

# Variant Representations of Wealth in *Sanditon*

Mirei HIROTA

There are moments, there are points, when her love of money is carried greatly too far. But she is a good-natured woman, a very-good-natured woman.<sup>1</sup>

The fictional world of Jane Austen can be said to have a certain obsession with money. Interestingly, in *Sanditon* (1817), her last posthumous unfinished novel, three distinct representations of wealth are embedded in the narrative. This article will concentrate on these representations by analysing and comparing them with other representations of wealth in other works by Austen.

## I

*Sanditon* starts with a carriage accident involving the Parkers. While Mr. Thomas Parker is travelling with his wife in search of a surgeon to come to Sanditon, his carriage overturns, and he sprains his foot. He briefly introduces himself to Mr. Heywood, who helps Mr. Parker after the accident, as being a man of means and “by no means the first of [his] family, holding landed property in the parish of Sanditon”.<sup>2</sup> It is evident that Mr Parker is one of the predominant landowners in Sanditon when he further explains: “he was of a respectable family, and easy though not large fortune; — no profession” because he has been “succeeding as eldest son to the property which two or three generations had been holding and accumulating before him”.<sup>3</sup> He also mentions that he has “two brothers and two sisters — all single and all independent — the eldest of the two former indeed, by collateral inheritance, quite as well provided for as himself”.<sup>4</sup> Apparently, his family has been inheriting the estate and protecting it for the next generation. This pattern of inheritance can also be seen in Austen’s other works as the necessary institution for affluent classes to maintain their standards of living.

*Sense and Sensibility* (1811) opens with the explanation of the Dashwood family and their estate, Norland Park. The late owner of this land is unmarried, so Henry

Dashwood, his nephew, is to become a legal inheritor of the estate. However, “by a former marriage, Mr. Henry Dashwood had one son: by his present lady, three daughters”,<sup>5</sup> and his will says that the estate and property should go to John Dashwood, his only son and then, to Harry Dashwood, Henry’s grandson. Mr. Dashwood leaves his three girls only “a thousand pounds a-piece”.<sup>6</sup> Thus male lineal descent of the Dashwoods has the right to inherit the family estate although this is against Henry’s wish as he wants his present wife and his three daughters to be left ample provisions.

In *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), Mr. Bennet’s estate Longbourn is going to Mr. Collins, his nephew, as the Bennets do not have any sons of their own. This means that five Bennet girls will be expelled from their home after Longbourn is entailed by Mr. Collins. Thus it is understandable why Mrs. Bennet becomes agitated about Mr. Bingley’s move to Netherfield Park as she desires one of their daughters to marry a rich man like Mr. Bingley: “Oh! single, my dear, to be sure! A single man of large fortune; four or five thousand a year. What a fine thing for our girls!”<sup>7</sup>

The first representation of wealth in *Sanditon* as well as in *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*, reflects the rules in William Blackstone’s *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765-9). His four-volume commentaries exerted an authoritative influence in the late eighteenth century, and remained for many years the best historical account of English law. Blackstone stipulates the rules of inheritance as follows:

- I . The first rule is, that inheritances shall lineally descend to the issue of the person who last died actually seised, *in infinitum*; but shall never lineally ascend.
- II . A SECOND general rule or canon is, that the male issue shall be admitted before the female.
- III . A THIRD rule, or canon of descent, is this; that where there are two or more males in equal degree, the eldest only shall inherit; but the females all together.
- IV . A FOURTH rule, or canon of descents, is this; that the lineal descendants, *in infinitum*, of any person deceased shall represent their ancestor.
- V . A FIFTH rule is, that on failure of lineal descendants, or issue, of the person last seised, the inheritance shall descend to his collateral relations, being of the blood of the first purchaser; subject to the three preceding rules.
- VI . A SIXTH rule or canon therefore is, that the collateral heir of the person last seised must be his next collateral kinsman, of the whole blood.
- VII . The SEVENTH and last rule or canon is, that in collateral inheritances the

male stocks shall be preferred to the female [. . .] unless where the lands have, in fact, descended from a female.<sup>8</sup>

The most notable points of these rules are that inheritance should be preserved by male lineal descent and primogeniture. The eldest son has the first right to inherit. Thus, the entailment of Longbourn by Mr. Collins in *Pride and Prejudice*, and the right of primogeniture to assume Norland Park by the Dashwoods in *Sense and Sensibility*, and Mr. Parker's birthright in *Sanditon* conforms to Blackstone's interpretation of traditional inheritance in England.

