

Anne's Fulfilment of the Self in Jane Austen's *Persuasion*

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I. Introduction

Persuasion,¹ the last of Jane Austen's six complete novels² has long been called a "problematic" novel. This denomination derives especially from the two rather conspicuous aspects that every reader of it inevitably observes. One is a changing aspect of Austen's usual comic element, "irony." And the other, a romantic bias, which Austen had consciously avoided in the rest of her complete novels, by "the free use of her chief tool, the comic genius"³ as Virginia Woolf comments in her "*Jane Austen*," which might have originated from Austen's intrinsic taste for "irony." This Lionel Trilling calls her "method of comprehension."⁴

These two noticeable changes in *Persuasion* mentioned above, are not only connected with some change of her artistic device but also with that of her sense of value, or her literary attitude, since it goes without saying that the form regulates its content, that is, they are inseparable from each other. In the light of this supposition, let's consider a little this correlation between her comic device and her heroine's attitude. Among several heroines Austen created in her novels, Elizabeth Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice* seems to be near her ideal. It is well-known that Austen wrote in her letter to her sister Cassandra when this novel was published in 1813: "I must confess that I think her (i.e. Elizabeth) as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print, and how I shall be able to tolerate those who do not like her I do not know."⁵ She is such a favourite heroine of hers among her six comedies that she calls her "My own darling child" in the same letter. The following extract shows us exactly what her character is like. "Elizabeth, agitated and confused, rather *knew* that she was happy, than *felt* herself to be so" (*PP.* 372). This is the author's analysis of the heroine's mental attitude in the state of her bliss finally brought by her engagement with Mr. Darcy. It was accomplished by his second proposal to her after a long conflict between them since they first met. In a sense, this is a denouement in *Pride and Prejudice*. If Elizabeth had been a romantic heroine, she might have felt her happiness, expressing overflow of her feeling. Whereas, she was happy to "know" that she was happy. This is a sort of suppressed expression of her sentiment without any slant to emotion, which is in agreement with that of Mr. Darcy's in the same context as Elizabeth's; "Darcy was not of a disposition in which happiness overflows in mirth" (*PP.* 372). In such a characteri-

zation as Austen shows in this context, there is a perfect unity between the form and its content as a comedy, from which we can fully extract her humour or comic amusement.

However, in *Persuasion*, the reader cannot fail to perceive something entirely new, which would be quite out of place with Elizabeth as well as Austen's earlier heroines. This is a romantic feeling which the heroine of the novel, Anne Elliot maintains, and which makes this novel stand apart from the other five. Mary Lascelles suggests an almost drastic change in the author's literary attitude: "Lyne which would have been memorable...to Anne...for the romantic beauty and strangeness of the place---[is] memorable to us because it is the first time that Jane Austen has used this adjective sympathetically." ⁶ Furthermore, Virginia Woolf says, "There is a new element in *Persuasion*.... She [i.e. Jane Austen] is beginning to discover that the world is larger, more mysterious, and more romantic than she had supposed." ⁷ This romantic bias clearly indicates the expansion of the author's spiritual world, and is presumably responsible for the controversial position the novel has in all of her works.

Besides this entirely new, romantic element in *Persuasion* which we considered above, the other new, comic element in it should be analysed. This is so drastic a change of quality in Austen's manipulation of "irony" that we never fail to perceive it. Her irony has become sarcastic, when the author criticises Sir Walter Elliot's worldliness, as follows:

"Vanity was the beginning and the end of Sir Walter Elliot's character...." (4)

This is just one instance of this sort. We can find some more critical words especially relating to his personality. It is unusual for Austen's irony to sound so severe as that. Her irony has become "satire" solely in her last novel. On this point, along with romantic bias, most of our concerns should focus now, and here we hope to elucidate why *Persuasion* only has been given the notoriety of title of "a problematic novel."

Furthermore, Austen's satiric attitude towards Sir Walter directly affects the heroine, Anne Elliot, since the author's viewpoint is, as a basis, mingled with that of the protagonist's from the beginning. But, as the story progresses, during which Anne's fulfilment of herself is attained, Anne's point of view takes over that of the author's. It is not until Anne's change of place is done, since she had long been "only Anne"(5) at her home, Kellynch-hall, Sir Walter's estate.

The fact that "Kellynch-hall was to be let" is "the beginning and the end of" Anne's fulfilment of the self. If it had not been for Sir Walter's calamity in this novel, Anne would have remained "only Anne" without attaining her happiness. In a word, *Persuasion* is a story in which Anne Elliot restores her once-lost-love by Lady Russell's "persuasion," in search of the self for the fulfilment of the self. This is the main point

which my thesis aims to analyse --- what makes her utmost dream come true, and what is the cause of her success in life.

II. The Context of *Persuasion* and Anne's Estrangement

II-I Austen's Consciousness of the Times

Persuasion, consists of episodes spread over two periods of time and three main locations. They are the elements of its context. This structure indicates the author's acute consciousness of the times and places. Therefore, in this chapter, "the times" in which *Persuasion* is involved, will be discussed, which, as a matter of fact, will elucidate Austen's consciousness of the times. Firstly, the dual times means the past and the present in terms of the story involved. The present is dated clearly at the year 1814, which is evident from the author's narrative in Chapter I of this novel, saying, "at this present time," (the summer of 1814) (5). This is the fact that R.W.Chapman points out in his "Notes"⁸ on *Persuasion* as follows; "it is now the summer of 1814." Considering from the fact that Austen began to write *Persuasion* in 1815, this story is almost identical to real time. The exact dating of time as we see in this novel is entirely new in her novels. Robert Liddell says about this in his *The Novels of Jane Austen* as follows: "Jane Austen has never been particularly interested in making every episode in her novels seem to follow the time-and-place logic of 'real life' or of a novel aiming at a very thoroughgoing representation of life."⁹ R.W.Chapman also says about this as follows: "Though *Persuasion* is the only one of the novels the action of which is definitely dated, the indications of time are less frequent and exact than is usual."¹⁰

Then, why did Austen change her long-maintained literary attitude towards the times? Presumably, the context of *Persuasion* we considered above is the main reason for that, in other words, the real time and place were indispensable for Austen, who intended to write a contemporary or real time story of her times. Originally, she seems to have valued the facts that she knows more than anything in her novel-writing, as we can see from her letter to Fanny Knight instructing her to write about only the facts that you know was her principle of novel-writing.¹¹ However, in this case, Austen seems to engage, to some extent, in the under-going historical facts, which she had seemingly avoided facing straightforwardly before *Persuasion*, which has long brought about a controversy, of pros and cons, in literary criticism. In a sense, Austen's world seems to have expanded in her last work. It reminds us of Lady Russell's wish for her beloved Anne Elliot; that is, "a change which must do both health and spirits good...A larger society would improve them." (15) Of course, it never indicates the same meaning as the above mentioned: "A larger society" in Lady Russell's words indicates nothing but "Bath," which is selected along with London as a new residential place after escaping from Kellynch-hall, and to which Anne Elliot does not want to go.

