

Akira Imamura: a scientific memoir (1950–2011)

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1 My senior high school days

I entered Otsu Senior High School in Otsu City in the Shiga prefecture in 1950 and graduated from Otsu Higashi (East in English) Senior High School in 1953. However, I didn't move from one high school to another. I entered and graduated from the same high school, but the name had changed. This was due to the violent change in the educational system in Japan after World War II. This was intimately connected to the sudden change in the morality and political system in Japan at that time. This turning point in the history of Japan made me certain that I should be very flexible in everything that I did and would do in life, and that there are not absolute justices and truths, but relative ones. One needs to have a reference frame in which to measure things and oneself. One is very much influenced by one's surroundings, just like atoms and molecules. This way of thinking has had a very important effect and influence on my thought processes and has affected and influenced my various research projects and endeavors. I was fortunate to get a very good education and foundation at Otsu Higashi Senior High School which prepared me for the next stage of my education, career and life development.

2 Kyoto University

In 1953, I entered the Department of Fuel Chemistry in the Faculty of Engineering at Kyoto University because Otsu City is located near Kyoto City, and I had graduated from high school in Otsu City. Many of the students like I who chose to study in the Faculty of Engineering at Kyoto University believed that they would have great chances and opportunities to get good industrial jobs after graduation, and to be able to help rebuild Japanese industry, which had been devastated by the long war.

Already as an undergraduate student I attended special departmental meetings/seminars in which the faculty members and students got together and the full professors gave us understandable talks about the current content and aspects of their ongoing active research projects. Among those who gave very interesting and thought provoking seminars was Professor Kenichi Fukui, who in 1981 would be awarded the Nobel Prize in chemistry. He spoke about the essence of frontier electron theory and its applications for predicting and understanding chemical structures and reactivity. His short speech had a strong impact on me. From that moment on, I decided to change my plan to pursue a job in industry to pursue one in academics (fundamental research). I would pursue an academic career which would allow me to do basic research instead of going to work in industry and apply, and perhaps perfect and extend the knowledge already known. My destiny had been set by attending an undergraduate seminar at a research intensive Japanese university, which Kyoto University always has been. From that day on, I would start my journey on one of the many possible paths which would ultimately lead to a tenured academic position at a research intensive university in Japan. Such a career path would not be (and today is not) as easy as I or anyone else would have

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expected. A career as a research-intensive academic research professor is a never ending one. The search and quest for knowledge and understanding never ends, as I would soon find out. There is always something more to learn, to discover, to find out, and then to teach one's young undergraduate students, and a bit older graduate and postdoctoral students. Nature has many hidden treasures and wonders which are there for us to uncover and find, if we only have the patience, diligence and willingness to be able to spend the time and make the effort and sacrifices required to do what it takes.

I entered the research laboratory of Prof. Fukui as a fourth-year undergraduate student, and was admitted in 1957 into the Masters Degree Program in the Graduate School at Kyoto University and was initially attached to the **Fukui Laboratory**. The first research project offered to me by Prof. Fukui was to work on further developing a theoretical approach to treat aromaticity in connection with the so-called $4n + 2$ (π electron) rule. By using perturbation theory, we succeeded in relating the stability of aromatic hydrocarbons with $4n + 2$ π electron ring structure formation [1]. In 1959, I was accepted into the Doctoral (PhD) Degree Program and my initial research project in the Fukui Laboratory involved using molecular orbital methods to study charge transfer complexes, the subject of which had been suggested by Associate Prof. Yonezawa who was collaborating with Prof. Fukui to develop frontier electron theory. The theory of charge transfer complexes had already been developed by Prof. R. S. Mulliken in 1952 [2], in which the charge transfer interaction was incorporated in terms of the highest occupied molecular orbital (HOMO) of the electron donor and the lowest occupied molecular orbital (LUMO) of the electron acceptor. One of the important aspects of this theory was the concept of the coincidence of the symmetry of the HOMO and the LUMO for an effective charge transfer interaction to be possible and to be present. I applied perturbation theory to the charge transfer interaction and derived a formula similar to the superdelocalizability formula in frontier electron theory.

