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Poverty and Criminality in Charles Dickens'

“Oliver Twist”

*An Extended Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for a
Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization*

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Declaration

We hereby announce that this research entitled “Poverty and Criminality in Charles Dickens’ *‘Oliver Twist’*” was written by Us, Miss SOUFI Imene and Miss BENTAHROUR Hadjer, under the supervision of Miss Fatima, Z.REZIGUE This extended essay is to be submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a Master’s degree in Literature and Civilization.

This extended essay is the outcome of our readings and researches and it has been originally written by us entirely. Any source of information we have used is mentioned at the end of this research paper and this research has also not been published nor submitted in any university or web sites before this time.

Dedication

First of all, we dedicate this humble work to our parents and siblings who did not miss any opportunity to make us feel that we are queens in our homes, who were effective comforters for us in times of our stress during the writing of this research.

We also dedicate it for our dear friends whom were always emotionally supporting us and in charge of hearing us complaining over and over.

To our classmates.

To everyone once supported us.

Thank you all.

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Abstract:

Literature is the mirror of society that pictures real events reflecting the social, political, or historical phenomena that societies suffer from. This extended essay aims at analyzing Charles Dickens' "*Oliver Twist*" novel shedding the light on the English society during the Industrial Revolution in the late 19th century based on the Marxist literary criticism's theory. The major problem in this analytical research is to reveal that poverty, in addition to the obligation of life's circumstances, is a symptom of criminality. In order to complete this study and reach significant results, we tackled the historical background of the author's society during the Victorian era showing the impact of the Industrial Revolution that boosted both of poverty and criminality's rates. Through the former, the focus is on the setting and the characters as we attempt to investigate the different crimes committed by different people for different reasons. Furthermore, this investigation exposes the crucial role played by Dickens in rising the public's awareness to the seriousness of the dilemma of poverty through his social reforms. We will also try to document some hypotheses linking poverty and criminality trying to find the true causes of adults' inclusion in the world of crime in general. To get to the last step of our research that tackles how and why it was easy for children to be trapped in the criminal underworld after a deep scrutiny of Oliver's personality and his experience in both worlds.

Key words:

The Victorian era - The Industrial Revolution - Poverty - Criminality - The obligation of life's circumstances – Poverty is a symptom of criminality - Social reforms - Marxist literary criticism - Underworld.

ملخص

يعتبر الأدب مرآة المجتمع الذي يعالج الأحداث الحقيقية التي تعكس الظواهر الاجتماعية أو السياسية أو التاريخية التي تعاني منها المجتمعات. يهدف هذا المقال الموسع إلى تحليل رواية تشارلز ديكنز "أوليفر تويست" التي تلقي الضوء على المجتمع الإنجليزي خلال الثورة الصناعية في أواخر القرن التاسع عشر على أساس نظرية النقد الأدبي الماركسي. تتمثل المشكلة الرئيسية في هذا البحث التحليلي في التحقق أن الفقر بالإضافة إلى ظروف الحياة، هو أحد أعراض الجريمة. من أجل استكمال هذه الدراسة والوصول إلى نتائج مهمة، سوف نتناول بعض الخلفيات التاريخية التي تعبر عن مجتمع الكاتب ديكنز خلال العصر الفيكتوري لتوضيح تأثير الثورة الصناعية التي عززت ارتفاع معدلات الفقر والإجرام. من خلال هذا البحث، سيعب التركيز على الإطارين المكاني والزمني والشخصيات الخيالية المجسدة دورا هاما في التحقيق في الجرائم المختلفة المرتكبة من طرف شخصيات مختلفة لأسباب متعددة. علاوة على ذلك، سنحاول من خلال هذا التحقيق تسليط الضوء على دور ديكنز الحاسم في توعية الجمهور بخطورة معضلة الفقر من خلال إصلاحاته الاجتماعية، وسنحاول أيضًا توثيق بعض الفرضيات التي تربط بين الفقر والإجرام من أجل لعثور على الأسباب الحقيقية لانخراط البالغين في عالم الجريمة بشكل عام. للوصول إلى الخطوة الأخيرة من بحثنا التي تتناول كيف ولماذا كان من السهل استدراج الأطفال إلى العالم الإجرامي بعد تحليل عميق لشخصية أوليفر وتجربته في كلا العالمين.

الكلمات الدلالية:

الأدب الفيكتوري - الثورة الصناعية - الفقر - الإجرام - ظروف الحياة - الفقراء - أعراض الجريمة - الإصلاحات الاجتماعية - النقد الأدبي الماركسي - العالم السفلي

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Literature is one of the gates that reflect the development of life. The Victorian literature, or art, is considered to be the art of realism, as it was the period of the embodiment of reality by many writers and novelists. So that many Victorian writers, such as the Brontë sisters and Charles Dickens, adopted the realistic frame to express and deliver a concrete image of the living conditions' reality during the Victorian period through their adoption of multiple and different topics such as political issues, social issues, and the various problems that the Victorians from different classes faced including poverty and criminality which also took a big part in the British Victorian Literature.

Charles Dickens was a Victorian novelist who gets into the hearts of the majority by believing that writing plays a big role in shedding the light on the problems of the world and why not fixing them. He made his serious fiction into a satiric and humorous mold to illustrate the real social issues during the 19th century. Dickens is also considered to be a social reformer who through his writings draws attention to a verity of wrong and corrupted things that were happening in his society such as the poor law amendment and the harsh living conditions. As he also proved himself in the field of the social justice writing by tackling the social issues like the boost of poverty and criminality in a fictional way.

One of Dickens' famous literary works "*Oliver Twist*" is the chosen masterpiece for this extended essay since it is known for being strongly critical as it is a realistic picture of the Victorian social conditions. The story of "*Oliver Twist*" has an interesting plot, which depicts the reality of the criminal underworld, revolving around an orphan innocent boy who was abandoned with no mercy in the streets of London where he witnessed the cruelty of the Victorian society, poverty, and starvation. So that he ended up by being brought up to the criminal environment meeting different types of criminals committing different levels of crimes and successively trying to involve him in their shameful world. This novel was

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admired by many readers including Queen Victoria, whom was a fan of Dickens, and enjoyed reading this novel where she described it as excessively interesting in her diary.

Noting the dilemma of the boost of the crime rate which has multiplied and differed causes to the point that made it an integral part of our homeland, Algeria, in the recent years, we were motivated to write this extended essay to make it cross the Algerian borders to reach the British ones, rather, the Victorian-British era, also to depict the suffering of the British from the same dilemma ages ago.

In this extended essay, we first aim to shed the light on the impact of literature on triggering the readers' attention towards certain issues where we are going to investigate the 19th c crimes that existed in England and specifically London. This study also aims to depict the realistic part that Dickens' novel "*Oliver Twist*" holds on concerning this phenomenon where we are going to analyze some portrayed crimes' causes, in which poverty was the major one, and punishments during the Victorian era through the use of language and structure in "*Oliver Twist*" under the Marxist theory. Most importantly through this extended essay, we work on displaying the experience of the poor little children's experiences via the character of Oliver Twist, where we investigate whether Oliver is a thief or a victim by analyzing his case in both worlds.

The main questions that this research work is going to shed the light on are:

- 1- In which way did the Industrial Revolution have an impact on both the Victorian British social realm and boost of both poverty and criminality?
- 2- What is the source of the criminal behaviours? Are crimes results of the rational choice or the influence of the life's circumstances?

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3- How does Charles Dickens reflect the issues of poverty and criminality in his novel “*Oliver Twist*”, and did he in any way try to raise the public’s awareness towards these two phenomena?