It is needless to say that Jane Austen always depicts the world of the English

landed gentry to which Austen herself belonged, as Warren Roberts says : “her world was that of the English gentry, a civilised elite social group.”¹² Therefore, her protagonists or antagonists along with main characters belong to their estates, such as Pemberley¹³ of Mr. Darcy’s and Donwell Abbey¹⁴ of Mr. Knightley’s and so on, and those estates surely serve as their emblems to show their social stratum. They must have been an invulnerable fortress at the time. In *Persuasion*, however, not only the estate but also its owner Sir Walter Elliot himself are endangered. Alistair Duckworth says in his *The Improvement of the Estate* : “In *Persuasion* the estate is defeated where in *Mansfield Park* it triumphed”(185).

The very beginning of this story is characterised by the author’s unrelenting satire towards Sir Walter Elliot, who has an obsession with “the Baronetage,” and his dual blessings of a baronetcy and the unaging beauty of his own countenance are “the constant object of his warmest respect and devotion”(14). Here, Austen’s critical depiction of Sir Walter Elliot’s worldliness symbolises the degeneration that the ruling classes were undergoing at that time. Austen must have been disappointed with the degradation of society. “By the time she wrote *Persuasion*, Jane Austen seems to have lost faith in the gentry,”(143) is David Monaghan’s comment on this in his *Jane Austen, Structure and Social Vision*. Why were the English gentry endangered at the time? We can find one answer to this in R.W.Chapman’s sayings in “A Reply to Mr. Duffy on *Persuasion*” as follows:

What does matter is the suggestion that the aristocracy was ‘effete’ and ‘fossilized’. Both aristocracy and landed gentry were, indeed, somewhat impoverished by war taxation; and at all periods extravagance compelled landowners to let, even to sell. But in 1815 neither class seemed in any danger of super-session.¹⁵

“Britain’s epic struggle with Napoleonic France ended in 1815,” says Warren Roberts in his “Nationalism and empire.” According to his historical description, Britain’s war stance had long continued from 1740 to 1815. since 1740 when she fought the War of Austrian Succession, and “Jane Austen was well informed of Britain’s struggle with France,” because “her two sailor brothers, Francis and Charles, were active participants in the military struggle between Britain and France.”¹⁶ In France, Austen’s cousin, Eliza de Feuillide lived, whom Austen seems to have had a little contact with. By means of their letters and newspapers, Austen seems to have “kept her abreast of contemporary events.” In fact, her personal interest in those war-time events were surmised in some of her letters.¹⁷ The author’s personal situation mentioned above can elucidate the question why she dealt with the story in the contemporary context.

II-2 Anne's Estrangement from Her Family

Actually, the story in *Persuasion* had taken place eight years back from the present, 1814, namely, the moment of time at which the story is involved. The author's point of view is always at present, so this episode of the past is, in spite of such importance as being the indispensable cause of this story, told in the form of recollection. Eight years ago, when Anne was nineteen, she was persuaded by Lady Russell to give up her engagement with a beloved young sailor, Captain Wentworth. The Lady had long been a friend of the Elliots, playing a role of Anne's mother for thirteen years since her mother, Lady Elliot passed away. The persuasion was justified by the reason that Captain Wentworth "had nothing but himself to recommend him, and no hopes of attaining affluence of a most uncertain profession"(26-27). (underline mine) In short, he had no fortune in spite of being qualified with a remarkably fine look, intelligence, spirit and brilliancy, along with wit. Especially, he had confidence in having a ship soon, which may have led him to success in the world. We can perceive Austen's changed attitude towards the times here from a sort of "success story of a sailor" in a historical point of view. Captain Wentworth, had made much fortune as a captain of a warship "Laconia" during the eight years since they parted.

While, Anne Elliot, "an extremely pretty girl, with gentleness, modesty, taste, and feeling"(26) was deeply in love with Captain Wentworth, and vice versa. His "confidence powerful in its own warmth, and bewitching in the wit which often expressed it, must have been enough for Anne."(27) In spite of their mutual love between them, Lady Russell persuaded Anne to reject Captain Wentworth solely for the aforementioned reasons. Anne was obliged to accept this from her prudence's sake. At this moment of the past, this story had materially begun. At the same time, Anne's mental development might have started amidst of the struggle and agony caused by her lost love. But this was done behind the curtain not on the stage, and her improvement cannot be revealed until the turning-point at Lyme which will be discussed later. Concerning Anne's submerged change, Robert Garis points out in his "Learning Experience and Change."¹⁸ This reminds us of Mr. Darcy's metamorphosis into a gentleman behind the stage.

Now at present, she is twenty-seven. Anne's separation from Captain Wentworth has actually brought her such irremediable changes, mental and physical, as perceived in the following words: "an early loss of bloom and spirits" (28) has "clouded every enjoyment of youth." Anne is walking alone "in a sort of desolate tranquility" (36) "in the autumnal months in the country" (33). The lapse of time from the irrevocable past which is mingled with the autumnal sentiment brings about the typical romantic atmosphere in this novel, which prevails especially over the former part of this story before Lyme. It is because Austen's depiction of nature serves as the psychological landscape of the heroine. Some extracts from *Persuasion* quoted above remind us of

the following remarks of Virginia Woolf:

There is a peculiar beauty and a peculiar dullness in *Persuasion*. The dullness is that which so often marks the transition stage between two different periods.¹⁹

Until now, we focused on the characteristics of the protagonist's personality as well as that of the antagonist's, from which we could make clear the Anne Elliot's psychological background on which she stands at present. And the incessant sway of her feelings between the irrevocable past and the present can be attributed to the main cause of "a peculiar beauty" derived from her romantic feelings. That which we examined above help understand what the internal aspects of the heroine's is like. With these elements in mind, we should elucidate her external aspects, namely, Anne's family connection.