To be more specific, the numerator in the formula is $(C_{ir} + C_{is})^2$ instead of $(C_{ir}^2 + C_{is}^2)$ for the two-center interaction [3]. This form of the numerator implies that the symmetry of molecular orbitals plays an important role in the charge transfer interaction. Moreover, this formula includes the contributions from not only the HOMO and the LUMO, but also all other orbitals in an analogous way to that given in the frontier electron theory. It is noteworthy that this formula can be considered as a possible motivating factor for the development of Woodward–Hoffmann theory and the so-called Woodward–Hoffman frontier orbital rules. In fact, Prof. Fukui applied this formula to the Diels–Alder reaction and indicated that the symmetry of the

molecular orbitals play an essential role in the chemical reaction in 1964 [4], one year prior to the publication of Woodward–Hoffmann theory [5–7].

Moreover, I tried to apply the theory of charge transfer complexes to the organic semiconductor which had been experimentally discovered and developed by Akamatsu and Inokuchi, but I didn't write up my work and submit it for publication. I also calculated the electronic structure of various biologically interesting carcinogenic compounds in collaboration with Dr. Nagata who was a research associate in Fukui's laboratory. These investigations were part of my PhD work in the Fukui laboratory at Kyoto University. The problem of accurately predicting the relative energies of charge transfer states, especially those involving charge transfer from one orbital to another in the same molecule (intramolecular charge transfer) or to an orbital on other molecule (intermolecular charge transfer) is still an active field for research in 2011. Fluorescence or Förster resonance energy transfer (FRET) in many cases involves charge transfer after the initial absorption of a visible photon of light. In organic semiconductors, a field of active research today, it is important that one have a theory which not only is able to reproduce the ground electronic state and its electronic and magnetic properties, but also those of the various low lying (accessible) electronic states. The work undertaken during my PhD-years would prepare me for work in this exciting and still active research area. The methods at the time, both in condensed matter physics, density functional theory and tight-binding models, were not really adequate to treat organic semiconductors, as they had been developed to treat solid state physics systems. It would be years before density functional theory and the tight-binding approximate models would be able to treat these systems with chemical accuracy.

In 1963, I received my PhD in chemistry from Kyoto University with Prof. Kenichi Fukui as my PhD supervisor (Doktorvater in German). During the period of 1962–1964, I worked as a research associate in the electrical communication laboratory of Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Public Corporation (now NTT, Inc.) and engaged in experimental studies on the physico-chemical properties of organic semiconductors such as polytetracyanoethylene copper chelate films.

3 National Cancer Center Research Institute, Tokyo

In May of 1964, Dr. Chikayoshi Nagata who had been a research associate in Fukui's laboratory of Kyoto University and was the Chief of the Division of the Biophysics at that time, kindly gave me the opportunity to become the Head of the Quantum Chemistry Section in the Division of Biophysics at the National Cancer Center Research Institute

(NCCRI) of Japan. From that time on, I began to try to determine the relationships between electronic structure of various carcinogenic compounds and their carcinogenic activities. As was to be expected, it was very difficult to find the direct functional relationships due to the intricacy of the networks of coupled biochemical reactions in living systems. The initial reactions that carcinogenic compounds would induce in living systems were thought to be few, while carcinogenicity was thought to be the final result of many different biochemical reactions and processes which would be influenced by the initial event. In many instances, cancer results decades after the initial exposure to some chemical, radiation, foreign organism, or combination of the three. A chain of events is started which ultimately leads to cancer, and one needs to figure out how to stop this chain of events if one cannot prevent it from initially occurring. Cancer was then and still is one of the most difficult of diseases to determine the initial cause and then to stop or cure.

During this time at the NCCRI, I started to develop a methodology for a semiempirical molecular orbital theory which included both σ and π electrons, hoping to extend the π electron theory of Hückel. However, I discontinued my research into the development of a semiempirical σ and π electron molecular orbital theory with the publication of the excellent and beautiful works of J. A. Pople, D. P. Santry and G. A. Segal based on the complete neglect of differential overlap, the so-called CNDO method [8, 9]. What I was attempting to develop had been developed by these three researchers at the Carnegie Institute of Technology and Mellon Institute of Industrial Research (which merged in 1967 to become Carnegie Mellon University) in the USA. John A. Pople would later go on to win the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for this and his subsequent work in quantum chemistry. I had chosen the right project to work on, but was beat to the punch by John and his two protégées.

