

い            とう            まさ            のり  
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学位の種類	博士(文学)
学位記番号	文博第102号
学位授与年月日	平成13年2月15日
学位授与の要件	学位規則第4条第1項該当
研究科・専攻	東北大学大学院文学研究科(博士課程後期3年の課程) 文化科学専攻
学位論文題目	<b>Unreadable Faces: The Disintegration of the Physiognomical Narrative in Joseph Conrad's Fiction</b> (読めない顔: ジョウゼフ・コンラッドのフィクションにおける 観相学的語りの解体)
論文審査委員	(主査) 教授 原 英一 外国人教師 ロビンソン, ピーター 教授 中村 捷 教授 原 研二 教授 齊藤 征雄

## 論文内容の要旨

### Introduction

In Joseph Conrad's fictional works, the narrative often closely describes the physical, particularly facial, deformities of the characters. Donkin, in *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'* (1897), for example, is presented with a long and thin neck, a peaked nose, prominent ears, a rare beard, and peaked and drooped shoulders. In *The Secret Agent* (1907), the narration exposes Stevie and Winnie's drooping lower lips and squint eyes, and, more conspicuously, the Professor's large ears, a frail skull, a protruding forehead, thin whiskers and so forth. These manners of minutely representing the characters' physical oddities are by no means original to Conrad; one can readily find examples in works of the genre's earliest phases. Yet, it is also true that there was a certain historical necessity for such observant narrative around the time Conrad entered on his literary career.

Ossipon, an anarchist character in *The Secret Agent* who passionately adheres to the theory of an Italian criminologist, Cesare Lombroso (1836-1909), declares Stevie's earlobes to be a token of 'degeneration'. Lombroso was a fashionable Italian criminologist who, in the last quarter of the

nineteenth century, insisted on the effectiveness of physiognomy, which itself had been a long-standing idea, in detecting the marks of criminality in human faces. Lombroso's method was scientific and pathological; he focused on the criminals' facial anomalies, called their 'atavism', and attempted statistically to prove the causality which he believed to exist between their depraved characteristics and their physical features. Those whose faces were found to be atavistic were all categorized as degenerate types, and considered necessary to be 'cured' in order to repress these disturbing elements for the healthy continuation of the society.

The Lombrosian degeneration theory was born against the background of Charles Darwin's discovery of evolutionary history, which was published in *The Origin of Species* in 1859. Darwinism, which uncovered the truth of human origins, brought about dramatic changes in the Western world view which had been largely based on Biblical knowledge. In the pre-Darwinian era, there was a firm belief in the evolutionary theory of J. B. Lamarck (1744-1829), whose chief point was in each species' teleological progress based on a Providential design. Darwin's concept was indeed a great challenge to the Lamarckian evolutionism, as it was the discovery of the absence of such a purposeful order in biological history – which was actually filled with chance deviations and random selection. What had been the 'master plot' collapsed, and the sense of anxiety about the loss of life's coherent meanings started to shape the human world, whether or not it was clearly sensed. Subsequently, there developed social Darwinism, which in fact was not a pure application of Darwin's theory to sociology, but was deeply rooted in the Lamarckian progressivism. Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), a pioneer of the social Darwinian theory, believed in biological evolution for the sake of social progress. What should be noted is that such a belief was often permeated with class consciousness, i.e. the commercial elite's desire for the justification of their social position in the light of the new biological science. Lombrosian degeneration theory, in accord with the social Darwinian prejudice, was also a governing discourse among the late-Victorian and Edwardian ruling classes, who felt menaced by the rise of socialist campaigning and increasing anarchist terrorism.

Such characteristics of the degenerationist discourse exactly coincide with the Conradian physiognomical narrative. Its targets are mostly characters from the lower social stratum. Donkin, for example, is the sort of workman agitator who has his origins in a poor quarter. Stevie and Winnie belong to the class which is not necessarily termed low, but is always exposed to the danger of falling into the social abyss, and it hardly needs stating that the Professor is an anarchist of humble origin. It has been considered that Conrad owes a large debt to the Lombrosian physiognomy for his characterization of lower-class characters, and this has often been associated with his personal dislike for socialism expressed in some of his writings.

