

愛の商品化—レティシア・エリザベス・ランドンと L. E. L. と「サッポー」

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① 「サッポー」 (1822)

She leant upon her harp, and thousands looked  
On her in love and wonder—thousands knelt  
And worshipp'd in her presence—burning tears,  
And words that died in utterance, and a pause  
Of breathless, agitated eagerness,  
First gave the full heart's homage: then came forth  
A shout that rose to heaven, and the hills,  
The distant valleys, all rang with the name  
of the Æolian SAPPHO—every heart  
Found in itself some echo to her song.  
Low notes of love—hopes beautiful and fresh,  
And some gone by for ever—glorious dreams,  
High aspirations, those thrice gentle thoughts  
That dwell upon the absent and the dead,  
Were breathing in her music—and these are  
Chords every bosom vibrates to. But she  
Upon whose brow the laurel crown is placed,  
Her colour's varying with deep emotion—  
There is a softer blush than conscious pride  
Upon her cheek, and in that tremulous smile  
Is all woman's timid tenderness:  
Her eye is on a Youth, and other days  
And young warm feelings have rushed on her soul  
With all their former influence,—thoughts that slept  
Cold, calm as death, have wakened to new life—  
While years' existence have passed in that glance...  
She had once lived in very early days:  
That was a thing gone by: one had called forth  
The music of her soul: he loved her too,  
But not as she did—she was unto him  
As a young bird, whose early flight he trained,  
Whose first wild songs were sweet, for he had taught  
Those songs—but she looked up to him with all  
Youth's deep and passionate idolatry:  
Love was her heart's sole universe—he was  
To her, Hope, Genius, Energy, the God  
Her inmost spirit worshipped—in whose smile  
Was all e'en minstrel pride held precious, praise  
Was prized but as the echo of his own.

(*Poetic Sketches. Second Series—Sketch the First. Sappho. Literary Gazette* 276[May 1822]: 282)

But other times and other feelings came:  
Hope is love's element, and love with her  
Sickened of its own vanity .... She lived  
Mid bright realities and brighter dreams,  
Those strange but exquisite imaginings  
That tinge with such sweet colours minstrel thoughts,  
And Fame, like sunlight, was upon her path,  
And strangers heard her name, and eyes that never  
Had looked on SAPPHO, yet had wept with her.  
Her first love never wholly lost its power,  
But, like rich incense shed, although no trace  
Was of its visible presence, yet its sweetness  
Mingled with every feeling, and it gave  
That soft and melancholy tenderness  
Which was the magic of her song.... That Youth  
Who knelt before her was so like the shape  
That haunted her spring dreams—the same dark eyes,  
Whose light had once been as the light of heaven!  
Others breathed winning flatteries—she turned  
A careless hearing—but when PHAON spoke,  
Her heart beat quicker, and the crimson light  
Upon her cheek gave a most tender answer....  
She loved with all the ardour of a heart  
Which loves but in itself: her life had passed  
Amid the grand creations of the thought:  
Love was to her a vision—it was now  
Heightened into devotion....But a soul  
So gifted and so passionate as her's  
Will seek companionship in vain, and find  
Its feelings solitary.... PHAON SOON  
Forget the fondness of his Lesbian maid;  
And SAPPHO knew that talents, riches fame,  
May not soothe slighted love, ----  
----There is a dark rock looks on the blue sea;  
'Twas there love's last song echoed—there She sleeps,  
Whose lyre was crowned with laurel, and whose name  
Will be remembered long as Love or Song  
Are sacred—the devoted SAPPHO!

② 「イングランドのサッポー」

Having offered these general remarks, we shall proceed to illustrate them by a view of the principal poem—*The Improvisatrice*, which would, alone, entitle the fair author to the name of the English Sappho. [...]

if the author never excels what she had already done, we can confidently give her the assurance of what the possessor of such talents must most earnestly covet—*Immortality*.

([William Jerdan,] review of *The Improvisatrice, and Other Poems*, by L. E. L., *The Literary Gazette, Journal of Belle Lettre, Arts, Sciences, &c.* 389 (3 July 1824): 417-20)

「美しいサッポー」

This is a fine spirited sketch, and would do credit to any writer; and it is eminently deserving of a triumph, as the composition of one of the few years, and sex of our fair Sappho.