4 Cornell University, Ithaca

In 1966, I was allowed to take a leave of absence from the National Cancer Center Research Institute in Tokyo and spend a *sabbatical* period in the laboratory of Prof. Roald Hoffmann at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. From August of 1966 until December of 1967, I was engaged in various collaborative research projects with Prof. Hoffmann. One project was to work on the theoretical development of the now famous through-space versus through-bond interactions in collaboration with Prof. Hoffmann. I developed these concepts mathematically by applying perturbation theory and the result was a beautiful and elegant explanation of the mathematical equations in

terms of through-space/through-bond interactions by Hoffmann [10]. Another interesting project was our study of the relationship between the molecular and electronic structures of biphenyl, fulvalene and their analogs in the ground and excited electronic states. At the time, it was experimentally known that biphenyl had a twisted ground electronic state structure and a planar first excited electronic state structure. I could provide an explanation and understanding of these experimental results based on molecular orbital theory, that is, I succeeded to explain this experimental result by the combination of steric effects between the hydrogen atoms bonded to the phenyl rings and π electron conjugation between the phenyl rings governed by the symmetry of the occupied molecular orbitals in the ground and excited electronic states. Here, we showed that by analyzing the electronic structure of orbitals occupied in the various electronic states, one could predict the geometrical structure. One of the keys to relating quantum chemical calculations to geometrical structure had been found. The next one was of course reactivity, that is, how the orbitals on two different molecules could be used to predict how the molecules would react, and the end products.

The molecular orbital analysis method we used to explain the ground and excited electronic structures and hence geometries for the neutral species can also be applied to explain and predict the molecular structures for both the cationic and anionic species of these molecules in the ground and excited states although we hadn't stated this specifically in our publication [11]. We also developed a general perturbation theory for extended Hückel theory which includes perturbed Coulomb and resonance integrals as well as overlap integral terms [12]. Prof. Hoffmann asked me to use the extended Hückel molecular orbital method to perform a conformational analysis for various dipeptides including *N*-acetyl-*N'*-methyl-glycylamide [13]. The conformational maps which resulted from our investigation were very similar to the ones which were derived by Prof. Scheraga's group in Cornell using empirically derived Lennard–Jones potential energy functions between atoms (so-called Ramachandran plots for each amino acid residue). Our conformational maps were thought to be more reliable and to provide more chemical and physical insight and understanding, as our approach was based on molecular orbital theory and included many of the interactions which are missing when one uses a simple Lennard–Jones potential energy function. The seeds for more work in this area by me and my group in Japan were sown during my sabbatical stay in the Hoffmann's laboratory at Cornell during the 1 year and 4 months I was in Ithaca.

The sabbatical experience gave me many useful results and fruitful ideas which I would use and be able to draw on during my research career. In addition, I was able to

gain a general view of Japan and Japanese science from outside of Japan, something which is good for every citizen of every country to get. One's perspective of oneself, one's country, and one's culture and one's way of doing science change or at least are seen under a different light when one is viewing them from the outside, rather than from within. I also have to mention that my many talks and discussions with Prof. Hoffmann were very stimulating, thought provoking, and instructive. Included among them was the thought that ONE of the aims of theoretical research should be to provide the guiding principles for organic and inorganic experimental chemists to use in the design of their future experiments. And certainly, the concept of through-space versus through-bond interactions is one of the most important. Indeed, this is still an active area of research over 50 years later.

5 National Cancer Center Research Institute, Tokyo again

After returning to Japan, I initiated a series of molecular orbital research projects to investigate various polymers utilizing the tight-binding approximation from solid state physics which I had studied when I had been a student in Prof. Fukui's laboratory of Kyoto University. I first applied a tight-binding method to investigate various conformations of polyethylene in the framework of extended Hückel theory. In order to be able to perform such calculations for polyethylene in various screw axis symmetries, I had to perform a unitary transformation of the x - and y -coordinate axes of the atomic orbital basis set in order to be consistent with the screw axis symmetry.

