

「カレイン」における裏切りと許しについて

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(抄録)

コンラッド(Joseph Conrad, 1857-1924)の短編「カレイン」(“Karain: A Memory”, 1897)は短編集 *Tales of Unrest* (1898) の中に収められている一編である。この作品は、イギリス人船員である「私」が数人の仲間とマレー地方に商売(武器の密輸)のために赴き、そこで地域の酋長であったカレイン(Karain)という人物と知り合い、物語が展開する内容である。主人公カレインは親友に対する裏切りから生じた大きな苦悩と不安を抱えており、それが原因で彼は錯乱に陥るが、「私」の尽力で正気を取り戻す経緯が描かれている。

この作品にはコンラッドのマレー地方を舞台とした一連の作品群の原点となるような要素(裏切りと許しの問題)がすでに含まれており、主人公が不安に陥る原因も友人への裏切りが出発点となっている。今回の発表においてはこの裏切りと許しのプロセスを中心に分析し、作家が最終的に提起していると思われる西欧文明批判の問題点を考察する。

(引用)

1. Many of Conrad's Eastern tales have fictional settings based on actual ones located precisely within those grey, autonomous areas where Anglo-Dutch boundaries were still contested. The Dutch and British attempts to annex territories which were still independent and the native realms which resisted or accommodated this rivalry are underlying themes of Conrad's Eastern romances. (Yeow, 3)
2. “Karain: A Memory” is the more elaborate of the two tales. Like “The Lagoon,” “Karain” considers the theme of betrayal and the relationship between the Western. (Peters, 49)
3. “You know us. You have lived with us. Why? —we cannot know; but you understand our sorrows and our thoughts. You have lived with my people, and you understand our desires and our fears. With you I will go. To your land—to your people. To your people, who live in unbelief; to whom day is day, and night is night—nothing more, because you understand all things seen, and despise all else! To your land of unbelief, where the dead do not speak, where every man is wise, and alone—and at peace!” (44)
4. He only smiled with discreet politeness and inquired about the queen. Every visit began with that inquiry; he was insatiable of details; he was fascinated by the holder of a sceptre the shadow of which, stretching from the westward over the earth and over the seas, passed far beyond his own hand's-breadth of conquered land. He multiplied questions; he could never know enough of the Monarch of whom he spoke with wonder and chivalrous respect—with a kind of affectionate awe! (12-13)
5. Afterwards, when we had learned that he was a son of a woman who had many years ago ruled a small Bugis state, we came to suspect that the memory of his mother (of whom he spoke with enthusiasm) mingled somehow in his mind with the image he tried to form for himself of the far-off Queen whom he called Great, Invincible, Pious, and Fortunate. We had to invent details at last to satisfy his craving curiosity; and our loyalty must be Pardoned, for we tried to make them fit for his august and resplendent

ideal. We talked. (13)

6. A watery gleam of sunshine flashed from the west and went out between two long lines of walls; and then the broken confusion of roofs, the chimney-stacks, the gold letters sprawling over the fronts of houses, the sombre polish of windows, stood resigned and sullen under the falling gloom. The whole length of the street, deep as a well and narrow like a corridor, was full of a sombre and ceaseless stir. (54)
7. The sun set; the dusk fell on the stream, and lights began to appear along the shore. The Chapman lighthouse, a three-legged thing erect on a mud-flat, shone strongly. Lights of ships moved in the fairway—a great stir of lights going up and going down. And farther west on the upper reaches the place of the monstrous town was still marked ominously on the sky, a brooding gloom in sunshine, a lurid glare under the stars. (HD 48)
8. Here the predominantly pejorative notion of the “monstrous town” can be deployed in a way that usefully complicates a familiar Victorian colonialist view of exotic races.
Naturally, *Heart of Darkness*, that most richly janiform or paradoxical of Conrad's texts, characteristically extends the paradoxical view of the city by juxtaposing two contrasting stereotypes. The “monstrous town” is also the “greatest town”—“greatest” connoting “most impressive in its historical and even moral achievements”. (Watts, 80)
9. He held it up. It was a six pence—a Jubilee sixpence. It was gilt; it had a hole punched near the rim. Hollis looked towards Karain. “A charm for our friend,” he said to us. “The thing itself is of great power—money, you know—and his imagination is struck. A loyal vagabond; if only his puritanism doesn't shy at a likeness...” (49)

引証文献

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