4- Is *Oliver Twist* a thief or a victim?

In an attempt of answering the main questions of this extended essay, it is assumed that the Industrial Revolution contributed to many positive changes for Great Britain, but this did not prevent the existence of a downside to it so that it was not a time for prosperity for everyone as some of the underworld people could barely earn enough to afford their livelihood, which made most of them find their own rescue in the criminal path that provided them with money to survive and escape starvation. The Marxists suggest that the economical system of capitalism resulted poverty which itself is a symptom of criminality, as it is also suggested that besides poverty, living in a criminal environment increases the risk of being a criminal through time since most violent behaviors are acquired behaviors, especially for children because their behaviors can be easily modeled.

As it can be considered that Dickens through the elements of his novel, plot, characters, and setting, gave a genuine representation of the poor underworld as he applied different ways of reforms to draw his readers' attention towards the sources of both poverty and criminality. Finally, it is argued that Oliver became a part of the gang against his own will where he was a victim of the criminal environment and the people surrounding him, whom successively tried corrupting him.

As for the methodology, a qualitative approach will be used during the thematic analysis of poverty and criminality, and how the prevalence of crime is linked to the rise of the rate of poverty. The primary source that we will rely on in the analytical chapters will be

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Dickens' novel "*Oliver Twist*", whereas the secondary sources will include some articles, essays, and some educational web sites that will be helpful and relevant to the theme. In addition, analyzing "*Oliver Twist*" in this study also requires the analytic method that requires an adaptation of the Marxist literary criticism to give a clear image about the inequalities between the proletariat and the nobility and the suffering of the lower class in England during the 19th century and that led to the boost of the crime rates.

In order to carry out the research, the framework of this extended essay is divided into four chapters. In the attempt of understanding the issues of poverty and criminality during the Victorian era and the relation between them, it is important to know the primary causes that led to boost of these issues. Thus, the first chapter, which tackles the historical part, will cover an overview of the Victorian society. Thus, the first part of this chapter depicts the impact of the Industrial Revolution on the Victorian social realm. The second part introduces the different social layers of the Victorian community and the characteristics of each layer, whereas the third part sheds light on the boost of the phenomenon of criminality during the Victorian era highlighting the role of poverty in the spread of all kinds of crimes.

The second chapter, which is the theoretical part, is devoted to clarify some concepts in order to highlight the relationship between literature and society. Thus, in this chapter we will first be referring to some of the key concepts of the Marxist literary theory that would shape our analytical research. In this chapter we also tend to study closely "Criminality" and "Poverty" as concepts since they are worldwide known as social phenomena that may influence any society, we are going to provide some sources of criminality that might be a rational choice or obligation of circumstances where poverty is considered as one of the symptoms of criminality.

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The third chapter, which is the first analytical part, is divided into two parts to study of the depiction of poverty and criminality in the novel "*Oliver Twist*". Thus, the first part will investigate poverty in the novel where we will be relying much on the setting and the characters in our investigation. Moreover, in this part we will try to link literature with the reality where we show how the law deprived people from their rights and the role of Charles Dickens as a social reformer who reflected the poor living condition in his society through his novel "*Oliver Twist*". Whereas the second part is dedicated to shedding the light on the different characters that committed different crimes for different reasons where Dickens provided them with various punishments that he sees appropriate for each crime they have committed.

The fourth chapter, which is the second analytical part, will draw upon the whole extended essay where its main concern will be relying much more on the character Oliver Twist as an orphaned poor Victorian child to provide a genuine example on the poor Victorian children. Thus this chapter will be divided into three parts, the first part will be studying Oliver's beliefs and action in the monstrous underworld, the second part would be analyzing his thoughts and behaviors in the upper safer world, whereas the last part will be dedicated to answer the question is Oliver a thief or a victim?

All the in-text citations, the works cited, and the methods of writing used in our research paper will follow the MLA Style Handbook Seventh Edition in addition to taking some remarks given by the supervisor.

Chapter One:

An Over View of the Victorian

Society

Introduction:

The emergence of science led to the Industrial Revolution, that with both of its good and bad sides, reversed Great Britain during the Victorian era that undoubtedly became the most remarkable period of the British history due to the successive changes that occurred on most of its aspects. Therefore, this chapter will explore the effects of the industrialization on transforming the social realm of the Victorian community; it will also examine the social layers of the Victorian era. Another main point that this chapter will highlight is the issue of the boost of the crimes' rates in the 19th century and the solutions provided by the government for this issue.

I.1 The Impact of the Industrial Revolution on the Social Realm

The Queen Victoria reined England for over 60 years from 1837 until her death on 22 January 1901. Her ruling period, which is known as the Victorian era, was a great time of prosperity in most of the English aspects including political reforms, social variations, and economic changes that resulted from the Industrial Revolution which made Britain one of the most powerful states with a strong economical system.

I.1.1 The Industrial Revolution:

The Industrial Revolution began in the mid-eighteenth century and lasted until the late 19th century, caused the biggest changes not only in Europe but in the whole world's countries. Its major changes can be summarized in the shift from an agricultural to an industrial stage; bringing the necessary advantages which made a new Great Britain that is able to rule the modern world.

The Industrial Revolution went through several stages before reaching its climax and the main factor for that was the workers' skills and efforts to keep pace with the changes of

the age, in which they developed their industry and invented huge factories. This remarkable period of history is known with its global change that made a big impact in large parts of England where by the end of the 19th century a small island, Great Britain, stepped up to rule a big empire due to the several changes that were brought up by the Industrial Revolution.

I.1.1.2 A double-Edged Industrial Revolution:

The fact that the Industrial Revolution was the most important event that occurred in the Victorian era based on the idea that the more to know the more powerful to become, it can simply be said that the Industrial Revolution was neither only positive because of the knowledge that brought up positive developments on the social, the political, and the commercial levels, nor fully negative only by changing everything that was once beautiful and peaceful. In other words, the Industrial Revolution is like a double-edged sword where the way it is hold determines its function making a huge impact.

I.1.1.2.1 The Positive Impacts of the Industrial Revolution:

There were a lot of positive impacts during the Industrial Revolution that changed England in almost all the fields starting from the economical system to some progressive actions in the social realm.

The Industrial Revolution was an era of creativity that gave birth to new innovations such as the telegraph that is considered as one of the most important inventions that shapes today's world communication because it reduces distances and makes the global world a small city, another creative invention appeared at that time which was the dream of every writer, "the modern typewriter" or a "typographer" which was created by Christopher Sholes in 1867, in addition to James Watt's creation of the steam engine that is considered to be the

most interesting and revolutionary invention that ascended both of the Industrial Revolution and Great Britain to the top. (McFadden Np)

Mokyr highlighted the reasons behind the rise of the technological inventions and how it had helped Great Britain grew economically by saying:

That scientific knowledge increased enough to allow continuous invention. Technological improvement was certainly at the heart of the matter, but it was not due to discoveries in science—at least not before 1900. The reason that incomes continued to grow in the hundred years after Waterloo was because Britain's pre-1815 inventions were particularly transformative, much more so than continental inventions. That is a second reason that the Industrial Revolution was British and also the reason that growth continued throughout (qtd. in Allen 2)

He asserts that the application of the scientific developments played a major role in the progress of the British economy due to the technological development through time.

Besides the development of the means of communication that facilitated the interactions between Britain and the other world's countries since the most important economic operations were taking place outside Britain, the economic growth was the fastest at that time; where it includes the sector of services in which Britain managed to practice most of its commercial practices and trades deals on the international level.