However, as I will show in my discussion, there are also moments in which the degenerate characters cannot be easily observed from a physiognomical viewpoint, and the narrative itself is confounded by a sense of unreadability. This is the problem I consider, which is closely related to Conrad's characteristic distrust in the authenticity of written language – the only vehicle for expression in fictional works. In the Preface to *The Nigger*, in discussing his own theory of fictional art, Conrad places much importance on the visual and auditory aspects of language:

And it is only through complete, unswerving devotion to the perfect blending of form and substance; it is only through an unremitting, never-discouraged care for the shape and ring of sentences that an approach can be made to plasticity, to colour; and the light of magic suggestiveness may be brought to play for an evanescent instant over the commonplace surface of words: of the old, old words, worn thin, defaced by ages of careless usage.

If to convey a 'truth' or a 'meaning', as Conrad states in other parts of the Preface, is the real task of fictional art, it is not accomplished through language which is already 'old' and 'worn thin'; it should, according to the author, be instead achieved through its 'shape and ring'. This exactly shows the author's awareness of the restriction, or inadequacy, of language as a medium for art compared with other artistic media. Such disbelief in the language's power is strengthened in 'Heart of Darkness', where the first-person narrator, describing the characteristics of Marlow's narration, states, 'to [Marlow] the meaning of an episode was not inside like a kernel but outside'. The typical Conradian anxiety over the language's flaws – the disjunction between the sign and its meaning – is manifestly suggested here.

In the broader perspective of the genre's history, Conrad's narrative is often considered a forerunner of modernism, whose method is represented by, for instance, James Joyce's or Virginia Woolf's stream of consciousness, in which language no longer offers a single thread of meaning. In Conrad's text, the narrative still conveys coherent meaning, as is exemplified by the physiognomical narration; but the text itself prepares elements which perturb, or, more radically, utterly disintegrate, such narration from within. I attempt to locate Conrad's narrative in the historical context of Darwinism, and to investigate how its 'modernity' tries to counter a narrative act whose origin is in the class-based aspiration for a *meaning* – a characteristic elitist obsession in the age of Darwinian anxiety. This dissertation should eventually open up a fresh prospect for the study of the Conradian, pre-modernist narrative.

## Chapter 1

This chapter treats *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*. I focus on James Wait's unreadable face, which appears with an enigmatic contrast of black and white, or shadow and light, and, with its mysterious suggestiveness, confounds those who look at it in search of unilateral meanings despite its actual bipolarity. The first-person narrator, for example, takes its blackness symbolically as representing something negative and ominous which disturbs the ship's collective psychology. Yet, this, nonetheless, is far from an accurate reading of the whole face, utterly disregarding its white element, and the obtained meaning being rather the product of the oppression given by Wait's overpowering presence, than of the pure interpretation of the facial appearances.

In contrast to this, there is another face which the narrator can present with an unequivocal meaning through the minute descriptions of its features. It is Donkin's face, whose every part presents a bird-like deformity – such as the big ears recalling a bat's wings or the peaked nose resembling a vulture. The narrative description is made from the physiognomical viewpoint

which is biased with class consciousness, as it renders Donkin's socialist claim for 'right' as the sarcastic picture of a lower-class demagogue. The narrative voice can freely control the meaning of its descriptions from the physiognomical perspective. On the other hand, although Wait is obviously a degenerate type of work-shy liar, his face, which is invested with obvious atavistic features, such as a heavy lower lip or a slanted forehead, is hardly described physiognomically or ironically. Rather, he is presented symbolically, from a viewpoint which sees only a partial aspect of his physical appearance – a 'black idol' adored by the sailors and the narrator. What manipulates the meaning of the description is not the narrator's point of view, but its visual object whose appearance is enigmatically confounding. The narrator's physiognomical viewpoint is ineffective confronted with Wait's mysterious face.

