

〈論文〉

英國小説の realism 研究 (I)
—— George Gissing : *Will Warburton* (前) ——

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George Gissing が、第17番目の長篇小説 *Will Warburton* を書いたのは、1902年から1903年の初頭で、三度目の妻 Gabrielle Fleury と共に、南仏の St. Jean de Luz に居を定めた時期であった。

Now I must tell you what arrangements we have made for the rest of the year—after unspeakable hesitation & fear & difficulty of every sort. We shall warehouse our furniture, & take a chalet for a year at S. Jean de Luz, at the foot of the Pyrenees. The climate there will, it is hoped, be advantagerous to me, & it is sufficiently temperate to allow one's living there both winter & summer. Arcachon has not suited me very well, but chiefly, I think, because the place is un-beautiful & rather depressing. At S. Jean one has a glorious shore & the mountains in view.

(*The Collected Letters of George Gissing*, Vol. Eight 1900–1902, p. 371)

Well now, after infinite worry we have decided to warehouse our furniture at Paris, for a year, & take a little house at S. Jean de Luz, very beautiful seaside place at the foot of the Pyrenees, close to Bayonne, in the country of the Basques. The climate is good both summer & winter, & I hope it may help me—for indeed I must get to work. On the 25th April, I go to S. Jean, to find a house. Then I shall return to Paris. I hope the removal & everything will be finished midway in June.

(*Ibid.*, p. 373)

前文は、France の Gironde 地方の Arcachon の住居 Villa Souvenir から、1902年4月16日に Miss Clara Collet に宛てた手紙で、後文は、翌日17日に實妹 Ellen に送ったもので

ある。因みに Miss Collet は、London 大學で、political economy の學位を初めて取得した、所謂、‘new woman’ で、1893 年から Gissing の最も親しい友人の一人として、1903 年の彼の死迄、交際を續けた女性であった。この頃の Gissing は、前年から筆を執り始めた歴史長篇 *Veranilda* と、*Fortnightly* 誌に連載した *Author at Grass* を抱えて、迫り来る肉体と氣力の衰えに怯えて居た時期で、同じ Miss Collet 宛に、12 月 24 日に、次の様な書簡を送って、健康の衰退を訴えて居る。

In the days gone by, I used to imagine for my later life all the evils of poverty ; what I never foresaw was inability to write through failure of health. Here have I been pottering at a novel since mid-summer, and it is not yet half done, owing to constant breaking down. This is a cheerless state of things. If a few month hence, I really do get to the end of my work, I shall feel better, and more hopeful. At present I am trying to speak out of the middle of a wool-bag, and naturally little to say that is worth anyone’s hearing.

(*Ibid.*, Vol. NINE p. 38)

更に、同年 11 月 1 日の Diary に、‘Am writing *Will Warburton* which, after more than fifty pages finished, I had to begin all over again about a fortnight ago. Do only one page a day. Think of the old days, when I have done as many as ten !’ と、氣力と体力の衰えを嘆いて居るのである。

‘... what I never foresaw was inability to write through failure of health... My inability to do any *serious work* takes away from any kind of enjoyment.’ (Italics は筆者) という悲痛な訴えが示す通り、‘I suspect [Ryecroft] the best thing I have done, or am likely to do ; the thing most likely to last when all my other futile work has followed my futile life.’ と自ら ‘best thing’ と断言した *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* にしても、とても ‘serious work’ とはお世辞にも言えない單なる隨筆集に過ぎないと言う事實から、この時期に執筆された *Will Warburton* は、非常に軽い touch の melodrama と断じざるを得ないのである。the *Speaker* 誌上で、‘modest, but timidly self-conscious, high-principled, generously self-sacrificing, but morbidly reserved and full of self-distrust.’ と Gissing の作品に登場する hero の特質を喝破した Edward Garnett は、*Will Warburton* は、作家 Gissing その人であると極めつけて居るが、上記の特質を代表する *Isabel Clarendon* の Bernard Kingcote や、*Born in Exile* の Godwin Peak に見られる暗く陰鬱な性格の賦與は行われず、傷つき易い