Moreover, manufacturing changed the type of production since it is a shifting process from an agrarian labor society to an industrial one which replaced labor by machines since its speed saves time leading to a notable augmentation in production. By the end of the 19th century, a new modern industry emerged that is the Textile industry which was among the

first creations that begun in big factories. This new creations includes using electricity, machines, and production lines. Despite the fact that cotton was considered as the world's most important non-food agricultural product and the disability of growing any cotton plants because of the cold climate, Britain broke all the obstacles and succeeded in the Cotton Textile making a huge economic income through it. (McFadden Np)

Analysts like McFadden agree that this huge movement was generally positive. However, besides the bunch of radical changes brought up by the Industrial Revolution and its virtuous impacts on Great Britain, it still dragged the society, that was still trying to adapt with the new industrial rules, into other problems such as the growth of population in different situations, and made the world face a terrible technological advance that is still chasing the prosperity of the British country causing it many obstacles.

I.1.1.2.2 The Negative Impacts of the Industrial Revolution:

The changes brought up by the Industrial Revolution made the prevailing climate in the society dispersion where many problems started appearing including the global warming phenomenon that resulted from the factories' smokes and gases, the spread of environmental pollution, the spread of some social pests like unemployment, child labor, criminality and poverty, which are the main topics of this extended essay.

In addition to the fact that people were still trying to adapt with the new industrial world because they were equipped to work in lands as peasants, paying taxes, and receiving low incomes, there was another issue that is the unemployment which appeared with the increased number of the factories that replaced people by machines, and since most of the lower class people suffered from illiteracy and lack of education they were prevented from knowing how to use the new industrial machines where they ended up by being jobless. Even

though those illiterate people were given the chance to work, they were treated in an inhuman way in which they had to work for long hours in exchange of lower wages. The difficulty of finding a job for poor citizens and the bad working conditions, like the lack of insurance, made it quite impossible for the poor to find other resources of income for the family dragging them into an extreme poverty and why not to criminality.

The wealthy people's abuse of the poor workers reached the highest levels of inhumanity that enabled them to rely on the child labor. At that time poor families could not take care of the whole members because of the issue of the unemployment and the bad living conditions which made children leave schools in early ages and go to streets in order to find jobs to help their families. David McDowall assumed that the child labor dramatically increased during the beginning of the 19th century where little children were working to help their families starting from a very young age since the factories owners knew their hopeless situations so they violated them by making them work for very cheap wages. (120)

Finally, sociologists and economists confirm that the negative side of the Industrial Revolution caused a massive damage in the social structure because it leads to an illegal exploitation by the noble class toward the poor class boosting the rates of poverty and criminality.

I.2 The Social Layers of the Victorian Community:

Social classes are the classifications of the individual's and the groups' positions in a society according to the agreed standards, Anja Weiß mentioned that the "Position or layers are clusters of persons who share structurally homologous capability structural positions with respect to one or more dimensions of social inequality." (9) Weiß considers that people belonging to the same social class must share similarities of the characteristics and

occupations so that there should be homogeneity between them where it has to be noticeable that they are belonging to the same class.

The 19th century Victorian society was known by being divided into three social layers the upper class or what is called as aristocracy, the middle class, which has emerged during the Victorian era because of the Industrial Revolution, and the lower class, or what is called by the working class. Each of these classes is defined by certain characteristics and standards where the existence of these classes created a big issue which is the inequalities between these layers in various domains such as wealth, education, power, and life conditions.

I.2.1 The Upper Class:

The upper class or what is called as “Aristocracy” includes wealthy people that are not necessarily originally nobles due to the emergence of new affiliates to this class from the middle class and even the lower class whom made advantage of the Industrial Revolution and developed themselves and their fortune, the individuals or the groups whom belongs to this class are generally characterized by having better manners than the other classes’ citizens owning lands, factories, large fortunes, and big houses.

Mark Giroard discussed in his research entitled “Victorian Values and the upper classes” that the upper class people cared a lot about education, the two most common public schools that the rich children attended were Eton and Harrow because they cared about prestige and that’s what they could get in these two schools, there were also another school that is less common which is the Winchester that was attended by the children of the newly wealthy and noble families. (58) The upper class families wanted their children to study either politics or commerce in order to guarantee their success in the future and to obtain prominent positions in society.

The characteristics of the upper class people were mainly the use of a higher level of language to express their culture and knowledge, the very respectful attitudes and manners either in their houses with their relatives or with the strangers outside, and the very elegant dress which makes it noticeable that they belong to the bourgeois class. Giroard mentioned that “the upper class life-style has always been influenced by idea-preaching and image-creating members of the class bellow them.” (52) Which means that the upper class citizens were influenced, in terms of life style, by the people whom are imitating them from the other classes, they always seek to be different and more elegant and sophisticated to make themselves unique and higher.

I.2.2The Middle Class:

The middle class is the class that rarely existed before the Victorian era; it included citizens and workers who occupied various domains such as medicine, military, and engineering. This class flourished during the Victorian era because of both of the capitalist system and the Industrial Revolution in which new varieties of citizens upgraded and climb up to reach it such us merchants, small factories owners, and bank workers since they started involving in trade and industry, that was because of the expansion of work opportunities and the ability of selling products of different factories in markets that they were newly classified in the middle class

McDowall mentioned that life was very easy for the middle class people where they were having a totally different and better life especially those who newly became middle class citizens, they enjoyed their new luxurious life and tried to imitate the aristocracy in their way of living, dressing, and talking that became kind of artificial. (139) In order to keep this position, people of middle class appreciated many morale values like discipline and hard work. As a consequence, families of middle class were ordered to limit the number of the

children they had since they were not productive, on the contrary, their needs were based on money and more attention.

In addition to the luxurious life, education was the most important thing for the people belonging to this class where the children attended private schools, grammar schools, or public schools. McDowall discussed how education was a very essential for the middle class citizens, in which they obliged their children to go to schools where their teachers based on providing them with a decent level of education that pushed them to start their self-improvement for the sake of making them the future leaders where he also pointed out that the most preferable fields of education for the middle class students were either commerce or banking since it was the age of industrialization. (140)

The huge adherence to the middle class was the most significant event in the Victorian era. Perhaps the Industrial Revolution was a beneficial point for the new middle class associates as it contributed to radically change their lives.

I.2.3 The Lower Class:

The Lower class was the most suffering class in the Victorian era; Weiß described it by saying that “The lower layers experience a lack of everything.” (10) Indeed, the citizens of this class never owned anything in their lives. The lower class included different levels and groups where the craftsman were earning much more salaries which made them ranked in a higher position than the laborers, the farm workers, the domestic servants, and the factory workers those who, in turn, were considered superior to the unemployed and the poor citizens that were classified in the lowest level of the working class.

Poor people were living either in overcrowded slums or in simple terraced housing where these places were known by the very poor life conditions that deprived them of most of

the living rights. They were working hard for cheap salaries since they were replaced by the machines and at the same time unskilled and unfamiliar with the new machines in the factories. They were not considered as beneficiaries like the middle class because they suffered in the bad and miserable living conditions that mainly led to the spread of child labor, poverty, and illiteracy. Lower class citizens during the Victorian era lived in full degradation during the absence of education and the irresponsibility of the parents that was because of alcoholism. As a result, criminality starts drilling it way through society.

