

マーク・ランガガー先生に敬意を表して

A Farewell Essay to Professor Mark Langager

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Professor Mark Langager has called Japan home intermittently over a span of 60 years. In the beginning Mark was a child of Japan, born to Lutheran missionaries, who lived for the first five years of his life in the Tohoku Region of Japan. There are videos of Mark speaking Japanese fluently at this time and conversant in the famous *Zuzu-Ben* dialect of Yamagata Prefecture. From the age of five until university Mark visited Japan for extended study abroad trips and would call Japan his home again while serving as a professor at ICU for these past 23 years. We are sad to see him go but hope that he will return to the US after retirement this year with a heart full of memories of the academic accomplishments and great friendships which he created over that time.

After first moving to the US at the age of five Mark lived with his parents who established churches in Minnesota, Oregon, and Arizona. He would only re-familiarize himself with the Japanese language in college at the University of Washington. This inspired him to return to Japan for study at both the University of Iwate and the University of Nagoya during his undergraduate years. He then returned to Japan after graduating from university on a Monbusho Research Scholarship to pursue research on Japanese language and culture in the Japanese Language and Culture Study Center at the University of Nagoya. From that point his love of Japanese language, culture and education studies

led him to work in the field of language education both as an Assistant English Teacher in Japanese public schools in Saitama and an instructor at Berlitz in Tokyo. The call to learn would draw him back into academia to pursue a doctorate in the field of Human Development and Psychology at Harvard University. At Harvard he wrote his dissertation on the education experiences of Japanese expatriates in New York and Boston. His dissertation research examined the effects that education experiences in “Saturday Schools” (*hoshuko*) and short-term enrolment in Japanese public schools during the summer (*taiken-nyugaku*) had on the academic achievement of Japanese high school students living abroad.

Professor Langager started working at ICU in the autumn of 2001, just three months after graduating with a doctoral degree from Harvard. Once he had the chance to return to the US during research leave in Seattle he built upon this earlier research to examine the influence of “Saturday Schools” on Japanese expatriates in that West Coast city which he recently calls home. He spent his sabbatical at the Center of Multicultural Education at the University of Washington which is led by the most famous figure in the field of multicultural education in the US, Dr. James Banks.

Since the start of his career at ICU, Professor Langager has pursued diverse interests and research related to education, conflict and peace studies,

sustainability and environmental studies with a number of colleagues in our community. His research on peace education compared concepts of “war ideation” in lower secondary social studies curricula in Arizona and Tokyo. In this research he highlighted the differences between identifying one’s country as a perpetrator or victim in the different textbooks and the enacted curriculum taught in classrooms.

Professor Langager has served our institution in a number of different roles according to his administrative duties. He has been a Director of the Religious Affairs Committee, a Director and Coordinator of the Japan Studies Program, a member of the Human Rights Advisory Group, a member of the IB Education Committee, and Associate Dean of Student Learning. He was also one of the two faculty in charge of organizing the new student retreat for a couple of years when it included the entire first year cohort which was a massive responsibility.

Professor Langager has been active in numerous campus events such as C-Week. As part of C-Week’s events, Professor Langager composed and performed a song in remembrance of an ICU student who unfortunately left our community and this world at an age too young. This song provided much healing and solace for the friends of the student who attended the performance.

Mark has translated a strong personal passion for environmental protection and sustainability into his research and teaching on environmental issues centered on the concept of “water literacy” in diverse contexts such as Palestine and India. Beyond this research, he has taught a General Education course titled “Sustainability” during his tenure at our institution. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, Professor Langager found peace by enjoying walks around the ICU campus in all of its natural glory. He incorporated this appreciation and passion into his General Education course on “Sustainability” and would lead students on nature walks to forage

for edible products such as Ginkgo nuts, loquats (*biwa*), wild onion bulbs, plums and summer citrus (*natsu mikan*). One student was moved when Professor Langager got on all fours so the student could stand on his back and be able to pick the citrus and keep it. Professor Langager was truly that type of educator who would sacrifice himself for the education and experiences of his students. He will be sorely missed and we wish him health and happiness as he returns to his other home and family in the US.

Please see a list of key publications from Professor Langager over the years to revisit his research and remember the invaluable contribution he made to our ICU Community. It has been an honor to serve with Professor Langager, and I sincerely thank him for acting as my mentor over these many years.

Select Publications:

“Escaping the Formal Education System: A Case Study of Chinese Homeschooling Families.” Wang, Qiu and Langager, Mark W. In *Educational Studies*, March 2019, Volume 61, pp. 65-79. Tokyo: International Christian University.

“Childhood academic language environments of Japanese sojourners: A principal components analysis study.” In *International Journal of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*, Vol. 13, Number 1 (January, 2010), pp. 1-22.

“Elements of war and peace in history education in the US and Japan: A case study comparison.” In *Journal of Peace Education*, Vol. 6, Number 1 (March, 2009), pp. 119-136.

“Low-Income Fathers’ and Mothers’ Perceptions of the Father Role: A Qualitative Study in Four Early Head Start Communities.” (with J.A. Summers, H. Raikes J. Butler, P. Spicer, B. Pan and S. Shaw), *Mental Health Journal*, Vol. 20(3), Fall 1999, pp.291- 304.