To the best of my knowledge, I was the first one in the world to develop and test an approach to treat polymeric systems with various screw symmetries using molecular orbital-based methodology, the method described in the first of a series of papers [14]. The second paper of this series was to apply this newly developed approach to study polyethylene and polyglycine using the CNDO/2 method in collaboration with Ms. Fujita [15]. We found that our approach was additionally applicable in the framework of self-consistent field (SCF) methods, although we did experience some problems with convergence. We experienced some divergent behavior during the SCF procedure for certain systems, especially in the case where the hydrogen bonds were interacting with each other as in α -helices. In order to overcome the divergence problems, I developed a novel iterative procedure that I implemented in the SCF method I was using for polymers by using the density matrix which had been originally formulated by McWeeny [16].

Moreover, I applied this procedure to investigate polyglycine and poly-L-alanine in the planar, the right-handed

α -helix and the left-handed α -helix conformations [17]. The calculated relative stabilities of the three conformations for poly-L-alanine was the right-handed > left-handed > planar, which is in agreement with the experimental results. The reason why the right-handed α -helix is more stable than left-handed α -helix was scrutinized by partitioning the total energy into the partial contributions of fragments of the polymer. Here, we found that the difference in the interaction energy between methyl group and remote carbonyl group is responsible for the stability of the right-handed α -helix. It should be stressed that this interaction between methyl and carbonyl groups could be regarded as a kind of hydrogen bond. After publishing these results, I was invited to give lectures at many physics meetings and in addition, at many biochemistry meetings.

I was quite surprised since the responses to my results were completely different by the two communities. That is, the physics community was in general surprised by the complexity of the system in comparison with other molecules containing a few atoms. On the other hand, the community of biochemists took not much notice of the computed system because of its simplicity in comparison with the real life biopolymers in cells. They pointed out strongly that the electronic structures of periodic polypeptides were of little practical use since the biological function of most proteins was intimately related to its aperiodicity. What was also remarked by Kendrew and others after the publication of the first crystal structure of a protein was that there was very little symmetry. Condensed matter and solid state physicists who had developed the tight-binding method were used to treating periodic systems, crystalline solids and not amorphous non-crystalline glasses. After my discussions with the biochemistry community, I fully recognized and appreciated the need for the development of computational methods for non-periodic polymers would be indispensable for quantum chemistry methods to be able to contribute to biochemical problems where symmetry was to a large extent lacking.

In parallel with this research project, I was developing a method to predict the catalytic activity in connection with orbital mixings with Prof. Hirano at the University of Tokyo. He pointed out to me the interesting paper written by Houk and coworkers, in which the change in the regioselectivity of Lewis acid catalysis was explained by the changes in the HOMO and LUMO obtained using the semiempirical CNDO/2 molecular orbital theory. However, no theoretical basis for the changes in the HOMO and LUMO had been given [18]. Therefore, we analyzed the changes in all of the molecular orbitals in terms of the interactions induced during Lewis acid catalysis in terms of perturbation theory [19].

As a result of this analysis, it was shown that orbital mixings were responsible for the changes in the molecular

orbitals involved in catalysis, including the HOMOs and LUMOs. Furthermore, there had been two factors which control the magnitude of the orbital mixings; one is the perturbation due to electrostatic interaction and the other due to the overlap of the orbitals. The former were designated as static orbital mixing and the latter as dynamic orbital mixing. General rules were derived to predict the magnitude of the orbital mixings. These rules were successfully applied to Lewis acid catalyzed Diels–Alder and the Meerwein–Ponndorf reactions [19].