This class' education, unlike the other classes, varied where there were some people who never been educated or entered to schools because their families prevented them from going to schools in order to work at an early age to help them with the life expenses. There were also some whom had a low education which enabled them at least to read and write since they would need it later in various fields of life they might face. Yet, others had received a fairly decent level of education that generally resulted increasing their desire of working hard to overcome the hardship of life where they based on their self-improvement such as the case of Charles Dickens. The available schools for the lower class during the early Victorian era were mainly the "Ragged Schools", which were organized by charities and churches to provide education for very poor people and orphans where the teachers were volunteers, and the "Dame Schools", that were private and organized by women and this type of schools were provided for the higher level of poor families such as craftsmen's' children. ("Education in the Victorian England" para 6)

The Victorian working class was staying away from the political activities. McDowall pointed out that the Victorian working class attempted practicing and organizing a political act but it did not last for long because it was shut down by the government and that is what

made the lower class increase their rebellion and hatred not only for the aristocrats but also for the middle class since they deprived them from their own right. (128)

The lower class has suffered a lot because of the division of classes that classified them at the bottom of the classes' pyramid which resulted the discrimination of the poor people and their suffering from the poor living conditions and even because of the capital system and the Industrial Revolution that violated their rights and reduced their chances of working.

The miserable living conditions was rising the amount of a new phenomenon which is "Prostitution" that was practiced by women from the lower class that considered it as one of the alternatives and solutions for making a better living quickly. For Kathleen Faure "Prostitution was a social issue in every industrialized city or town of England, hence the name given to it by some Victorians: 'The Great Social Evil'." (7) Which means that prostitution was wildly spread in Britain and considered to be unethical and "Evil" because this heinous act often ended in sexually transmitted diseases that caused the end of many people's lives.

The 19th century's England witnessed a very complicated and successive social mobility, where people from the lower class climbed to the middle class and others from the middle class to the upper class, whereas some other individuals and families from the upper class slipped down to the middle class and even to the lower one, either because of their bad luck or the abuse of their fortune and fell into debts like Charles Dickens' family. The dire situation faced by the lower class led them to take the criminal path as the easiest and fastest way to escape from the difficult situations they are suffering from and the famine that was threatening their health to preserve their lives. This, in turn, led to an increase in crime at the Victorian society level.

I.3 Crimes in the Victorian England:

The 19th century in Britain is considered as a remarkable rise in industry, trade, and economy, but these changes were among the most important factors in the spread of poverty and the discrimination of the poor people, that led to the dramatic spread of the phenomenon of crimes all over Britain, especially in the inner cities, creating a big fear within the society. The British government hired police men and took appropriate penalties to limit the crime's high rate.

I.3.1 The Boost of Criminality in the 19th Century:

The Industrial Revolution and the economical development brought up many shifts in the British society. A huge gap in the social system was created leading many people to become wealthy, and at the same time making the situation of the poor families worsen more than it was before, and that was due to many factors such as the rapid urbanization, that was as a reaction of building factories in agricultural places which made people jobless and have no means of living but to move to the urban cities to search for works which helped creating other problems like unemployment or the employment with cheap salaries.

Poor People suffered from the awful living conditions where food and life essentials were very expensive which made them incapable to provide normal healthy lives to themselves. Not only that, but also the political system served in making things worse, for examples the new poor law that has been applied by the government in 1834, where workhouses were supposed to be built to reduce some social problems but it was not the case since they turned to be much more like prisons rather than a safe place where people were living in pity, having to work hardly for ten hours even children for unequal wages, and getting watery soups and bread.

The historians Donald Macrauld and Frank Neal explained that “Poverty and modern urban environments became recognized factors of crime.” (qtd.in Sample 7) It was not only the amount of urbanization and poverty that was increasing but also crimes. Many people who had no employment and could not feed their families so the easiest way for them would be to turn to criminality either through pick pocketing, breaking houses, or murdering.

The crimes that were committed in the 19th century were mainly committed by people whom can be easily identified by their looks, spend most of their time roaming in the streets and waiting for opportunities to commit crimes, and also spending their time on training on pick pocketing, house breaking, thievery... Etc. These common characteristics between criminals led to the invention of another class that was labeled as “The criminal class” or what is called “The Underworld” by the upper class, the new class occupies the lowest position in the hierarchy. The underworld was considered to be the class that represents the poorest citizens of Britain, where this class was assumed to be the most specialized category in the world of criminality; that represented a danger to the Victorian society as a whole and to the wealthy class in particular.

There were a huge number of the novels that were produced about this particular theme which showed that both writers and readers were solicitous about crimes .The British authors in the 19th century wanted to take the current situation of their homeland as a starting point for writing exclusive novels that narrate and visualize reality, where they invented fake names from their imaginations to write real events and make it appear like imaginary fictional novels. Charles Dickens was one of the rare writers who used this genre of writing to transmit facts about the reality about the crimes that happened in the English underworld during the 19th century where the depiction of crimes in the Victorian era can be easily noticed in his novel “*Oliver Twist*” where he gave vivid examples of types of crimes and criminals to

provide his readers with an approximate picture of the underworld and the dangerous villainous people whom belonged to the criminal class.

In conclusion, criminality was generally a result of both the worst environment that the individuals live in, whether this environment is known by the very bad condition or by the abnormal things and acts that its citizens commit. Extreme poverty at that time equaled criminality and that was by the press and the media's invention of the "Underworld" idea that never existed before the 19th century.

I.3.2 Crimes' Prosecutions and Punishments:

For decades executions in public was the most common punishment against crimes, where everyone had to attend to witness this punishment against generally all types of crimes, a huge debate was held about whether this punishment is human or not because of the violent process of executing criminals that was terrible where the hang rope used to be placed on the neck of the criminal and a dark hood used to cover their heads in which it obscures them from seeing the audience that were witnessing the punishment of hanging, they end up by being left in public dangled where they gradually strangle until they die, this act was considered to be inhuman for some people whereas it was the right and the most fair punishment for others.

Another punishment that was used by the British courts was the transportation that was mainly to Australia, transportations were intended to punish all types of minor criminals such as thieves and pickpockets, whereas the prisons were only for debtors. The Victorian government changed the law of punishments in which the death penalty was retained only for those who commit murder.

The Victorians built larger ordered prisons all over Britain for both punishments and rehabilitation of criminals to prevent criminality and that was mentioned in the first reform act in the 1820s where it stated that the criminals should be classified in the prisons where criminals needs to be separated into groups, the separation should be based on the gender, the age, and the types of crimes.

The punishments for crimes were diverse suiting the criminals' situations where the prisoners should be fed regularly with healthy food. The common punishments that the Victorian government used were either few weeks' hard labor for young people or prison for adults as a charge of stealing and for the kids the punishments were mainly rehabilitation where reform prisons were built specifically for children in which it contained a high security system in addition to schools which made rehabilitation being considered as a way of reform to become a better person that might help in the society's development.

The death penalty was still going for murder cases where the debate about this penalty has always continued until the appearance of "abolishing movements" that were defending human rights and refusing the inhuman process of executing criminals, until the Church of England supported it by mentioning that it appears in the bible until Bishop Wilberforce suggested to apply these executions in the prisons rather than in public and his suggestion was applied in 1868 in a more humane way that satisfied the majority of the Victorians where the criminals would be carried out by professional hangmen and the weights and measurements of the person that would be hanged should be taken to use the appropriate process of hanging including the quality and the length of the rope to lead to rapid death (*BBC // Crime and Punishment* 00:15:56-00:20:28)

Through the Queen Victoria's reign the treatment of criminals by the society drastically changed, at the beginning criminals were assumed to be only the ones deriving

from the poorest lower class that has chosen to afford their living in an unethical and illegal way, then it shifted to inventing a label which was the criminal class to describe these criminals, ending up by taking in consideration the criminal's biological, psychological, and sociological issues which might led them to commit crimes. These successive changes of the social assumption on criminals in turns successively changed the courts' decisions about the necessary penalties.