Why was Anne Elliot alone obliged to be estranged from her family, the Elliots. This question derives from the facts that she was too good to deserve such exclusion as we examined above. And also, Austen confesses, in her letter to Fanny, the idea of Anne Elliot as her heroine, as follows: "You may perhaps like the Heroine, as she is almost too good for me."²⁰ In the same letter, however, she says, "pictures of perfection as you know make me sick & wicked---," in which Austen claims her "ideas of Novels and Heroines." Her negative feelings towards "pictures of perfection" about her heroines cited above, necessarily resonate with the Elizabeth's remarks as follows; "Follies and nonsense, whims and inconsistencies *do* divert me, I own, and I laugh at them whenever I can."*(PP. 57)* It is because "Irony," Austen's intrinsic literary attitude, could be vitalised especially in such characterizations. In spite of that, it is ironical that such laughter at imperfection often tends to derive from a latent desire for or an unconscious comparison with "perfection." Furthermore, we should now elucidate the implications of the terms "pictures of perfection" and "too good for me" which we extracted from her *Letters*. Firstly, goodness is one of the most significant virtues of Jane Austen's, with which all of her heroines are originally provided. And again in Elizabeth's words, from the same extracts, we can surmise that Austen might have highly valued "goodness," as follows; "I hope I never ridicule what is wise or good." In spite of that, the term, "too good," in most cases, has a negative connotation. And in Anne's case here, also, "too good for me" sounds negative, insomuch as she is good excessively than Austen had expected her to be. However, one thing we should consider is the fact that "goodness" and "perfection" are not the same, taking their origins from different sources. Therefore, if Anne Elliot is "too good" for Austen, it is impossible to say simply that Anne is perfect. "Goodness" can be involved in part of "perfection." Without "goodness" especially insofar as our human matters are concerned, we can never attain "perfection." Judging from what we maintained above concerning the ex-

tracts from Austen's *Letters*, we can surmise that Anne Elliot might never have been "a perfect or complete heroine" as had often been said in literary criticism. Indeed, she has some human weakness from which she had been compelled to suffer. Therefore, she is not perfect yet, but almost nearly so, just striving to attain perfection in the sense of the word. The fact that solely by her fulfilment of the self, Anne could reconcile her long standing estrangement of eight years from Captain Wentworth by "persuasion," clearly exemplifies that Anne Elliot changed. This is in agreement with the following words of Jocelyn Harris: "Anne Elliot ... changes from a loathly lady to a lovely young woman in the course of *Persuasion*."²¹

As far as "a complete heroine" is concerned, we need to consider a little another so-called, nearly perfect heroine of Austen's besides Anne Elliot. (Elinor in *Sense and Sensibility* has often been said to belong to this category as well). Her name is Fanny Price in *Mansfield Park* . Indeed, Fanny, in some respects, looks like a typical conduct-book girl, but it is not true, because Austen did not like "pictures of perfection" as we see in the extracts above from her *Letters*. So, if she looks to be perfect, it must be considered there must be some duplicity around Fanny. Presumably, Austen created Fanny as one of her comic characters in a sense. She is so meek, obedient and sincere just like a model of a conduct-book, but, in a way, seems to be too vulnerable to stand on her feet. The following remarks by Margaret Kirkham agree with what we considered above: "Fanny is not a true conduct-book heroine and, insofar as she resembles this ideal---in her timidity, self-abasement, and excessive sensibility, for example---her author mocks her ---and us, if we mistake these qualities for virtue."²² Margaret goes on to say, "If Jane Austen created a conduct-book heroine, it cannot have been without an ironic intention of some kind." From this viewpoint, both Anne Elliot and Fanny Price cannot be said to be "complete characters" in its literally meaning. Both of them are provided with a sort of human weakness by the author, which evidently Austen had always been able to describe due to her insight and compassion, regarding the fallibility of human nature.

We reconfirmed above that Anne Elliot is a heroine who is not as perfect as other heroines of Austen's are. However, it does not imply that Anne has a moment of "Wakening," namely, a turning-point as other heroines do. Therefore, this thesis aims to show that how Anne Elliot attained her dream as mentioned before. Now, let's focus on her peculiar situation among her family before going farther. At first, her family connection should be examined. She is the middle daughter of three fathered by Sir Walter Elliot, whose stagnant life as a Baronet is, as discussed before, a target of Austen's severest irony, namely, satire, from the beginning to the end. At that moment in which these satiric words are put out, they inevitably indicate Austen's own viewpoint on the matter. They are evidently her heroine's own as well. Towards the ending of the story, we can confirm Anne's feelings towards her father and sister, which

are symbolised in this epithet, “the heartless elegance”(226). Their appearance into the party room deprived the people there of “the comfort, the freedom, the gaiety of the room” (226) to “hush into composure, and determined silence, or insipid talk” to meet their “heartless elegance.” Anne grieves in a soliloquy, “how mortifying to feel that it was so!” This scene serves as testimony to Anne’s relationship with her family.

II-3 The Estrangement in the Social Context

We can now picture Anne’s situation among her family in our mind. Literally, “She was only Anne” (5). It was proved that she is apparently estranged by her family. Therefore, we must analyse what factors brought about this estrangement. At first, the chief cause of her estrangement can be attributed to the basic diversity of their view of life or sense of value²³, some of which we had perceived in the episode above. Even inside the family, the interaction of the period concerning the basic attitude towards life is discernible. Sir Walter’s worldliness is, as it were, an epitome of the society or the rank in which he was involved, about which we had already examined in the previous section. Besides numerous British war affairs, the kingdom from the late eighteenth century to the early nineteenth, encountered the historically drastic changes in various phases of life; such as the Industrial Revolution starting from the mid-eighteenth century, the Romantic Revival in the literary and art fields, and the Evangelical movement, etc. The upheaval of the middle-class and individualism at that time can be called, in a sense, the byproducts of such social changes mentioned above. Fundamentally, a family is a unit of its society, and they have an inseparable interaction between them. Therefore, the family is a mirror of the society of the times in a way. We can admit a sort of social reflection, good or bad, even on the private life of Anne Elliot as well as that of the Elliots. Concerning this relationship between a family and its society, Barbara Hardy’s comment on Jane Austen’s novels: “Social life is psychologized. Private life is related to environment,”²⁴ sounds in agreement with what we said.

