

# Globalisation and the Ideal of Home (1): *Martin Chuzzlewit*

Fumie TAMAI

**Keywords:** free-trade radicalism, the dilemma of freedom, the ideal of home

**Abstract:** The first half of this essay aims to examine *Martin Chuzzlewit* against the background of Dickens's attachment to free-trade radicalism. *Martin Chuzzlewit* describes a world in transition from a country ruled by aristocratic landowners to one ruled by middle-class industrial entrepreneurs, and the motive power of the transition is the competitive spirit of individuals. While the ideal of freedom is advocated as the means to bring progress, the text at the same time reveals an anxiety about the unrestrained thrust for competition from below which might lead society into chaos. A device for solving the dilemma of the conflicting needs for freedom and restraint is the ideal of "home," which functions as a safeguard in maintaining social order and middle-class hegemony.

## I

"A NEW POWER HAS ARISEN IN THE STATE." Thus proclaimed *The Times* on 18 November 1843 in an article about one of the meetings of the Anti-Corn Law League (ACLL) in Manchester. What the author of the

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article called “a new power” were the manufacturing classes, who had been battling against the monopoly and the “Old Corruption” of the aristocracy since the league was founded by Richard Cobden and his followers in Manchester in 1839. By the time this article was written the league had become a pressure group of great influence which “no politician [could] sneer at,” and which “no statesman [could] undervalue” (*The Times*). The newly rising power had an influence which reached out from Manchester to embrace England, Scotland, and Wales, and the whole of the British Empire. Throughout the nineteenth century free trade radicalism facilitated the continuous expansion of the empire by breaking down “the vast network of patronage and privilege which was the ‘old colonial system’” and replacing it by a so-called “middle-class empire” (Semmel 205). It marked the new era of the world order—the era of what is nowadays called “globalisation.”

Free trade radicalism had a great influence on Dickens in the forties. “By Jove how radical I am getting! I wax stronger and stronger in the true principles every day,” he wrote to Forster on 13 August 1841 (*Letters* 2: 357). During the forties he self-consciously called himself a “radical” and was increasingly active in various schemes for the “improvement” of society. He made speeches at various Mechanics’ Institutions and Athenaeums, supported the ragged schools, made an investigation into the working conditions of the mining labourers, and planned to establish an “asylum” for “fallen women.” Michael Shelden remarks that “[t]he free trade cause gave Dickens for the first time a social philosophy that seemed to explain the causes of poverty and crime” (Shelden 330). According to Shelden, Dickens’s interest in the free trade cause can be traced back at least to the summer of 1841 when he wrote the three satiric poems on the recent Tory election victory for *The Examiner* (Shelden 333-34), but the clearest manifestation of his support for the cause was “The Agricultural Interest,” an article which was published in the *Morning Chronicle* on 9

March 1844. In it he ironically said that the present government “indict[ed] the whole manufacturing interest of the country for a conspiracy against the agricultural interest” (65) while the whole country cried for the repeal of the Corn Law. In January 1846, when the long battle over the Corn Laws was about to come to a head, he launched an ultraliberal newspaper, *The Daily News*. In the editorial of the first issue of the paper on 21 January 1846, he wrote, “The Principles advocated by the *Daily News* will be Principles of Progress and Improvement; of Education, Civil and Religious Liberty, and Equal Legislation” (qtd. in Grubb 240). Although he resigned his position as the editor of the paper just two weeks after its commencement, his keen interest in the free trade cause found an expression in his two novels, *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1842-44) and *Dombey and Son* (1846-48), which were written or conceived during the period when the Anti-Corn Law agitation was at its height. The purpose of this essay is to re-examine these two novels against the background of Dickens’s attachment to free trade radicalism.

Free trade radicalism was built around the ideal of freedom—“freedom of commerce, national justice and the mutual good will of mankind” (qtd. in Pickering and Tyrrell 2), as one of the members of the ACLL, Revd. J. W. Massie, said in a speech at the Manchester Corn Exchange on 22 March 1842. The myth of the Anglo-Saxons as a freedom-loving people, who had suffered under the “Norman yoke,” but gradually regained their freedom through Magna Carta and the subsequent struggles, had its origins in the sixteenth century when the Reformers tried to justify the break with Rome, and its utilisation persisted long afterwards (Horsman 387-88). The League mobilised this belief in Anglo-Saxon freedom in portraying their struggle for the repeal of the Corn Laws as the latest chapter in a story of English liberty (Pickering and Tyrrell 1-2; Searle 20). Looking back at his political career in later life, John Bright told his Birmingham constituents, “The history of the last forty years of this country is mainly a history of the conquests of freedom. It will be a grand volume that tells the story” (qtd. in

Briggs 205). The advocates of free trade shared a belief that aristocratic control over industry and commerce was the ultimate obstacle to progress, and that once it was removed, the nation would be able to enjoy permanent peace and prosperity. In a major publication of the Anti-Corn Law League, *The Charter of the Nations*, Henry Dunckley declared that “the law of life is, not reaction, but progress” (qtd. in Shelden 345).