The class-prejudiced physiognomical narration is further challenged in the latter part of the novella, when Donkin can materialize his socialism through his power of observation. He breaks the spell of Wait's mysterious face through his 'scrutinizing gaze', discovering him to be merely a 'shadowy', insignificant existence. Finally, he succeeds in stealing Wait's money, and literally achieves his egoistic socialist desire to be equal with everybody, or, more correctly, to leave the sea to live an easy life free from any hard labour. Thus Donkin, himself a degenerate type, paradoxically through the physiognomical perspective frees himself from his destined social position. On the other hand, the narrator's viewpoint is again unable to penetrate into the black and white contrast, this time, of the city. Although the visual dichotomy in fact predetermines the sailors' exploited position in the great commercial city, London, the narration, in contrast to Donkin's penetrating perspective, fails to perceive the true 'meaning' of the hierarchical society. Consequently, the narrator cannot avail himself of his owning a narrative viewpoint, with which he might be able to penetrate into the truth of an unjust hierarchy, as Donkin did, or place himself outside the realm of the exploited sailors.

The influence of degeneration theory was certainly considerable in consolidating the basis of a bourgeois society in *fin de siècle* England. In the course of its development from Darwin's biological evolutionism to its social form, such as Lombroso's physiognomy, the deterministic discourse marginalized criminals, coloured races, poor labourers and so forth as mere degenerate types, so as to place the wealthy, administrative class in the centre as 'the fittest'. It is also true, though, that there were many warnings, in the contemporary England, against the danger of such a fanatic belief in the prejudiced science resulting in the neglect of humanity. Conrad himself questioned the validity of physiognomical science in some of his own writings. Yet, in *The Nigger*, the resistance appears in a latent, but more effective way, via the plurality of the text's viewpoints, which not only differ from one another but are equally inauthentic and marginal – turning physiognomy into one of the unreliable interpretative variations (as when the narrator fails to decipher Wait's enigmatic face). This implies the heart of Conrad's attitude towards physiognomy; by marginalizing that very physiognomy in the narrative, he is rejecting the possibility that it become coercively central and authentic. Besides, Conrad offers a further challenge to physiognomy; since Donkin's viewpoint marginalized by physiognomy paradoxically comes to have the power to control visual objects (which is precisely how physiognomy exercises

its coercive categorisation), and so destabilizes the existing social order sustained by degenerationist determinism. Thus, in *The Nigger*, in which Wait's indistinguishable face and Donkin's scrutinizing gaze are at once embedded, the socially centralized viewpoint of physiognomy is crucially tested by both the text's marginalization of the viewpoints and the visual power of the marginalized degenerate. The text's specific narrative, not the story itself, opens the possibility that a person who is socially categorized as a degenerate type can paradoxically realize the desire, however egotistic and mean, to live a better and easier life than is apparently pre-destined.

## Chapter 2

In chapter 2, I will reevaluate the so far neglected short story, 'The Idiots' (1896), by closely investigating the relationship between its narrative, which has been considered unskilled and problematic, and degenerationism. Whereas the short story's narrative is begun by a first-person voice whose knowledge is restricted, it soon gives way to an impersonal, omniscient voice which occupies the rest of the narrative. Together with its failure in giving a coherent ending, this narrative inconsistency has been the target of criticism.

However, I would rather suggest that the problems with the form are the result of its close connection to the content—the degeneration which suddenly occurs in a prosperous landed family. The menace which the idiot children and the murderous wife, Susan, offer to Jean-Pierre is indeed great, as these degenerate types are both physically and socially the great obstacles to the steady continuation of the wealthy farmer's life. Such Darwinian interruption to the stability of the social position is, in the later nineteenth century, what considerably stirred the elite class's anxiety. Nevertheless, the sense of anxiety in the text, is not finally alleviated by a personal, interpretative narration which, as is characteristic of the Darwinian period, should aspire to seek coherent meanings in human life. The narration provides no consolation to Jean-Pierre's frustrated plot to maintain the land, nor to Susan's oppressed life as a woman. Besides, even a tragic ending does not definitely close these central characters' existences, as Jean-Pierre's fervent wish to avoid being deprived of the land by his relations is, to some extent, secured. Thus, the impersonal, omniscient narration closes the text without offering any sense of ending. In the context of the commanding Darwinian anxiety, the text's form and content, both deeply related to it, generate a narrative which, rather than being involved in that history, runs counter to the historically characteristic obsession.