If we discuss this issue from the standpoint as we took above, Anne’s estrangement from her family is not limited only to a personal matter of her times. Jane Austen might have proposed this theme as a sort of proposition or warning towards the times. Because the time 1815-16 in which *Persuasion* was written, was the time of the accomplishment of the Industrial Revolution in England, and of its giving a drastic change to the society as a whole, which violently altered both the social order and manners, which were especially caused by the rise of the middle class as we examined above. One of the greatest changes of the times was a sort of estrangement of the individual overpowered by the machine. Thomas Carlyle, as a near contemporary of the times, in 1829, protested “the practical turn of mind” in his “The Signs of the Times—the arrival of the mechanical Age,” in which he emphasises “Self-renunciation” and

"Duty" as a clue to retrieve "truth of life."

Among Austen's six complete novels, the influence of the Industrial Revolution was, for the first time, depicted in *Mansfield Park*. Its production was begun in 1811 and the publication was in 1814, a year before she began writing *Persuasion*. In this respect, Ann Banfield comments in her essay as follows: "*M.P.* is the first developed novel responding to industrial society."²⁵ However, in *Persuasion*, Austen's literary attitude seems to have realised the abyss of human nature at the crucial times. Alistair M. Duckworth's remark agrees with what we mentioned above: "If her (i.e. Jane Austen's) fiction looks forward to modern themes and responses(as in *Persuasion* and *Sanditon* I believe it does), it also grows out of an eighteenth century novelistic concern with the predicament of the dislocated individual."²⁶

So far, we have reconfirmed that Anne's estrangement has, in a sense, a big historical background. However, for the moment, our concern should be focused on Anne's personal achievement of the self seeking for the recovery of her once lost love. "Kellynch-hall was to be let" (15). These words are the clue to the plot of *Persuasion*. When Admiral Croft was chosen as a peculiarly desirable tenant of Kellynch-hall, this new incident suggests, in short, both the decline of the aristocracy and the rise of the middle class. Indeed, Admiral Croft was one of the "rich Navy officers ashore"(17) in 1814.²⁷ But, the fact that Captain Wentworth is Mrs. Croft's brother is the most significant for Anne Elliot. The following sentence declares the start of the Anne's journey towards her fulfilment:

Anne, who had been a most attentive listener to the whole,...to seek the comfort of cool air for her flushed cheek.(25)

This was the first visit of Admiral Croft and his wife to Sir Walter's estate as a potential tenant. This plot will serve as an introduction to the reunion of Anne Elliot and Captain Wentworth. Eight years have passed since they parted. In the following chapter, we will pursue Anne's journey to the new circle, away from her home, Kellynch-hall.

III. The Change of Place and the Fulfilment of the Self

III-1 Uppercross vs. Kellynch

Anne Elliot alone, among all the Elliots who decided to move to Bath, made a choice of visiting Uppercross where Anne's sister, Mary Musgrove lives. In spite of a reluctant visit, her personal distaste for Bath along with Mary's invitation, brought her a complete change of place and new experiences—the discovery of the new world and her own self. Anne's crucial choice of her own at that moment eventually enabled her to learn the differences between Kellynch-hall and Uppercross, a "little social common-

wealth”(43), and to ponder on her own identity. A couple of months’ stay in Uppercross unexpectedly brought Anne the knowledge of the great “advantage”(46) of having experiences outside her own family, which the author avows as follows:

Her own spirits improved by change of place and subject, by being removed three miles from Kellynch. (46)

Furthermore, she comes to learn “another lesson in the art of knowing their own nothingness beyond their own circle”(42). In short, Anne’s self-discovery was firstly realised by the change of place, the effect of which Austen interprets as follows: “a removal from one set of people to another, though, at a distance of only three miles will often include a total change of conversation, opinion, and idea” (42). This idea can be said a sort of Austen’s philosophy just as the change of times is.

The following extract depicts the heroine’s lament for the changing aspects of the village, which is mingled with the sensitiveness towards the change of times the author possesses:

Uppercross was a moderate-sized village, which a few years back had been completely in the old English style: (36)

Even inside the Uppercross family, Anne detects the reflection of the social change of the times; The father and mother in “the Great House” are in the old English style; while the young people in Uppercross Cottage are in the new. To sum up, “The Musgroves, like their houses, were in a state of alteration, perhaps of improvement” (40).

When Anne Elliot secretly complains about the high imprudence of a style of association among the Musgroves, she unconsciously reveals the inherited value from her traditional family, the Elliots’, which is, needless to say, not degenerated by her father, Sir Walter Elliot. The following extract shows Anne’s internal cry over the changing aspects towards the degeneration of the inherited culture or value:

“Oh! could the originals of the portraits against the wainscot, could the gentleman in brown velvet and the ladies in blue satin have seen what was going on, have been conscious of such an overthrow of all order and neatness! The portraits themselves seemed to be staring in astonishment.”(40)

Now, we should examine what is the difference between Anne and Mary, since Anne is treated in Uppercross, “with too much confidence by all parties”(44), whereas Mary’s arrogance claiming for the undue negligence of her rank by Mrs. Musgrove at

the dining table, is the target of the family's severe criticism. Anne and Mary have the same origin as the Elliots. However, their sense of value is entirely different from each other ; the protagonist had shown her "prudence" when she obeyed Lady Russell's persuasion at as early an age as nineteen, which we mentioned before. On the other hand, Mary has absorbed only in "the Elliot pride," nothing but a worldly vanity which derives from her father, Sir Walter Elliot. That is a worthless formality, a degenerated decorum to which she obstinately adheres. But, "Anne is the only Elliot to stand out against pride of rank,"²⁸ whereas Mary as well as Elizabeth is the exact copy of Sir Walter Elliot's in this respect. Here, we could certify Anne's superiority to her sisters. However, even Anne is also obliged to know that she is not entirely free from "the Elliot Pride," which remains, in general, subliminal without notice. Therefore, Anne could not admit without a big surprise to find that she has "the Elliot pride" either. It will be, by accident, revealed in the following incident.