6 Shiga University of Medical Science, Otsu

In 1975, I left the NCCRI and accepted a professorship in chemistry at the newly founded Shiga University of Medical Science. This university was founded under a then new policy of the Japanese government to increase the number of medical doctors in Japan. My main educational responsibility was to teach general chemistry to freshman and sophomores students. I was also expected to help in setting up the organization, in the design of the new building and in the procurement of instruments for this newly founded medical science university. During my first two to three years at this university, I was especially occupied with these administrative and teaching commitments and hence did not have much time to dedicate to my former research projects. However, I did make time to develop a method to evaluate the magnitude of the effect of through-space/through-bond interactions on the ionization energy. Here, all Fock matrix elements needed to be transformed from the atomic orbital (AO) basis to a localized orbital basis. By setting appropriate core resonance integrals to zero followed by diagonalization, one could obtain the change of the orbital energy in question. The method was applied in the framework of *ab initio* Hartree–Fock and semiempirical CNDO/2 theory to various systems with lone pairs in molecules in order to determine the relationship between the through-space/through-bond interactions and the orbital energies of lone pairs [20]. The method was also applied to the electrophilicity of the OH radical by comparing the magnitude of the electron transfer from aliphatic compounds to the OH group with that from the OH group to aliphatic compounds in hydrogen abstraction reactions using semiempirical CNDO/2 theory. As a result of these analyses, the OH radical was found to be electrophilic in nature [21]. This research was carried out mainly by Dr. H. Shinohara who later became professor of Tokyo Metropolitan University.

In 1979, the 3rd International Conference of Quantum Chemistry (ICQC) was held in Kyoto, Japan in which Prof. K. Fukui was the chairman of this conference. At this conference, I met Prof. Janos Ladik of Erlangen University

in Germany. He was able to offer me a nine-month guest professor position at Erlangen University. I willingly accepted his offer and stayed from January to September of 1981 in Erlangen. While in Erlangen, I worked on the development of the use of perturbation theory to calculate the interaction energy between two nearly incommensurate polymers by using the *ab initio* Hartree–Fock program for periodic polymers written by Dr. Sandor Suhai who became later the professor and Head of the Department (Abteilung in German) of Molecular Biophysics and Bioinformatics at the German Cancer Research Center [Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum (DKFZ)] in Heidelberg, Germany. Dr. Suhai kindly went over the theory and details of the program with me, which made it possible for me to make further developments in this line of research [22]. He also sent one of his PhD students Gerd R  ther from Heidelberg to work with me for one year in the 1990s.

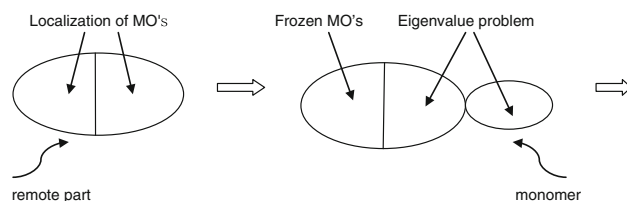
7 Hiroshima University

In 1982, I moved from Shiga University of Medical Science to Hiroshima University as a professor of physical chemistry in the Department of Chemistry in the Faculty of Science. I continued my previous research projects on quantitative analyses of the through-space/through-bond interaction [23] and studies of the electronic structure of various polymers [24] with some very capable and bright students. I also investigated the Peierls instability from the perspective of the phase of molecular orbitals with my PhD student Yuriko Aoki who would later become professor of materials science at Kyushu University. The energy difference between equi-bond structure and bond alternating structure in polyacetylene was explained by the phases of the HOMO and MO's near the HOMO. The semiquantitative evaluation of this energy difference was successfully carried out by means of H  ckel molecular orbital theory for a finite length of polyacetylene [25]. Moreover, we could rationalize the fact that the bond alternation is suppressed by the inter-chain interaction in terms of bonding and antibonding combinations of two molecular orbitals of the polymers concerned, that is, when antibonding combination of two HOMOs is higher than the bonding combination of two LUMOs, the bond alternation was found to be suppressed. In this way, we could understand the basis for Peierls instability in terms of concepts of molecular orbitals which are familiar to chemists, without any knowledge of solid state physics. Of course, it is best to understand both the physics and chemistry explanations, and they should of course be consistent. But in many cases, one gains additional insights by looking at alternative explanations for the same physical phenomena.