## Chapter 3

In this chapter, I discuss *The Secret Agent*, in which Conrad most conspicuously depends on Lombrosian degenerationism, particularly in the description of the anarchist characters. This has been often associated with Conrad's professed dislike of anarchism, but rather I consider that the novel's treatment of anarchism is more deeply related to the novel's artistic value than to the author's political attitude. The physiognomical narration which describes the characters' deformed faces is in kind similar to that of *The Nigger*; it is given from an elitist perspective which

presents the lower-class characters, such as the anarchists or the mentally deficient Stevie, with prejudiced ironies. Yet, such physiognomic narrative forms a singular contrast to the narrator's own sympathetic statement of Stevie's inner indignation against social injustice. While sympathetically describing Stevie's deeper insight into humanity, the narrative voice renders his character ludicrous by ironically portraying his physical deformity.

There are moments, however, when the narrator's physiognomy is ineffective. In failing to bomb the Greenwich Observatory, Stevie instead blows himself to pieces and leaves there nothing but 'a heap of nameless fragments'. Stevie's disintegrated body becomes completely unreadable, and rebuffs Chief Inspector Heat's attempt to disclose his identity. Physiognomy, which works by *reading* human faces, is no longer operative here. The text contains what annihilates its physiognomical perspective. In other words, it is the disintegration of the text's narrative *plotted* by the text itself. The physiognomical narrative of *The Secret Agent* is characterized by its continuous obsession with interpretation. It is the characteristically idiosyncratic voice of the Darwinian age which by its nature coincides with the first-person narration of 'The Idiots'. Just as the short story renounces the desire for interpretation by displacing the first-person voice, the novel questions the same sort of aspiration by abruptly suspending its own narrative. Or, I should rather say, the textual dissociation from the interpretative tendency is much more critical. Whereas the narration of the opening part of 'The Idiots', by using the first-person pronoun, stresses the sense of individuality, that of *The Secret Agent* rather conceals its identity, as is observed in the scarcity of the first person, which offers itself ostensibly as a less prejudiced voice. That it is in fact biased with a partial consciousness is attenuated by its impersonality, and this voice apparently increases a sense of authenticity. Therefore, what is renounced by the sudden collapse of the physiognomical perspective is not a personal, possibly erring voice, but one which is offered as genuine and unique. By means of the intensity of the explosion, the text thus much more thoroughly challenges its own idiosyncratic voice.

Although Stevie's death itself may expose him to a further irony, physiognomical narration is continually disturbed by his sister, Winnie. Her face, at the very moment she stabs Mr. Verloc, presents the same signs of degeneracy as her brother's. While her degeneration is clear from the physiognomic perspective, nevertheless, her face displays a mysterious aspect — an aspect which degenerationists such as Lombroso cannot have grasped with their armchair theory. Though, abandoned by Ossipon, she finally dies by throwing herself into the sea, her face of madness leaves the 'degenerationist' incessantly tormented by the *mystery* it hinted at. The authorial irony disappears, and the irresistible sense of anxiety prevails over the description of degeneracy. It is the same uneasiness which governed Heat's perspective describing Stevie's shattered body. Such repeated interruption of the degenerationist voice, it seems to me, in essence characterizes the narrative of *The Secret Agent*.

Furthermore, physiognomy is again perturbed, by an anarchist nicknamed the Professor. Although his face and body also show typical signs of degeneration, he has a strong confidence in his powers. This is partly because he always carries a bomb with himself, and boasts that he will blow himself up the moment he is arrested by the police. Yet the Professor truly feels reliance on

the bomb not in the midst of policemen, but among crowds of people, where his physical deformity necessarily stands out. If the bomb exploded, what it would shatter would be his miserable physique – which reminds us of the significance of Stevie's self-disintegration. He never dies, though ready to, and continues to unsettle the physiognomical perspective which otherwise would deprive his figure of its anarchist terror. Following the cases of Stevie and Winnie, the closing scene completes the novel's narrative strategy; the Professor's 'deadly' march through the crowd disintegrates the physiognomic narrative from within the text.

