

Katherine Mansfield について

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I

Katherine Mansfield の夫 J. Middleton Murry は、1954年に Constable 社から出版した “Journal of Katherine Mansfield” の決定版の序文に於て、

The diligence of Katherine Mansfield's biographers, Miss Ruth Mantz (1933) and Mr. Antony Alpers (1954) has unearthed a good deal of information concerning her life previous to 1912 which was unknown to me.

と告白している。事実この “Journal” は 1904年1月1日に筆を起している。即ち彼の女が故国 New Zealand を去つて Queen's College に入学した翌年からの日記ということになる。従つてそれ以前の Mansfield を知るためには、従来前記 Mantz の著書に依存するところが非常に大きかつたのであるが、昨年 Antony Alpers によつて “Katherine Mansfield” が Jonathan Cape 社から出版され、あたかも Mansfield の作品が新たな角度から読み直されている時だけに、裨益するところはすくなくない。今、この Alpers——Mansfield の生家と奇しくも数軒を離れた家に幼年時代を過したと云う人——が、綿密に試みた調査に従い、Queen's College に入学する迄の Mansfield を、その作品と関係づけて辿つてみたいと思う。

II

Katherine Mansfield は、Beauchamp 家の三女として、1888年10月14日に New Zealand の首府 Wellington にうまれた。その当時の首都の状況を

伝える Alpers の筆は次ぎの如くである。

Wellington in the late seventies was a small seaport town of fourteen thousand people who had just acquired their first steam trams, and were arguing as to which was frightening the horses most, the engines, or the scarlet-and-gold paint..... In situation—it lay in the crook of a landlocked harbour, with a view inland towards a snowy mountain range—it was charming. Its loveliness on a calm clear day, with that sheet of brilliant blue before it and the bush-clad hills beyond, would take the breath away. But the calm days were so rare. There was always the wind—the irritable northerly, rattling windows, making people clutch their hats; drenching southerly, straight from the Antarctic; or the beclouded westerly, howling through the strait outside. The incessant wind, and the lack of the comfort of flat ground (steep hills came crowding to the water's edge on every side), made Wellington a restless place for the colonists, as well as very unlike "Home."And yet: the harbour so blue on a fine still morning; the Rimutakas gleaming in the sun; the calling ships so peaceable; the simple innocence of the little town; the innate decency behind its small deceptions. It was a place that one could love, as Katherine Mansfield found when looking back from far away.

いかにも開拓の当初らしい風景が描き出されている。これを Mansfield の "The Scrapbook" にかゝれば次ぎの通りである。

He saw the town below him—the red-roofed houses set in plummy, waving gardens, the absurd little city-quarter, "built in American style," the wharves, the tarred wharf-sheds, and behind these black masses two cranes, that looked somehow, from this

distance, like gigantic pairs of scissors, stuck on end. And then the deep, brimming harbour, shaped like a crater, in a curving brim of hills, just broken in the jagged place to let the big ships through.

父親 Harold Beauchamp が Vera Margaret と Charlotte Mary の二人の娘の誕生の後に、Tinakori Road 11番地に新築した二階建の家で Mansfield は生まれた。Alpers の表現を借りると：

The Beauchamps built a house of their own: at No. 11 Tinakori Road, a square wooden box of the approved earthquake-proof design, with a red-painted, corrugated-iron roof. From upstairs one saw the harbour. At the front was a square of lawn, with arum lilies growing rank as weeds, and the back fence stood on the brink of a bushy gully running down to the sea. Here the third child was born at eight o'clock on the morning of Sunday, October 14, 1888.

ここに前庭に植えてあつたと誌るされている arum lilies は、彼の女の幼い頃、庭に出ては顔をよせて匂いをかいで百合だ。“The Garden-Party” の中で Mrs. Sheridan が、籠に詰めたサンドウィッチを娘の Laura に持たせて、不幸のあつた近所の家を叩問させる時に、

“Take it yourself, darling. Run down just as you are.”