The ideal of freedom, however, had an inherently destabilising aspect, for there was the possibility that the same freedom which enabled the newly rising middle class to overthrow the old world order maintained by the aristocracy would ironically allow the classes below to overthrow the new world order which the middle class had just established. The forties were turbulent years not only for the middle-class radicalism but also for its working-class counterpart, Chartism, which was, in Thomas Carlyle’s words “the bitter discontent grown fierce and mad . . . of the Working Classes of England” (*Chartism* 3-4). The middle and upper classes saw the disturbing parallel between the movement and the French Revolution. The writer of an article entitled “The Chartists and Universal Suffrage” in the conservative *Blackwood’s* in September 1839, for example, contended that “[t]he persons engaged in these detestable and criminal objects” were “composed for the most part of the lowest, the most ignorant, and the most desperate of the kingdom” (289), and that their aim was to gain “the power of breaking into and pillaging every chateau in the kingdom” (295). It was because of this fear of revolution that the League, following Cobden’s line of argument, adopted a view of class harmony between manufacturers and the working classes rather than the Ricardian view of class conflict (Semmel 161). Bright was also essentially conservative. According to Briggs, he never wished to see a complete transformation of English institutions, nor even a complete middle-class transformation, and at one time went so far as to openly declare that he was “the perfect Conservative” (Briggs 208). Liberal doctrine which promoted the process of

“globalisation” had its limitation when it came to domestic class politics. Middle-class hegemony was maintained upon a precarious balance between radicalism and conservatism.

Dickens’s radicalism is also characterised by this contradictory combination with conservatism. His liberal belief in “Principles of Progress and Improvement; of Education, Civil and Religious Liberty, and Equal Legislation” is countered by an equally strong belief in the rightfulness of the existing social order. In a speech at the Mechanics’ Institution in Liverpool on 26 February 1844, he even said, “Differences of wealth, of rank, of intellect, we know there must be, and we respect them” (*Speeches* 56). His “conservative” radicalism is inscribed in the representation of class and empire. Both *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Dombey and Son* describe the world in transition, the transition from the old to the new world order or the transition from the old to the new colonial system. In both novels the motive power of the transition is the competitive spirit of individuals. While the ideal of freedom is advocated as the means to bring progress, the texts at the same time reveal an anxiety about the unrestrained thrust for competition from below which might lead society into chaos. A device for solving the dilemma of the conflicting needs for freedom and restraint is the ideal of “home,” which functions as a safeguard in maintaining social order and middle-class hegemony. In this essay I intend to examine apparently opposing phenomena, that is, globalisation and the rise of the ideal of the bourgeois home.

## II

*Martin Chuzzlewit* does by no means directly address the “Condition of England Question”; there are no scenes which describe squalid slums in the metropolis or the miserable life of the labouring poor in the northern industrial towns. The novel nevertheless reflects Dickens’s recent interest

in free trade radicalism. His direct criticism of protectionism can be found in the description of Todgers's neighbourhood in London:

Several fruit-brokers had their marts near Todgers's; and one of the first impressions wrought upon the stranger's senses was of oranges—of damaged oranges, with blue and green bruises on them, festering in boxes, or mouldering away in cellars. . . .

Among the narrow thoroughfares at hand, there lingered, here and there, an ancient doorway of carved oak, from which, of old, the sounds of revelry and feasting often came; but now these mansions, only used for storehouses, were dark and dull, and, being filled with wool, and cotton, and the like—such heavy merchandise as stifles sound and stops the throat of echo—had an air of palpable deadness about them which, added to their silence and desertion, made them very grim. In like manner, there were gloomy court-yards in these parts, . . . where vast bags and packs of goods, upward or downward bound, were for ever dangling between heaven and earth from lofty cranes. (131-32)

Oranges rotting and decaying before reaching consumers, storehouses filled with wool and cotton awaiting export, and bags and packs of goods dangling unsold in the air—all these things signify the stagnation of international and domestic trade caused by protectionism, and the whole area, as a result, is shrouded in a heavy atmosphere of decay and decline.