心の持主が當面する階級の壁と、日常生活上の stress から生ずる苦悩を、従來の鬱々とした plot の進捗を捨てて、明るく speedy に描き切って居るのが目新しい。Gissing の無二の親友だった Morley Roberts は、*Will Warburton* こそは、後期の作品群の中に在っては、*The Private Papers of Henry Pyecroft* に次ぐ出来栄の作品と高く評價して居るが、筆者の見解に依れば、故國を遠く離れ、健康も勝れず、加えて、決して幸せとは言えない三度目の妻とその母親との生活から生ずる種々の悩みが、この作家の特徴であった粘着力のある人物描写を後退させ、あっさりとした stereotype な characters の創造に依って、謂わば、「明るい小説」を生み出させたのではないかと思われる。然しながら、非常に興味深いのは、hero の性格創造に當って、従來のあらゆる角度からの密着振りが影を潜め、實生活上の作家自身を文字通り 'real' に描出して居ると言う点である。氣力体力の衰退が、over な character 創りを控えさせ、否應なしに肩の力の抜けた、一種軽快な印象を登場人物達に與えて居る様に見えるのは、結果的に見て、何とも皮肉と言わざるを得ない。そして、自分自身を描くと言う行爲が、不必要な作意を捨てさせた結果、意外にも、'realism' に徹した人物 Will Warburton を出現させたと考えられる。將に、禍転じて福的な、作家自身も容易に氣付かない、効果的な現象と言って差支えあるまい。この傾向は、同時期の Pyecroft の人物創造にも顕著で、所謂、諦観的な、世捨て人的な、生臭さを押えた人物の創出と言え、この時期以前のこの作家の作風とは、明らかに一線を画する現象と言えよう。

結論めいた前置きはこれ位にして、本題に入ろう。*Will Warburton* の全 48 章のほぼ半ばに當たる第 XIX 章に、四人の characters の性格設定とその相関關係を、顕著に觀察出来る。

婚約者 Norbart Franks の肖像画の中に、commercialism に迎合する薫りを鋭敏に嗅ぎ取った Rosamund Elvan は、一方的に婚約を破棄して、友人と連れ立って Cairo に出掛ける。手紙好きの彼女は、友人 Bertha Cross に、一週間に六通もの書簡を送るが、その天性の開放的な明るさが、'cheerless' な生活を余儀なくされて居る Bertha を、一層憂鬱にさせて了う。

Sitting by a fire kept, for economical reasons, as low as possible, with her mother's voice sounding querulously somewhere in the house, and too often a clammy fog at the window, Bertha read of Egyptian delights and wonders, set glowingly before her in Rosamund's fluent style. She was glad of the letters, for they manifested a true affection, and were in every way more interesting than any others that she received ; but at times they made the cheerless little house seem more cheerless still,

and the pang of contrast between her life and Rosamund's called at such moments for all Bertha's sense of humour to make it endurable.

(*Will Warburton*, p. 128)

一方、Rosamund は、Bertha の持つ思慮深さに憧憬の念を抱いて居る。

“I am often worse than depressed. I sleep very badly, and in the night I often shed wretched tears. Though I did only what conscience compelled me to do, I suffer all the miseries of remorse. And how can I wish that it should be other wise? It is better, surely, to be capable of such suffering, than to go one's way in light-hearted egoism. I'm not sure that I don't sometimes *encourage* despondency. You can understand that? I know you can, dear Bertha, for many a time I have detected the deep feeling which lies beneath your joking way.”

(*Ibid.*, p. 129)

Rosamund の長所は、苦悩は苦悩として認めた上で、それを善い方向に変化させて行くと言う、良い意味での 'egoism' なのである。事実、父の死後、その遺産が少なく、自分の将来の生活を支えられないと知ると、water colour の sketch を生業として自活して行こうと決心し、即座に実行に移すが、自らの才能の限界に気付くと、直ちに、180度転換して、別れた筈の Franks と結婚して了うと言う、変わり身の速さである。この Rosamund Elvan と Bertha Cross の対照的な性格付けは、*New Grub Street* (1891) に於ける Amy Readon と Marian Yule の関係にさかのぼる作家得意の手法の再現で、後半約十年の間の彼の作品に、heroes と heroines に止まらず、幾多の byplayers にも駆使されて、それなりに効果を発揮して来て居るが、*Will Warburton* に於ける heroines の対比は、前置きでも述べた様に、二人の女性の心理の最深部に触れる處迄は發展しておらず、従って、飽く迄も圖式的な相対関係に止まって居ると言わざるを得ない。Rosamund Elvan の一方的な婚約解消と言う行爲を通して、自分の娘との対比を間接的に表現する役割を演ずるのが、Mrs. Cross である。Rosamund は當然の事として、婚約相手の Norbart Franks の行動に関して、'I shall *never* understand it.' と断じ、婚約破棄の原因について、'No doubt there's something you keep from me.' と娘を責めて、Bertha が Rosamund と違って、母親を無視して、行動を起す可能性を持たない女性であると言う事実を強調させるのである。

