

Tokyo Modernism Research Seminar 2

モダニズム研究セミナー@東京(第2回)

“The Politics/Poetics of Inheritance and Commemoration: Joseph Conrad and Ezra Pound”

March 30th (Tuesday) 2021, 2:00pm-4:00pm [UTC+9]

2021年3月30日(火)午後2時～4時

Evelyn Chan (Associate Professor, the Chinese University of Hong Kong)

“Work, Inheritance, and Desert in Joseph Conrad’s *Almayer’s Folly* and *An Outcast of the Islands*”

This paper explores the question: how is the deep sense of desert possessed by Almayer in *Almayer’s Folly*, and Willems in *An Outcast of the Islands*, which ends up destroying them, generated? In answering this question, I look at how Conrad engages and reworks earlier Victorian ideologies of work and inheritance. In Willems, this is the ideal of the self-made man, and in Almayer, the aristocratic ideal of idle riches, in his case to be attained through both work and marriage. Both characters feel that they are morally—based on the work they put in, their individual sacrifices, and their ability and talent—entitled to “splendid future[s],” extraordinary outcomes, and happy endings. In a tyranny of hermeneutics, their conviction in their own desert does not waver even in the face of adversity. However, the justificatory language both characters use for their desert—language that, upon closer inspection, draws upon social discourses of desert based on work and inheritance—are at every step dismantled by Conrad’s narrative. Conrad shows how there are no absolute, fixed deserts, and that the justifications for the appropriateness, fairness, or justice of the material rewards that the characters believe are their due end up corroding personal identity instead of constructing, bolstering or enhancing it.

Andrew Houwen (Associate Professor, Tokyo Woman’s Christian University)

“Ezra Pound’s ‘Sword-Dance’ Translations of Rai Sanyō’s *Kanshi* Poems on the Japanese Warring States Period ”

On 27 October, 2 November and 9 November 1915, the Japanese dancer Itō Michio performed three ‘sword-dances’ for a coterie audience in a studio at 1 Holland Lane, Melbury Road, Kensington. The texts of these ‘sword-dances’ were translated by Ezra Pound and eventually published along with two other such poems in *Future* the following year. Although these translations have been praised by eminent critics such as James Longenbach for their ‘excellence’, there has to date been no detailed examination of them in relation to their *kanshi* originals. Following my earlier talk and article on Pound’s version of Nishi Dōsen’s *kenbu* poem on Saigō Takamori’s last stand at the Battle of Shiroyama, this presentation will focus on the two sword-dance poems, ‘Song for a Foiled Vendetta’ and ‘Honogi’, that Pound translated from the *kanshi* composed by the neo-Confucian historian Rai Sanyō (1780-1832) concerning the sixteenth-century Japanese Warring States period. It will propose that Pound drew on these poems’ depiction of samurai ethics to commemorate the valour and death of his friend, the French sculptor Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, on the battlefield at Neuville-Saint-Vaast in France five months earlier, and to criticize the Western civilization that had, Pound felt, caused Gaudier-Brzeska’s death.

This seminar is to be held on Zoom. If you’d like to participate, please register in the following link: <https://forms.gle/kTavvu4KAeqjdcKe9>

このセミナーはZoomで開催します。参加ご希望のかたは次のリンクから事前登録してください。

<https://forms.gle/kTavvu4KAeqjdcKe9>

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主催「英国モダニズムにおける反心理学の系譜に関する学際的かつ国際的研究」(基盤研究(B)研究代表者・遠藤不比人)