Dickens's satire goes further and is directed against the aristocracy defending the Corn Laws, especially a group of people participating in the "Young England" movement. The gentry who frequent "the queer old taverns" (132) near Todgers's are "ancient inhabitants of that region" (133):

These gentry were much opposed to steam and all new-fangled ways,

and held ballooning to be sinful, and deplored the degeneracy of the times; which that particular member of each little club who kept the keys of the nearest church, professionally, always attributed to the prevalence of dissent and irreligion; though the major part of the company inclined to the belief that virtue went out with hair-powder, and that old England's greatness had decayed amain with barbers. (133)

"Young England," a small group of Tory MPs including Benjamin Disraeli, was active from 1842 until 1846. They attacked the harsh materialism of the commercial and manufacturing classes and yearned for an idealised feudal society in which the aristocracy, together with the established church, protected the loyal people (Smith xi-xii; Lee 85). Dickens regarded them as the representatives of the anachronistic Tories who, always dreaming a romantic vision of the "good old days," could never appreciate the progress and improvement of the age. With their reactionary views about the technological innovations such as steam and ballooning and their taste for archaic fashions, the gentry in Todgers's neighbourhood make the economy stagnant and impedes the progress and prosperity of the nation.

Although it is only in the passages cited above that Dickens explicitly attacks the protectionist Tories, he makes subtler, yet more powerful, satire of the Tory government in *Martin Chuzzlewit* by creating Pecksniff. At the very beginning of the story, the narrator says that the Chuzzlewit Family "was, in the very earliest times, closely connected with the agricultural interest" (13), and that "[t]here can be no doubt that at least one Chuzzlewit came over with William the Conqueror" (13). This ironic comment on the family's spurious pedigree has the function of associating them with the aristocracy, its protectionism and its long history of oppression. Pecksniff is the most conspicuous member of the Chuzzlewits, who represents the family vices of hypocrisy and selfishness. He is, the narrator says, "a moral

man . . . especially in his conversation and correspondence” and is said to have “a Fortunatus’s purse of good sentiments in his inside” (23). It is, however, soon revealed that he is merely “a hypocrite” (66 *passim*), who, under his charade of benevolence, conceals selfish greed. He defrauds his pupils of a premium under false pretence, tries to monopolise old Martin’s fortune, and involves himself with the fraudulent business of the Anglo-Bengalee Company.

Hypocrisy was the charge which was often made against the industrialist free traders and the reformist radicals who participated in various schemes for the improvement of the living and working conditions of the labouring poor. The Anti-League protectionists claimed that what free traders tried to defend was not the interest of the workers but that of their own. Both Chartists and protectionists suspected that the true motive of the industrialists was to lower the wage of their workers through repealing the Corn Laws and lowering the price of bread. An anonymous writer of an Anti-League pamphlet in 1843, for instance, argued that although the League claimed that they advocated “the cause of the poor,” what they actually defended was “the profit of the mills” (Schonhardt-Bailey 163). The title of this pamphlet was “League Hypocrisy! Or, the ‘Friends of the Poor’ Unmasked.” Some people considered the moral and ethical tone which the free traders’ arguments took as too self-righteous and hypocritical. George Game Day said in a speech, “In advocating their own sentiments, they arrogate to themselves a vast superiority of honesty, of virtue, and of sense . . . and, in their crusade against what they term ‘monopoly,’ they have monopolised all the virtues to themselves” (Schonhardt-Bailey 167).

For Dickens the true hypocrites were not the reformist radicals but the aristocratic politicians who did nothing but blame the former for their “hypocrisy.” His indignation against them breaks out in an apostrophe to “Pharisees” inserted in the chapter in which he paints young Martin’s plight



in London poverty:

[G]o, Teachers of content and honest pride, into the mine, the mill, the forge, the squalid depths of deepest ignorance, and uttermost abyss of man's neglect, and say can any hopeful plant spring up in air so foul that it extinguishes the soul's bright torch as fast as it is kindled! And, oh! ye Pharisees of the nineteen hundredth year of Christian Knowledge, who soundingly appeal to human nature, see that it be human first. Take heed it has not been transformed, during your slumber and the sleep of generations, into the nature of the Beasts! (221)

Dickens emphasises that it is the Tories of the status quo, not the reformist radicals, who are “Pharisees.” When we examine Pecksniff in these contexts, it becomes clear that Dickens created him as a means of counter-attacking the Tory politicians. His hypocrisy reveals itself most clearly when he lectures his daughters on how satisfactory it is to be warm and well-fed when many other people are not, and how this arouses one's “sense of gratitude” to “a very beautiful arrangement” (120) of the divine plan.