と云つた言葉のあとから、追いかけるように語をつないで、

“No, wait, take the arum lilies too. People of that class are so impressed by arum lilies.”

と持たせようとした花である。

III

Mansfield の父 Harold は、Beauchamp 家の長男に生まれ、若輩にして

既に鋭鋒を現わした。

The young Harold had unlimited energy, great concentration, a clever head for figures……

と Alpers は称讃している。十七才にして食料品輸入業の W.M. Bannatyne & Co. に勤め、その奮闘努力は忽ち酬いられて、給料は同僚の Dyer を遙かに凌駕した。たまたまこの同僚に Annie という十四才になる栗色の髪の、華奢な妹がいた。これが後に Mansfield の母親となる人であるが、年齢の点もあり、Harold は辛抱強く、彼の女が適齡期に達する迄待った。この間 Annie は時折リューマチ熱になやまされ、これが又心臓の機能を弱める原因になつたと云う。従つて将来母親としてのつとめを果すのも容易でなさそうに見えたが、Harold には、全く献身的で、Harold も亦愛情を以て Annie を庇護してやつた。Harold が二十六才の時、二人は結婚し、Annie の母と未婚の妹——Kitty と Belle——が若夫婦と一緒に生活するようになつた。

Annie は健康もすぐれなかつたが、生活そのものにも張りを見出し得なかつた。Alpers はその間の消息を次ぎの如く物語っている：

She was troubled with vague regrets about her life, and in her behaviour to people around her she was divided between her instincts and her prejudices, as they were too, being uprooted and thrown into strange surroundings. She thought there could still be a middle class in a country that had no upper class and was bent on having no lower. Her Mother, a grandmother by instinct, living a satisfying life, had unerring dignity ; Annie had to have babies against her will, and to suffer from the illusion of privilege in a self-levelling colony.

この苦しみから逃れる方法として彼の女が見出したのは夫との海外旅行であつた。Mansfield の生誕数週間にして、Annie は夫の最初の商用旅行に同伴して本国に赴き、赤ん坊の面倒は祖母が見ている。Alpers はこう書いている：

The child was christened Kathleen Mansfield, after her grandmother. And soon the bond was sealed in more than name; Mrs. Dyer was the beloved Grandma of Katherine Mansfield's best-known stories, and of her *Journal*: the darling, comforting Granny who had always loved her, understood her, and protected her from harm. It was she who did all the mothering in the house. She was only forty-nine; her daughter Annie, after three difficult pregnancies complicated by heart trouble, was already tired of babies, but she had strength and love to spare for many more children yet. She took Kathleen to her lap with lavish affection, and when Kathleen was a few weeks old, Annie was able to leave for England with her husband, who was making his first business trip. Before they returned, Kathleen had become her Granny's *Kass*.

この祖母の愛情は、終世忘れられなかつたものであろう。花嫁姿で祖父の肩に頭をよせ、彼の手首を優しくにぎっている祖母の写真は大事にして肌身をはなさぬ程であつた（“*Journal*”の巻頭を彩っているのもこの写真である）。然しこの祖母にも、妹達が生まれた後は、以前のように甘えられなくなつてしまつた。“*Journal*”を開くと、*A Recollection of Childhood*.の中に吾々は次ぎのような胸うつ文字に接する。

Things happened so simply then, without preparation and without any shock. They let me go into my mother's room (I remember standing on tiptoe and using both hands to turn the big white china door-handle) and there lay my mother in bed with her arms along the sheet, and there sat my grandmother before the fire with a baby in a flannel across her knees. My mother paid no attention to me at all. Perhaps she was asleep, for my grandmother nodded and said in a voice scarcely above a

whisper, 'Come and see your little sister.' I tiptoed to her voice across the room, and she parted the flannel, and I saw a little round head with a tuft of goldy hair on it and a big face with eyes shut—white as snow. 'Is it alive?' I asked. 'Of course,' said grandmother. 'Look at her holding my my finger.' And—yes, a hand, scarcely bigger than my doll's, in a frilled sleeve, was wound round her finger. 'Do you like her?' said my grandmother. 'Yes. Is she going to play with the doll's house?' 'By-and-by,' said the grandmother, and I felt very pleased. Mrs. Heywood had just given us the doll's house. It was a beautiful one with a verandah and a balcony and a door that opened and shut and two chimneys. I wanted badly to show it to someone else.

