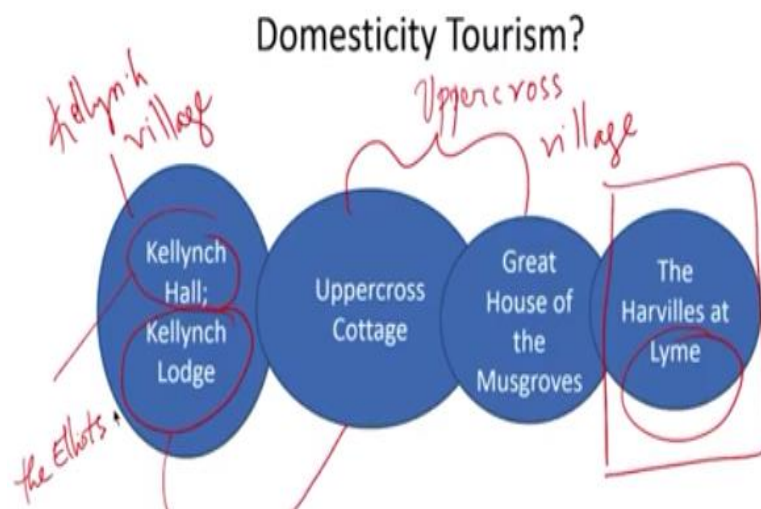


The Nineteenth-Century Novel
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Lecture - 09
Persuasion Vol. II, Chapter 13-18

Hello and welcome back. Today we are going to start week three's contents of Persuasion. We have almost reached a midway point of Austen's Persuasion and we have finished in week 2 at a moment of crisis. We see a critical situation where one of the Musgrove girls has had a serious accident, so that is where we stopped in our previous lectures. Before I jump on to a close reading of the several incidents that happen in chapters 13-18, I would like to talk about a concept called domesticity tourism.

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So if you look at the movements of Anne Elliot, you will realize that she is constantly travelling. That travel would include just a simple walk from Kellynch Hall to Kellynch Lodge. That is where she spends the first night after her family has moved to Bath leaving Anne behind, and from Kellynch Lodge we see Anne moving to Uppercross cottage. In fact, Lady Russell drops her at Uppercross cottage and then she moves on to take up her affairs elsewhere.

And we see that Anne after having had a bit of stay at Uppercross cottage, she also visits the Great House of the Musgroves. There is constant travelling between the two houses, one of which is Uppercross cottage and the other is the Great House of the Musgroves. And then

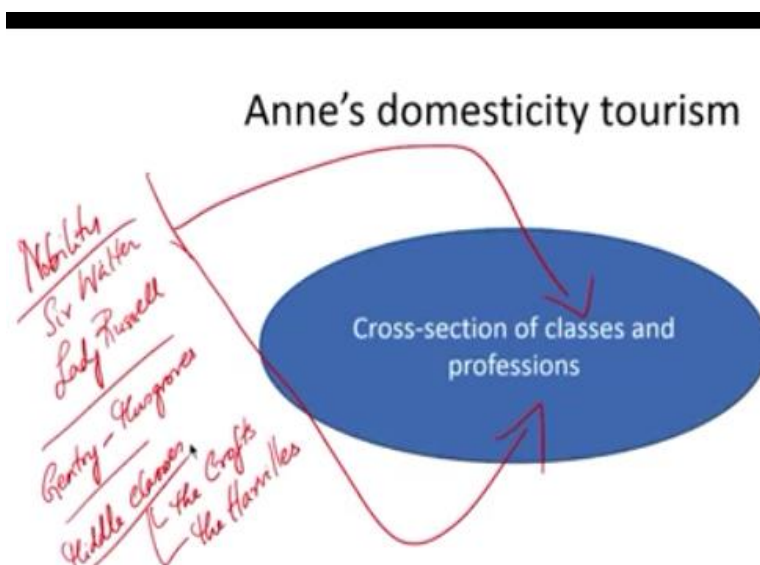
after a period of stay at Uppercross village, we see Anne moving to Lyme as part of a picnic outing. So I would label this as Anne's stay at Uppercross village.

And this would be Anne's stay at Kellynch village. And as I pointed out, we see that accident of Louisa Musgrove at Lyme, where the party is paying a visit to the Harvilles, who are the friends of Captain Wentworth. So there is a kind of a tourist element to Anne's mobility and that is very significant, because except this visit to Lyme, which is obviously intended as a sightseeing visit even though it is also intended to visit the Harvilles.