Next, we tried to evaluate theoretically the quality of explosives by means of molecular orbital methods and molecular dynamics. This research was undertaken in collaboration with Dr. Y. Kohno who was a researcher of Chugokukayaku CO., LTD in Hiroshima. We found that N–N bond lengths of HMX (Octahydro-1,3,5,7-tetranitro-1,3,5,7-tetrazocine) polymorphs calculated by the molecular orbital methods were longer than those of crystals determined by X-ray crystallography, and that the differences in bond length between calculated and experimental ones were intimately related to impact sensitivity of the HMX polymorphs. This result suggests that N–N bonds in HMX may store a kind of strain energy and this energy may play an important role in the explosion [26].

Another important focus of my research was to establish a method to calculate the electronic structures of non-periodic polymers such as DNA and proteins. As had been stated previously, I had developed the method to calculate periodic polymers by using the tight-binding approximation in semiempirical molecular orbital methods such as CNDO/2 and had obtained satisfactory results. However, this result had not been a satisfactory one for biochemists because of the limitation that this method was confined for use on periodic systems. From the time I had this point made clear to me by my biochemist colleagues, I had been trying to establish a method for the calculation of non-periodic systems. The basic idea I had was to mimic the method of protein syntheses in living systems, that is, proteins are synthesized in living system by adding one amino acid residue at a time on the ribosome. Therefore, the idea was to first calculate the electronic structure of an oligomer using the usual molecular orbital methods, and then add the next monomer to the oligomer. We then needed to obtain the electronic structure of oligomer + monomer system (extended chain). In the first stage of this research, perturbation methods were tried with little success mainly due to problems with convergence. Divergent behavior was observed and attributed to the small magnitude of the values in the denominator originating from the nearly degenerate energy levels in the oligomers. Next, the variational method was tried. In this approach, the molecular orbitals of an oligomer are calculated followed by localization of the molecular orbitals in two parts, one of which is remote enough from the site on which a newly combined monomer could attack. Consequently, all matrix elements between molecular orbitals localized in the remote part and those of attacking monomer should be negligibly small. Thus, the molecular orbitals of the newly combined system was represented as a linear combination of localized orbitals of the oligomer and molecular orbitals of attacking monomer and an eigenvalue problem derived from the variational principle is solved after dropping the matrix elements concerned with the remote part.

This procedure is schematically described below

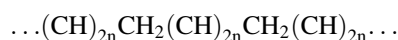


By repeating this procedure, we can elongate (lengthen/extend) non-periodic polymers as long as we want. Therefore, we named this method the elongation method [27–29]. It should be noteworthy that any monomers can be selected and then the electronic structure of non-periodic polymers are easily calculated. Another important characteristic of this method is that the dimension of the eigenvalue problem remains nearly constant at each elongation step, in other words, the elongation method is nothing but an order- N method. We implemented this method in various types of theoretical methods such as the extended Hückel, CNDO/2, ab initio Hartree–Fock, and DFT (density functional theory) methods and satisfactory results were obtained in each case. This research had been undertaken in collaboration with Dr. Yuriko Aoki who is now Professor of Kyushu University and her many graduate students and now even postdoctoral students and visiting professors, similar to the visiting professorship I had in Erlangen with Professor Janos Ladik and Dr. Sandor Suhai in his group. After my retirement from Hiroshima University, the elongation method has been further developed by Prof. Aoki's group at Kyushu University and more recently Prof. Gu's group at South China Normal University. The method is currently able to treat three-dimensional systems such as globular proteins. Professor Aoki is now extending the method for use in calculating linear and nonlinear frequency-dependent electric field-dependent properties and property surfaces. So, the research and development is now continuing and going strong at Kyushu University in Kasuga, Fukuoka, Japan.

