dollars with it. If you only spend three dollars for a dictionary, the *Thorndike-Barnhart* is the only lower-priced book worth having. (p. 477)

といっている。その他、同書中から *New World* に関する部分を拾いながら、実際の例にも当て見たいと思う。先ず語義の排列について、

The *Webster's New World* uses a modified historical order, giving older senses first as long as they are living and current today and tacking obsolete and archaic meanings on at the end. (p. 469)

これは *New World* 巻頭の *Guide to the Use of the Dictionary* で断つているように編集者の最も苦心したところであるらしい。発音、品詞、屈折形の次に先ず語源を持つて来て、語源から、語義の変化を、発展順に並べて、発展の後を順々に迎えるようにし、それに差支えない限り、廃義、古義を後にまわすようにしている。しかし、発展順とは言つても、はつきり年代順によるものではないようである。巻頭の *Guide* と実際の配列とを合わせて考えてみると、語義間の連絡を重く見て、似たものを成るべく並べるようにしているようである。SOD と比較してみると大体年代順に近いことはわかる。しかし SOD で別項目になっているものを一つにまとめたり、一項目中に a, b, c と分れているものを別々に独立させたりしているのではつきり比較はできないようである。例えば *sinister* の 4 は *wicked, evil, or dishonest, especially in some dark, mysterious way* であるが、これは SOD の 3 (1455), 4 (1747) と思われ、5 (1579), 5b (1797) の一緒になつた 3. *suggesting the approach of disaster...* より後になっている。また 5 番目に *disastrous; unfortunate* があるが、これは 6 (1576), 7 (1725) の一緒になつたものと思われる。従つて年代順にすると 4, 5, 3 になると思

われる。もつとも、時折見られることであるが SOD の 5 (1579), 6 (1576) の順も逆である。これはさておき、NW の配列順は巻頭にあるように引易くを第 1 にしているのであろう。a. logical, progressive flow とあるが、歴史的発生順としても、また semantically に連絡をつけるとしても、とにかく完全を期することはむずかしいに違いない。

次に語義の説明については manatee, conjecture, reprobate, retinue などの例を上げて、

This treatment of hard words explained by easy ones came into modern dictionaries most notably in the *Winston's Simplified Dictionary* of 1926 and is continued in the *ACD*, *Thorndike-Barnhart*, and the *Webster's New World*. The definitions in the preceding paragraph are from *Webster's New World Dictionary*; *Winston* is briefer, more compact, a little more crowded, but neat. *ACD* is a little less rigorous than *World* in staying within the vocabulary of common use, but still understandable without a great deal of chasing up other words, with a style terse, clipped, and clean. (p. 471)

Grace is a constant satisfaction in British *Wyld's Universal* and in *Webster's New World*, whose editors were creative writers and stylists before and after they turned their hands to lexicography. (p. 472)

実際の例を Nation にとって比較してみると、

- N.W. 1. a stable, historically developed community of people with a territory, economic life, distinctive culture, and language in common.
2. the people of a territory united under a single government; country; state. 3. a) a people or tribe. b) a tribe of North American Indians belonging to a confederation: as, the Six Nations. c) the territory of such a tribe.

the nations, 1. in the *Bible*, the non-Jewish nations; the Gentiles.

2. [poetic]. all the peoples of the earth.

- ACD 1. an aggregation of the same ethnic family, speaking the same language or cognate languages. 2. a body of people associated with a particular territory who are sufficiently conscious of their unity to seek or to possess a government peculiarly their own. 3. a member tribe of an Indian confederation.

- COD Distinct race or people having common descent, language, history, or political institutions (*most favoured*~, to which State accords

lowest scale of import duties);/(in medieval & some Scots univv.)
body of students from particular country or district; LAW of~s;
LEAGUE² of N~s; UNITED N~s. Hence ~HOOD n.

- UED 1. A large group of human beings who form an independent political unity, and are subject to a single supreme central government; usually occupying a clearly defined geographical area, and further united by an ancient community of race, customs, traditions, and general spirit, and feeling themselves to be a unity: *the British, French, Dutch, nation &c.; the voice of the nation*, opinion of the majority of the inhabitants of a country; *law of nations*, international law; *Battle of the Nations*, Leipzig, 1813. Phr. *most favoured nation*, one whose exports are subject to the lowest rate of tariff charges when they enter given country, the latter having the same terms for its own exports. 2. A group of people who form, or once formed, an ancient national unity, though at present either geographically scattered (*Jewish nation*), or forming part of a larger national unit (*Scottish, Welsh, nation*), but still presenting distinguishing racial and other characters, such as separate religion or language. 3. (Bib.) In pl. *the nations*, the Gentiles, the non-Jewish peoples. 4. (in mediaeval universities) Group of students belonging to the same race or nationality.