([William Jerdan,] review of *The Fate of Adelaide, a Swiss Romantic Tale; and other Poems*, by Letitia Elizabeth Landon, *The London Literary Gazette* 237 (4 August 1821): 492)

③ 「魔法の三文字」

The Author of these volumes is a lady of remarkable genius. We remember well when she first appeared before the public in the pages of “The Literary Gazette.” [...] We were young and at college [...] At that time poetry was not yet out of fashion, at least with us of the cloister; and there was always in the Reading-Room of the Union, a rush every Saturday afternoon for “The Literary Gazette,” and an impatient anxiety to hasten at once to the corner of the sheet which contained the three magical letters “L. E. L.” And all of us praised the verse, and all of us guessed at the author. We soon learned it was a female and our admiration was doubled, and our conjectures tripled. Was she young? Was she pretty? and—for there were some embryo fortune-hunters among us—was she rich?

([Edward Bulwer-Lytton,] rev. of *Romance and Reality*, by L. E. L., *The New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal* 32 (Dec. 1831); 546-47)

④ ゴシップ記事

・『サンデー・タイムス』(1826)

A well-known English Sappho... famous for the amorous glow of her fancy, has just been detected in a faux pas with a literary man, the father of several children. The discovery happened when the *placens*...and brats were sent off...last September to the waterside, and was effected by means of a charwoman.... Observing, that as often as the youthful Sappho arrived at the embowered recess of Love and the Muses, the blinds on the ground-floor *study* were *pulled down* and shutters *pulled up*; and wondering how *books* could be read in *the dark*, this female busybody stationed herself so ingeniously...as to see the whole poetical mystery, by which ‘hearts throb with hearts,’ and ‘souls with souls unite.’ This she expounded to the wife.... Other truths then came out, from which it appeared that the ‘virgin gentleness, the orphan muse’ [Landon's father died in 1824] had honored her Benedict (though not *Benedictus*) Phaon with a young chubby Terpander, or son of a *lyre*, two years before, and at Canterbury of all places....

(“Sapphics and Erotics.” *The Sunday Times*[5 March 1826 ])

・『ロバ』(1826)

My Dear Jerdan,

... you have given the *finishing stroke* of inspiration to Miss Landon, who has become a very Sappho under your hands, and cannot write nonsense even though she were willing, After this you may do any thing. (“To the Editor of the Literary Gazette.” *The Ass: or, Weekly Beast of Burden* 1 (1 April 1826):8)

The Apple-tree with snow top;  
The peach like burnished gold;  
False Love, that like a mutton chop,  
Is flung aside when cold;

The hail that's but the heavens in grief,  
Congealing tears of rain;  
The true love, like a rump of beef,  
That's out and come again.  
("The Charms of Nature." lines 9-16. *The Ass* 5 (29 April 1826): 80)

⑤ ランドンによるスキャンダル否定  
・ キャサリン・トムソン宛ての手紙 (1826)

I think of the treatment I have received until my very soul writhes under the powerlessness of its anger. It is only because I am poor, unprotected, and dependant on popularity, that I am a mark for all the gratuitous insolence and malice of idleness and ill-nature. And I cannot but feel deeply that had I been possessed of rank and opulence, either these remarks had never been made, or if they had, how trivial would their consequence have been to me. I must begin with the only subject—the only thing in the world I really feel an interest in—my writings. It is not vanity when I say, their success is their fault. [...]

As to the *report* you named, I now not which is greatest--the absurdity or the malice. Circumstances have made me very much indebted to the gentleman [whose name was coupled with hers], for much of kindness. I have not had a friend in the world but himself to manage anything of business, whether literary or pecuniary. Your own literary pursuits must have taught you how little, in them, a young woman can do without assistance. Place yourself in my situation. Could you have hunted London for a publisher, endured all the alternate hot and cold water thrown on your exertions; bargained for what sum they might be pleased to give; and, after all, canvassed, examined, nay quarrelled over accounts the most intricate in the world? And again, after success had procured money, what was I to do with it? Though ignorant of business, I must know I could not lock it up in a box. Then, for literary assistance, my proof sheets could not go through the press without revision. Who was to undertake this--I can only call it drudgery--but some one to whom my literary exertions could in return be as valuable as theirs to me?