Conclusion:

Overall, the impact of the double-edged Industrial Revolution was powerful and massive since from the one hand it developed the British economy making the rich class more richer, whereas on the other hand it destroyed the lives of the poor class where it made them even poorer depriving them from the working opportunities which in turn deprived them of living. Most of the poor class found their own rescue in the criminal path that provided them money to survive and escape famine. The growing turnout of people to the field of criminality and thievery contributed in the dramatic rise of crime in the 19th century England. Charles Dickens was one of the most known novelists in England during the 19th century due to experiencing the bad conditions of the poor class and the criminal class and taking advantage of his writing career to portray and shed the light on these social issues and conditions starting his mission as a social reformer hoping to spot the light on certain social issues of the Victorian society.

Chapter Two:

The Individual between Poverty

and Criminality

Introduction:

The Victorian era is known by its realistic literary writings that were generally criticized by many theories including the Marxist literary criticism which was the most known applied criticism on most of the Victorian pieces of writing especially the ones tackling the issues of poverty and criminality that were among the major issues that were reflected in most of the realistic novels. Hence, this chapter is devoted to the analysis of some of the Marxist literary criticism's key concepts, then analyzing the concept of poverty, its causes and whether it leads to criminality or not, whereas the last part will be devoted to analyzing the concept of criminality and whether it is a choice or an obligation of the life' circumstance.

II.1 The Marxist Literary Criticism:

Marxism is a theory that emerged for the sake of changing the world where its leaders dig into creating a balance to make a better version of the world, to maintain a safer and securer place for the oppressed and the controlled people.

The Marxist literary criticism begins with Georg Lukács (1885-1971) and extends to new expositors such as Terry Eagleton and Fredric Jameson. It is also applied by many writers such as Marx himself and Charles Dickens, within their literary texts to provide the readers with a significant way to understand pieces of literary writings and critically analyse them since it deals with social, political, and economical issues, as it also deals with ideology, history, and society. Marxist literary criticism contains many key concepts including “The Class Struggle”, “The Ideological and Repressive Apparatuses”, and “Reflectionism”.

II.1.1 The Class Struggle:

The Victorian society is known by its class struggle that is considered to be the hostility in society for the sake of variant interests of various groups of people. The Marxist consideration of classes in the society that is led by the capitalist system determines two main classes, “The Bourgeoisie” which is the dominating class that controls the markets, and rules private properties, where they care only about their self-interest. Whereas the second class is “The Proletariat” or what is called the working class that is known by being monopolized and working hard for cheap salaries to serve the ruling class.

Peter Barry pointed to the idea that Marxism considers that the development had been brought up by the “struggle for power” between the two classes where the poor people are always abolished to serve the wealthy ones. (157) This exploitation of one class by another one somehow led to the alienation of people from the products that they are producing mainly because of the division of labour or the separation of tasks that the wealthy capitalists consider to be natural since they privilege capital over labour.

Robert Dale Parker mentioned that Marx argued that the factory workers are “subjected to the **alienation of labor**” after the division of labor in factories. Where he also compared the earlier time’s workers that witnessed the process of making their products from its beginning until its end, whereas the factories workers never had the chance to do that ending up by being alienated to their labor. (190-191) The workers were treated inhumanely and seen only as machines that would only help the factories’ owners in manufacturing their materials in a record time to earn money quickly, everything was calculated without considering that the workers are human beings.

Hicks Malcolm and Bill Hutchings stated that:

Within a political framework which sees progress towards a classless society as both inevitable and ideal, the Marxist critic rejects any notion that a text's excellence resides in its universality. To attribute value on those grounds is to confirm a conservative world and the moral systems which support it. Rather, he or she approves of the social and historical placing of texts as essential for demonstrating their relevance to the political movement of their times. In a propagandist sense, Marxist criticism assigns value according to the detection of effective content in the political struggle towards the classless ideal: once it has served its term, literature can be consigned to the dustbin of history. (8)

Malcolm and Hutching in this passage refer to the fact that there are no Marxist critic who mentioned or proved that the classless society has ever been accomplished and by saying "literature can be consigned to the dustbin of history", they might want to state that it would be a big mistake if a successful classless society would be demonstrated in literary texts since throughout history there has been always a conflict between the two classes. Their theory can be proven via George Orwell's fiction "*Animal Farm*" where the classless society's idea failed because of the corruption of its ideals where there can never be a society without at least guidance or leadership.

II.1.2 The Repressive and The Ideological State Apparatus:

The Marxists see the state as the capitalist's ruling class only mean of control and maintaining a dominant position. The French Marxist Louis Althusser wrote a book entitled *On The Reproduction of Capitalism Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* in which he transformed the concept "State Apparatus" and redefined the theory of ideology in which he

mentions that there are two elements which he calls “Apparatuses” of the state that served the ruling class’ empowerment which are the repressive state apparatus (RSA) and the ideological state apparatus (ISA). Althusser’s essay became influential for many scholars and theorist since it was published.

II.1.2.1 The Repressive State Apparatus:

Althusser mentioned in his book that the 19th century’s ruling class was using the state in an explicit and a violent way to dominate the lower class (70), highlighting that the class struggle is resulted by the exploitation and the blackmail of the proletariat class by the upper class for the sake of remaining in power.

According to Althusser “The state apparatus, which defines the state as a force of repressive execution and intervention 'in the interests of the ruling classes' in the class struggle conducted by the bourgeoisie and its allies against the proletariat, is quite certainly the state, and quite certainly defines its basic 'function'.” (239) Althusser argues that the state is certainly working to fulfill the needs of the ruling class and creating the class struggle that was led by the rich against the poor class where he defines R S A as the ruling class’ use of force against the proletariat to control and dominate them for their own interest.

The ruling class used politics in a different illegal way since they dominated the government, the army, the police force, the courts, and also the prisons. Their method of dominating the lower class and taking power in the social hierarchy was the use of violence; they even used physical repression against the workers. All in all, the R S A was considered as a threatening on both the political and the social order.

II.1.2.2 The Ideological State Apparatus:

The ruling class applied a second method, “The Ideological State Apparatus”, rather than violence to dominate the working class basing on the educational and the religious fields to facilitate the path for them-selves to indirectly control people’s thoughts, beliefs, and values to reach and manipulate them.

Althusser argues that there is no class that can dominate another class and control it for a very long time without using the I S A (245) which is logical because we always find a class which dominates the state where we cannot find its visible bad effect and that is due to the ideologies, strategies, and methods that are applied behind the scenes to maintain the dominance of the ruling class.

According to Althusser, the dominant ideological apparatus used by the capitalists in the 19th century was the educational apparatus since it was an important part of society where it performed two main functions for the ruling class. First, it helped in reproducing the class inequality and that was by transmitting it from a generation to another by failing all the generations of proletariat students successively. Second, it was hiding the truth about the inequalities between the two classes using sets of fake ideas and beliefs to justify these inequalities and make the proletariats accept their situation and their position in the society. If the proletariats accept these ideas, they will not be considered as a threatening to the capitalists. (251-253)

II.1.3 Reflectionism:

Reflectionism is a theory founded by the Hungarian Marxist philosopher and critic Georg Lukács who influenced the progress of the western Marxism. Lukács linked the fictional works to the real world introducing the idea that a literary text is a reflection of the

society in which it was produced, where there is always an impact of the background of the society within that text.

