

## 英米文学専修・立教英米文学会 活動報告

### 立教英米文学会

2017年12月16日  
〈講演会〉

【講師】唐戸信嘉（茨城キリスト教大学助教）

「『英文学科』におけるテキストと歴史的コンテキストの力学——ジョン・チャートン・コリンズから I. A. リチャーズに至る文学研究方法論の道程」

【講師】池上恵子（成城大学短期大学部名誉教授）

「中世後期イギリス聖人伝を読む」

### 英米文学専修 HP について

英米文学専修では2007年7月にHPを開設いたしました。

卒業生からのメッセージや学会からのお知らせ、過去の紀要の目次や論文題目などが掲載されております。

アドレスは以下の通りです。多くの皆様からのアクセスをお待ちしております。

<http://www.rikkyo.ne.jp/grp/dealcar/>

## 〈編集後記〉

We are perpetually influenced by forces beyond our complete control. We are forever engaged in a complex network of cultural, linguistic, and biological relations—many of which we can barely recognize, let alone fully understand. We are, like it or not, eternally enwrapped in circumstances that were chosen for us before we were born and that act upon the events of our existence long after we have departed.

That humans, nevertheless, somehow find the cognitive and/or imaginative capability to organize the absurdities of chance and circumstance into narratives of comprehensible order is always a mystery worthy of contemplation. Perhaps, this is where literature establishes its central, human function—as a mechanism capable of engaging with the fundamentally arbitrary nonsense of being. Indeed, if literature is of any use to humanity, its value is predicated upon its capacity to facilitate the creation of sense where absurdity reigns. As Alice suggests during her dialogue with the Mad Hatter in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, “if the world has absolutely no sense, who’s stopping us from inventing one?” And, with an Alice-like abandon, we go about our lives making meaning based on the artificial architecture of our senses, building the walls and doorways of our memories and desires out of the accidental components that are available—fitting fragment with fragment, this with that, to surround, protect, and delineate verity from vaguery. But the closer one looks at the connections, the wider the gaps that appear between the constructions of the mind.

For, while we assemble the bounds of sense, logic, and meaning, there is always an element of chaos engaged in confusing our fragile blueprints of human experience. As George Eliot puts it in *Middlemarch*, “We are all humiliated by the sudden discovery of a fact which has existed very comfortably and perhaps been staring at us in private while we have been making up our world entirely without it.” Obviously, we are all sent through the various courses of our respective lives with incomplete atlases of the cosmos. And yet, with every “sudden discovery”—some of them humiliating, others profound and inspiring—our capacity to comprehend is expanded further.

We perform poetry to articulate the many shapes of experience. We tell tales to communicate thoughts and emotions. And in literary scholarship, we create a space for discussion and debate that is, at its core, an endeavor to map the unknown.

In this year’s volume of the *Rikkyo Review of Arts and Letters* (『英米文学』第78号), the many contributors have, indeed, engaged in this sort of meaningful literary endeavor. Across the great divides of culture, time, and place, the articles, essays, and reviews collected in this volume are a testament to the exploratory nature of the field of literature and the investigative minds of its practitioners. Representing new research into English philology, poetry, prose, and myth, spanning centuries of history, and involving a variety of approaches to the literary forms and modes of discourse that continue to baffle and intrigue readers and researchers across the globe, this year’s volume is a true indication that the probing, scholarly spirit of literary studies will always find new destinations to visit, new linguistic territory to inspect, and new challenges of sense, thought, and interpretation to discover. Literary scholarship at Rikkyo University, as demonstrated by this volume, continues the voyage to encounter fresh areas of literary inquiry and to venture forth into the uncharted domains of human experience.

(イエイツ マイケル D. H.)