## Conclusion

In *The Secret Agent*, published about ten years after *The Nigger* and 'The Idiot', the challenge to the degenerationist perspective is much more radical and anti-classist. Whereas the physiognomical narration, from the idiosyncratic, elitist perspective, ironically reveals the physical deformities of the degenerate characters, it is successively menaced by Stevie's disintegrated, unreadable body and Winnie's impenetrable face. The Professor's self-destructive bomb finally terminates the physiognomical irony by perpetually implying the possibility of extinguishing his degenerate body. Conrad's text, while obviously synchronizing with the discourse generated by the contemporary, Darwinian anxiety, simultaneously frustrates it by containing bodies which are inexplicable from such an interpretative perspective. I would suggest that the genuine merit of Conradian art is in this self-disintegrating narrative, which opens up the possibility of a fiction which severely counters the historical exigency of a class-ordered society.

However, it is also true that Conrad's fiction simultaneously registers an irresolvable historical dilemma. Although crucially challenging the Victorian elitist narrative, his texts never replace it with different kinds of narration, such as the sympathetic voice which sincerely presents Stevie's indignation. There is certainly a sense of uneasiness, or terror, which governs the narrative, but the physiognomical narration by no means stops describing, for example, the Professor's deformed physique. Such characteristics are also observable in *The Nigger* and 'The Idiots'. The first-person narrator's reaching for a 'meaning', in *The Nigger*, is never completely denied in the closing scene where he asks, 'Haven't we . . . wrung out a meaning from our sinful lives?' This certainly casts doubt on the authenticity of the narrative perspective, but it does not necessarily mean that the self-complacent 'meaning' he has obtained is thoroughly contradicted by another, really penetrating perspective such as Donkin's, which, in spite of its insight, never offers a concrete meaning. In a similar way, the closing passage of 'The Idiots' does not provide any coherent narration which would substitute for the extinguished first-person voice and dramatize the tragic end of Jean-Pierre and Susan.

In other words, in Conrad's texts, the narration is available only when it is given from the degenerationist, elitist perspective; the lower, degenerate classes, in contrast, cannot finally have their own voices which would sincerely narrate their wretched lives in opposition to the upper-class voice. This serves to disclose the identity of the narrative act in the Darwinian age; it is in essence the product of a prejudiced class consciousness which aspires to counter uneasiness over

the continuation of the predetermined social order. It tries to relate a story in its double senses: through the act of telling, it attempts to connect the otherwise random elements into a coherent order lest the existing social hierarchy should be overthrown. The narrative act itself is, as it were, too deeply involved in the foundations of a class-oriented society to be easily converted into a voice which should rather threaten it. Resisting a historical exigency, therefore, brings about an insoluble dilemma. The text, though severely countering the elitist narration, cannot offer any alternative to it.

Thus, there is no other way than utterly to abandon the narrative act itself. Yet, that would only cause another, more serious dilemma, as a narrative is the very heart of fictional art. To lose it would bring about a similar kind of failure to that which indeed spoils the ending of 'The Idiots'. Consequently, the fictional text has to continue narrating for the sake of its own existence, however strongly it suspects its power to control meaning. This sense of a quandary coincides with Conrad's own statement in the Preface to *The Nigger*, in which, whereas the author doubts the appropriateness of the language, already 'worn thin', as a vehicle of art, his tone coercively puts emphasis on the artist's duty to convey a 'true meaning'.

I would thus like to locate the origin of Conrad's pre-modernist narrative in the historical context of the post-Darwinian age. In pursuing the superiority of fictional language over the historical exigency of a Darwinian anxiety, the fiction reaches a dead end – the self-negation of its own language. In other words, the fiction's attempt to overcome the historical master narrative and so establish its own necessarily ends in the loss of its narration. It is such an historical uneasiness that characteristically governs post-Darwinian fiction.