Mrs. Cross had made the remark many times, and always with the same satisfaction. Her daughter was content that the discussion should remain at this point ; for the feeling that she had said something at once unpleasant and unanswerable made Mrs. Cross almost good humoured for at least an hour.

(*Ibid.*, p. 130)

Cross 母娘が、Fulham Road のはずれに、The Jollyman という grocery の店が開店した事を知って、母親が先ず買い物に出掛け、それ迄買って居た Billings に較べて、値段も安く、然も宅配付きの営業方針を知って喜び、更に、その店の主人が、普通の商人と違って、自分達と同じ階級に属する 'gentleman' である事に気付くのである。

'I shall most certainly deal at Jollyman's. What a pity we don't know of him before ! Such a gentlemanly man—indeed, *quite* a gentleman. I never saw a shopkeeper who behaved so nicely. So different from Billings—a man I have always thoroughly disliked, and his coffee has been getting worse and worse. Mr. Jollyman is quite willing to send even the smallest orders. Isn't that nice of him—such a distance ! Billings was quite insolent to me the day before yesterday, when I asked him to send ; yet it was nearly a two shilling order. Never go into that shop again, Bertha. It's really quite a pleasure to buy of Mr. Jollyman ; he knows how to behave ; I really almost felt as if I was taking to someone of our own class. Without his apron, he must be a thorough gentleman.'

(*Ibid.*, p. 130)

かくして、「階級」に苦悩する hero, Will Warburton が登場するのである。

時は 1886 年。Whitechapel の Ailie Street に在る sugar-refining industry を、Sherwood brothers と共同経営する Will は、三十歳を稍過ぎて居る。十六歳の Will を残して死んだ父親は、現在の製糖工場の経営権と、息子が二十一歳で受け取ることの出来る可成の現金とを遺して呉れた。Huntingtonshire に住む母と妹も、十分に暮らして行ける丈の遺産を持って居るので、Will は、取敢えず人生の設計が確定する迄、學業に専念した。

'I don't care how poor I am, but I will be my own master. To be at other people's order brings out all the bad in me ; it makes me sullen and bearish, and all

sorts of ugly things, which I certainly am not when my true self has play. So, you see, I must find some independent way of life.'

(*Ibid.*, p. 18)

と、意気揚々と母親に宣言する Will の career に汚点をもたらすのは、共同経営者の Godfrey Sherwood である。Will 同様、元來、sugar refinery を、'the life of man' (*Ibid.*, p. 19) と思って居なかった Godfrey は、いずれは Parliament に打って出ようと言う意気を持つ丈に、國家の砂糖政策に不信感を抱いて居て、chance さえあれば、他の事業に転進する心算で居た處に、偶然、Somerset 在住で、Bristol に工場を經營する Mr. Applegarth から、自分もそろそろ引退したいので、全英に知れ渡った Applegarth Jam を譲りたいと持ち掛けられたのを良い機會に、製糖工場を疊んで、brand の確立した將來有望な Jam 事業に乗り出そうと、Will に相談して來たのである。

Applegarth's Jam を買い取る爲の資金として、sugar refinery の工場を賣却したものに加えて、自分は Mr. Strangwyn という百萬長者の息子 Ted に一萬磅貸してあるのを返してもらうから、Will にも相應の金策を頼みたいとの Godfrey の提案に、Will は、St. Neot の母と妹の所有する年 150 磅の収入のある土地を担保に、四千磅を都合して、彼に託したのである。二年以内に、三倍の資産になると意気込む Godfrey を、全面的に信賴した Will に数週間後にもたらされた報らせは、'Godfrey Sherwood was too far good a fellow, too far conscientious a man of business.' (*Ibid.*, p. 81) という期待を完全に裏切るもので、