Unlike Mr. Parker, Lady Denham (née Brereton) increases her wealth and raises her social rank twice through marriage. The first marriage is with the elderly Mr. Hollis, who dies shortly afterward, leaving her "everything—all his estates, and all at her disposal".<sup>9</sup> Then she remarries Sir Harry Denham of Denham Park. He succeeds in "removing her and her large income to his domains", but he fails in "permanently enriching his family" as Lady Denham is so careful of her property.<sup>10</sup> The opening quotation of this paper shows her enthusiasm towards money. As a result, she gets only her title from Sir Denham, but succeeds without relinquishing the property she gained by her first marriage, and after Sir Denham's death, she continues living at her own house at Sanditon. People related to the Hollises, the Denhams, and the Breretons are lawful inheritors of her property and are vying for it with each other. Thus Lady Denham inherits money, the estate and the title by marriage, and is expected to transfer them to the next generation following the rules stipulated by Blackstone.

## II

Speculations are the second representation of wealth though they stand on a shaky economic basis. *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines "speculation" as "engagement in any business enterprise or transaction of a venturesome or risky nature, but offering the chance of great or unusual gain", and this definition started to gain use from the late 18th century. *The O.E.D* quotes from Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) for usage: "Sudden fortunes, indeed, are sometimes made in such places, by what is called the trade of speculation".

According to Mr. Parker, Sanditon is "the favourite—for a young and rising bathing-place, certainly the favourite spot of all that are to be found along the coast of

Sussex; — the most favoured by Nature, and promising to be the most chosen by man”.<sup>11</sup> His explanation with several superlatives shows his boundless confidence in the place or may also suggest his blind evaluation of Sanditon as he is “an enthusiast; — on the subject of Sanditon, a complete enthusiast. [...] the success of Sanditon as a small fashionable bathing place was the object, for which he seemed to live”.<sup>12</sup> Some years ago, land owners of Sanditon become aware of its geographical advantage as a seaside resort, and they find “the probability of its becoming a profitable speculation”.<sup>13</sup> John K. Walton states that “by the 1820s and 1830s a few established landowners were beginning to plan new seaside resorts on their estates” and “these speculations by established landowners were far outnumbered by the efforts of syndicates or individual speculators to plan seaside resorts from small beginnings in this period”<sup>14</sup>. This passage would make it clear that Mr. Parker is likely to hear rumours or at least be aware of the latest information about speculations about the fictional advantages of having a seaside resort. Austen faced such novel economic thinking in her own life when speculation took a bad turn. In March 1816, the banking business and army agency of Henry Austen, Austen’s 4th brother, collapsed; Mr. Leigh-Perrot, her uncle lost £10,000, and Edward Austen, Austen’s 3rd brother £20,000.<sup>15</sup>

Mr. Parker’s fascination with financial potential of Sanditon is revealed in the following passage:

Sanditon was a second wife and four children to him — hardly less dear — and certainly more engrossing. — He could talk of it for ever. — It had indeed the highest claims; — not only those of birth place, property, and home, — it was his mine, his lottery, his speculation and his hobby horse; his occupation, his hope and his futurity.<sup>16</sup>

In describing Sanditon’s worth to Mr. Parker as “his mine, his lottery, his speculation and his hobby horse”, the narrator satirises the particular uncertainty or precariousness inherent in his speculations. Without these words, this quotation surely conveys Sanditon as the most crucial part of Mr Parker’s life, but the passage should also be offset by a narration that also points out that “his financial risk is rooted in a lack of self-knowledge” and that “his optimism may have no basis in reality”.<sup>17</sup>