Due to Lukács' concept of "Reflectionism", it is not necessarily to be naturally Marxists to analyse fictional texts from a Marxist point of view. We cannot read and interpret literary texts from only our own perspectives because it would remain incomplete and deficient so we must go to both the historical and the social backgrounds of the era in which that literary text had been written to analyze and identify the major things that impacted writing it and the social matters that were reflected in it.

Terry Eagleton defined the Marxist literary criticism as follows:

Marxist Criticism is not merely 'sociology of literature', concerned with how novels get published and whether they mention they mention the working class. Its aim is to explain the literary work more fully; and this means a sensitive attention to its forms, styles, and meanings. But it also means grasping those forms, styles and meanings as the products of a particular history. (3)

In his definition, Eagleton declares that the Marxist literary criticism is not only about whether the content of the literary text is social or political, since the Marxist literary criticism often returns to politics in the evaluation of texts, but it is about whether the working class is mentioned in the literary texts or not simply because this criticism tend to analyze the stories of class struggles in a particular text to see if it is with or against the ruling class' ideology, as it is also about going back to the history and the social backgrounds of the literary works to fully explain and identify the purpose of the use of its styles and forms to grasp all its meanings, all in all he means that the Marxist literary criticism also considers the literary works as products of specific eras of time.

Eagleton added that Reflectionism had a relation with the Marxist criticism as a reaction of “The Formalist theories” of literature that placed literature in a box and restricted it with a verity of rules, to free the literary criticism. (46) Indeed, before the Marxist criticism and the theory of Reflectionism literary criticism was guided and limited where the critics and the readers were depending on their own interpretation of the literary texts. They analyze only the compositions of the literary works such as the language used, the aesthetic style, and the form whereas they excluded the cultural, the social, and the historical backgrounds from their analysis.

All in all, the literary pieces are like an encrypted message that needs to be decoded and interpreted cautiously part by part by analyzing each part alone. Once analyzing all its sides and extracting all the crypts and hints, the time to assemble the puzzle comes, where we clearly observe everything. The aim of the theory of Reflectionism is all about surrounding the literary texts from all its social, historical, and cultural sides to at least get a closer interpretation of the exact writer’s meaning or message.

II.2 Poverty as a Symptom of Criminality:

The world cannot guarantee its stability and continuity without fighting poverty and trying to eradicate it from its roots. Although this crises had several attempts to be eliminated, searching for a radical solutions is still to be continued till today by denouncing the necessity of stopping this dilemma, this point was among the main ones discussed in Johannesburg conference where Thabo Mbeki, the President of South Africa, stated that “A global human society, characterized by islands of wealth, surrounded by sea of poverty, is unsustainable.” (qtd.in “Poverty and Wealth” para1) Despite the progress made by mankind in various fields and the fact that the reaping of most planet resources in which experts agree that it is enough

to provide luxurious life for the six billion living people if it was distributed in a fairway, the dilemma of poverty is still increasing day by day.

II.2.1 Poverty Concept Definition:

Poverty can be defined as the state of being unable to provide all the necessary or basic needs for a whole family or a community in general where the standards of measuring poverty in a whole community differs from a country to another depending on the national income.

The category of poor people could be divided into three sub-categories that can be summarized in the following definition given by the House of Common:

There are basically three current definitions of poverty... Absolute poverty is defined as the lack of sufficient recourses with which to keep body and soul together, relative poverty defines incomes or resources in relation to the average it is concerned with the absence of the material needs to participate fully in accepted daily life. Social exclusion The Prime Minister described social exclusion as ‘...a shorthand label for what can happen when individuals or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown’. (qtd.in “Scottish Affairs - First Report” Np)

According to the previous definition, the first sub-category, the ones suffering from absolute poverty, is about the individuals who cannot afford to feed themselves at least to ensure their survival, while the second sub-category includes the individuals whom their level of living is measured in terms of consumptions as lower than a particular one, whereas the third sub-category, that is widely spread in the world’s most industrialized countries, includes the poor people who are able to provide their families with life requirements from food to education, yet, they still cannot be considered as a middle class people in terms of society structure.

Poverty differs as a concept from society to another and it is measured according to the poverty line which is the minimum level of basic needs, this line changes depending on social, political, and historical factors. Other scholars agreed that the measures taken should be improved in order to find a new poverty measure which represents the current spending samples such as the governments' benefits and taxes and the cost of living. Finally the majority of critics confirm the fact that poverty cannot be represented in one definition since its circumstances and factors change with the change of the time and the place. According to the Bureau of Census of the U.S figure's of 2016 more than 40 million people are considered as poor ones. Thus, the measuring of poverty excludes the people under the age of 15, people living in military quarters, and people living in universities campus. (qtd.in Chen para2)

Many sociologists define poverty as a social discrimination on account of the unequal distributions of resources through society. Besides the structure of society and the social discrimination which has a particular role in defining poverty making the poor find difficulties in trying new opportunities in order to start a new life, other sociologists mentioned that there is another type of poor people in which they refer to poverty as a psychological disease that many families can be affected with, by having a phobia of spending money or even use it which makes them not able to afford their basic needs because of the lack of confidence.

II.2.2 Causes of Poverty

There are multiple reasons for poverty, for a moment, it would be very simple to count them despite this variation, but after taking a closer look; it seems that each country or society has its own rooted causes, depending on the phenomenon existed inside it and the measures used to find suitable solutions.

First, the improvement of industry changed the picture of the poor from poor agricultural peasants and farmers into poor factory workers, thus it improves the conditions of the poor who became less poor than before since they received different forms of helps from

the government such as the Poor Law amendment of 1834 that was made by the British government, which was about the creation of workhouses for the poor people. However, other problems appeared with the appearance of this amendment such as the housing shortage and the failure in saving money that was due to gambling, alcoholism, and poor sanitary conditions.

Second, individualism which is according to Robert Owen the main reason of poverty, especially when the government's help stopped after the decision of not being involved in the poor societies issues according to the principle of "laissez faire capitalism" (qtd.in "Utopian Socialism" para 2) Since he believes that this involvement will cost them money and rise in taxes which would leave the stage for middle and upper societies to volunteer. Moreover, poor people had nothing to sell or share in the society as opposed to the rich ones who owned tools of production and budget to build factories which made it very hard on poor people to get rid of their bad situations.

In short, reasons of poverty differ from a society to another since its circumstances and factors change due to time and place, For example, due to the difference in climate, standard of living, social classifications, and most importantly the economical situation that changes according to the changes in economic indicators, the causes of poverty in Algeria are different from those of Britain.

Criminality was more related to poor children and teenagers since they usually dream of becoming rich people in short periods of time where they try to gather money in any possible way, in which they might take the wrong path to make profits ending up by committing criminal acts. Though they know that it is a wrong behavior, they tend to do it anyways because they believe that it is the only solution to gain money, live, and fit in a society that is based on the idea that the strong wealthy people are the ones to rule.

Many experts agree that poverty is a symptom of criminality since poor people are more likely to get stressed because of their daily problems where that stress turns to become a mental disease which leads to a personality disorders that might lead them to commit unexplainable crimes such as kidnapping, violating, and stealing. Depression is also considered as a mental disease which generally affects unemployed people which encouraging them to commit crimes. All in all, the relation between criminality and poverty is integrated because, as it is mentioned above, poverty leads to criminality since it had a great impact on the societies during the Industrial Revolution.