It took place at Lyme Regis during Anne's couple of months' stay in Uppercross. Lyme is a beautiful beach spot with a fine view, seventeen miles from Uppercross village. Anne and Henrietta (Mary's sister -in-law), along with the party, were taking a morning stroll down to the sea before breakfast. And it was when they were coming up the steps from the beach that "a gentleman at the same moment preparing to come down, politely drew back, and stopped to give them way"(104). "As they passed, Anne's face caught his eye...", and "she could not be insensible of" his look "with a degree of earnest admiration." "A fine south-easterly breeze" had restored "the bloom and freshness of youth on her complexion"(104). The fact that Captain Wentworth in the party precisely caught this sight and told Anne something about the man, indicates not a little effect impressed on his mind. It was her first and unexpected encounter with Mr.Elliot, who was almost instantly assured of being Anne's cousin and "Heir to Sir Walter Elliot" (106). This scene is one of the conspicuous delineations of Austen's in which the reader will never fail to perceive the author's romantic bias, as we referred to in this Introduction before.

The following extract which depicts the heroine's honest feelings towards her home, Kellynch, apparently certifies her potential "Elliot pride" :

The idea of becoming what her mother had been; of having the name of 'Lady Elliot' first revived in herself; of being restored to Kellynch, calling it her home again, her home forever, was a charm which she could not immediately resist."(160)

In spite of Anne's "Elliot pride," she is duly respected by the Musgroves, and is considered by her attitude to remain free from that pride. Because, Anne's attitude is firmly founded on her intrinsic virtue, "prudence." When we consider the difference between Anne and Mary in this respect, it reminds us of Mr. Darcy's remarks on the dif-

ference between “vanity” and “pride” in the chat with Elizabeth: “... vanity is a weakness. But pride where there is a real superiority of mind, pride will be always under good regulation”(PP. 57). In *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr. Darcy represents “pride,” therefore, when Austen makes him say this truth from his mouth, it sounds ironical, since we could take it as a sort of self-justification of his. However, in *Persuasion*, when we apply Mr.Darcy’s interpretation of “pride” into Anne’s nature, it sounds quite appropriate, that is, Anne Elliot has “a real superiority of mind,” in which her “Elliot pride” is under good regulation, in other words, “Self-Control.”²⁹ Such state of mind is congenial with “prudence.” On the contrary, Mary entirely lacks in “a real superiority of mind,” in which her “Elliot pride” is, without regulation, degenerated into worldliness, which is a real proof of Sir Walter Elliot’s lineage.

III-2 The Meaning of Lyme

The episode which happened at Lyme we considered above, will serve as dually significant roles in *Persuasion*: one is served as a sort of incentive to the heroine’s fulfilment of the self, the other as the stage on which both the protagonist and the antagonist will be driven into their self-discoveries. These roles should be discussed later in the course of the development of the story, since this chapter aims to elucidate what will realise her fulfilment of the self. In order to pursue this aim, Lyme should primarily be analysed because Lyme is an indispensable turning-point of the story development as we maintained before. It was when the heroine moved from Kellynch to Uppercross, that she learned of her own nothingness beyond her own circle. This seemingly self-effacing or rather pessimistic view of life Anne Elliot had maintained before Lyme, will be remarkably changed into positiveness, by means of various kinds of experiences she will encounter at Lyme.

Indeed, Lyme is a sort of wonderland, in which the improbability could be, by the spell of the sea breeze, transformed into the probability insofar as the readers’ imagination could afford to follow it. Compared with the other five complete novels of Austen’s, especially at Lyme and after, it is very conspicuous that both the protagonist and the antagonist seem to be entirely free from restriction to avow their true feelings to each other. In short, the delineation of “the overflow of their powerful feelings”³⁰ presumably exemplifies Austen’s romantic bias as we maintained in the beginning. This characteristic can be found at Lyme in her delineation of the scenic beauty of Char-mous.

If we analyse Lyme in terms of its effects on our aim, two elements could be considered. The first element is the place in which Anne collects some previously undiscovered information about herself and Kellynch she had never known. The second is, the very spot on which a crucial accident will take place, and eventually bring forth her fulfilment of the self. The first element serves as the driving force to the second, which is

the primary element, in *Persuasion*, on which our concern should be focused. Now, the details of each element will be discussed in the following sections.

§ -1 The New Information at Lyme

Not a little of the information provided by the Uppercross circle about herself and her family was entirely new and surprising to Anne Elliot. It was what she had happened to know since she left her circle. So then, why did the heroine need such information? Because she had begun to maintain a desire to know Captain Wentworth's true sentiments, since she became "a most attentive listener to the whole"(25) at the time when Admiral Croft and his wife first paid a visit at Kellynch-hall, which we maintained in chapter II. Almost instinctively, she perceived a high probability of seeing him again. When it was coming true at Uppercross, Anne's utmost desire that "... how were his sentiments to be read?"(60) became a most probable question to be answered. At that moment, however, she had no confidence in his sentiments for her. But the nature of Anne's towards him could be conveyed straightforwardly to the reader by her confession as follows: "Alas! With all her reasonings, she found, that to retentive feelings eight years may be little more than nothing"(60). Moreover, another piece of evidence for her affectionate feelings towards him was indicated by the following extract: "Anne hoped she had outlived the age of blushing; but the age of emotion she certainly had not"(49).

Therefore, all the knowledge she acquired at Uppercross and at Lyme serves as a spur, in terms of psychological point of view, to her fulfilment of the self. The primary and most significant piece of information among them was that of Mary's, which was concerning Captain Wentworth's sentiments towards Anne especially about her character. The knowledge struck Anne like a bolt from the blue. The following extract includes almost everything that Anne Elliot was anxious to know about him:

He had not forgiven Anne Elliot. She had used him ill; deserted and disappointed him; and worse, she had shown a feebleness of character in doing so, which his own decided, confident temper could not endure.(61)

One of the most regrettable facts that the heroine discovered in his sentiments was, that Captain Wentworth had perceived her character to be feeble. Furthermore, the knowledge that he had attributed the breaking-off of their engagement solely to her feebleness of character, was terribly hard to bear for Anne Elliot, since the truth on her side was not only misunderstood by him but also was distorted into the worst case, that her character was taken by him to be feeble. Subsequently, this mortifying fact that Captain Wentworth had entirely misunderstood Anne's character, was confirmed by his own remarks when she happened to overhear Wentworth talking with

Louisa who is twenty, and the elder daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Musgrove. It took place in the hedge-row during their rambling at Lyme Regis: "It is the worst evil of too yielding and indecisive a character, that no influence over it can be depended on" (88).