Beside possible profitable business potential, seaside resorts have considerable health advantages. According to Mr. Parker, even healthy people should spend “at least six weeks by the sea every year” to maintain their well being.<sup>18</sup> He further explains

that “the sea air and sea bathing together were nearly infallible” to those who suffer disorders of “the stomach, the lungs or the blood” or those who are “anti-spasmodic, anti-pulmonary, anti-sceptic, anti-bilious and anti-rheumatic”.<sup>19</sup> Thus Mr. Parker and Lady Denham, his “colleague in speculation”, undoubtedly wish Sanditon would become a successful seaside resort for anyone who values their health, and especially for wealthy guests like Miss Lambe, who would have lengthy stays in the resort and spend much money.<sup>20</sup> David Selwyn summarises that “Sanditon is a bland, all-purpose blueprint for a resort, straight out of the pages of a guidebook”.<sup>21</sup> But ironically, unlike the all-purpose resorts that are introduced by guidebooks, Sanditon does not have many visitors.

### III

The last representation of wealth in *Sanditon* connects with the colonies. Edward Said’s comment on *Mansfield Park* (1814) is equally true about *Sanditon*: “the novel steadily [...] opens up a broad expanse of domestic imperialist culture without which Britain’s subsequent acquisition of territory would not have been possible”.<sup>22</sup> The Bertrams’ income in *Mansfield Park* relies largely on the interests from the plantations in Antigua in the West Indies, but by “some recent losses on his West India Estate”, Sir Thomas Bertram’s plantations are in a severe situation.<sup>23</sup> This forces him to Antigua, together with Tom, his profligate eldest son. Throughout Austen’s novels, characters often travel abroad, away from England, though the reader does not always follow them. But before *Sanditon* was published, none of Austen’s characters had originated abroad and come to England. Besides Sir Thomas and Tom Bertram, in *Persuasion* (1818), Captain Frederick Wentworth, Admiral Croft, his brother-in-law, and his friends, and also Fanny Price’s brother in *Mansfield Park*, serve for the navy, and make their livings by their profession. It is obvious that Anne Elliot is persuaded to abandon Captain Wentworth because of his lack of wealth and social status; however, he manages to establish himself as a navy officer after Anne leaves him.

Diana Parker, one of the sisters of Thomas Parker, brings the news that she has encouraged “two large families, one a rich West Indian from Surry, the other a most respectable girls boarding school, or academy, from Camberwell” to visit Sanditon.<sup>24</sup> Telling this news to Lady Denham, she replies to Mr. Parker “Very good, very good [...]. A West Indy family and a school. [...]. That will bring money”.<sup>25</sup> Moreover she continues,

Because they have full purses, fancy themselves equal, may be, to your old country families. But then, they who scatter their money so freely, never think of whether they may not be doing mischief by raising the price of things — and I have heard that's very much the case with your West-inges.<sup>26</sup>

Her contemptible view of West Indians corresponds well to George Osborne's opinion of Miss Rhoda Swartz in William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (1847-8). She is "the rich woolly-haired mulatto from St. Kitt's" and "the heiress (who paid double)".<sup>27</sup> Old Mr. Osborne wants his son to marry her as he believes "she would be a great match [...] for his son" and that her wealth will enhance the social status of the Osbornes.<sup>28</sup> As well as Lady Denham, being ignorant of her financial condition, he does not consider his son's sentiment toward Amelia Sedley. There is clear discrimination against the upstart mulatto people. George Osborne, Mr. Osborne's son, refutes his father, saying, "our name dishonoured for the sake of Miss Swartz's money".<sup>29</sup> In the Russell Square house, the Osbornes residence, Miss Swartz appears just as the illustration indicates:

"honest Swartz in her favourite amber-coloured satin, with turquoise-bracelets, countless rings, flowers, feathers, and all sorts of tags and gimcracks, about as elegantly decorated as a she chimney-sweep on May-Day."<sup>30</sup>



MISS SWARTZ REHEARSING FOR THE DRAWING-ROOM<sup>31</sup>

These words and the illustration in the novel represent opulence, but at the same time, she is said to have “all sorts of tags and gimcracks” and be “about as elegantly decorated as a she chimney-sweep on May-Day”. This description reveals an open contempt for vulgarian mulattos. Although they disdained West Indians, the English in England still found West Indian affluence alluring.

