新収作品 リチャード・ウィルソン《ティヴォリの風景（カプリッチョ）》

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A standing screen, with a typical 18th century decorative motif of floral pattern on light green ground, forms the background for a young woman removing her coat. Two gentlemen carefully observe the hem of her undergarment exposed in this process, as they gaze longingly at her actions. This young woman’s pose derives from Crespi’s renowned “lice picking” pose, while Moschini has taken that link literally, stating that this woman is in fact, picking at small insects.

However, is this woman actually picking at lice? At the very least, the maid in the background holding a water basin, the elegant clothes of the men peeping at the woman, and the delicately chic floral pattern of the young woman’s skirt all imply that this scene is in a wealthy, as opposed to impoverished and hence lice-ridden, home. Indeed, the table next to the woman bears a fashionable silk fan and two perfume bottles.

Longhi’s humor is concealed in this painting. Simply looking at the pose of the central woman, as seen in other works by Piazzetta and Longhi, we get a clear image of lice picking. But such an action is not really appropriate for this woman. Then, what is this young woman doing? Thus the painter tantalizes the viewer, naturally our gaze is drawn to her decolletage, just like the two gentlemen in the painting. The maid glances at the men with an almost “it can’t be helped” smile on her face. And indeed, she is not simply chastising the men in the painting, her look is also directed at its viewers.

Whether old or young, male or female, rich or poor, Longhi never painted the subjects chosen for his works in a vulgar manner; he always turned a gentle gaze on the human form. In this he resembles his good friends, the representative 18th century Venetian dramatists, Carlo Goldoni and Gasparo Gozzi, and Gozzi’s son Carlo. Gaspar Gozzi compared Longhi to Tiepolo,²⁰ saying that while Tiepolo depicted (famous) figures from history, Longhi focused “un’adunanza da ballo, una ventura di amore, una discopola di musica.” In Gozzi’s view, both painters depicted their subjects “nella sua maggior perfezione.” In contrast to these sentiments of 18th century Venetians, Michael Levey made the following comment.

“His pictures are therefore, with all their undoubted charm, lazy little pictures: just as the society he pictures is lazy. The world he sees is in general the enclosed one of affulent people trying to pass the time.”²¹ The question remains: was the painting perfect or lazy? In any event, Longhi’s works bring a natural image of Venice in the 18th century to the modern viewer. (Mitsumasa Takanashi)

Notes
1) Vincenzo Moschini, Pietro Longhi, Milano, 1956, pp.17-18, fig.4.

Richard Wilson [Penegoes 1713-Colomendy 1782]
Landscape Capriccio with the Tomb of the Horatii and Curiatii, and the Villa of Meuccenes at Titovi
1754
Oil on canvas 99.1 × 134.5cm
Inscribed on the masonry, lower right: \"RW / ROMA / 1754\"
P.198-5
Provenance: Christie’s 7 June 1845; Derek Johns, London.
Exhibitions: David Solkin, Richard Wilson, Tate Gallery, 1985, no.72.

イタリス風景画の創始者ともいえるウィルソンは1750年代にイタリに滞在し、クロードやデュケの強い影響を受けた。それ以前は主として肖像画を制作していたが、このイタリア滞在を契機として青りん風景画の制作に従事するようになった。ターナーやコンスタブルに先駆けてイタリス風景画を浸透させた意義は少なくない。イタリア滞在中に制作されたクロード風の様式によるウィルソンの風景描写は、グラント・ツアーの流行とともに大いにもてはやされれた。イタリス帰国後も自国の景観を題材に古典的な風景を制作したが、後期作品においては、オランダの画家、とりわけ、アルペルド・キャップなどにもうつられ、自然主義的な深まりも認められる一方、ロマン主義を予告するような作品も制作した。

本作品は、1754年にローマで制作された。当時、ローマに滞在していたスティーヴン・ベッキングがから直接注文を受けたものである。この時ベッキングが注文した作品は4点であるが、現在知られているのは本作品を含む2点である（なお、この2点は1845年のクリスティーズのオークションに掲げて出品されて以来、初めて、1882年のテート・ギャラリーのウィルソン回顧展で2点一緒公開された）。ウィルソンはローマ内外に放たるム_histogram_01の建築物やモニュメントを選択し、それらを敬愛するクロードやデュクの構図に略してまとめ上げた。背景にはヴィア・デビア・ヌオーヴァにある古代の英雄ホラティウス兄弟たちの墓、反対側にはおそらくウィラ・メティチの影に基づく女性像、中景にはマエケネスの別荘が描かれ、古代ローマの栄華が追想されている。ベッキングの運作は全体として古代ローマの衰退と没落を表現しようとしたものだったと推測される。

本作品に満ちているメランコリックな調子は、18世紀にグラント・ツアーを行なったイタリスの旅行者たちが古代ローマにたいしてもっていた一般的な感情でもあるが、そこに文明の衰退に関する時世の保守的な政治哲学の反映を読みとる研究者もいる。いずれにせよ、当時イタリスの貴族たちが自分たちの文化もその末裔に連なることを願った、古代文化にたいする懐かししきが認められえるといえよう。
as appeared in a Christie's auction in 1845, and then did not resurface until their inclusion in a 1982 retrospective on Wilson held at the Tate Gallery.

For this painting, Wilson selected a variety of classical buildings and monuments, not all of them located in Rome, and then arranged them in a composition reminiscent of his revered Claude and Dugh. The foreground of this painting features the tomb of the ancient heroes, the Horatii, located in the Villa Appia Nuova, paired with a sculpture of a woman based on the sculpture at the Villa Medici. The Villa of the Maecenas is placed in the center of the composition, lending the entire work an air of ancient Roman elegance. It has been suggested that Beckingham sought an image of the rise and fall of the Roman Empire in the series of works he commissioned from Wilson.

The melancholic mood which pervades this painting was a standard sentiment that British travelers on the Grand Tour held towards Ancient Rome. Some scholars have seen this attitude as a reflection of the conservative political philosophy of the day towards the decline of civilization. In any event, this painting confirms the longing for ancient civilization felt by the British aristocracy of the day, who felt their own culture to be a descendent of that earlier empire.

With the exception of a handful of 19th century British paintings, such as those by Rossetti and Millais, the NMWA has only had one earlier British painting, a Reynolds portrait, in its collections. While there are many obstacles to the museum building a systematically arranged collection of British painting in the future, we can only hope that the acquisition of this work will provide further impetus to such collecting. Finally, while traces of supplemental brushwork can be seen in the detailed areas of the work, overall the painting is in a good state of preservation. (Akira Kofuku)