'My dear Warburton I have such bad news for you that I hardly know how to tell it. If I dared, I would come to you at once, but I simply have not the courage to face you until you know the worst, and have had time to get accustomed to it. It is seven o'clock ; an hour ago I learnt that all our money is lost—all yours, all that from St. Neots, all mine—every penny I have. I have been guilty of unpardonable folly—how explain my behaviour ? The truth is, after the settlement in Little Ailie Street, I found myself much worse off than I expected. I went into the money market, and make a successful deal. Counting on being able to repeat this, I guaranteed the sixteen thousand for Bristol ; but the second time I lost. So it has gone on ; all these last weeks I have been speculating, winning and losing. Last Tuesday when I came to see you, I had about twelve thousand and hoped somehow to make up the deficiency. As the devil would have it, that same morning I met a City acquaintance,

who spoke of a great *coup* to be made by anyone who had some fifteen thousand at command. It meant an immediate profit of 25 per cent. Like a fool, I was persuaded—as you will see when I go into details, the thing looked horribly tempting. I put it all—every penny that lay at our bank in the name of Sherwood Bros. And now I learn that the house I trusted has smashed. It's in the paper this evening—Biggles, Thorp and Biggles—you'll see it. I dare not ask you to forgive me. Of course I shall at once take steps to raise the money owing to you, and hope to be able to do that soon, but it's all over with the Bristol affair.'

(*Ibid.*, p.p. 91~92)

と言う、「才子才に溺れる」のたとえを地で行く様な結果となって、かくして、Will の 'degradation' が始まることとなるのである。Godfrey Sherwood の資金を失うこの過程の描写は、非常に realistic で、多分 model のあった実際の出来事からの援用と思われるが、このような細部に於ける realism が、作品全体を real にする結果を産んで後半期の作家の特徴となって居るようである。

Godfrey Sherwood のこの大失態に対する Will の氣持の變化にも、vivid な realism の一端を垣間見ることが出来る。'On this moment of painful lucidity followed blind rage. Why, what a grovelling imbecile was this fellow ! To plunge into wild speculation, on the word of some City shark, with money not his own ! But could one credit the story ? Was it not more likely that Sherwood had got involved in some cunning thievery which he durst not avow ? Perhaps he was a mere liar and hypocrite. The story of the ten thousand pounds he had lent to somebody—how improbable it sounded ; why might he not have invented it, to strengthen confidence at a critical moment ? The incredible baseness of the man ! He, who knew well all that depended upon the safe investment of the St. Neots money—to risk it in this furiously reckless way. In all the records of scoundrelism, was there a blacker case ?' (*Ibid.*, p. 93) と、怒り心頭に發した Will も、暫くして氣分が落ち着くと、將に息子の將來の爲を慮かって、快く土地を抵當に入れることに同意して呉れた母と妹の好意を裏切って了った苛責の念にさいなまれ始める。現在、銀行に在る手持の資金は、精々、数百磅に満たず、母妹と自らの生活を支える手段が皆無であることを自覺した時、Will は眼の前が眞暗になるのを感じ、その打開策を講ずることこそが、焦眉の急と感ぜられるのである。資金を霧散させた Godfrey の責任を追及することより、現實の生活を維持する手段を求めることに心を砕く心情は、従來のこの作家の hero 達の直情径行

な行動に較べると、遙かに reality に富んだものと映るのである。友人の賣れない画家 Norbart Franks に、これ迄融通して来た金の返済を督促したことと、その理由である今回の calamity を打ち明けたことに、強い自己嫌悪を感じ、‘A man like me ought to live alone.’ (*Ibid.*, p. 108) と決心するに至る。

In one sense of the word, no man was less pretentious ; but his liberality of thought and behaviour consisted with a personal pride which was very much at the mercy of circumstance. Even as he could not endure subjection, so did he shrink from the thought of losing dignity in the eyes of his social inferiors. More poverty and lack of ease did not frighten him all ; he had hardly given a thought as yet to that aspect of misfortune. What most of all distressed his imagination (putting aside thought of his mother and sister) was the sudden fall from a position of genial authority, of beneficent command, with all the respect and gratitude and consideration attaching thereto. He could do without personal comforts, if need were, but it pained him horribly to think of being no longer a patron and a master. With a good deal more philosophy than the average man, and vastly more benevolence, he could not attain to the humility which would have seen in this change of fortune a mere surrender of privileges perhaps quite unjustifiable. Social grades were an inseparable part of his view of life ; he recognised the existence of his superiors—though resolved to have as little to do with them as possible, and took it as a matter of course that multitudes of men should stand below his level.