Dickens's criticism of the Tory conservatives, however, is more elaborately woven into the relationship between Pecksniff and his employee, Thomas Pinch. Nothing is more hypocritical than Pecksniff's patronising attitudes towards Tom. He pretends to be Tom's benevolent patron who always cares for his welfare, but at the same time emphasises that he and Tom are always on equal terms bound with each other “in mutual faithfulness and friendship” (87). Under this pretence of patronage and friendship, however, is concealed the actual exploitation of his faithful and strangely gullible employee. He defrauds Tom's grandmother of all her hard-earned savings, “dazzling her with prospects of [Tom's] happiness and advancement, which he knew . . . never would be realised” (33), and keeps

Tom as his assistant with an unreasonably low salary. This relationship between Pecksniff and Tom corresponds with that of the landowning aristocrats and their farmers. The landowners often argued that they were defending the law on behalf of the farmers and claimed themselves to be “the farmers’ friends”—a title which was often used by the Tory politicians, including the Prime Minister of the time Sir Robert Peel. In the debate on the Corn Law, the radicals of the Anti-Corn Law League often attacked those who defended the law by maintaining that they unjustly exploited the farmers by keeping the price of both bread and rent high while they pretended to be their patrons and friends. Richard Cobden, for instance, said in a speech at the House of Commons on 15 May 1843, “[W]hilst all this patronage, and all these honours, have been showered on the ‘farmers’ friends,’ what have the farmers got themselves?” (Schonhardt-Bailey 67). The farmers, in his opinion, were just cajoled and deceived by their landlords who monopolised the benefit gained by the protection from grain imports under the Corn Laws.

It would be therefore of no surprise that Pecksniff was considered by many contemporary readers as a caricature of the head of the Tory ministry, Peel, who had taken office in August 1841. Though it is widely agreed that Pecksniff’s prototype was Samuel Carter Hall, a writer and founder of the *Art Journal*, whom, according to John Forster, Dickens regarded as a hypocrite and a snob, Nancy Aycock Metz and Morris Golden argue that Dickens’s imagination was fed at least in part by the Prime Minister, who had incurred people’s anger and discontent in the early 1840s because of his protectionist policy, his general indifference to the sufferings of the working classes in the recession, and the introduction of the Income Tax (Metz, “Dickens” 6-10; Golden 17-22). An 1844 cartoon in *Punch*, which is entitled “The Political Pecksniff,” is a parody of Hablot K. Browne’s illustration of the fourth number of the novel. In the cartoon, Peel, depicted exactly like Browne’s Pecksniff, stands beside the coffer labelled “CASH /

Income Tax” on his right, and a stack of controversial bills on his left, and in the article attached to this cartoon the writer says, “he, Sir Robert Peel, is the original Pecksniff” (Metz 9-10). Not only *Punch*, but also the reviewers of other journals, identified Peel with Pecksniff (Golden 20). Laman Blanchard remarked in his 1844 review of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, “things Pecksniffian, and Pecksniff practices are matters publicly spoken of as moral existences. We have read and heard allusions to them in grave political ‘leaders’ and lectures deep in philosophy” (qtd. in Metz 6).

If Tom’s position is analogous to that of the exploited farmer, John Westlock and young Martin are in the same predicament as that of the mismanaged and dissatisfied farmers who are able to penetrate their employer’s real nature, that is, in John’s words, “the hypocrisy, the knavery, the meannesses, the false pretences, the lip service of that fellow, and his trading in saintly semblances for the very worst realities” (198). These young men, however, eventually liberate themselves from Pecksniff and gain freedom. John is fortunate enough to inherit his uncle’s fortune, and Martin emigrates to America. Even gullible Tom finally gains an insight into Pecksniff’s hypocrisy, and leaves him. When he liberates himself from his old master’s yoke, he feels “an unaccustomed sense of freedom” and finds it “wonderfully pleasant to reflect that he was his own master, and could plan and scheme for himself” (526). The expulsion of Pecksniff in the denouement indicates the decline of aristocratic rule.