Lady Denham tells Charlotte Heywood, the eldest daughter of Mr. Heywood and spending a holiday at Sanditon, that Sir Edward, Lady Denham’s nephew “*must* marry for money”<sup>32</sup> for he is “a poor man for his rank in society”.<sup>33</sup> She cries with excitement “if we could but get a young heiress to Sanditon!”<sup>34</sup> Despite her discrimination against the West Indians, when she hears that Miss Lambe, a rich half mulatto from the West Indies, is coming to Sanditon, she cannot hide her ambition. Janet Todd and Linda Bree point out “a mulatto or half-mulatto could be part of a wealthy slave-owner’s family and could have a substantial inheritance”.<sup>35</sup> Miss Lambe is “about seventeen, half mulatto, chilly and tender”, and has “a maid of her own, was to have the best room in the lodgings, and was always of the first consequence in every plan of Mrs. Griffiths”.<sup>36</sup> She believes it is Miss Lambe, who is “the very young lady, sickly and rich, whom [Lady Denham] had been asking for; and she made the acquaintance for Sir Edward’s sake”.<sup>37</sup> She wants Sir Edward to marry a woman of fortune like Miss Lambe, thus she approaches Mrs. Griffiths, her guardian. Moreover, she wants Miss Lambe to buy her “milch asses” for her health, but Mrs. Griffiths declines her offer as Miss Lambe must preserve her physician’s prescription.<sup>38</sup> This small incident suggests the failure of Sanditon as an economic foundation.

Sara Salih adds that “the Sanditonians’ reactions to Miss Lambe are resolutely *unsentimental*, and they draw attention to her financial rather than her racial status”.<sup>39</sup> In the novel, Miss Lambe never speaks. This might be because the novel is unfinished. However, if she spoke, she would become a “sentimental other”.<sup>40</sup> Thus she serves as a representation of wealth and fortune as the result of imperialism.

#### IV

Marie Dobbs, born in Australia in 1924, wrote a sequel to *Sanditon* in 1975 titled *Sanditon: A Novel by Jane Austen and Another Lady*. This novel consists of 30 chapters, and ends with “An Apology from the Collaborator”. From the first to the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> chapters are from the original *Sanditon* by Austen, but chapters

following these are supposedly written by Marie Dobbs, "Another Lady".

In the sequel, love romances are highlighted among young fellows like Sir Edward, Sidney Parker, Charlotte Heywood, and Clara Brereton. Lady Denham also urges her nephew to marry rich Miss Lambe in this work, but both of them seem only to "show the slightest interest in each other".<sup>41</sup> Instead, Miss Lambe decides to marry Arthur Parker, who is one of the trio of hypochondriacs of the Parkers with a modest fortune to live on and who is a great admirer of her sketches, saying, "I have inherited quite enough money never to be any sort of burden on a husband".<sup>42</sup> On the other hand, Sir Edward tries to abduct Clara Brereton, but she is attached to Henry Brudenall, a friend of Sidney Parker, and they elope and go to India.