## 論文審査結果の要旨

本論文は、ダーウィン（Charles Darwin）以後の英国小説が、いかなる「語り」の問題に直面していたかを、ジョゼフ・コンラッド（Joseph Conrad）の小説の中に見られる「観相学的な語り」の詳細な分析を通じて明らかにしようと試みたものである。ダーウィンの進化論が与えた文化的影響は、小説の「語り」に最も顕著に表れたとすることができよう。18世紀にフィールディング（Henry Fielding）が確立した「全知の語り」（Omniscient Narration）という語りは、ディケンズ（Charles Dickens）、サッカレイ（William Thackeray）など、ヴィクトリア朝初期から中期にかけての小説まで、支配的なものであった。それは根底的にはキリスト教的の世界観、歴史観を基礎とするものである。世界とその歴史は神の物語の一部である、すなわち、創世記から最後の審判に至る物語の中間にあるのであり、フィクションもまたそのような、神が絶対的著者として書き上げる主軸的プロット（Master Plot）を模倣するものと考えられたのである。しかし、ダーウィンの自然淘汰説を根幹とする進化論は、このような前提を完全に覆すこととなった。神を模倣する全知全能の語り手（Omniscient Narrator）はその権威を喪失し、世界の混沌を表現するために新たな語りの形が求められることになったのである。

しかしながら、本来のダーウィン主義が内包する無秩序への志向は、ブルジョア支配階級にそのまま受け入れられたわけではない。ダーウィン以前のラマルク（Jean Baptiste Lamarck）



の考え方と同様に、世界はより良い状態へと向かって目的論的に進化するものであるとする捉え方がむしろ主流であった。そのような考え方は帝国主義的発展と科学技術のめざましい進歩によって特徴づけられる時代精神にふさわしいものとして受け入れられ、社会・文化の目的論的進化を信奉する社会ダーウィン主義が文学にも大きな影響を与えることとなった。イタリアの観相学者ロンブローゾ（Cesare Lombroso）の観相学もそのような文化的背景の中で受け入れられ、相当な影響力を持ったのである。論者が指摘するように、人間の身体的特徴、とりわけその相貌を「読む」ことによって、その人間の内面を知りうるという観相学的考えそのものはきわめて古い歴史を持つものであるが、ロンブローゾのそれは、社会ダーウィン主義の時代にふさわしい内容となっている。彼は特に犯罪者の相貌に強い興味を持っていて、観相学的観察によって、犯罪者がすなわち退廃者であること、進化に逆行する「先祖がえり」であることを主張したのである。観相学を科学として確立することができれば、犯罪者を事前に識別し、（ブルジョア）社会を防衛することが可能となるというのが、彼の観相学の示唆するところであった。身体的特徴によって、犯罪者、女性、有色人種、下層階級の人間を差別化しようとするロンブローゾの思想は、疑似科学でしかないが、それは小説の語りという観点から見ると、全知の語りと交替する可能性を潜在させていると見られなくもないものである。コンラッドがその作品の中で観相学的語りによって世界を記述することの意味を探求したのは、彼が新しい語り、独自の虚構芸術の完成をめざす中での実験の一部であったと言えよう。しかし、本論文の分析によれば、コンラッドの小説では、観相学的語りが提示されていながらも、常にそれを否定する別な語りがちあらわれ、疑似科学による世界解釈が不可能であることが逆に示唆されることになる。このことは、ヴィクトリア朝からモダニズムへの過渡期に位置した作家であるコンラッドの作品の中に、ダーウィン以後のフィクションの語りの本質的問題が顕現しているのであると考えられよう。