以上を見ると、ACD よりは 3. の語義が a, b, c に分れて詳細になり、且つ *the nations* が含まれている。しかし 3. a) の a people or tribe の意味が不明瞭である。これは Wyld の 2. の説明によつて補われるものであろうが、これが加えられたことにより 2. から 3. b. への語義の連絡がつくわけで、語義の配列についての注意を読んでいれば有益であると思われる。

COD に比較して劣る点は、phrase, 用例であるが、これも nation の場合に限ると *most favoured nation* がないだけで、他は何れも見出し語として出て居り、唯、Wyld の詳しさにだけは及ばないようである。しかし、Wyld は矢張り古いだけあつて稍々繁雑の感を免れず、簡潔でしかも要を尽している点では *New World* に指を屈してよかろう。また *damn* の項も ACD に比して倍位に量がふえている。

- N.W. v. t. 1. originally, to condemn as guilty; hence, 2. to condemn as bad, inferior, etc.: often used in the imperative as a curse. 3. to criticize adversely; hence, 4. to ruin the chances of for success; make fail. 5. to swear at by saying "damn": as, he *damued* the

weather. 6. in *theology*, to condemn to eternal punishment, as in hell.

v. i. to swear or curse; say "damn", etc.

n. the saying of "damn" as a curse.

adj. & adv. [Colloq.], damned: a clipped form, used as a curse or strong intensive.

interj. an expression of anger, annoyance, disappointment, etc.

Often euphemized as darn, dog-gone, etc.—SYN. see *curse*.

damn with faint praise, to condemn by praising without enthusiasm.

not care (give) a damn, [Collq.], not care at all.

ACD v. t. 1. to declare (something) to be bad, unfit, invalid, or illegal. 2. to condemn as a failure: damn a play. 3. to bring condemnation upon; ruin. 4. to doom to eternal punishment, or condemn to hell. 5. to swear at or curse, using the word "damn".—v.i. 6. to use the word "damn"; swear. —n. 7. the utterance of the word "damn" in swearing or for emphasis.

この両者の比較は絶対に N. W. の勝ちであろう。殊に *ady.*, *adv.*, *interj.*, として使われる方がむしろ多い位である。また *not give a damn* をあげたのも (American Thesaurus of Slang には出ているが) 普通の辞書としては最初ではなかろうか。ついでに *damn* 以下の *entry* を比較してみる。むろん N. W. は 142,000, ACD は 132,000 で N. W. の方が多いのであるが, N. W. にだけあるものを拾って行くと *damnably* (ACD は派生語として *damnable* の項にある) *Damon and Pythias* (ACD は単に *Damon* で, N. W., ACD ともに *Pythias* は *Damon* へ refer してある). *damp-dry*, *damping*, *dampish*, *dampness*, *dandyish*, *Danubian*, *Dapsang*, *Dardanian* で割と派生語が外へ出されていることが多い。これは引きよさをねらったものであろう。一方, ACD にのみあるものは, *Daniel* (Edward Salisbury), *d'Arblay*, *Darbyites*, *Dardanus*, *Daredeviltry*, *darg*, *Darjeeling* で固有名詞が多いようである。

up-to-date という点では *hi-fi* が *adj.* として入って居り, *high fidelity* が *separate compound* で出ている。その他, *flying saucer*, *tweeter*, *woofer*, *spaceship*, *Salk* (ソークワクチンの発明者), *calypso* (n. としても, ACD は *adj.*), *tuner* (ラジオの), 思いつくままにめくって見たが, 語い・語義とも N. W. の方がふえていることはたしかである。ACD は動植物名に学名をつけているが, N. W. は *lily family* 位の記述で, より一般的になっている。これも, この程度の辞書ではいいのかも知れない。

次に語原であるが, これは N. W. の特色の最大のものと考えられる。

Webster's New World gives space to a full treatment of native and foreign words in the light of recent studies, carrying them back, where possible, to Indo-European roots and down through their changing forms in English to the point where the definitions of current meanings pick up the story. (p. 473)

nation の例をとると

N.W. [ME. & OFr. *nacion* < L. *natio* < *natus*, pp. of *nasci*, to be born]

ACD [ME. t. L: s. *nātio* race, people, nation, orig., birth]

COD [F, f. L *nationem* nom. -o (*nasci nat-* be born, -ION)]

milk に例をとると

N.W. [ME, *milke*, *melk*; AS. *meolc*; *milc*; skin to G. *milch*; IE. base **melǵ-*, to stroke, press out, wipe off, hence to milk (an animal), seen also in L. *mulgere*, to milk (cf. EMULSION)]

ACD [ME, OE *milc*, *meolc*, c. G *milch*]

COD [com.-Teut.: OMercian *milc*, Du. *melk*, G *milch*, F. OTeut. *meluks* (*melk* vb, cogn. w. Gk *amelgō*, L *mulgēre* to milk)]

以上を比較してみると印欧語までさかのぼっているのは、むしろ N. W. だけであるが、ACD よりは詳しく、ほぼ COD と同程度であると言える。但し印欧語までさかのぼっている例は極く少数である。

発音では N. W. は ACD 同様 General American を主体とし、他は時に variant として並べてある。記号は伝統的なやり方に [ə, ɪ] だけ IPA を借りている。尚、上記 American English in its Cultural Setting の著者は 1960 年に出る予定の Webster の newer International は brave enough to go phonemic であろうと言っている。(同書 474 頁) 発音に関する限り ACD と N. W. は大差ないようである。

以上比較して見た上で、N. W. は全体として ACD より一歩前進した辞書と言うことができる。上記引用中の *World seems definitely superior, with ACD a close second choice.* という言葉を語原から順に語義を辿るという編集方針を頭に入れて使えば、確かに unique な辞書で、むしろ、ACD が close second という表現は控え目と考えられる。

後記 比較に使った辞書は N. W. (1956), ACD (1951), COD (1954), UED (1956) で ACD が少し古かったことをお断りしておく。