(Landon to Katherine Thomson, June 1826, qtd. in Blanchard 1: 55-56.)

・ 『ヴェネツィアのブレスレット』序文(1829)

I allude to the blame and eulogy which have been equally bestowed on my frequent choice of Love as my source of song. I can only say, that for a woman, whose influence and whose sphere must be in the affections, what subject can be more fitting than one which it is her peculiar province to refine, spiritualise, and exalt? I have always sought to paint it self-denying, devoted, and making an almost religion of its truth; and I must add, that such as I would wish to draw her, woman actuated by an attachment as intense as it is true, as pure as it is deep, is not only more admirable as a heroine, but also in actual life, than one whose idea of love, is that of light amusement, or at worst of vain mortification. With regard to the frequent application of my works to myself, considering that I sometimes portrayed love unrequited, then betrayed, and again destroyed by death—may I hint the conclusions are not quite logically drawn, as assuredly the same mind cannot have suffered such varied modes of misery. However, if I must have an unhappy passion, I can only console myself with my own perfect unconsciousness of so great a misfortune. (*Venetian Bracelet*, "Preface"; McGann and Riess 103)

⑥ エマ・ロバーツによるランドンの伝記 (1839)

While dwelling with apparently earnest tenderness upon the sorrows of love, its disappointments and treacheries, L. E. L. identified herself with the beings of her fancy, lamenting, frequently in the first person, over miseries which she had never felt, and to which she was by no means likely to be subjected, since both then and subsequently, she manifested an almost extraordinary want of susceptibility, upon all occasions when attempts were made upon her heart. [...]  
her poems were the production of a girl who had not yet left off her pinafores, and whose only notion of a lover was embodied in a knight wearing the brightest armour and the whitest of plumes. Such, however, was the fact, and this beau ideal preserved her from the tender passions for many a long year; none of her admirers, and they were numerous, reaching the high standard erected in her own imagination. While generally supposed to be the pining victim of unrequited love, her heart remained untouched, its overflowing tenderness being lavished upon the faithless heroes of her

own creation.

(E[mma] R[oberts], “Memoir of L. E. L.,” 10-11)

⑦ジャーダンによるランドンの伝記 (1848)

Throughout the year 1822, L. E. L. was as full of song as the nightingale in May; and excited a very general enthusiasm by the Sapphic warmth, the mournful emotion, and the imaginative invention, the profound thought and the poetic charms with which she invested every strain. [...] Reviewing the productions of L. E. L. at this period, we cannot quite assent to the propositions laid down by preceding biographers that the whole [of Landon's work] proceeded from imagination and not real feeling. On the contrary, we think it impossible that such could have been the case with any mind that ever existed. ([William Jerdan,] “Memoir of L. E. L.,” xiii-xiv)

⑧ジャーダンの自伝 (1852-53)

From day to day and hour to hour, it was mine to facilitate her studies, to shape her objects, to regulate her taste, to direct her genius, and cultivate the divine organisation of her being. For the divine part was in Her! She was the Myth of the Grecian tale[....]

Thus it befel with my tuition of L. E. L. Her poetic emotions and aspirations were intense, usurping in fact almost every other function of the brain; and the assistance I could give her in the ardent pursuit produced an influence not readily to be conceived under other circumstances or upon a less imaginative nature. The result was a grateful and devoted attachment; all phases of which demonstrate and illumine the origin of her productions. Critics and biographers may guess, and speculate, and expatiate for ever; but without this masterkey they will make nothing of their reveries. With it, all is intelligible and obvious, and I have only to call on the admirers of her delicious compositions to remember this one fact to settle the question of their reality or romance--that they are the effusions of passionate inspiration, lighted from much unlike sources, and not uncommon events, and that they must be attributed to the spirit which clothed them according to its own unreal dreams, and not to the apparent cause. (William Jerdan, *Autobiography* 3: 169-71.)