II.3 Criminality as a Choice or an Obligation of the Life's Circumstances:

Crimes always existed with the existence of the human beings which does not eliminate the possibility of its continuity as long as humans exist on earth. It can be expressed as a balance between the conflict of the social norms and values and the different pressures by the community; therefore it is considered to be a social, ethical, political, and economical phenomenon before being regarded as a legal case.

II.3.1 Crime Concept Definition:

The term criminality has passed upon a variety of changes over time, scholars and criminologist always tried to define this concept, but most of its early definitions has always been criticized by many critics, it always included the deficiencies starting from defining it only from the lawful perspective, rather than from the social perspective. But it has always ended up by being criticized since it was not updated with the evolution of life.

Considering an act as a crime in the past was attributed to breaking the law, criminologists were examining the legal process rather than studying the criminal behavior to

decide whether the individual is a criminal or not in accordance with the criminal law and justice, where the definitional paradigm to most beneficial and effective definition of crime is the legal one.

Both Ronald C.Kramer and Wayne Morrison mentioned that the definition of crime can only be seen from the lawful perspective where they mentioned that there is nothing called born criminal (475 ; 15) where they believe that crimes are acts that contradict the legal rules imposed by the state where they excluded the individual's mental and social from their definition by denying the idea that this act could be inherited, which means that criminologist should adopt the idea that there is no crime and no punishment unless there is a legal text that urges it.

The definition of crime from only the lawful perspective made it sound inefficient and unjust for the people, the community, and even other criminologists, since it excludes some of the criminal acts that break the social norms from being crimes. So it had to be edited to suit both the individual and the social cases and this helped the emergence of another different definition of it which is the sociological definition.

“Crime” for sociologist is considered to be an odd and thumping behavior that contradicts with the social norms, for them this act might be a conclusion of the lack of the social solidarity, that increases the individual's immunity with the social norms and bases, for the criminal this immunity might be collapsed and that indirectly leads the criminal to commit acts that opposes the community and the social norms.

Morrison argued that the social interactions are highly influential as he considers that the criminal acts are results of these social interactions in a way or another, which means that “crimes” have no meaning if they are outside the scope of the interactivity-free communities.(12) Morrison sees that “crimes” are behaviors contradicting with the social and

the cultural norms, that the individuals must adhere to since they were agreed upon in the community to control the social affairs where it cannot be identify if it is part of a non-communicative community.

The definition of the crime on the basis that it is anti-social behavior and a deviation from the prevailing values and behaviors of society remains deficient, since social values differ from a society to another and from an era to another. For Example, in some of the western countries different forms of sexuality like “The LGBTQ+” are no more considered as a sin where it has been decriminalized, whereas in Algeria it is still considered an unforgivable sin that continues to be criminalized. So there must be some legal provisions to prohibit crimes and at the same time protect the individual and the social norms.

The criminologists ended up by believing that it is necessary to define crime not only as a legal case, in which the criminal become a lawful object, but also as a humanistic and a social matter where the direct and the indirect factors of committing it should be taken into consideration to decide whether it is a crime or not to indentify a suitable punishment for that particular type of crime.

II.3.2 Causes of Criminality:

Criminality as a phenomenon has become the main concern of many countries as it does not have only one specific cause. Despite the fact that poverty, alcohol, and drugs might be the major causes of breaking the laws and committing a criminal act, special theories, related to social disciplines and psychology, have emerged to study the real causes of each crime and surround the crime from all its aspect, these theories are divided into two groups, biological and sociological theories.

II.3.2.1 The Biological Theory:

The biological theory states that the individual might be criminal by nature or what is known by “born criminals” where it studies the internal (neurological, genetic, and physical) factors that differentiate the criminal from the non-criminal individuals.

Christian Wicker claims that the Italian psychiatrist Cesare Lombroso was the leader of the biological theory by saying “[Lombroso] He was thus the first criminologist to devote himself to direct observation and measurement of the individual case in order to trace the origin of the crime. For many criminologists, he is therefore regarded as the founder of their science” (para 5) where he based his analysis of criminals only on their physical appearances.

After the World War II the biological theories added the genetic and the neurological analysis of the individuals to identify whether they are criminals or not where they related the criminal acts of some individuals to the oddity of their genetic inheritance or sometimes to their mental issues.

Lombroso’s positivism school categorized the “born criminals” as people who have different characteristics from the normal people where they have a dense darker hair, a wider chest, and they are much taller with taller hands. They also have an irregular skull shape that is noticeably much smaller and these characteristics were classified after analyzing the autopsy of a lot of criminals’ dead bodies that generally had similar features.

II.3.2.2 The Sociological Theories:

The sociological approach sees that the criminals are influenced by external factors that push them to commit crimes; this theory studies these external factors to identify the other factors that can lead the individuals to convert to criminality. And to study the social causes of criminality a variety of theories emerged.

II.3.2.2.1 The Social Disorganization Theory:

This theory emerged in Chicago's university by the two researchers Clifford R. Shaw and Henry D. McKay, where it is based on the investigation of the places where the criminals derive from and if the place turns out to be messy revival where it is known by poverty, bad health conditions, and inferior economic conditions.

Shaw and McKay link the criminal act to the environment and the needy conditions that the criminal deals with claiming that "areas settled by newly arrived immigrants experienced a breakdown of social norms due to ethnic diversity and competing cultural traditions. Conventional institutions of social control were therefore weakened and unable to regulate the behavior of local youths." (qtd.in "Theories and causes of Crime" 3) That is to say that the immigration of the new settlers broke the social norms and created the diversity of cultures that was a reason of rising the amount of the criminal acts within those areas where they settled since the authorities were not able to maintain the stability of these overcrowded places and reform the young people.

All in all, this theory is all about the idea that the environment's disorganization could lead the individuals to convert to criminality; where it might either be the result of the poor living conditions or the effect of the races' and the ethnicities' mixture where the individuals get influenced by each others.

II.3.2.2.2 The Strain Theory:

This theory studies the breakdowns in the social norms that might often be a result of the frequent social changes, where the poor people are the most frequent victims of this successive change.

Robert. K. Merton suggests that criminality results from an individual's inability to achieve his objectives by socially accepted behaviours where he is more likely capable of committing some illegal or unethical acts that contradicts both the social and the legal values

only to reach his goals (qtd.in “Theories and causes of Crime” 4) Indeed, sometimes the changes that occur in the social norms and the ethics might encourage the individuals to commit unethical behaviors or criminal acts. In short, when the individual is unable to achieve his goals by the provided social means, he tends to change the means to realize his objectives without taking into consideration the legality and the morality of the means he uses since the society is undergoing successive changes in all its aspects.

II.3.2.2.3 The Rational Choice Theory:

This theory emerged to study the individuals who themselves choose to be criminals, it sees these criminals as capable and rational people, which means that they decided to follow the criminal path for many reasons and mainly for easy and fast money gaining where they make plans about when, where, and how they would commit their criminal acts.

There is a saying that summarizes the definition of the criminal by choice which states that “Criminal offenders are actually no different than noncriminal offenders. Both willingly choose their own behaviors, and both choose those behaviors on the basis of a rational consideration of the costs and benefits of the intended action.” (“Rational Choice Theory” para 6) In other words, the followers of this theory believe that as long as a person neither suffers from poor living conditions nor from psychological, genetic, or mental problems, he must be classified as a criminal when committing a criminal act as he must be punished for his actions, because he was not obliged to enter this world if it had not been his strong desire to achieve his goals in an easy, illegal, and a faster way.