(*Ibid.*, p. 109)

‘a personal pride’を失い、‘dignity’を捨てて、生きて行くことは、‘social grades’に拘泥する性格から見て、耐え難いことであったのである。さりとて、social superiors に屈して、自己を虚しくすることなど、如何に生活の糧を得る爲とは言え、許容し得ない行爲であることは當然であって見れば、‘to live alone’の状態、尚、生活して行く手立てとして、獨立して出来る仕事、詰まり、自営業者となることであろう。苦悩の末、遂に辿り着いた結論に従って、‘grocer’としての道を選ぶことになるのであった。

rent に 85 磅、plant に 125 磅、stock に 150 磅、goodwill に 100 磅強の合計約 500 磅弱の資金を、Godfrey が親類から借りて返金して寄越した 100 磅余りに、自らの手持の現金を總て掻き集めて賄った Will は、lodging の女主人 Mrs. Hopper の義弟の Allchin の協力を

得て、The Jollyman を開店させる。店は、Allchin が半年程勤めた Boxon という grocer の店舗を、その倒産につけ込んで譲り受けたのである。この Allchin という人物は、妻の病氣の際に Will に世話になったこと等に感謝して、店の先頭に立って良く働き、Will の信頼厚い使用人なのだが、作家 Gissing が、*The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* の中で渴望して居る「静かで忠實な」servant の男性版とでも言えそうな性格の持主で、The Jollyman の成功の可成りの部分は彼の努力の結果なのであるが、この人物の 'reality' については、別の機会に譲ることにする。

さて、grocer に転ずることによって、母妹の生活を安定させることを目指すと同時に、'be no man's servant' (*Ibid.*, p. 119) という信念に基づき、Whitechapel の工場で砂糖を精製することと、Fulham でその砂糖を賣ることに、如何なる相違があろうかと、自分自身に言い聞かせて、店の counter に立つことになる。開店後一年を過ぎて、特に、年末迄の三ヶ月は好調に推移した上に、Christmas に Norbart Franks が借金 120 磅を返済して呉れたこともあって、出資額の 3.5% 分を St. Neots に送金出来て、取り敢えず安堵の胸を撫で下した Will だが、總ての財産を店に注ぎこんだ爲に、當然自らの日常の暮らしは儉約を余儀なくされて、'it meant money, and money meant life, the peaceful, fruitful life of those dear to him.' (*Ibid.*, p. 145) と嘆く姿は、この作家の heroes を見馴れて来た者にとっては、'stereotype' との感は否めない。然し、自らの 'degradation' の事実を恐れて、近親にも又友人達にも、辛い現状を隠匿し續ける Will の氣持は、非常に real である。

The needful prevarication cost him so many pangs that he came very near to confessing the truth ; he probably would have done so, had not his mother been ailing, and it seemed to him, little able to bear the shock of such a disclosure. So the honest deception went on. Will was supposed to be managing a London branch of the Applegarth business. Great expenditure on advertising had to account for the smallness of the dividend at first. No one less likely than the ladies at The Haws to make trouble in such a matter. They had what sufficed to them, and were content with it. Thinking over this in shame-faced solitude, Warburton felt a glow proud thankfulness that his mother and sister were so unlike the vulgar average of mankind—that rapacious multitude, whom nothing animates but a chance of gain, with whom nothing weighs but a commercial argument. A new tenderness stirred within him, and resolutely he stamped under foot the impulses of self-esteem, of self-indulgence, which made his life hard to bear.