The primary intention is to go look at Lyme Regis, a very, very beautiful spot. So except for this space or spatiality that Austen introduces us to, the rest are, you know, clearly visits to various domesticities. In fact, we will come to Kellynch Lodge a bit later, but we have been introduced to the domesticity at Kellynch Hall and we know the kind of lifestyle the Elliots lead. And by the Elliot, I specifically make a reference to Sir Walter Elliot and Elizabeth Elliot.

Anne as we understand is marginal to that domesticity, and as I pointed out, we also get introduced to Uppercross cottage, the domesticity of the Musgroves as in Anne's Musgrove, and Charles Musgrove and we also get to see the older Musgroves, the father and mother of the Louisa and Henrietta pair. So primarily we are shown a list of houses and the family lifestyle of each one of them. So I would call this as domesticity tourism undertaken on the part of Anne Elliot.

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What this kind of tourism also offers us is an introduction or an illustration of a cross-section of classes and professions. So if you look at the kind of trajectory that Anne Elliot has been traversing on, we will realize that we are introduced to the nobility, especially through Sir Walter, and we are also introduced to Lady Russell who is just beneath him in terms of class hierarchy, and then we are introduced to the gentry through the Musgroves.

And then we are about to be introduced to the middle classes through not only the Crofts whom we will kind of closely look at in terms of the kind of domestic lives that they lead and the domestic rearrangements that they offer within Kellynch Hall, but also through the Harvilles, whom we have met actually at Lyme Regis, and their domestic setup is pretty attractive and charming in the eyes of the ladies who come to visit them, especially Anne Elliot and the Musgrove girls.

So we are in fact introduced to a cross-section of classes and a cross-section of the professions too. We do get to see what the men of the gentry and the nobility do on a daily basis, and we are also shown what sort of occupation the men from the middle classes carry out on a daily basis too, when they are not at sea, especially in the context of the naval men.

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Domestic Tourism

- "visual consumption of the house and lands of the aristocracy in which the middle classes indulged themselves" as "an act of symbolic ownership." (Elizabeth Ellington, "On Landscape and the Filming", pg 96)

So what is domestic tourism? This is you should pay attention. This is not domesticity, this is domestic tourism, and what exactly is this? According to Elisabeth Ellington, it is a visual consumption of the house and the lands of the aristocracy in which the middle classes indulge themselves as an act of symbolic ownership. It is a very interesting statement. So in the 19th

Century and in the late 18th Century, there was this habit of, you know people visiting some of the great houses in the country.

And this was called as domestic tourism, just visiting the great houses which were open to people, so that they could come in on some of the days and take a look at the part of the house, which was open to visual consumption. So through such acts, the middle classes symbolically owned that space and place. So that was what happening in domestic tourism. So it was an act of symbolic ownership on the part of the middle classes.

So if you remember in *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth Bennett goes on domestic tourism with her friends, the Gardiners, and she visits the home of Darcy. So that house was open to public, some sections of the house was open to the public and Elizabeth got to see furnishings and the arrangements of the interiors of Darcy's home and she could kind of symbolically own that house, even if she was not its literal mistress at that moment of time, so that is what is domestic tourism.

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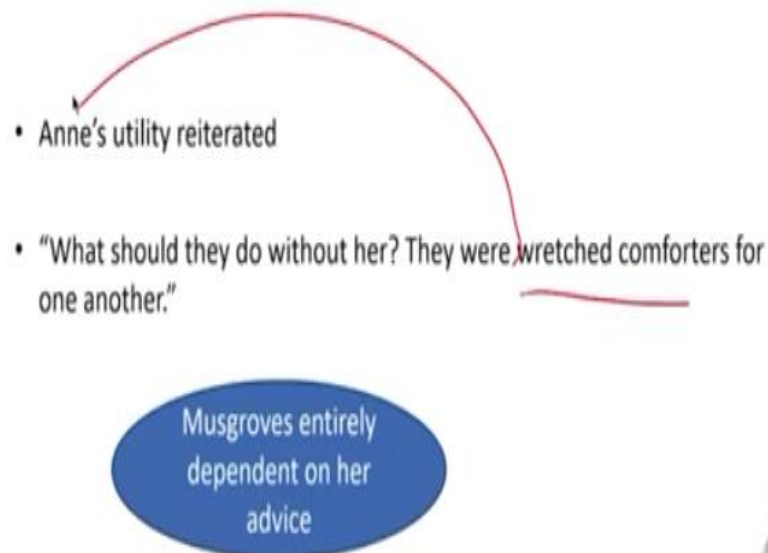
Domestic Tourism