そもそもコンラッドはきわめて複雑な語りの手法を駆使した作家として知られているが、本論文の第1章で取り上げられる比較的初期の中編小説『ナーシサス号の黒人』（*The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*）も例外ではない。一見して非人称的語りであるが、実は一人称であり、しかもその語り手は当然ながら全知ではなく、社会的、階級的に限定された視野しか与えられていない。それは全知の語りに交替すべき個の語りであるように思われる。個の語りはラマルクの目的論的進化論の小説における現れであり、世界の混沌に明瞭な解釈を与えようとするものである。しかし、この小説では語り手は読むことができない顔に直面して、世界に意味を付与しようとする能力を喪失してしまう。ナーシサス号の船員たちに神秘的な影響を及ぼす黒人ウエイト（Wait）は、その名前そのものが曖昧で（固有名なのか動詞なのか）一定の座標に位置づけることができないばかりではなく、黒と白の謎めいたコントラストをなすその顔は語り手に解釈の不可能性を突きつける。語り手はウエイトの「黒」の顔を不吉なものとして読みとるが、その眼の「白」を自分の解釈に取り入れることができず、偏った見方しかできないのである。一方、この作品では観相学的語りによって明瞭な位置づけを与えられるドンキン（Donkin）という登場人物が存在する。彼はブルジョア階級には嫌悪される社会主義者であり、その相貌は明らかにロンブローゾ的「退廃者」、「先祖返り」であることが読みとれる。しかし、皮肉なことに、語り手によって退廃者という観相学的解釈を与えられたドンキンが、解釈を寄せ付けないウエイトの正体を見抜いてしまうのである。語り手によって明らかに否定的にしか描かれないドンキンが最終的には観相学的語り、個の語りを逃れてしまう可能性を持った存在なのであ

る。社会主義者でありながら、労働を嫌い、ウエイトの金を盗むドンキンは、彼の階級を社会ダーウィン主義的世界観の中に位置づけ、定義しようとするブルジョア社会そのものの解釈からも自由であるように思われる。この小説の語りは、自らが寄って立つ観相学的語りを語りそのものによって覆してしまっているとも言えよう。

社会ダーウィン主義が優生学に傾斜するのは当然予想されていることである。適者生存によってよりよき世界が実現されていくのであるとすれば、適者ならざる者、すなわちロンブローゾ的退廃者を排除し、自然淘汰ではない人工淘汰によって進化（＝進歩）の速度を増大させることは理にかなうはずということになる。逆に言えば、退廃者の存在はブルジョア階級のそのような社会ダーウィン主義的目論見を転覆させるものとなりうるのである。本論文の第2章で扱われている短編「白痴」(‘The Idiots’)では、退廃者に対する階級的不安を背景として、興味深い語りの問題が提示されている。この作品は、一人称の語りで始まりながら、やがて非人称的全知の語りに移行するという不統一、全く説得力を欠いた形で物語が終わることなどの点で、一般的には低い評価しか与えられず、コンラッド批評の中ではほとんど無視されてきた。しかし、論者は、この作品の語りの不統一、結末の曖昧性の中に、コンラッドの小説独特の語りの問題が現れていることに注目し、その分析を試みている。主人公ジャン・ピエール (Jean-Pierre) は自分の土地財産の確実な継承のために結婚して子供をもうけるが、三人の子のすべてが白痴であった。進歩的共和主義者であるジャン・ピエールは当初は神の怒りにふれたものかと疑い、信仰に帰依するが、その後生まれた三番目の子も白痴であったために、退廃者の血筋を引く者として妻を激しく責め立て、その妻に刺し殺される。妻のスーザン (Susan) が狂気の血を受け継いでいることが示唆されているため、物語の全体としては、退廃者が支配階級の血筋の退廃をもたらすというブルジョア的、優生学的不安の表現であると見ることもできる。しかしその不安は、観相学的あるいは社会ダーウィン主義的解釈を付与する個の語りによって解消されることはない。一人称の語りが全知の語りに変容し、ダーウィン以前の語りの形式に戻ったかに思われるのだが、この作品の結末に明らかなのは、この語りあるいは語り手は、物語の全体に意味を付与することが全くできないのである。階級の利益のために歴史的に必要とされる語りの形は、ここでもまた、語りそのものによって否定されてしまうのである。

