

『ニコラス・ニクルビー』におけるケイトの役割

角田 裕子 (日本大学大学院博士後期課程)

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1. Nicholas's education from his experiences, although not developed with the sophistication later seen in *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations*, gives the novel affinities in particular with the *BILDUNGSROMAN*. (Schlicke, *Oxford Reader's Companion to Dickens*, 415)
2. It has magnificent features. Mrs Nickleby is a great comic creation and the central image of her ceaseless chain of speech is genteel, wounded egotism.
(Wilson, *The World of Charles Dickens*, 132)
3. But how the graces and elegancies which she had dispersed about the poorly-furnished room, went to the heart of Nicholas! Flowers, plants, birds, the harp, the old piano whose notes had sounded so much sweeter in bygone times – how many struggles had it cost her to keep these two last links of that broken chain which bound her yet to home! With every slender ornament, the occupation of her leisure hours, replete with that graceful charm which lingers in every little tasteful work of woman's hands, how much patient endurance and how many gentle affections were entwined! He felt as though the smile of Heaven were on the little chamber; as though the beautiful devotion of so young and weak a creature, had shed a ray of its own on the inanimate things around the made them beautiful as itself; as though the halo with which old painters surrounded the bright angles of a sinless world played about a being akin in spirit to them, and its light were visibly before him.
(Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby*, 571-72; ch.46)
4. The younger lady was in the lovely bloom and spring-time of womanhood; at that age when, if ever angels be for God's good purposes enthroned in mortal forms, they may be without impiety supposed to abide in such as hers.
She was not past seventeen. Cast in so slight and exquisite a mould, so mild and gentle, so pure and beautiful, that earth seemed not her element, nor its rough creatures her fit companions. The very intelligence that shone in her deep blue eye and was stamped upon her noble head, seemed scarcely of her age or of the world, and yet the changing

expression of sweetness and good humour, the thousand lights that played about the face and left no shadow there; above all, the smile - the cheerful happy smile - were entwined with the best sympathies and affections of our nature.

(Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, 235; bk.2, ch.7)

5. 'I hold you in the bitterest detestation and contempt, sir,' said Kate. 'If you find any attraction in looks of disgust and aversion, you – let me rejoin my friends, sir, instantly. Whatever considerations may have withheld me thus far, I will disregard them all, and take a course that even *you* might feel, if you do not immediately suffer me to proceed.'

(Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby*, 341-42; ch.27)

6. 'I do,' said Kate, with honest indignation. 'Whether you make this accusation of yourself, or at the prompting of others, is alike to me. I say it *is* vilely, grossly, wilfully untrue. Is it possible!' cried Kate, 'that any one of my own sex can have sat by, and not have seen the misery these men have caused me! Is it possible that you, ma'am, can have been present, and failed to mark the insulting freedom that their every look bespoke? Is it possible that you can have avoided seeing, that these libertines, in their utter disrespect for you, and utter disregard of all gentlemanly behaviour and almost of decency, have had but one object in introducing themselves here, and that the furtherance of their designs upon a friendless, helpless girl, who, without this humiliating confession, might have hoped to receive from one so much her senior something like womanly aid and sympathy? I do not – I cannot believe it!' (Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby*, 352-53; ch.28)

7. 'In the meantime,' interrupted Kate, with becoming pride and indignation, 'I am to be the scorn of my own sex, and the toy of the other; justly condemned by all women of right feeling, and despised by all honest and honourable men; sunken in my own esteem, and degraded in every eye that looks upon me. (Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby*, 356; ch.28)

8. The heroine of his next novel, Kate Nickleby, is the hero's inspiring young sister and also a 'very beautiful girl of about seventeen', but manages to get a little further away from the 'loved original' than does Rose Maylie – not sufficiently far, however, to be able to flicker into much independent life. (Slater, *Dickens and Women*, 95)

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