- "if one could appreciate the view then one did not need to own the land that produced it, as one could imaginatively possess it through...aesthetic appreciation." (Clara Tuite, *Romantic Austen: Sexual Politics and the Literary Canon*, pg 139)

Again I have a point of view from Clara Tuite and she says in her work *Romantic Austen: the Sexual Politics and the Literary Canon*, that if one could appreciate the view, then one need not own the land that produced it, as one could imaginatively possess it through aesthetic appreciation. So the same idea of symbolic ownership is also running through this point of view too.

So you do not have to actually literally own that space, but you could simply appreciate it and through your capacity for aesthetic appreciation, you could own that building, that lavish, luxurious, grand house. So again domestic tourism was quite common on the part of the middle classes and it was their kind of entry into the spaces of nobility, and we do get examples of it in Austen's fiction.

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Now in volume II what are the characteristics that are, you know revealed about Anne Elliot. Once again we see that Anne's utility is reiterated, it is reinforced and in the context of that accident of Louisa Musgrove everybody depends on Anne Elliot as to what they should do in order to deal with that situation. So from Captain Wentworth to Charles Musgrove to the older Musgroves everybody seeks the advice of Anne Elliot.

So this is a quote which exemplifies that point. "What should they do without her? They were wretched comforters for one another." So in contrast to Anne the rest of this bunch of people, they were not very capable in terms of comforting one another, when they were faced with this big crisis of the potential death even of Louisa Musgrove. So at this point, this phrase is very, very significant in this context too.

They are not able to comfort one another and that job, that function of offering solace and comfort and guidance is given to Anne Elliot and that is a crucial function that she performs.

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• Anne's appearance:

"silent, pensive self, might be filled again with all that was happy and
gay, all that was glowing and bright in prosperous love, all that was most
unlike Anne Elliot."

But even though Anne has had a kind of rise in terms of her coming back, of the bloom that she had lost previously, despite that beautiful appearance of Anne, there is still that silent pensive self that Anne still contains within her, and she knows that, you know, that space which is somehow kind of reflecting that silent, pensive self; that space of Uppercross cottage where she is left all alone whereas everybody has gone to visit Louisa Musgrove at Lyme, even in that space she realizes that, you know, this space which is now reflecting her silent pensive self will come to reflect all that is happy and cheerful and spirited quite soon in the potential marriage of Louisa Musgrove and Captain Wentworth. So let me read this excerpt for you.

"The silent, pensive self, might be filled again with all that was happy and gay, all that was glowing and bright in prosperous love, all that was most unlike Anne Elliot. So it is something very interesting is happening when we read this narrative voice and which is, Anne is, as I said, all alone in Uppercross cottage, and she would soon move to Bath with Lady Russell, but before that happens, you know, that sense of loneliness is captured in that moment when Anne is surrounded by all the silence and a kind of a pensive ambience.

And as I pointed out this characteristic of Anne is projected onto that space, that is one thing, there is a projection of the self onto the spatiality of Uppercross cottage. Number two, she also realizes that this pensive, silence self will be taken out of Uppercross cottage in the eventuality of the marriage of Wentworth to Louisa Musgrove and that marriage will be, you know, bringing in a lot of happiness, gay also in that time meant happiness and cheerful spirit.

And the space will become glowing and bright, so the wedding would, you know, turn the space into a brighter space and it will be filled with prosperous love, you know, and that word prosperous, you know, gives us a hint that Anne is aware of the fact that Captain Wentworth is very, very wealthy. So it is a wealth that is going to bring in a lot of, you know, light into this particular space, because it will bring in a community of people who will be in love and admiration with one another.

So everything that is unlike Anne Elliot is going to happen within that a spatality, and there is a kind of almost a sadistic element to Anne Elliot, because she seems to torture herself with anticipations with, you know, expectations of prosperity, wealth, you know, glowing beauty and all this is going to happen to others, in the context of others and not to herself. So her awareness is a painful awareness and that painful awareness is somehow transposed to the reader too who is spending quite a lot of time in the mind of Anne Elliot.