本論文の第3章では、コンラッドの作品の中で観相学的語りが最も顕著に見られる『密偵』(The Secret Agent) が扱われる。ここではロンブローゾの名前が言及されるばかりではなく、スティーヴィー (Stevie) やウィニー (Winnie) という明らかにロンブローゾ的退廃者が描かれている。ここでの語りは一見して観相学的解釈を全面的に採用し、肯定しているように思われる。ここに登場する社会主義者はすなわちアナキストであり、ブルジョアの視点から見れば、彼らは犯罪者に他ならない。社会主義者が犯罪者であることは、何よりもまず彼らの外見、相貌に明瞭に現れている。登場人物の一人であるオシボン (Ossipon) は、ロンブローゾが人間の顔の様々な部分、顎、頬骨、額、眉、眼窩、耳朶などの形態によって、統計学的に犯罪者独特の相貌というものの存在を「証明」したことに感化されて、「科学的な」眼で人物を観察するのである。彼はスティーヴィーを退廃者と断じ、その姉のウィニーもまた退廃者であることを「見抜く」のである。オシボンが利用するような「科学」としての観相学が真に有効であるなら、それによる解釈、語りはブルジョア階級の秩序維持、進歩への志向にとって、きわめて有効な武器を提供することになるはずである。しかし、ここで重要なことは『密偵』の中の観相学的語りは、しばしば読めないもの、解釈を拒否するものに直面させられるというこ

とである。グリニッジ天文台を爆破するための爆弾の誤爆によって粉碎されたスティーヴィーの肉体は、判読不能なものとしてヒート警部 (Inspector Heat) を途方に暮れさせることになる。さらに重要なのはプロフェッサー (the Professor) の存在である。彼もまたこの小説の語りによって退廃者として位置づけられているのだが、彼はスティーヴィーのように肉体として解体されることもなく、また観相学的語りによって最終的に否定されることもない。この小説はこのアナキストが、「逮捕された瞬間に自爆できるように」常に身につけている爆弾の起爆スイッチを手に握りながら群衆の中を歩いている場面で終わる。退廃者であるスティーヴィーは爆死し、殺人を犯したウィニーもまた (おそらく) 投身自殺を遂げた。しかし、同じく退廃者であるプロフェッサーがブルジョア社会にとっての脅威あるいは純粋な恐怖そのものとして生き続けることは、観相学的語りがまたしても自らをその語りそのものによって裏切り、社会ダーウィン主義が否定するはずの「不適者生存」の可能性を提示してしまったことを意味しているのである。

観相学的語りは、進化論の登場とそれに伴う社会ダーウィン主義の台頭を背景として、歴史的に要請されたものであった。コンラッドもまたそれを表面的に受け入れているように見える。しかし、本論文で指摘されているところによれば、彼にとって語りとは真理の外殻をなすものであったことを想起しなければならない。「闇の奥」(‘Heart of Darkness’)にあるように、物語の意味とは「核のように内側にあるものではなく、外側にある」(‘not inside like a kernel but outside’)のである。全知の語りに交替すべき新たな語り模索されるモダニズム小説の時代にあつて、コンラッドは観相学的語りの提示を試みたが、最終的にはそれが自らによって否定される語りを提示することになった。それは言語表現そのものに対する不信を醸成することになったとも言える。ウィニーを退廃者として読み切りながらもオシボンが感じざるを得ない恐怖、『密偵』の結末でプロフェッサーが社会に突きつける恐怖の本質は、歴史的、階級的語りの問題を実は超越していて、フィクションの可能性そのものが否定されることへの恐怖であると考えられるのである。本論文は、コンラッドの語りの精密な分析を通して、その歴史的、文化的コンテクストそのものを解明し、さらにはモダニズム小説の奥深い問題の本質に迫るといふ成果をあげることになった。コンラッド研究のみならず、モダニズム、及びポスト・モダニズムの小説の語り問題、さらには物語論の研究にも貢献するところ大なるものがある。

よって本論文の提出者は、博士 (文学) の学位を授与されるのに十分な資格を有するものと認められる。