8 Hiroshima Kokusai Gakuin University, Hiroshima

In 1998, I retired from Hiroshima University and in 1999 I moved to Hiroshima Kokusai Gakuin University in Hiroshima City to assume a professorship in the Department of Mathematics where I taught freshmen science students calculus and linear algebra after working as a part-time lecturer for one year. Hiroshima Kokusai Gakuin University is relatively small private university and my educational duties were much heavier than they were at Hiroshima University. Therefore, I didn't have as much time to devote to my research projects. In addition, I was made

the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering from 2001 to 2005 and then the President of the University from 2005 to 2010. During these periods, I had to devote much of my energies to various management issues of the university. Hence, I could only carry out a limited amount of research during my 10 year period at Hiroshima Kokusai Gakuin University. When one only has very limited time to pursue one's research, one must be very selective in the choice. One of my choices during this time was to research in the molecular design of conducting polymers, that is, polyene which has two π conjugated systems perpendicular with each other. In this polymer, I designed a system in which units of finite length of sp hybridized σ orbitals are combined periodically with a carbon atom with sp² hybridized σ orbitals and thus every unit has two π conjugated systems perpendicular with each other as shown below.



In this system, the π system has tendency to form a bond alternating structure due to the Peierls instability and another perpendicular π system also has same tendency, but the latter π system has a preference for the formation of double bonds different from those by the former π system. In other words, the Peierls instabilities of two π systems are competing with each other, and as a result of the balancing of this competition this system has no bond alternations leading to a small HOMO–LUMO gap. This inference was verified by the geometry optimization calculations with DFT calculation as well as molecular orbital calculations [30]. Consequently, I could make a proposal for the molecular design of a π conjugated single-chain electronically conductive polymers. This was the latest of my long line of research and brought me back to full circle where one of the aims of my early research was to provide unifying principles for organic and inorganic chemistry to use in the design of their new compounds and/or experiments. By interacting with both research and industrial chemists and physicists in Japan, in Erlangen and Heidelberg in Germany and in Ithaca in New York, I came to do the things I have been trained to teach my many students to do, to apply the knowledge gained in one's fundamental research programs to solve real and practical problems in society. Any country which does so will be able to continue to develop its industrial base and also teach the fundamental and basic skills to the next generation of students and civilians to be self sustaining. The nexus between teaching, research and innovation (jobs and industry generation) has never been more important than it now is. With that I will now like to finish my scientific memoirs to date, and acknowledge those who have contributed to my scientific career and made the time go very quickly, as time flies by when one is able to do what one has a love and passion to do, as I have been blessed to be able to do for the last 50 + years.

Acknowledgments I greatly appreciate having had the opportunity to undertake research in the field of quantum chemistry under the stimulating guidance and mentorship of many excellent researchers, including but not limited to Prof. Kenichi Fukui, Prof. Roald Hoffmann and Prof. Janos Ladik. I am also grateful to all collaborators and undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral students who have been involved in my research projects. I would also like to sincerely express my gratitude to my former PhD student, Prof. Yuriko Aoki at Kyushu University for her enormous endeavor to organize the publication of this special issue of this periodical, Theoretical Chemistry Accounts, with Prof. Karl James Jalkanen who undertook the editorial work (peer review process and English editing for all submissions, including this memoir manuscript, and for inviting many other international scientists (both young, middle-aged and old (retired and emeritus faculty)) who were also so kind to contribute some of their best works to this Festschrift Issue. Finally, I would like to thank Professor Chris Cramer, Editor in Chief of TCA, and Springer Verlag and their staff in Heidelberg, Steffen Pauley and Petra Treiber, for accepting the proposal of Prof. Yuriko Aoki and Prof. Karl James Jalkanen to undertake the endeavor to commemorate the occasion of my 77th birthday and recent retirement from administrative duties as President of Hiroshima Kokusai Gakuin University.

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Appendix

Collaborators:

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Feng Long Gu	2000–2011
Kazuyoshi Ueda	1993–1997

Hiroko Fujita	1966–1975
Yuji Kohno	1990–1998

Graduate students:

Hideaki Umeyama	1967–1971
Hiroyuki Shinohara	1976–1978
Terumitsu. Kakumoto	1983–1986
Yuriko Aoki	1983–1988
Masato Suzuki	1985–1987
Hiroyuki Toh	1986–1989
Kouji Maekawa	1989–1993
Masaki Mitani	1990–1995
Youji Kurihara	1992–1998
Seiji Tani	1984–1987
Gerd Räther	(from Germany) 1998–1999

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