

ASNET/GJS Seminar Series

Forbidden Enlightenment: Yi Kwangsu's Mujǒng from a Trans-East Asian Comparative Perspective

Speaker: Satoru Hashimoto

Society of Fellows, University of Chicago

Time: December 11, 2014 (Thu) 4:30-5:30 pm

Location: Ground Floor, Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia,
University of Tokyo

Language: English and Japanese

What is by consensus the “first modern novel” written in the Korean language, Yi Kwangsu’s *Mujǒng* (*Heartless*, 1917) is often commended as a literary embodiment of the idea of enlightenment. In this presentation, I will revisit this work from a trans-East Asian comparative perspective, particularly analyzing its abundant intertextualization of the thematic, rhetorical, and stylistic elements of classical Korean narrative literature and classical Chinese poetry. I will thereby attempt to illuminate an alternative temporality of “mourning” expressed in the novel’s narrative and explore how it dislocates the novel’s manifestation of enlightenment.