'Her name is Gwen,' said the grandmother. 'Kiss her.'

I bent down and kissed the little goldy tuft. But she took no notice. She lay quite still with her eyes shut.

'Now go and kiss mother,' said the grandmother.

But mother did not want to kiss me. Very languid, leaning against the pillows, she was eating some sago. The sun shone through the windows and winked on the brass knobs on the big bed

It was spring. Our garden was full of big white lilies. I used to run out and sniff them and come in again with my nose all yellow

All day, all night grandmother's arms were full. I had no lap to climb into, no pillow to rest against. All belonged to Gwen.

IV

あたゝかい母の愛撫のかわりに、祖母の膝にのつていた Mansfield は、ど

んなに冷たい人として幼い心にその母の像を描いていたのであろうか? “At the Bay” に於て、Annie をモデルにした Linda Burnell は次のように描かれている。

Linda frowned; she sat up quickly in her steamer chair and clasped her ankles. Yes, that was her real grudge against life; that was what she could not understand. That was the question she asked and asked, and listened in vain for the answer. It was all very well to say it was the common lot of women to bear children. It wasn't true. She, for one, could prove that wrong. She was broken, made weak, her courage was gone, through childbearing. And what made it doubly hard to bear was, she did not love her children. It was useless pretending. Even if she had had the strength she never would have nursed and played with the little girls. No, it was as though a cold breath had chilled her through and through on each of these awful journeys; she had no warmth left to give them.

これに反して、同じ “At the Bay” に於ても、Stanley Burnell の名前で描かれている父親 Harold は：

Stanley was half-way up the path before he saw Linda. “Is that you, darling?”

“Yes, Stanley.”

He leapt across the flower-bed and seized her in his arms. She was enfolded in that familiar, eager, strong embrace.

“Forgive me, darling, forgive me,” stammered Stanley, and he put his hand under her chin and lifted her face to him.

“Forgive you?” smiled Linda. “But whatever for?”

“Good God! You can't have forgotten,” cried Stanley Burnell.

“I’ve thought of nothing else all day. I’ve had the hell of a day. I made up my mind to dash out and telegraph, and then I thought the wire mightn’t reach you before I did. I’ve been in tortures, Linda.”

“But Stanley,” said Linda, what must I forgive you for?”

“Linda!” — Stanley was very hurt — “didn’t you realize — you must have realized — I went away without saying good-bye to you this morning? I can’t imagine how I can have done such a thing. My confounded temper, of course. But — well” — and he sighed and took her in his arms again — “I’ve suffered for it enough to-day.”

Alpers は Mansfield 父子の間を次ぎの如く見ている。

To his daughter Kathleen, Beauchamp was to be the father-adversary, and some famous battles were to be fought before the conflict was resolved. But if he often hurt her, he seldom directly frustrated her. At certain crucial moments he actively helped her in the acquiring of some of those things which, as an artist, she needed most of all.

V

こうしてみると、Kathleen の祖母への思慕が並々ならぬものであつたことは想像にかたくない。“Prelude” にこれを求めることにしよう：

They were taken off to bed by the grandmother. She went first with a candle; the stairs rang to their climbing feet. Isabel and Lottie lay in a room to themselves, Kezia curled in her grandmother’s soft bed.

この思慕が切ないばかりに結晶したのが、“In the Bay” に於ける次ぎの会話であろう：

“Grandma,” she said in a startled voice.

“What, my pet!”

“You’re not to die.” Kezia was very decided.

“Ah, Kezia” — her grandma looked up and smiled and shook her head — “don’t let’s talk about it.”