Captain Wentworth's avowal to Louisa quoted above was an exact allusion to Anne's character, which shows, along with Mary's information aforementioned, what he considered Anne's character to be. Her knowledge about it made her agitated, because at the moment of "persuasion", her choice was solely for the fulfilment of her duty and prudence as a daughter of the Elliots, by which eventually she "deserted and disappointed him."

But, immediately before her mortifying discovery of his sentiments, Anne was released to know the other side of his sentiments towards her: Captain Wentworth showed his silent kindness to Anne in the Musgrove Cottage drawing-room at Upper-cross. That is, he resolutely helped Anne in silence to release herself from her nephew, little Charles and his mischievous act of obstinately clinging to her. The extract that "Her sensations on the discovery made her perfectly speechless" (80), indicates a great deal of her romantic feeling towards Wentworth. The author suggests, in this little sparkling scene, their mutual suppressed affectionate feelings, or latent passions for each other. "Such a trifle" (81) might have been called this tiny episode, which actually serves as a subconscious driving force for her fulfilment in the subsequent incident at Lyme. Besides, the heroine's unexpected encounter with Mr. Elliot aforementioned in Chapter III-1 should be recollected as another incentive for her crucial moment. Mr. Elliot's sudden appearance at Lyme and Louisa's incident have sometimes been criticised as too artificial, however, Lyme should be allowed to stand apart.

§ -2 Louisa's Accident at Lyme

This incident plays the most significant role with regards to the meaning of Lyme, which will provide the heroine with the moment of her fulfilment of the self. This was "the sad catastrophe" and "was perfectly decided that it had been the consequence of much thoughtlessness and much imprudence" (126) by Anne and Lady Russell afterward. In short, Louisa, whom Captain Wentworth had praised as his ideal of "fortitude and strength of mind" (88)³¹ threw down her mask in front of him. She insisted on her descending again with Wentworth's help from the height of the new Cobb to the lower one. And she finally "fell on the pavement", and "was taken up lifeless" (109). It was done against his earnest warning of danger. Saying "I am determined, I will" (109), Louisa, in order to seek her delight, resolutely behaved as she wanted. This accident is, as it were, the inevitable consequence of his delusion of "power of mind" (88), which he had believed to be not in Anne's character, but in Louisa's. Actually, however, Louisa only showed her egotism.

At this Louisa's crucial moment, Anne instinctively revealed her true character,

especially her subliminal strength of mind. It was when she was earnestly engaging in helping Louisa's life, by her resolute and most appropriate activity in urgent need of Louisa's salvation. The following extract shows Anne's decided exertion in services to all those who are present, as follows:

Anne, attending with all the strength and zeal, and thought, which instinct supplied, to Henrietta, still tried, at intervals, to suggest comfort to the others, tried to quiet Mary, to animate Charles, to assuage the feelings of Captain Wentworth. Both seemed to look to her for directions.(111)

At the crucial moment of Louisa's life or death, Anne devoted herself, by instinct, with humility along with fortitude of mind to save her life, simultaneously taking care of every one who attended there in need of her help, with her most considerate kindness and deed. Charles' cry, "Anne, Anne, what is to be done next?"(111) and Wentworth's heartfelt words, " ... but, if Anne will stay, no one so proper, so capable as Anne!" Both of them indicate that Anne has finally acquired their utmost trust in her, that is, Anne's fulfilment of the self was firstly carried out. In other words, it is her metamorphosis. The fact that this was done "by instinct"(111) shows that in her fulfilment of the self, Anne didn't change herself, but revealed what had been subliminally maintained in her character and personality, which had been hidden in the shade of "prudence" or taken for "feebleness of character." When the heroine confessed that she was deeply impressed with Wentworth's praiseful words in which she found his gentleness "almost seemingly restoring the past"(114), she found also with great delight, his "proof of friendship and of deference for her judgment"(117).

In the case of Anne's fulfilment of the self, because of the aforementioned reason, it is inappropriate to denominate it as, so-called "awakening." On the contrary, "awakening" had taken place in Wentworth. However, it was not done solely by himself, but was accomplished in accordance with Anne's fulfilment of the self, which indicates a very significant meaning in her achievement of the self. As it were, Louisa's accident at Lyme, as a result, served both the protagonist and the antagonist, as the turning-point in the plot. His delusion about Louisa's character was instantly dispelled at the moment in which this catastrophe had taken place. He came to realise the truth of his real "fortitude of mind", and eventually recognised that he had totally misunderstood Anne's character owing to his "attempt of angry pride"(242). The following extract certifies Wentworth's awakening as follows:

...till that day, till the leisure for reflection which followed it, he had not understood the perfect excellence of the mind with which Louisa's could so ill bear a comparison; or the perfect, unrivalled hold it possessed over his own. There, he had

learnt to distinguish between the steadiness of principle and the obstinacy of self-will, between the darings of heedlessness and the resolution of a collected mind.(242)

In Louisa's character, Wentworth perceived an incarnation of "the obstinacy of self-will" and "the darings of heedlessness," whereas in Anne Elliot's, he finally understood, the real superiority of her character. In short, his awakening was "the natural sequel"(30) that Anne's fulfilment of the self had inevitably brought forth.

§ -3 After Lyme

In the previous chapter, we have focused on Anne's fulfilment of the self at Lyme. Anne's exertion of restoring Wentworth's love which had been lost for eight years by "persuasion," was finally attained by her almost instinctive revelation of her heart and character. It exemplified that Anne's character was "the loveliest medium of fortitude and gentleness"(241). Now, we should consider another climax after Lyme. This is, as it were, the last accomplishment of Anne's fulfilment of the self towards the happy ending of this story. Now, she was never "only Anne."

