

<大学院コロキウム>

第1回

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演題 “Radical Writers and the Culture of Religious Fear in
Milton’s England”

司会 圓月勝博 (同志社大学)

2012年5月10日 午後3:00 ~ 4:30

徳照館1階会議室

Synopsis (by Prof. David Loewenstein)

Before I begin the main part of my lecture today, keep in mind the following events: during this period occurs the collapse of press censorship (1641) and the beginning of a massive outpouring of printed works that would reach more than 22,000 by 1660; the outbreak of civil war in England between King Charles I and Parliament (1642); the abolition of episcopacy (which had dominated the Church of England before 1640) (1643); Parliament issues an Ordinance for the Regulation of printing in 1643: John Milton’s *Areopagitica* (1644) responds directly to it; Milton also publishes provocative tracts justifying divorce (1643-45; divorce may be common in some modern cultures, but in early modern England, unless

you were Henry VIII, it was very uncommon): these, in turn, are responsible for Milton first being labeled a “heretic” (a reminder that this term of condemnation was applied loosely); in 1643 the Westminster Assembly of Divines, dominated by “Puritans” or Presbyterians who wanted conformity to a reformed national church and opposed sectarianism, opens (Milton is critical of them in *Areopagitica*); in 1645 Archbishop William Laud, who stressed religious ceremonialism and order during the 1630s and hated the Puritans (who opposed his emphasis on ceremonial worship and ritual) is executed for treason; then in 1646 Thomas Edwards’ *Gangraena* is published in three parts (Edwards is a Presbyterian minister and strongly favors a national church): *Gangraena: Or a Catalogue and Discovery of many of the Errors, Heresies, and Blasphemies and Pernicious Practices of the Sectaries of this Time* is a massive denunciation of religious sects and practices and quickly becomes the most popular anti-heresy book in the seventeenth century; William Walwyn responds directly to this major work of religious fear-mongering; in late 1646 the Levellers emerge as a major radical political group (they favored liberty of conscience and religious toleration for all Protestant sects) and Walwyn is one of their leaders and key writers; the trial and execution of Charles I occurs in January 1649 and during this year Milton publishes some of his most radical political works justifying revolution and regicide; the Commonwealth is established in 1649 and during the Interregnum there are a series of experimental governments (Milton writes for them) as religious ferment and fears about the dangers of toleration continue (the Quakers, the most successful of the radical sects, first emerge during this period); in 1658 the major Puritan leader Oliver Cromwell dies and Milton starts to compose *Paradise Lost*; by the winter and spring of 1660 the Commonwealth collapses and King Charles II returns to England beginning the Restoration when the Church of England is established and followed by years of intense religious persecution against nonconformist religious groups and Protestant dissenters (the great Puritan writer

John Bunyan, a Baptist who refuses to desist from preaching, is imprisoned between 1661 and 1672).