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Spatiality

- "Cottage, with its black, dripping and comfortless veranda..."
 - "modern and elegant apartments of the Lodge, and gladden the eyes of its mistress."
- Anne's apartment of Uppercross cottage = bleak*

Let us look more into that setting, that is clearly illustrated for us in Anne's voice. So Anne is still in the cottage and that cottage is black, dripping, and comfortless. And it is a very, very negative portrait, a very bleak portrait that we get of this spatality, this Uppercross cottage, and I would want you to go back to the initial descriptions of Uppercross cottage, where you know we get a pretty picture of that space, but now when Anne is about to quit it, Anne is about to quit.

So Anne is going to leave Uppercross cottage, and at that moment of departure we get this, you know, bleak portrait and the question is why. One, Anne knows about the dynamics of that domesticity which is housed in Uppercross cottage, the domestic politics of the young Musgroves, Charles and Mary Musgrove is not very appealing, is not very healthy, it is not very positive.

So that lack of positivity could inform Anne's imagination, or it could kind of project that lack of happiness onto the space and therefore the space becomes black, dripping and comfortless, that could be one reason. The other reason is that Anne is still not very happy in terms of her courtship trajectory. It is almost non-existent, even though she is still very loyal to Captain Wentworth, we can sense that he has perhaps moved on.

And Anne is a witness to that kind of turn in the courtship trajectory of her ex-lover Captain Wentworth, and therefore her dispirited mood, kind of projects that lack of, you know, cheer in her own mind on to the space and therefore it becomes dark and you know dripping and comfortless. Perhaps Anne is able to notice all the negative characteristics of this house because of her own frame of mind.

So there are several interpretations that you can elicit in terms of the lack of comfort at Uppercross cottage. The physical description is a clue as to the state of affairs in the Musgroves' domestic lifestyle, it is a clue to the state of affairs of Anne's own mind in terms of her courtship progress or its lack of it. And now Anne is going to move as I said, to Kellynch Lodge, and she will give company to Lady Russell.

So what kind of house does she live in? She lives in a modern and elegant apartment and Anne's function is to gladden the eyes of its mistress. This last phrase is very, very interesting, because once again we realized that Anne is going to have a job to fulfil, if she is going to be a guest, she is not the one who is going to be entertained, in fact it is the opposite. Anne is going to entertain the mistress of Kellynch Lodge and the mistress is Lady Russell.

So we see a kind of an inferior position that Anne Elliot occupies in every domesticity to which she is an invited member. And that is a slightly disturbing, why is there an unequal relationship between Anne and the rest of the populace of Kellynch lodge or Uppercross

cottage or the Great House at Uppercross. So there is a very clear-cut imbalance of power in the spaces that Anne occupies.

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Preferred Spatialities and People

- “how much more interesting to her was the home and the friendship of the Harvilles and Captain Benwick, than her own father’s house in Camden Place, or her own sister’s intimacy with Mrs Clay.”

*Kith & kin VS friends
Social circle*

Now Anne is kind of judging the various spatialities and the various groups of people that she has met with so far and she believes that how much more interesting to her was the home and the friendship of the Harvilles and captain Benwick, than her own father's house in Camden place or her own sister's intimacy with Mrs. Clay. So again there is a comparison going on between a, her father's house in Bath, the place that he has rented which is called Camden place and b, the homes of the Harvilles.

And she is comparing the, you know the company of her sister, Mrs. Clay and her father with the company that she has, you know come into contact with in the Harville home, such as the company of Captain Benwick. So the word, the key word here is “interesting”. She finds these people who are not her relatives, who were actually you know not her kith and kin, not as interesting as the friends, the social circle that she has met with at Lyme.

So family, you know, becomes somehow not very attractive, because of their lack of empathy for Anne and that family relationship is kind of displaced in Anne's mind in favor of the friends whom Anne is treated with a lot of respect and admiration, for example Captain Benwick. Captain Benwick is, you know, visibly you know affected by Anne's readings, the quality of her intellect, and Anne assumes a superior position in terms of Captain Benwick when she advises him as to the kind of material that he should read in order to suppress the depressing, you know emotion that is running through him. And we have actually, you know,

come across Captain Benwick's past and Anne's advice is you know intended to lessen the painful past of Captain Benwick.

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Kellynch Hall

- "your feelings are less reconciled to the change than mine. By remaining in the neighbourhood, I am become inured to it."
- "in conscience feel that they were gone who deserved not to stay, and that Kellynch Hall had passed into better hands than its owners."

loss of their place at Kellynch Hall
The Grays

Now we will come to a point in the novel, where we see Anne conversing with Lady Russell as to the events that have happened so far and Anne says that to Lady Russell that "Your feelings are less reconciled to the change than mine. By remaining in the neighbourhood I am become inured to it." So here they are talking about the loss of their place at Kellynch Hall.