(*Ibid.*, p. 145)

知人 Pomfrets 夫妻は、‘some sort of office employment’ と想像し、友人 Franks は、何處かの ‘clerk’ にでもなったのだらうと考えて、深く追求されなかったのは幸運であったのだが、Will の無心に、ほとんど二つ返事で大金を用立てて呉れた母と妹に対して、‘disclosure’ 出来ないことは、彼にとって、何物にも替え難い苦悩と後悔の念に包まれる要因となったのである。

Was he to be a grocer for the rest of his life ? —This question, which at first scarcely occurred to him, absorbed as he was in the problem of money-earning for immediate needs, at length began to press and worry. Of course he had meant nothing of the kind ; his imagination had seen in the shop a temporary expedient ; he had not troubled to pursue the ultimate probabilities of the life that lay before him, but contented himself with the vague assurance of his hopeful temper. Yet where was the way out ? To save money, to accumulate sufficient capital for his release, was an impossibility, at all event within any reasonable time. And for what windfall could he look ? Sherwood’s ten thousand pounds hovered in his memory, but no more substantial than any fairy-tale. No man living, it seemed to him, had less chance of being signally favoured by fortune. He had donned his apron and aproned he must retain.

(*Ibid.*, p. 150)

眞實を ‘disclosure’ 出来ないことから生ずる苦悩に加えて、更に Will を痛めつけるのは、‘degradation’ の悲しみである。父の遺産に恵まれて、middle class の平均以上の生活が約束されて居たにも拘らず、友人の失態に依って、夢想だにしなかった grocerdom に墮ちた自分の姿を、客観的に眺めると、背筋が凍る想いに悩まされる毎日の連続で、順風の際であれば、笑って見過せるであろう lodging の女主人の水増しした請求書に、非道く腹立しい想いを感じる自分自身を哀れみ、この様な女性と争うことは、自らも相手の rank 迄墮ちることだと自覺して、矛を収めるのである。

He had to remind himself that, if he was poor, his landlady was poorer still, and that cheating him she did but follow the traditions of her class. To debate an excess of six pence for paraffin, of nine pence for bacon, would have made him flush and grind his teeth for hours afterwards ; but he noticed the effect upon himself of the new habit

of niggardiliness—how it disposed him to acerbity of temper. No matter how pure the motive, a man cannot devote his days to squeezing out pecuniary profits without some moral detriment. Formerly this woman, Mrs. Wick, with her gimlet eyes, and her leech lips, with her spyings and eavesdroppings, with her sour civility, her stinted discharge of obligations, her pilferings and mendacities, would have rather amused than annoyed him. “Poor creature, isn’t it a miserable as well as a sordid life. Let her have her pickings, however illegitimate, and much good may they do her.” Now he too often found himself regarding her with something like animosity, whereby, to be sure, he brought himself to the woman’s level. Was it not a struggle between him and her for a share of life’s poorest comforts? When he looked at it in that light, his cheeks were hot.

(*Ibid.*, p.p. 151~152)

同じ ‘degradation’ の悲哀をかこつ hero に、作家の第三作 *The Unclassed* の Bernard Kingcote が居る。地方の開業醫の長男に生まれ、成り行きに任せて、醫者の道を志すが、父の死を轉機に、遺産を得て大陸に遊び、母の死の報らせで帰英してからは、藝術と文學を志すが、いずれも大成せず、年金僅か六十鎊を頼りに、生來の内向的な性格の命ずる儘に、London を離れて、地方に住みつくこの若者の「階級」からの脱落に較べれば、Will のそれは数倍恵まれて居ることは、一目瞭然の事實であるが、彼の ‘degradation’ から生ずるもう一つの不安は、‘... suppose it became practicable to—well, say, to think of marriage, of course on the most modest basis; could he quite see himself offering to the girl he chose the hand and heart of a grocer? He laughed. It was well to laugh; merriment is the great digestive, and an unspeakable boon to the men capable of it in all but every situation; but what if *she* also laughed, and not in the sympathetic way? Worse still, what if she could *not* laugh, but looked wretchedly embarrassed, confused, shamed? That would be a crisis it needed some philosophy to contemplate.’ (*Ibid.*, p.p. 150~151) と言う点で、下層の女性はいざ知らず、middle class に属する女性に、grocer として結婚を申し込むこと等とても出来ないと考えて了うのである。Gissing の大部分の作品の hero 達は、所謂、‘weak-heatedness’ と言う性格を與えられて居ることは言う迄もないが、Will Warburton の「弱さ」は、それ以前の heroes——例えば、前出の Bernard Kingcote や、*Born in Exile* の Godwin Peak 等——と比較して、軽度な症状と言った感じがしてならない。と言うのは、作品の plot 上で Will に與えられた situation そのものが、