⑨ 愛のテーマの繰り返しへの批判

・『リテラリー・マグネット』

In fact, the chief fault which pervades the poetry of L. E. L. is unbroken sameness. Her Muse is always in mourning, and sighs and tears are the food on which she loves to banquet. Her harp has but one note, and that wakes to sorrow only. Stanzas on a Withered Flower, Lines to a Deserted Harp, or Verses to a Faithless Lover, are the chief subjects of her song. (Review of *The Improvisatrice, and Other Poems*, by L. E. L., *The Literary Magnet* 2 (1824): 107)

・『ウエストミンスター・レビュー』

To conclude; our serious and well-meant advice to E. L. E. is, to free herself as much as possible from her poetical vocabulary, to nurse her poetical thoughts, to avoid the subject of love, a topic so full of words and so barren of thought, and, above all not to be elated by the praise, or guided by the “poetical taste and critical judgment” of the Literary Gazette, if she wish that her reputation as a poet should rest on a solid and permanent foundation. (Review of *The Improvisatrice, and Other Poems*, by L. E. L., *The Westminster Review* 3 (April 1825): 539)

⑩アニュアル批判

It is hardly necessary to examine these books and designs one by one—they all bear the same character, and are exactly like the “Books of Beauty,” “Flowers of Loveliness,” and so on, which appeared last year. [...]

Miss Landon, Miss Mitford, or my Lady Blessington, writes a song upon the opposite page, about water-lily, chilly, stilly, shivering beside a streamlet, plighted, blighted, love-benighted, falsehood sharper than a gimlet, lost affection, recollection, cut connexion, tears in torrents, true-love token, spoken, broken, sighing, dying, girl of Florence; and so on. ([William Makepeace Thackeray,] “A Word on the Annuals,” *Frazer's Magazine* 16(1837): 758)

⑪ブレッシントン伯爵夫人「現代の女性詩人の商売道具」

Wither'd hopes, and faded flowers,

Beauties pining in their bowers;  
Broken harps and untuned lyres;  
Lutes neglected, unquench'd fires;  
Vultures pecking at the heart,  
Leaving owners scarce a part;  
[...]

This now is all the stock in trade,

With which a modern poem's made.

(The Countess of Blessington, "Stock in Trade of Modern Poetess," lines 11-16, 47-48; *The Keepsake for 1833*: 208-09)

⑫アニュアル=女性への贈り物

・『ニュー・マンスリー・マガジン』

We have just only begun to imitate, and we already excel our Continental neighbours in the embellishment, and we shall probably soon rival them in the number, of these literary annuals. [...] we have a display of genuine taste, an elegant compendium of our passing literary novelties, and a present that no gentleman need be ashamed to place in the hands of a lady on a New Year's Day.

("New Publications, English and Foreign, With Critical Remarks." *The New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal* (1 Jan. 1825): 25-26)

・『ブラックウッズ・エジンバラ・マガジン』

Do you wish to give a small earnest graceful gift to some dearly-beloved one, then thank us for the happy hint, and with a kiss, or, if that be not yet permissible, at least with a smile of severest suavity ... lay the Literary Souvenir upon her tender lap, with a very few words, which it would be impertinent in us to particularize; only be sure 'you breathe them not far from her delicate auricle;' and with a low, a deep, and pleasing tone, like the knight who won the bright and beauteous Genevieve. It is a hundred to one that you are a married man in six weeks or two months; nay, if it be a 'large paper copy,' one flesh will ye be before the new moon.

([John Wilson] "Christopher North", review of *The Literary Souvenir for 1825*, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 17 (January 1825): 94.)

⑬「サッポアのうた」

It was my evil star above,

Not my sweet lute, that wrought me wrong;

It was not song that taught me love,

But it was love that taught me song.

If song be passed, and hope undone,

And pulse, and head, and heart, are flame;

It is thy work, thou faithless one!

But, no!—I will not name thy name!

("Sappho's Song," lines 9-16, in *The Improvisatrice* 10-11)

⑭「女性即興詩人」

I loved him as young Genius loves,

When its own wild and radiant heaven

Of starry thought burns with the light,

The love, the life, by passion given.

I loves him, too, as woman loves—

Reckless of sorrow, sin, or scorn:

(*The Improvisatrice* 64-65)

⑮詩は贈り物

My power was but a woman's power;  
Yet, in that great and glorious dower  
Which Genius gives, I had my part:  
I poured my full and burning heart  
In song, and on the canvas made  
My dreams of beauty visible;  
(*The Improvisatrice* 3)

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