It begins with Anne's indirect confession of love towards Wentworth, who is writing a letter at a table not very near to her. The impressive uniqueness this scene maintains has remained long fresh in the hearts of those who read it. Robert Liddell praises it as follows: "It is the most beautiful and the most exciting love-scene in English fiction."³² It was when Anne was in the midst of a heated conversation with Captain Harvill, at the White Hart party. The subject was the nature of man and of woman, especially as to his or her constancy in love. She eagerly burst out her true feeling with "her breath oppressed"(235) as follows:

"All that privilege I claim for my own sex (it is not a very enviable one, you need not covet it) is that of loving longest, when existence or when hope is gone."(235)

When Austen made the heroine avow her passionate feeling towards Wentworth as quoted above, even indirectly, it sounded newly fashioned and romantic. Because, in Austen's times, it was generally considered to be improper that a woman should confess her affectionate feeling in a letter to a man before a man does.³³ In this scene mentioned above, Wentworth confirmed Anne's constancy of love for him. This was the result of her positive attitude towards life she had attained in her fulfilment of the self at Lyme. As regards Wentworth's own constancy of love, he had already suggested it to Anne before this party, at their first reunion at Bath since they parted at Lyme. He blamed his friend, Benwick's marriage with Louisa, since it was so soon after his fiancée, Fanny Harvill's death. Wentworth criticised his inconsistency of love, saying,

"A man does not recover such a devotion of the heart to such a woman! He ought not--- he does not"(183). Founded on this ground, her confession of love for him, in spite of such a manner, indirect but most decisive, proved their affinity of love. In short, Wentworth's direct expression of love for Anne derived from Anne's decisive attitude towards love. Therefore, in silence, he handed his letter with ardent love for Anne. His letter, the culmination of their revival of love after the long ordeal of their souls, is a symbol of the perfection of Anne's fulfilment of the self: "Anne was tenderness itself, and she had the full worth of it in Captain Wentworth's affection"(252).

Towards the end of the story, we confirm the established sense of value which both the protagonist and the antagonist maintained or newly attained by their ordeals. When Wentworth confessed his delusion concerning Louisa's character, he admitted that it had been by "the attempts of angry pride"(242). Furthermore, recollecting the past in which he had suffered in agony, he recognised that "my enemy" is nobody but "My own self," admitting that he had been too proud to ask Anne again for marriage. We can perceive that these are the main parts of Wentworth's awakening, in which he seems to have improved his human nature.

Lady Russell is also one of those who improved her own character, by means of Anne's fulfilment of the self. Though she tells her dearest Anne her earnest hope of seeing Anne as "the future Lady Elliot"(159), she only says, "I am no match-maker, being much too well aware of the uncertainty of all human events and calculations"(159). Lady Russell no longer tries to persuade Anne, but wishes to "leave the matter to its own operation"(160).

The last person among Anne's friends, Mrs. Smith should be mentioned a little. She is Anne's school fellow in Westgate-buildings. The extract, "Anne kept her appointment; the others kept theirs"(158) indicates her attitude on an individual basis, which proves Anne's enlightened self, that is, she stands on her feet. Her appointment was that with Mrs. Smith, which she kept her own while the Elliot family took in the different direction. Mrs. Smith's contact serves to disclose the truth of Mr. Elliot's nature, his cold selfishness, through which Mr. & Mrs. Smith had suffered a lot. Owing to her information, Anne calls upon her "rational dependence" and with firmness of mind, finally rejects everything about Mr. Elliot.

We learned above that Anne's fulfilment of the self has a centrifugal power to affect the people around her. And the fact should not be overlooked that this influential power largely derives from Wentworth's and Lady Russell's warm and consistent love. The idea that a sincere love can serve as the animating motive to this sort of endeavour of improvement can be realised in Richard Simpson's criticism³⁴ as follows: "[Jane Austen] seems to be saturated with the Platonic idea that the giving and receiving of knowledge, the active formation of another's character, or the more passive growth under another's guidance, is the truest and strongest foundation of love."

IV. Conclusion

Literature is a product of the times. Even if the degree or the form of reflection from its time varies, we can perceive it in many ways: in its context or characterization and so on. *Persuasion* is a sort of epitome of the times, the dawn of nineteenth century England. However, it is not the first time for Jane Austen to show her acute consciousness of the times straightforwardly, since she depicted, in *Mansfield Park*, a drastic change of society and human beings under the influence of the Industrial Revolution and the changing aspect of social life. Therefore, *Persuasion* is the second among her six complete novels in which she created the story of her times. But, as we discussed in this thesis, her consciousness of the times is uppermost; the plot of the story is on a real-time basis, the characterization contains the elements of modernity; however, at the same time, the elements of the eighteenth century occupy a very significant position as a whole.

As the comic element recedes with the satire prevailing, the romantic bias emerges in her last work, making *Persuasion* quite a singular novel. These characteristics may be the “epicenter” of the denomination of “the problematic novel.” However, the fact that Anne Elliot’s character was “the loveliest medium of fortitude and gentleness” exactly symbolizes the character of *Persuasion* at the same time. In other words, Austen integrates the virtue of olden and modern into Anne’s utmost virtue, “tenderness,” by which Anne’s fulfilment of the self was realized. Anne’s virtue is everything that Austen had sought for in her literary career by the creation of her heroines.

NOTES

- 1 The text of Austen’s works I use is *The Novels of Jane Austen*. R.W.Chapman. ed. 5vols. Oxford University Press, 1923; 3rd ed. 1933, repr. 1987. The pages in parentheses without any notice indicate those from *Persuasion*. The other works’ abbreviations are as follows: *PP* is for *Pride and Prejudice*; *MP*, for *Mansfield Park*, etc.
- 2 *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814), *Emma* (1816), *Northanger Abbey* (1818) and *Persuasion* (1818).
- 3 Virginia Woolf, *Collected Essays*, vol.1, (1968), p.149.
- 4 Lionel Trilling, “*Mansfield Park*”, William Heath. ed. *Discussions of Jane Austen*. 1961, p.87.
- 5 (76. To Cassandra Austen. Friday 29 Jan. <1813>), *Jane Austen’s Letters*, 2nd ed. R.W.Chapman. ed. Oxford University Press, 1952, p.297; “I must confess that I think her as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print, and how I shall be able to tolerate those who do not like her at least I do not know.”
- 6 Mary Lascelles, *Jane Austen and her Art*. Oxford University Press, London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1939, p.183.
- 7 Virginia Woolf, *The Common Reader*, 1st ser. London: The Hogarth Press, 1951, p.181.
- 8 R.W.Chapman, “Notes on *Persuasion*”; “It is now the summer of 1814 (8), and thirteen years have elapsed (5).” *The Novels of Jane Austen*, R.W.Chapman. ed. (ibid.) ; *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion* (vol.V), p.292.
- 9 Robert Liddell, *The Novels of Jane Austen*. London: Longman, Green and Co. Ltd., 1963,