比較的穏かであり、切端詰って彷徨する程重度のものではないこともあるが、もっと重要なのは、作家自身が、一口に言って、生活上安定し、加えて、身体的な衰えを痛感して居る時期の作品であることから、以前程徹底的な人物創造——ぎりぎりの貧困と 'degradation' から来る絶望に喘ぐ heroes——を避け、必然的に余裕のある人間像を造り上げることで、fictious に傾くことを嫌って、それ故に、極めて自然な、言い換えれば、有るが儘の real な人物像を誕生させて居るのではないかと思われる。その時点での作家自身の生活状態から掛け離れて、より fictious な大向う受けを狙った人物を描き出すよりも、飽く迄も自然に、自己の現在の状況に應じて、作り物でない人間を描出する方が、出来栄えは別にして、より realism に近付いて居ると言えるであろう。

更に、作家がこの作品で、極く自然な hero の創造を目指して、前・中期・後期前半の諸作品では見ることの出来なかった、素直な 'honesty' を賦與して居ることに気付く。精神的又肉体的、更には、'exile' と 'poverty' の深淵に沈んで居ることの多かった数々の heroes は、その 'straightforwardness' の向う先は、悲惨な窮乏状態からの脱出に阻まれて、ともすれば悲観や絶望につながって了い勝ちであったのだが、Will Warburton は、非常に率直に、自らの苦悩の源は、階級的脱落でもなければ、過剰労働の爲でもなく、まして Rosamund Elvan に對する愛情の故でもなくて、自らの 'degradation' から生ずる日常的な現状を 'disclose' する爲に、'liar' であり続けなければならなかったと言う点に在ったのである。

Then he flung himself into bed, but got no sleep until past dawn. Rising at the usual hour, he told himself that this would not do ; to live on in this way was mere moral suicide ; he resolved to run down to St. Neots, whence, if his mother were capable of the journey, she and Jane might go for a week or two to the seaside.

(*Ibid.*, p. 186)

兼ねて店の使用人 Allchin からも、顧客の對應に真心が籠って居らず、従って、客達も奇妙に感じて居るので、暫く休暇を取って、refresh に努めて見てはと忠告されて居た、Will の 'moral suicide' は、實は、すべての他者に對する嘘に依るものであったと言うことを、はっきりと自覺せざるを得ない状況に追い込まれて居た訳である。

And in these endless hours of solitude there grew upon him a perception of the veritable cause of his illness. Not loss of station, not overwork, not love ; but simply

the lie to which he was committed. There was the root of the matter. Slowly, dimly, he groped toward the fact that what rendered his life intolerable was its radical dishonesty. Lived openly, avowedly, it would have involved hardships indeed, but nothing of this dull wretchedness which made the world a desert. He began to see how much better, how much easier, it would have been to tell the truth two years ago. His mother was not so weak-minded a woman to be stricken down by loss of money ; and as for Sherwood, his folly merited more than the unpleasantness that might have resulted to him from disclosure. Grocerdom with a clear conscience would have been a totally different thing from grocerdom surreptitiously embraced. Instead of slinking into a corner for the performance of an honourable act, he should have declared it, frankly, unaffectedly, to all who had any claim upon him. At once, the enterprise became amusing, interesting. If it disgraced him with any of his acquaintances, so much the worse for them ; all whose friendship was worth having would have shown only the more his friends ; as things stood, he was ashamed, degraded, not by circumstances, but by himself.

(*Ibid.*, p.p. 187~188)

案ずるより生むが易しのたとえ通り、最も ‘disclosure’ することを恐れて居た母親と妹の理解と、その ‘honesty’ の故に、あの Kingcote も Peak も勝ち取れなかった Bertha Cross の愛と信頼迄も、芽出度く手中に収めることが出来たのである。

(To be continued)

Text : *Will Warburton*, reprinted by AMS Press, New York, 1969.

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