### III

The freedom which enables people to throw off aristocratic rule, however, has a dangerous aspect as well. The shift of power relationships which is taking place in Wiltshire is a part of the great transition taking place throughout Britain. The 1830s and the 1840s was the period of the fundamental transformation of Britain from a country ruled by aristocratic

merchants and landowners to one ruled by industrial entrepreneurs (Clark 76). Following several Parliamentary Acts for the deregulation of banks and companies in the twenties and thirties, the Companies Act of 1844 allowed the easy formation of joint-stock corporations and ensured their greater freedom of operation. Individual talent and efforts became more important for success than kinship and blood ties, and competition in business was promoted. Entrepreneurial capitalism, however, had an inherently destabilising element. While the greater degree of freedom obviously increased the liquidity and productivity of capital and revitalised the economy, it also increased opportunities for financial overextension and fraud. Dickens's portrayal of the "Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company" is based on the fraudulent business of the West Sussex Assurance Company, which was launched by several directors with virtually no capital. The name "Anglo-Bengalee" implies the greater risks and fraudulent dealings involved in colonial business, which destabilise the economy. By converting "West Sussex" into "Anglo-Bengalee," Dickens warns the reader against the danger of the abuses of freedom in global business.

Moreover, entrepreneurial capitalism generates an excessive drive towards competition, which is regarded as harmful and dangerous to people and society. Jonas Chuzzlewit, who has been taught only the doctrine of cash nexus since he was an infant, testifies to the dehumanising effects of cut-throat competition:

The very first word he learnt to spell was "gain," and the second ... "money." ... [H]aving been long taught by his father to over-reach everybody, he had imperceptibly acquired a love of over-reaching that venerable monitor himself. (124)

Jonas is literally dehumanised in the competitive business world, as the

various appellations with which his fiancé calls him indicate: he is a “creature” (182 *passim*), “monster” (322 *passim*), “low savage” (381), and “Griffin” (381 *passim*).

The threat of unrestrained freedom, however, is most keenly felt in the American sections of *Martin Chuzzlewit*. It is well known that the American episode reflects the great disappointment which Dickens experienced when he visited the country in 1842. His disappointment partly came from his anger about a torrent of abuse from several leading American newspapers concerning his speech on international copyright. It was not, however, just the sharp criticism of the press that galled him. He was also disillusioned by the political culture of the United States, the country which was regarded as the leading democracy of the age. “I *am* disappointed,” he wrote to W. C. Macready on 22 March 1842, “This is not the Republic I came to see. This is not the Republic of my imagination. I infinitely prefer a liberal Monarchy . . . to such a Government as this” (*Letters* 3: 156). What he detested was the chaotic disorder of the country: “the paralyzed government; the unworthy representatives of a free people; the desperate contests between the North and the South; . . . the stabbings, and shootings, and coarse and brutal threatenings exchanged between Senators under the very Senate’s roof” (*Letters* 3: 175-76), and so on. In his opinion, America was the nation of “*the Mass,*” and “[t]he Nation [. . .] without a head” (*Letters* 3: 176). He wrote to Macready, “I believe the heaviest blow ever dealt at Liberty’s Head, will be dealt by this nation in the ultimate failure of its example to the Earth” (*Letters* 3: 175). He was “a Lover of Freedom, disappointed” (*Letters* 3: 176).

In *Martin Chuzzlewit*, America, “the land of liberty” (249) is a nation of violence, aggression, and disorder. Freedom and violence are inseparably bound to each other, as in the case of Mr. Chollop, who is “much esteemed for his devotion to rational Liberty,” and who always carries a brace of revolving-pistols, a sword-stick, and a great knife (492):

He always introduced himself to strangers as a worshipper of Freedom; was the consistent advocate of Lynch law, and slavery; and invariably recommended, both in print and speech, the “tarring and feathering” of any unpopular person who differed from himself. (493)

The ultimate form of violence inflicted on human beings is slavery, which Dickens vehemently criticises in both *American Notes* and *Martin Chuzzlewit*. To bestow limitless freedom on one group of people means to totally deprive the other group of people of their freedom. In Chapter 17 on “Slavery” in *American Notes*, Dickens writes, “[T]he worst deformity and ugliness of slavery are at once the cause and the effect of the reckless licence taken by these freeborn outlaws” (243). The examples of the advertisements for run-away slaves from the newspapers testifies to the atrocious violence inflicted on the slaves’ body. In *Martin Chuzzlewit*, Dickens attacks slavery again by creating Cicero, an ex-slave in New York, who is able to gain his liberty only after he becomes ill and his strength has nearly gone. Mark Tapley’s ironical comment on the slave system reflects Dickens’s critical attitudes towards the abuses of freedom and liberty:

“[T]hey’re so fond of Liberty in this part of the globe, that they buy her and sell her and carry her to market with ’em. They’ve such a passion for Liberty, that they can’t help taking liberties with her.” (275)

Excessive freedom generates excessive drive for competition. Life in America is constant struggle which anticipates the Darwinian world of the survival of the fittest. A dinner at Mrs. Pawkin’s Boarding House does not have a Dickensian atmosphere of festivity and fireside cosiness, but is

transformed into a grotesque competition to outlive others:

All the knives and forks were working away at a rate that was quite alarming; very few words were spoken; and everybody seemed to eat his utmost in self-defence, as if a famine were expected to set in before breakfast time to-morrow morning, and it had become high time to assert the first law of nature. (263)

Dickens suggests that this impulse for aggression and violence has also been nurtured in the destitution and poverty of London streets. At the beginning of Chapter 18 the narrator depicts a gloomy picture of London on the night before Martin and Mark leave for America: “A dark and dreary night; people nestling in their beds or circling late about the fire; Want, colder than Charity, shivering at the street corners” (240). The repressed energy of the wrath of the people tries to find a vent like a destructive force of nature, and the whole scene slides into revolutionary chaos and insanity:

Whither go the clouds and wind, so eagerly? If like guilty spirits they repair to some dread conference with powers like themselves, in what wild region do the elements hold council, or where unbend in terrible disport?

Here! Free from that cramped prison called the earth, and out upon the waste of waters. Here roaring, raging shrieking, howling, all night long. . . . Here in the fury of their unchecked liberty, they storm and buffet with each other, until the sea, lashed into passion like their own, leaps up in ravings mightier than theirs, and the whole scene is whirling madness. (240)

Here Dickens evokes the fear of Chartism, “the bitter discontent” of the people “grown fierce and mad” (Carlyle 4).

The slide into democracy is described as the degenerative process of returning to the lower state of existence. “[S]ome institutions develop human nature; others retard it” (264), says Colonel Diver. Pam Morris argues that the language of the novel, especially that in the Eden section, draws upon the lurid imagery of volcano and explosion used within the dominant discourse to express the chaotic state of a society tending towards democracy. The *Christian Observer*, for instance, warns against revolutionary occurrences and writes, “unless some counteracting agency should take place, the whole world will become a bed of mud, levelled to the uniformity of surface by the waters which invest it” (qtd. in Morris 42). Morris contends that in Eden:

The proper division and order of things has been lost in a primeval decomposition: nothing is “divisible into their separate kinds . . . [all is] a jungle deep and dark, with neither earth nor water at its roots, but putrid matter, formed of the pulpy offal of the two, and of their own corruption.” The citizens of America are represented to be as indistinguishable and weed-like as the vegetation. (43)

The landscape of Eden is the symbolic representation of a society which has fallen into an anarchic state of disorder and chaos.

#### IV

*Martin Chuzzlewit* is thus trapped in a dilemma between the conflicting needs to advocate and restrain freedom. On the one hand, the text suggests that freedom should be restored by throwing off the yoke of the aristocracy, but on the other hand, it reveals an anxiety about the social anarchy of democracy resulting from the unleashed freedom of the people. What is presented as a solution for this dilemma is the ideology of “home.” It is



commonplace now to discuss the importance of the ideal of home in the formation of middle-class cultural identity, but as yet no critics have highlighted the centrality of the ideal in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. The narrator says, “though home is a name, a word, it is a strong one; stronger than magician ever spoke, or spirit answered to, in strongest conjuration” (517). “Home” in the Victorian era is neither just a word nor simply an object but an idea around which bourgeois identity is constructed and maintained. The late 1830s saw the publication of two influential women’s conduct books, Sarah Lewis’s *Woman’s Mission* (1839) and Sarah Ellis’s *The Women of England* (1839). Both books defined the bourgeois home as a refuge from the struggles and strife of the public sphere of men, and middle-class women’s role as an exertion of moral “influence” which could restore men. The underlying assumption of this “separate sphere” ideology is that competition in the male sphere is essentially degrading and dehumanising, and that men need to be separated from their own sphere to be restored and to become fully “human” again. Ellis, for instance, argues that even before a boy comes of age, “his mind has become familiarized to the habit of investing with supreme importance, all considerations relating to the acquisition of wealth” (51):