“But you’re not to. you couldn’t leave me. you couldn’t not be there.” This was awful. “Promise me you won’t ever do it, grandma,” pleaded Kezia.

VI

Mansfield が五才になつた時、父親は子供達に田舎の生活を経験させるために、町から四哩奥の Karori に、五ヶ年契約で割合に広い家を借りた。母親の義兄弟で Valentine Waters という郵便局員の教会オルガニストも、Harold の計画をまねて、二人の男の子を連れて Thorndon からすぐ近所に引越して来ることになつた。1893 年のイースター直前に両家は相前後して Karori に移り、こゝに賑やかな生活が開かれる。Beauchamp 邸は Chesney Wold と呼ばれ、Waters の家は Monkey Tree Cottage という名で知られていた。

Alpers によれば：

Compared with the house in town, compared even with the gardens of temptation up the way, Chesney Wold was rather grand, with its big bay windows, its ornamental porch and its conservatory, its forty-year-old trees, its solitary aloe beside the drive. It was rambling and spacious and lovely. There were stables at the back, an orchard, and several acres of paddocks, with the Karori stream winding through them…… It was here that Kathleen spent some of the formative years of her childhood, which she reconstructed so vividly in many of her stories.

Beauchamp は毎朝徒歩で四哩の距離を通勤したが、一時間はかゝらなかつ

た。余程足ばやに下り坂を降りて行つたらしく、ninepenny horse-bus のお客様と競走をしていたと云う。帰路はアイルランド生れの園丁 Pat Sheehan が buggy で迎えに来た。Karori の生活は、父親の予想通り、子供達にとっては申分のないものだつた。園丁 Pat に助けられての乗馬、家畜の世話、出かけて行くクリークや谷間、芝生では Waters の子供達との楽しい遊び。It was here that Kathleen spent some of the formative years of her childhood. と Alpers の書いている通りの生活であつた。

VII

1894 年に一児の生誕をみた。待望の男児である。Leslie Heron と名付けられたが、皆はこの子を “Boy” とか、“Chummie” と呼んだ。後継者を得た Beauchamp はこの時36才。期待されていた通り商会の主人となり、各種会社に関係し、ウェリントン港湾委員会にも顔を連ねている。

Mansfield も学齢に達した。1895 年彼の女の通学が始まる。Alpers は次ぎの如く書いている：

And so, at the beginning of 1895, she joined Vera and Chaddie and all the other children of the valley——farm children, the milkman's children, the storekeeper's, the washerwoman's, the bus-driver's, the children of a dentist——at the Karori State School, to receive the “free, secular, and compulsory” education prescribed in the colony's Education Act of 1877.

Mansfield は父に似て、算数に秀でていた。Spelling が下手で、詩の暗誦に長じていた。乱暴な字で書きなぐつていたらしい。植民地らしく、学校の中では、各階層の家庭の子供達と一緒になつていたが、生活程度によつて一線が劃されていたことは、“The Doll's House” が明らかに物語っている。

For the fact was, the school the Burnell children went to was not at all the kind of place their parents would have chosen if there had been any choice. But there was none. It was the only

school for miles. And the consequence was all the children of the neighbourhood, the Judge's little girls, the doctor's daughters, the store-keeper's children, the milkman's, were forced to mix together. Not to speak of there being an equal number of rude, rough little boys as well. But the line had to be drawn somewhere. It was drawn at the Kelveys.

少女 Kathleen はこの上下の境界を取り除きたかつた。Mrs. Heywood から Beauchamp 家の子供達が贈られた人形の家は、学校中の女生徒の評判になり、皆は次ぎ次ぎと見せて貰う機会を持つたが、Kelvey 姉妹は案内されない。洗濯婆さんの子供だからと云つて、なぜ外の生徒と同様な取扱いがしてやられないのだろうか。Kathleen は不満でならない。

"Mother," said Kezia, "can't I ask the Kelveys just once?"

"Certainly not, Kezia."

"But why not?"

"Run away, Kezia; you know quite well why not."

