

Virginia Woolf and Old Bloomsbury

ヴァージニア・ウルフとオールド・ブルームズベリー

KANAI Saika (金井 彩香)

Tel & Fax: 0123-27-6026 E-mail: s-kanai@photon.chitose.ac.jp

ウルフは、「オールド・ブルームズベリー」(1928)において古き良きブルームズベリー・グループの終焉を嘆く。しかし、厳格な知の交換の場であったグループが親密さ、性を語る自由、同性愛や恋愛への寛容さを帯び変化していったことは、父や兄の死、姉の結婚を経たウルフを保守的な子供時代から解放し、真の作家として成長させたのである。

In her essay “Old Bloomsbury” (1928), Virginia Woolf lamented that good old days of the Bloomsbury group ended in 1907; however, these days and the following changes the group went through essentially marked the beginning of Woolf’s literary history. During the old Bloomsbury period, Woolf underwent the deaths of her father and brother and the marriage of her sister. Her experiences during these years and the changes that followed nurtured her as a writer and enhanced her literary style of writing about herself.

Although the Bloomsbury group began as a private gathering of interconnected Cambridge intellectuals, it gradually grew more intimate. The group formed in 1904, when Woolf and her siblings—Vanessa, Thoby, and Adrian—moved to 46 Gordon Square in Bloomsbury. There, they invited Thoby’s Cambridge friends, including Lytton Strachey, Saxon Sydney-Turner, Clive Bell, Leonard Woolf, and others, who later became some prominent figures of the day, to join them. Interestingly, the members’ intellectual activities branched off into individual pursuits, and the gathering influenced the members’ private lives, leading to love and marriages.

Woolf’s relationship with the group was not limited to intellectual activities. The members became closer when Thoby Stephen died in 1904. As Woolf wrote in “Old Bloomsbury,” there were more sexual conversations, affairs, and homosexual relationships. Eventually, the marriage between Vanessa and Clive Bell lost “the monastic character it had in Chapter One” (195).

Throughout her life, Woolf sought “everything—love, children, adventure, intimacy, work” (*The Letters of Virginia Woolf* 496), all of which later became part of her writing. The Bloomsbury group was the first place she found herself released from her Victorian childhood. Through witnessing and experiencing the old Bloomsbury group and the changes that ensued, Woolf became an affluent writer.

References :

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