What about the fate of "Sanditon" as a seaside resort? Since Dobbs foregrounds romantic attachments, that information is comparatively scarce. Its new visitors are only two young men, Sidney Parker's friends. However, when Sidney gives *Guide to Watering Places* to his brother, Mr. Parker gets excited about posing "a suitable entry on Sanditon for submission to the responsible editors".<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, Sidney points out a connection between gambling and investment to Charlotte as "Sanditon ... is even too much of a gamble for [him]."<sup>44</sup> According to him,

Seaside resorts depend on fashion [. . .] and fashion depends on tastes and who can ever predict those with any certainty? He said his brother was making a hobby out of Sanditon and combining commerce with pleasure, which was a good thing for *him*; but it was clearly no investment for an outsider.<sup>45</sup>

Thus he indicates uncertainty among speculation in seaside resorts, fashion and the tastes which make those places prosperous. Moreover, he has already noticed the danger of business born from amateur ideas and of losing money through it. At the end of the novel, readers learn of the failure of Sanditon to become a fashionable seaside resort of the kind introduced in publications like *Guide to Watering Places*; "Sanditon [. . .] never prospered into the smart seaside resort Lady Denham and Mr Parker had wished to make it".<sup>46</sup> Marie Dobbs seems to use Miss Lambe's wealth to rescue Arthur Parker, who does not have enough fortune to be independent but has affected sincerity towards Miss Lambe. Moreover, Sidney Parker's pertinent remark about the vulnerable nature of speculation on Sanditon alludes to its failure of being a celebrated watering place. As a sequel to Jane Austen's *Sanditon*, this work does not seem to be



sketched following Austen's writing technique of "the little bit (two Inches wide) of Ivory on which I work with so fine a Brush".<sup>47</sup> Actually, Dobbs herself apologises for her deficiencies in "An Apology from the Collaborator" in the novel. However, we can at least guess from Dobbs the predictable failure of Sanditon as a fashionable seaside resort and that, in the end, there will be a preference for love over money.

In the novels of Jane Austen, social, historical issues such as the problems of slavery and bastardy are usually marginalised, but in *Sanditon*, financial speculation is foregrounded, and through this economic mobility, love romances among the inhabitants and the visitors seem to develop, and the health manias of the Parkers are described ironically. As David Selwyn comments, the period when Austen wrote *Sanditon* was about "a time when the Georgian spa was giving way to the seaside beloved of the Victorians".<sup>48</sup> Austen noticed this shift and used this "new type of leisure resort as a fictional device anticipating the methods of the Victorian novel itself",<sup>49</sup> negotiating mildly with the old, solid, traditional type of wealth (inheritance of property), wealth from colonies, and a fluid, economic type of wealth (speculation). In this way, *Sanditon* may seem Austen's own speculative push to start a new genre of novels, and to open a door to start Victorian social novels like those written by Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins.

Austen refused to represent those things that she did not have first hand knowledge of. She firmly decided that she should not write from knowledge acquired through books and rumours. Although we should be careful not to accept the words in a private letter simply as truth, her advice to aspiring novelist Anna Austen in August 11, 1814 is revealing. Austen tells her niece that she should write what she has experienced in order to avoid the "danger of giving false representations".<sup>50</sup> Austen would have had certain knowledge about the financial speculation and its outcomes. Also she would have heard rumours about rich mulatto ladies from colonies or might have had contact with them. But she would never have addressed such socio-political issues directly. Austen died before completing *Sanditon*, so ironically enough, this book, though it may have sought a more pioneering narrative, retains the manner of her prior works with a hint of direct commentary about the surge of new money over long-held social positions.

## Notes

- 1 All the quotations of *Sanditon* are from *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Jane Austen: Later Manuscripts*. Eds. Janet Todd and Linda Bree. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008. Hereafter abbreviated *LM*. This quotation is p.151 of *LM*.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p.142.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p.147.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p.147.
- 5 Austen, Jane. *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Jane Austen: Sense and Sensibility*. Ed. Edward Copeland. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006, p.4.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p.5.
- 7 *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Jane Austen: Pride and Prejudice*. Ed. Pat Rogers. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006, p.4.
- 8 Blackstone, William. *Commentaries on the Laws of England. In Four Books*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1978. vol. 2, pp.208-40.
- 9 *LM*, p.151.  
Janet Todd and Linda Bree comment that “Mr. Hollis’s property was not entailed on to male heirs and he had chosen to leave it to his widow without conditions” (Todd & Bree, *LM*, p.642).
- 10 *LM*, p.151.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p.142.
- 12 *Ibid.*, p.146.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p.146.
- 14 Walton, John K. *The English Seaside Resort: A Social History 1750-1914*. New York: St Martin’s Press, 1983, p.114.
- 15 Poplawski, Paul. *A Jane Austen Encyclopedia*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998, p.20. Also see Copeland, Edward. “Money.” Edward Copland and Juliet McMaster eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997, p.145 of 131-48.
- 16 *LM*, p.148.
- 17 Selwyn, David. *Jane Austen and Leisure*. London: Hambledon Press, 1999, p.60.
- 18 *LM*, p.148.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p.148.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p.150.
- 21 Selwyn, p.62.