And we know that Lady Russell who favours, or who prefers the aristocracy, the nobility to the other classes in terms of the privileges that are supposed to be enjoyed by people. Anne knows this and Anne says that you are not reconciled to the change that has happened in this particular village, because you have not been in the neighbourhood, in fact you have gone away, but I, on the other hand, I have become inured to it. I have become accustomed to it. I have become, you know, familiar with it. So I am able to tolerate it better, and she says that I have been in the neighbourhood so I have seen Kellynch Hall in the hands of other people and I am used to this, whereas you have not. And here we can sense that Lady Russell is somehow like a mirror of Sir Walter Elliot and Elizabeth Elliot in this regard, in terms of their feelings for the privileges of the aristocracy.

But Anne knows that, deep down she knows that in conscience, they were gone who deserved not to stay and that Kellynch Hall had passed into better hands than its owners. So the second excerpt there on the slide tells us the contrast between the first point of view and the other.

Anne offers some kind of comfort to Lady Russell here, but she knows that deep down her father, the living parent and her sister Elizabeth Elliot do not deserve to stay at Kellynch Hall.

The place has a nobility of its own in terms of the spirit. It is embodying. So they do not deserve to stay in that hall and they have gone and the hall has passed into better hands than its owner. So the owners are the Elliots and the better hands are the Crofts.

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The Crofts Alterations to Kellynch Hall

- "few alterations we have made have been all very much for the better."
- "I have done very little besides sending away some of the large looking-glasses from my dressing-room, which was your father's....Such a number of looking-glasses, oh Lord! there was no getting away from one's self. So I got Sophy to lend me a hand, and we soon shifted their quarters; and now I am quite snug, with my little shaving glass in one corner, and another great thing that I never go near."

Anne does get to witness some of the changes that has happened at Kellynch Hall through her visit to the Crofts. And she visits the Croft in the company of Lady Russell, and in that conversation between the Crofts and Anne, we get to see what are the positive changes that have happened there, and this first excerpt there on the slide is a quotation from Admiral Croft's words to Anne Elliot.

And he says that I have made a few alterations and those few alterations we have made have been all very much for the better. And if you remember the previous excerpt, the same word better is echoed there too. So Anne does endorse the opinions of the Crofts, when she feels that they are the better owners of that place. And what are the alterations that have happened to Kellynch Hall? And he says that I have done very little besides sending away some of the large looking-glasses from my dressing room, which was your father's. Such a number of looking-glasses, Oh Lord! there was no getting away from oneself. So I got Sophy to lend me a hand and we soon shifted their quarters and now I am quite snug with my little shaving glass in one corner and another great thing that I never go near. So this set of words uttered by Admiral Croft tells us the small changes that he has you know brought in into his living

space at Kellynch Hall, even though those changes are small and the things that have been removed are trivial, they do give us a sense of the ideological reasons behind such an alteration.

So he says that I have removed all the looking glasses, the mirrors of Sir Walter Elliot, and we know that the Sir Walter Elliot is a very, very vain man. He constantly likes to look at his own figure on the looking glass. So here we get a contrast between Admiral Croft and Sir Walter. Admiral Croft is not a vain man at all. In fact, he does not like to look at his figure in the mirror, in fact, which is why he has removed all these glasses from his dressing room.

Look at the way he does it. He says that I got Sophy to lend me a hand and who is Sophy, Sophy is the wife of Admiral Croft. So they do not get a servant to come and do this for them, in fact they do it on their own. So that again gives a very, very symbolic window into the kind of tasks that you know they are willing to perform on by themselves. So this capacity to be very proactive, this capacity to get things done by their own effort is indicative of the work ethic of the middle classes.

And another very interesting thing in this context is the fact that the husband and the wife work together. It is a joint job that they perform. So again there is a lot of camaraderie there, unison in terms of consensual alterations that are to be performed in the living space. So this picture that we get of Admiral Croft and Sophy is a very attractive and charming window into their domesticity.

And it is quite unlike the domesticity of Sir Walter Elliot or the Musgroves in Uppercross cottage or the older Musgroves at the Great House who seem to be, you know, harmless, but they are also clueless as to what is real value. Thank you for watching. I will continue in my

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