[H]e sees before him, every day and every hour, a strife, which is nothing less than deadly to the highest impulses of the soul, after another god—the mammon of unrighteousness—the moloch of this world; and [. . .] he learns too soon to mingle with the living mass, and to unite his labours with theirs. (51-52)

He “has therefore need of all [the woman’s] sisterly services . . . to foster in his nature, and establish in his character, that higher tone of feeling, without which he can enjoy nothing beyond a kind of animal existence” (58). Home functions as the safeguards against the degenerative force of competition

and as the main device for maintaining social order.

The first two-thirds of *Martin Chuzzlewit* is characterised by the lack of a proper “home.” “[T]he comforts of a home” (25) which Pecksniff advertises to recruit pupils is only a sham; the two sisters are constantly “correcting and counter-checking, and . . . antidoting, the other” (23), and the father regards his daughter as nothing but the means to gain wealth. The house of Anthony Chuzzlewit and Son has no air of domesticity: “Business, as may be readily supposed, was the main thing in this establishment; insomuch indeed that it shouldered comfort out of doors, and jostled the domestic arrangements at every turn” (175). When Mercy Pecksniff arrives in the house as a young bride it looks even gloomier: “Mrs Jonas . . . felt a strange chill creep upon her, whilst she looked about the room. It was pretty much as she had known it, but appeared more dreary” (404). Chuffey laments for the ill-fated doom of the bride, “Oh! woe, woe, woe, upon this wicked house!”, and the narrator ironically says, “It was her welcome,—HOME” (406). Mrs. Pawkin’s Boarding House is in a chaotic state with no woman to take care of domestic drudgery. When Bevan calls the house “home,” Martin exclaims in astonishment, “When you say ‘home,’ do you mean a house like this?” (285).

Martin decides to return to England by any means after recovering from pestilent fever in Eden. Metz points out that Martin shows every symptom of nostalgia, or homesickness, which, in the discourse of nineteenth-century medical texts, began to be considered as a disease which might endanger life itself when it is intense (Metz, “Fevered” 55-54). As Metz argues, Martin’s case is obviously based on Dickens’s own experience of suffering from homesickness on his American trip (Metz, “Fevered” 55-56). His letters to his friends in England are strongly charged with his passionate attachment to “Home”:

Oh for Jack! oh for Topping—oh for Charley, Mamey, Katey—the

study, the Sunday's dinner, the anything and everything connected with our life at Home! How cheerfully would I turn from this land of freedom and spittoons—of crowds, and noise, and endless rush of strangers— . . . to the lightest, least-prized pleasure of “Den'ner [Devonshire] Terrace!” I turn my eyes towards the picture [Maclise's crayon drawing of Dickens's four children] and yearn for Home, three thousand miles away. (*Letters* 3: 94)

As his departure to England approached his emotion was heightened to an almost hysterical level: “As the time draws nearer, we get FEVERED with anxiety for home. . . . Oh home—home—home—home—home—home—HOME!!!!!!!!!!!!” (*Letters* 3: 248). His trip to America, “the land of freedom and spittoons,” gave rise to his feelings of homesickness and made him realise the power of home. As Frances Armstrong writes, “His arrival home marks the beginning of the period when he seems to have been most convinced of the power of home” (42). Not long afterwards he began the series of Christmas books, which were to be remembered best for their Dickensian domestic scenes, both by contemporary readers and readers of the future generations.

One of the main focuses of the story after Martin and Mark return to England is the process of the creation of a happy home by Ruth Pinch:

Pleasant little Ruth! Cheerful, tidy, bustling, quiet little Ruth! No doll's-house ever yielded greater delight to its young mistress, than little Ruth derived from her glorious dominion over the triangular parlour and the two small bed-rooms. (564)

Dickens delineates Ruth's cooking of a beef-steak pudding in detail, and the fact that he was very embarrassed when one reader pointed out that suet should have been added in the recipe demonstrates how precise Dickens

tried to be in describing such a household scene. He seems to have been also careful in his description not to attach any tinge of savagery to any act connected with domesticity. Even the cutting of meat by a butcher is a piece of “high art,” not a savage act:

It was agreeable . . . to see him cut it off, so smooth and juicy. There was nothing savage in the act, although the knife was large and keen; it was a piece of art, high art; there was delicacy of touch, clearness of tone, skilful handing of the subject, fine shading. It was the triumph of mind over matter; quite. (565-66)

The English domestic sphere is thus presented as antithesis of the world of violence and aggression of America.