Variant Representations of Wealth in *Sanditon*

- 22 Said, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage, 1994, p.95.
- 23 Austen, Jane. *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Jane Austen: Mansfield Park*. Ed. John Wiltshire. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005, p.27.
- 24 *LM*, p.164.
- 25 *Ibid.*, p.170.
- 26 *Ibid.*, p.170.
- 27 Thackeray, William Makepeace. *Vanity Fair*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998, p.7.
- 28 *Ibid.*, p.249.
- 29 *Ibid.*, p.251
- 30 *Ibid.*, p.252.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p.253.
- 32 *LM*, p.179.
- 33 *Ibid.*, p.153.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p.179.
- 35 Todd & Bree, *LM*, p.674.
- 36 *LM*, pp.201-2.
- 37 *Ibid.*, p.203.
- 38 *Ibid.*, p.203.
- 39 Salih, Sara. "The Silence of Miss Lambe: *Sanditon* and Fictions of 'Race' in the Abolition Era." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 18 (2006): p.351 of 329-53.
- 40 *Ibid.*, p.353.
- 41 *Sanditon: A Novel by Jane Austen and Another Lady*. Bath: Chivers Press, 1999, p.285.
- 42 *Ibid.*, p.375.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p.276.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p.306.
- 45 *Ibid.*, p.306.
- 46 *Ibid.*, pp.445-6.
- 47 Chapman, R.W, ed. *Jane Austen's Letters to Her Sister Cassandra and Others*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: Oxford UP, 1979, p.469.
- 48 Selwyn, p.64.
- 49 *Ibid.*, p.64.
- 50 *JA Letters*, p.395.

# 『サンディトン』における富の表象

—— 財産継承、投機、植民地からの富 ——

廣 田 美 玲

ジェイン・オースティンの作品には富や財産に関する表象が度々埋め込まれているが、彼女の未完の遺作『サンディトン』(1817)には、三つの異なるレベルの富の表象がみられる。本稿では、彼女の他の作品と比較しつつこれらの表象について考察をしている。

まず、『分別と多感』(1811)における長子相続や『高慢と偏見』(1813)における限定相続といったウィリアム・ブラックストンの法解釈に則った伝統的な財産継承が書き込まれていることがわかる。サンディトンの古くからの地主の一人であるパーカー氏や、結婚により財を築き、社会的地位の上昇に成功したレイディ・デナムがその例である。

また、サンディトンを海辺のリゾート地に開発し売り出すといった投機という新しい富の表象も書き込まれている。継承により得た土地を開発することで、経済的な利益を見込んだもので、レイディ・デナムがパーカー氏の共同出資者となり、リゾート地サンディトンの成功を熱狂的に夢見るのである。

最後に、エドワード・サイードの『文化と帝国主義』(1993)で取り上げられている『マンズフィールド・パーク』(1814)におけるサー・トーマス・バートラムのアンティグアのプランテーションからの利益や、『説得』(1818)における海軍の軍人たちによる植民地や海外絡みで得られる富、つまり帝国の外で作られた財産が、『サンディトン』においては、西インド諸島から裕福なムラートの女性がサンディトンに保養のためにやって来るという設定に転化されて用いられていることがわかる。