母のたしなめを受けたにもかゝらず、Kezia は、たまたま門の所を通りかゝつた Kelvey 姉妹を呼び入れて、中庭の一角に置かれてある人形の家へと案内する。一つ一つ中の作りの美事さを見せているところへ家の中から声がする。

"Kezia!"

It was Aunt Beryl's voice. They turned round. At the back door stood Aunt Beryl, staring as if she couldn't believe what she saw.

"How dare you ask the little Kelveys into the courtyard?" said her cold, furious voice. "You know as well as I do, you're not allowed to talk to them. Run away, children, run away at once. And don't come back again," said Aunt Beryl. And she stepped into the yard and shooed them out as if they were chickens.

"Off you go immediately!" she called, cold and proud.

Alpers の説明を借りれば、この頃の Kathleen は何とも云いようのない寂しさを味い、家にあつても気むづかし屋だつた。Vera や chaddie とも離れ、Jeanne や Leslie とも一緒にならず、又祖母以外の人からは余り目をかけて貰えぬことに自分でも気づいていた。むつつりとしていて、おこりつぽく、鋭い凝視は大人をもまごつかせる程であつた。母親はこの娘にはいつもやきもきしていた。この時分から Kathleen は読書に熱中して、その結果視力を害するに至つた。床の中で蠟燭の火を便りに本を開いては、祖母に吹き消されることも屢々だつた。1898年頃の写真には、steel-rim の眼鏡をかけてうつつている。三年生の時に “A Sea Voyage” を書いて、作文賞を貰つているが、これはその前年の夏に、父方の祖父母の家へ遊びに行つた時の Picton への船旅を題材にしたものと云われている。1898 年に両親は二度目の母国訪問の旅に出、子供達は Granny Dyer と Aunt Belle に託された。一方 Kathleen と二人の姉は、この年から Thorndon の Wellington Girls' High School に入学し、毎日馬車で通つた。この学校では雑誌を出していたので、Kathleen は大いに元気づけられた。第一学期の末には、早くも九才の少女の手になる物語 “Enna Blake” が印刷され、一般の賞讃を博した。

VIII

この年も暮れようとする11月に両親が本国から帰り、一家は又 Thorndon に戻り、No.75 Tinakori Road に居を定める。“Journal” はこの新居を次ぎの如く伝えている。

Our house in Tinakori Road stood far back from the road. It was a big, white-painted square house with a slender pillared verandah and balcony running all the way round it. In the front from the verandah edge the garden sloped away in terraces and flights of concrete steps — down — until you reached the stone wall covered with nasturtiums that had three gates let into it — the visitors' gate, the Tradesmen's gate, and a huge pair of

old iron gates that were never used and clashed and clamoured when Bogey and I tried to swing on them.

堂々たる邸宅であつた。そして一家を引連れて Harold Beauchamp がこの家に住むのを待ち構えていたかのように、首相から New Zealand 銀行頭取就任の話が持ちこまれた。それは金融界の大御所的存在になるということであつたが、新しい邸宅は、その大任にふさわしい豪荘さをもつていた。但、植民地らしくも、正門を数歩出て、通りを下れば、そこにごみごみとした裏長屋の生活がむき出しに見えていた。

But it was a little trying to have one's own washerwoman living next door who would persist in attempting to talk to Mother over the fence, and then, just beyond her 'hovel', as Mother called it, there lived an old man who burned leather in his back yard whenever the wind blew our way. And further along there lived an endless family of halfcastes who appeared to have planted their garden with empty jam tins and old sauce-pans and black iron kettles without lids.