- pp.199-200.
- 10 R.W.Chapman, "Chronology of *Persuasion*" in "Appendixes" : *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion*, p.302.
 - 11 (103. *To Fanny Knight. Friday 18 Nov. <1814>*), *Jane Austen's Letters*, (ibid.), p.409 : "---all that you know so well how to value, All that really is of the first importance---"
 - 12 Warren Roberts, "Nationalism and empire," Janet Todd. ed. *Jane Austen in Context* (Cambridge University Press,2005), p.331.
 - 13 Pemberley is the antagonist, Mr. Darcy's estate in *Pride and Prejudice*.
 - 14 Donwell Abbey is the antagonist, Mr.Knightley's estate in *Emma*.
 - 15 R.W.Chapman, "A Reply to Mr.Duffy on *Persuasion*," : *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, vol.9, p.154.
 - 16 Warren Roberts, "Nationalism and empire" (ibid.), pp.331-332.
 - 17 " ... the gentleman of the neighbourhood seem unwilling to come forward in any decided or early support of their rights."(47. *To Cassandra Austen. Friday 30 Aug. <1805>*)(ibid.), p.169. : "The 'St.Albans' perhaps may soon be off to help bring home what may remain by this time of our poor army, whose state seems dreadfully critical."(63. *To Cassandra Austen. Tuesday 10 Jan. <1809>*)(ibid.), p.246.
 - 18 Robert Garriss, "Learning Experience and Change," *Critical Essays in Jane Austen*, ed.B.C. Southam, p.81.
 - 19 Virginia Woolf, *Collected Essays* (ibid.), p.152.
 - 20 (142. *To Fanny Knight. Sunday 23 March <1817>*)(ibid.), p. 487.
 - 21 Jocelyn Harris, "Anne Elliot, the Wife of Bath, and Other Friends," ed. Janet Todd. *Jane Austen: New Perspectives*. (1983), p. 275.
 - 22 Margaret Kirkham, "Feminist Irony and the Priceless Heroine of *Mansfield Park*," *Jane Austen: New Perspectives*. ed. (ibid.)1983, pp.231-232.
 - 23 Conf. :Note of Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*, p.280. "Relatives who embarrass the heroine are a familiar motif in the eighteenth-century novel."
 - 24 Barbara Hardy, *A Reading of Jane Austen*, (1979), p.28.
 - 25 Ann Banfield, "The Influence of Place: Jane Austen and the Novel of Social Consciousness," David Monaghan. ed. *Jane Austen in Social Context* (Barnes & Noble ISBN,1981), p.46.
 - 26 Alistair M. Duckworth, *The Improvement of the Estate, A Study of Jane Austen's Novels* (Baltimore & London:The Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), p.10.
 - 27 In 1814, Peace was made. The Allied Forces(England, Spain and Portugal) defeated France. Napoleon defected to Elba.
 - 28 Jocelyn Harris, (ibid.), p.279.
 - 29 (86. *To Cassandra Austen. Monday 11 Oct. <1813>*) (ibid.), p.344.
 - 30 "poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings:" "Wordsworth's Preface of 1800, with a collation of the Enlarged Preface of 1802," H. Littledale. ed. *Wordsworth and Coleridge, Lyrical Ballads 1798* (Oxford University Press, 1911), p,246.
 - 31 "...Everything therefore favorable to *fortitude* (Italics mine) must be of inestimable."(Godwin, *Political Justice*, vol.2,bk.6.ch.6,p.280) : Butler says that "'fortitude and strength of mind'(88)is truly 'Godwinian phraseology'." Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (1975), p.275.
 - 32 Robert Liddell, *The Novels of Jane Austen* (Longman, Green and Co. Ltd., 1963), p.135.
 - 33 "Vide a letter from Mr.Richardson," Samuel Johnson, *The Rambler*, (1969), vol.2.No.97, pp.153-159) : Jane Austen mentioned as to this respect in *Northanger Abbey* : "as a celebrated writer has maintained, that no young lady can be justified in falling in love before the gentleman's love is declared, it must be very improper that a young lady should dream of a gentleman before the gentleman is first known to have dreamt of her." (NA, pp.29-30).
 - 34 *North British Review* (1870). *Jane Austen: the critical Heritage*, ed. B.C. Southam (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), p.244.

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「ジェイン・オースティン『説得』に見るアン・エリオットの自己実現」
(Anne's Fulfilment of the Self in Jane Austen's *Persuasion*)

中 川 澄 子

ジェイン・オースティン、最後の作品『説得』が「問題作」(“a problematic novel”)と呼ばれて久しい。その要因を彼女のアイロニー表現の変化とロマンティシズムへの傾斜の二つに集約し、ヒロイン、アン・エリオットの「自己実現」に投影される19世紀初頭イギリスの歴史的背景との因果関係に光を当てる。即ち、イギリスの1740年来の多くの海戦勝利や産業革命の影響による社会変動期にあるイギリスの縮図を、アン・エリオットとその家庭、サー・ウォルター・エリオット家の変動の中に捉え、価値観の相違のため家庭内で疎外されたヒロインが広い世界に出て真の自己を発揮し「自己実現」を果たす。ジェイン・オースティン最後のヒロインの理想の人物像を通して、オースティンの価値観、人間観を解明する。物語は「説得」により失ったキャプテン・ウェントワースとの愛を、その8年後の今、1814年というリアルタイムで設定し、彼との再会を機にアンの「自己実現」によって二人の愛の復活を果たすまでのドラマである。准男爵、サー・ウォルター・エリオットの怠惰と世俗趣味への作者のアイロニーは、今までにない痛烈な「諷刺」と化し、オースティン本来の明るく、軽妙洒脱なウィットに富むアイロニーは影を潜める。一方、アンの哀楽の感情はオースティンには先例のない自由な感情表出がロマンティックな心象風景として「自然」と一体化する。アンの「自己実現」は、ウェントワースを「自己覚醒」(wakening)へと導き、「説得」の張本人ラッセル夫人をも変える。それは、アンの「自己実現」が彼女本来の「優しさ」(tenderness)に根ざしており、「寛容」と「愛」を内包しているからである。つまり、分別や義務を重んずる18世紀的価値観を基盤としながら、新しい時代の自立した個を尊重する個人主義的価値観との調和を目指す新しい価値観である。それこそ、アンの「自己実現」により体现させたオースティン自身の価値観に他ならない。