

第3回 感受性 ②

1. The Cult of Ossian

James Macpherson, *Fragments of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and Translated from the Galic or Erse Language* (1760)

The “Homer of the North”

- Bleak Scottish landscape and weather
- Mysterious events behind tragic love affairs and murders
- Elegiac mood
- The great warriors and bards of the past
- The supernatural visitations of the past heroes
- The absence of gods

Poetic prose

Narrow is thy dwelling now; dark the place of thine abode. With three steps I compass thy grave, O thou who wast so great before! Four stones, with their heads of moss, are the only memorial of thee. A tree with scarce a leaf, long grass which whistles in the wind, mark to the hunter's eye the grave of the mighty morar. Morar! Thou art low indeed. Thou hast no mother to mourn thee; no maid with tears of love. Dead is she that brought thee forth. Fallen is the daughter of Morglan.

A combination of the ancient world of the Gaels with the moods of sensibility and the rhythms of the Old Testament

Robert Lowth's *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews* (1753)
on the structure of Hebrew verse in the Old Testament

2. Doubting the authenticity

Samuel Johnson: the poem is ‘as gross an imposition as ever the world was troubled with’

William Wordsworth: ‘Having had the good fortune to be born and reared in a mountainous country, from my very childhood I have felt the falsehood that pervades the volume imposed upon the world under the name of Ossian. From what I saw with my own eyes, I knew that the imagery was spurious.’

3. Enthusiastic Responses

(Germany)

Friedrich Gottlob Klopstock: Ossian is virtually German.

Celts = Gaels = Germans = Bards

Bürger translated several sections of Ossian.

Goethe: ‘The Songs of Selma’ in *Werther* –

Representing hopeless infatuation and self-regarding melancholy

Friedrich Hölderlin (1787)

Something new! A beautiful, beautiful heart-stirring novelty! I have Ossian, the bard like no one else, Homer's great rival I have actually in my hands. You must read him, friend – then your valleys will become Corna's valleys, your Engelberg a mountain of Morven. Then so sweet and melancholy a feeling will slowly come over you.

(England)

William Blake

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Lord Byron

(France)

Jean-François Le Sueur, *Ossia, ou Les Bardes* (1804) Opera

Alphonse de Lamartine:

Above all, Ossian, that poet of vagueness, that mist of imagination, that inarticulate lamentation of the northern seas, that foam of the strand, that moaning of the shades, that rolling of the clouds around the stormy pines of Scotland, that northern Dante, as majestic, as supernatural, as the Dante of Florence, more sensitive [*sensible*] than he, and who often wrests from his phantoms cries more human and more heart-rending than those of Homer's heroes.

Anne-Louis Girodet-Trioson, "Ossian receiving the Ghosts of the French Heroes" (1801)

François Pascal Simon Gérard, "Ossian on the Bank of the Lora, Invoking the Gods to the Strains of a Harp" (1801)

Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, "Ossian's Dream" (1813)

?? Ossian in the U.S.A.

4. Some More Backgrounds [Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (1986)]

宗教

The Latitudinarians (広教会派)

Dissenters

Evangelical Revival

Methodism

哲学

Earl Shaftesbury innate human virtue

Hutcheson benevolence

Hume anti-rationalism, sceptic

'Morality . . . is more properly felt than judged of . . . To have a sense of virtue is nothing but to feel satisfaction of a particular kind.'

Smith *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759)

Rousseau, *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761)

美学 Edmund Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757, revised and enlarged 1759)

The beautiful / the Sublime

5. Romanticism as a reaction against Sensibility

- Romanticism was an episode within the larger movement of Sensibility. ??

Coleridge: 'Romanticism is not Benevolence. Nay, by making us tremblingly alive to trifling misfortunes, it frequently prevents it and induces effeminate and cowardly selfishness.' (1796)

Radical views on society and politics

> the American Revolution and the French Revolution

'*Bildung*' = inner cultivation (Shaftesbury and Schiller)

Feeling and reason are to be fused into one faculty.