湿地で、陽のあたりの悪い低みの、土台も礫にない粗末な住いの中で、どん底の生活が営まれていた。Mansfield の傑作と賞され、彼の女の作家としての地位を確立したと云われる "The Garden Party" は、この一角を舞台にして書かれたもので、Sheridan と Scott を夫々上下両階級の代表として、懸絶した相互の距離を「同情心」によつてつなごうと試みたものである。Kathleen が次ぎに High-school magazine にのせたものは "A Happy Christmas Eve" である。Alpers はこれを conventional and unimaginative と評している。この頃父方のいところに当る Mary Annette Beauchamp (当時は嫁して Countess von Arnim) が、ロンドンから "Elizabeth and Her German Garden" を出版し、数版を重ねる好評を博していたが、このことは少女 Kathleen の心に量りしれない影影を与えたことゝ思われる。このようにして学校生活を送つて行くが、特に輝かしい存在となる様子もうかゞわれず、内気

で、不機嫌だつた。或時来客の月並な質問に答えて、「将来作家になりたい」と云つて、皆の爆笑を買つた。都会の生活を再開するようになつてからは、両親は子供達の休暇を見計つて、皆を港の向側の Day's Bay に連れて行き、海辺の Bungalow 生活を楽しんだ。この様子は "At the Bay" にくわしい。

Ah-Aah! sounded the sleepy sea. And from the bush there came the sound of little streams flowing, quickly, lightly, slipping between the smooth stones, gushing into ferny basins and out again; and there was the splashing of big drops on large leaves, and something else — what was it? — a faint stirring and shaking, the snapping of a twig and then such silence that it seemed someone was listening.

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As the morning lengthened whole parties appeared over the sand-hills and came down on the beach to bathe. It was understood that at eleven o'clock the women and children of the summer colony had the sea to themselves. First the women undressed, pulled on their bathing dresses and covered their heads in hideous caps like sponge bags; then the children were unbuttoned. The beach was strewn with little heaps of clothes and shoes; the big summer hats, with stones on them to keep them from blowing away, looked like immense shells. It was strange that even the sea seemed to sound differently when all those leaping, laughing figures ran into the waves.

実にこの「なんとなく湿つぱく海草の匂う」海岸で、「崩れやすい丘を登つたり、真紅の sunbonnet を冠つて」楽しい夏を Kathleen は過した。

K

1899 年の暮、Kathleen は英語・算数・仏語の三科目に抜群の成績を示し、

前首相 Sir Robert Stout から親しく賞を授けられる光栄をになつた。その後一学期を High School にすごし、1900 年に Miss Swainson の private school に、二人の姉と共に転校して、将来海外で教育をうける日のために準備をととのえた。この学校に通学していた間に、Kathleen は校誌に “The School” という題で物語を寄せている。両親はそろそろ彼の女達を英国に送る計画をたてゝいた頃であるが、この時代の最大の出来事と云えば、彼の女が “Journal” に誌るしている “Caesar” なる男性に出会つたことであろう。Alpers はこう云つている。

Her parents had now decided to take their three eldest daughters to England to be “finished.” But that was still a year away, and the interval, for Kathleen, was a year of emotional and physical changes, which came early to her. She was thirteen. This was the year when she startled Miss Butts with her question about “free love”; and the year when she first met “Casar.”

この “Casar” については、前記 “Journal” の冒頭に於て、彼の女の夫 J. Middleton Murry が次ぎの如く註を施している。

Katherine Mansfield left New Zealand in January 1903 to enter Queen's College, Harley Street, London. She was fourteen. A year before, she had met in Wellington a gifted young 'cellist, Arnold Trowell, who was a native of the city. She had made friends with him, conceived a girlish passion for him, and began to learn the 'cello herself. He is the Caesar of some of the following entries. He and his brother, Garnet Trowell, a young violinist, left New Zealand some six months after Katherine to study at the Brussels conservatoire.

Murry の云う通り、Kathleen は 1903年1月に Cape Horn 経由で New Zealand を出発した。この時記念の家族写真を撮影しているが、Alpers は彼の女の姿が美しくなり、均斉のとれているのに注目して、その原因に及び

「恋愛を感じ、セロを見出したからか、それとも何かその外に心境の変化をきたしたからか」と述懐している。Kathleen は Montevideo から第一信を Caesar に送り、その後文通は六ヶ年間継続している。これが文章を以て自己を表現する彼の女の才能の啓達に多大の寄与をしたことは想像にかたくない。