The story ends with the engagement of three couples, young Martin and Mary Graham, John Westlock and Ruth, and Mark and Mrs. Lupin, and although there is no description of their future happy homes, the denouement ends with the repetition of the word “Home” with capital H:

“Get up behind!” [Old Martin] said. “Get up in the rumble. Come along with me! Go you on the box, Mark. Home! Home!”

“Home!” cried Mr Tapley, seizing the old man’s hand in a burst of enthusiasm. “Exactly my opinion, Sir. Home, for ever! . . . Home to be sure! Hurrah!”

Home they rolled accordingly, when he had got the old man in again, as fast as they could go. (776)

For Ellis, homes were the basis of English national identity. “The national characteristics of England [which] are the perpetual boast of the patriotic sons” (9) was “the domestic character,” that is, “the home comforts, and fireside virtues” (10), and it was the women of England who

maintained the “moral characteristics” (9) of the nation. In a similar way a woman is represented as the embodiment of the nation in *Martin Chuzzlewit* in a scene in which Mark kisses Mrs. Lupin just after coming back from America:

“You have had plenty, I am sure,” said the hostess. “Go along with your foreign manners!”

“That aint foreign, bless you!” cried Mark. “Native as oysters, that is! One more, because it’s native! As a mark of respect for the land we live in! . . . I a’n’t a kissin’ you now, you’ll observe. I have been among the patriots: I’m a kissin’ my country.” (617)

At the height of nationalistic sentiments, “broad, buxom, comfortable, and good-looking” (37) Mrs Lupin, the mistress of the cosy Blue Dragon, is described as the spirit of England, upon which Mark’s national identity is constructed: “he had given full expression to his nationality” (618).

Home was the core and the foundation of the empire, from which English norms and identity were propagated to the remotest part of the globe. Ellis wrote:

[A]s far as the noble daring of Britain has sent forth her adventurous sons, and that is to every point of danger on the habitable globe, they have borne along with them a generosity, a disinterestedness, and a moral courage, derived in no small measure from the female influence of their native country. (54)

The ideal of bourgeois home thus provided the theoretical justification for colonisation and contributed to the expansion of the empire. This process will be analysed in detail in the next section on *Dombey and Son*.

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## 梗概

グローバリゼーションと家庭の理想(1) : 『マーティン・チャズルウィット』

玉井史絵

本論文(前半、後半からなる前半)ではディケンズが反穀物法同盟に代表される自由貿易主義急進主義に傾倒していた1840年代前半の二つの小説『マーティン・チャズルウィット』と『ドンビー父子』のうち、特に前者を検討する。19世紀を通じて、自由貿易主義者は保護主義的な地主階級に対抗し、自由競争こそが世界の繁栄と進歩に貢献するとして、今日で言うグローバリゼーションを促進していった。しかし、労働者階級がチャーチスト運動を通じて政治参加を訴え始めた時代にあって、自由という理想は中産階級にとって、自らの築いた覇権を危うくしかねない危険な要素もはらんでいた。そしてその結果、彼らの急進主義は体制維持という保守的な側面を併せ持つも

のとなった。『マーティン・チャズルウィット』において、保護主義と貴族階級への批判は、「ヤング・イングランド」と称する保守党の国会議員への皮肉や、ベックスニフという偽善的な登場人物によって当時の保守党の首相ピールを風刺することによって巧みになされている。しかしその一方で、節度のない自由競争への脅威に対する警告を、アメリカを舞台とした章において発している。

自由を擁護すると同時に自由を制御しなくてはならないというジレンマを解決したのが、1830年代後半に生まれた中産階級の「家庭」の理想である。1830年代後半に流布し始めた女性のための規範書は、競争は元来人間を墮落させるものだと言き、家庭こそが競争によって失われた人間性を回復する場であるとした。この「家庭」の理想はイギリス中産階級のアイデンティティの基盤となり、その覇権を保つ装置として働くことになる。それゆえに『マーティン・チャズルウィット』ではアメリカを舞台とした章を境として、家庭の喪失から家庭の回復へと物語の中心は移っていくのである。