After digging into the different definitions of crime and dealing with the theories of criminality that are classified to identify the various causes of crime, it is the time to sum up by analyzing the cases of these crimes. Criminals differ according to the type of criminal cases they commit and what they hold of special circumstances or special thought. We often

see criminals everywhere practicing all types of criminal acts, but each of them has his own reasons that push him to do such actions.

In conclusion, for criminalizing and decriminalizing acts, the criminologist and the legal authorities must pass through different analyses to identify criminals, so according to the biological theories, the criminal should not be considered as criminal and their crimes have to be decriminalized since they are genetically or neurologically susceptible to crime, whereas the other cases of criminality should be criminalized and punishable according to the causes and the level of crime, especially the rational choices crimes.

Conclusion:

Overall, it can be said that the Marxist literary criticism is a theory that shapes our process of reading, understanding, analyzing, and interpreting the Victorian literary texts that were reflected by the pure reality of the Victorian society's issues, such as the different types of criminality, that were caused by many factors including the poor conditions of the environments, the influence of the social interactions, and the biological issues, where there were also crimes committed by completely rational choices of the criminals, and poverty that was mainly resulted by alcoholism, and the unemployment; these causes might be symptoms of criminality in which it can lead the individuals to convert to criminality.

Chapter Three:

**The Representation of Poverty and
Criminality in “*Oliver Twist*”**

Introduction:

In his novel "*Oliver Twist*", Charles Dickens depicts the situation in the Victorian era, calling the issues of the poor living conditions and the criminal environment, proposing some solutions to the problems he tackles in his novel using different characters (misled children, thieves, and prostitutes) facing different conditions, he rather wrote his novel as a way of reform where he draws his readers' attention to the ugly truth of the lowest abandoned class life conditions in a very realistic way. Hence, this chapter is devoted, to analyze the aspects of both poverty and criminality in "*Oliver Twist*".

III. 1 The Depiction of Poverty in "*Oliver Twist*":

"*Oliver Twist*" is considered to be one of the impactful stories in the history of literature that reflects the social obstacles and the class struggle during the Victorian era and shows Dickens' attitude toward the government and the issues portraying poverty through his plot where he sheds the light on the Victorian's poor living conditions using poor characters living in dirty streets and suffering from absolute poverty.

III.1.1 The Oppression of the Setting:

"*Oliver Twist*" depicts the phenomenon of poverty through Dickens' use of the lower class illustrating the poor environment where his poor characters lived, through the omniscient narrator who described the degenerate state of London's streets by mentioning that "Some houses which had become insecure from age and decay, were prevented from falling into the street, by huge beams of wood reared against the walls, and firmly planted in the road" (Dickens 44) as he also used Oliver in another scene as a camera-eye to describe the streets where Fagin and his gang live by using words denoting decadence such as "dirtier", "narrow", "muddy", and "polluted air". (46) Dickens' emphasis on describing the areas with minimal living conditions indirectly provokes the readers to wonder the harsh and terrible

living conditions that his poor characters are suffering from. It is noticeable that Dickens did not only describe the setting for the sake of describing the city, but also to shed the light on the oppression of those gloomy places by charging his text with symbolic words describing the dilapidation that represents the apparent poverty in those miserable and terrifying places.

Dickens intended using such setting to portray the Victorian reality and London's streets situation during the Industrial Revolution and how the homeless and the evil people struggled from the poor living conditions whereas, the upper class citizens were forbidden to cross these streets which were dangerous and insecure for them, to shed the light on the class diversity. Besides the fact that factories were dominating and polluting every corner of the English streets which is mentioned in Oliver's description, people were replaced by machines which create a lack of recruitment, as a consequence; people of the underworld start gathering generally in London.

Ann Haley Mackenzie states that Dickens' interest in the Industrial Revolution and his experience in both the lower and the upper worlds, besides his career as a reporter that helped him to know more about the poor conditions and the legislations dealing with these poor issues, especially the poor law amendment of 1834 that barely tackled the sanitary issues, enabled him to discuss the issues of health and the pollution throughout his writings (202) shedding the light on Dickens' multiple qualities and tools that facilitated his mission of reflecting the class struggle existing in his society including the poor living conditions through his writings such as "*Oliver Twist*".

III.1.2. The Corruption of the Poor Law Act:

Dickens criticized the poor law act of 1834 in multiple ways through his novel recreating the real picture of the nobles' attitude towards the poor people which made the critics regard the book as a reaction to the state.

Sirinya Pakditawan asserted that Dickens attacks the poor law via the use of his literary work "*Oliver Twist*" through mentioning that:

The Poor Law of 1834 wanted to make the workhouse more a deterrent to idleness as it was believed that people were poor because they were lazy and needed to be punished. ...Dickens, for instance, attempted to improve the workhouse conditions with his novel *Oliver Twist* and as a result, this work helped influence changes in the problem. (4)

Dickens had a remarkable impact in his society as a social reformer where "*Oliver Twist*" was his way of conveying an indirect reforming message to his readers as well as the government. He inveighed the workhouses and the negative result that was brought by the child labor; especially in the poor society. Those reforms were made by the government, which mainly consists of people from the upper class, to minimize the proportion of beggars, whereas they ended up by corrupting it for their own self-interest neglecting its consequences.

The workhouses identified a very early age for children to be part of it, Dickens in his novel pointed to this idea through his narrator's following comment "This was no very great consolation to the child. Young as he was, however, he had sense enough to make a feint of feeling great regret at going away. It was no very difficult issue for the boy to call tears into his eyes. Hunger and recent ill-usage are great assistants if you want to cry; and Oliver cried very naturally indeed." (12) According to Dickens, Oliver was mature enough for the

government just like the other boys of his age to be monopolized in the workhouses where they were forced to work as the elders for lower wages.

Moreover, the children were frequently punished just for asking for their rights refusing to live in misery and suffering. At the first chapter of the novel, the children decided to ask for more food since they were only fed the amount of food that keeps them alive where Oliver was the chosen one to volunteer, Oliver's demand was seen by the fat healthy men as bravery and a challenging attitude that ended by him losing his only shelter once and for ever whereas the rulers did not care about his future. (15-17) These scenes portray the class struggle that occurred in the Victorian society. For the fat men, Oliver is not supposed to ask for more food, as he is challenging the hierarchy and the system that imposed the rule of feeding children a specific amount of food, no more any less. Dickens intended using the powerful symbol of the obesity of the members of the workhouse board that stands in stark opposition to the leanness of the poor to show how greedy and pompous they are.

The Poor Law Act was meant to be an occasion to rescue those poor children and avoid kicking them to the streets, but the responsables of the workhouses corrupted the objective of these houses, that were providing the poor with their rights, in order to keep the class struggle. Those nobles directors belonging to the upper class intended to destroy the poor's opportunities to get out of the bad living conditions making them believe that they should remain poor because if the lower class prosper, poverty will disappear creating a classless society which is unhelpful for the upper class citizens who needs the underworld for their specific reasons.

III.1.3 The Portrayal of Poverty through Characters:

Dickens' depiction of the very dangerous social phenomenon poverty was generally noticed in his underworld characters, he tends to give each character a special attitude and way of dressing; in other words, he tries to create different types of poor people giving each character a special personality and different perspective of poverty, since some of the poor people were not accepting to live in such bad conditions.

The first poor character is Jack Dawkins, who is often called the Artful Dodger through the novel, is an allegorical character that has a contradiction between his young physical appearance and his adult attitudes which were reactions to the bad living situations he witnessed that made him tend to act like a responsible old man before reaching the age of responsibility. Dawkins generally wears old men's coats, a hat, and corduroy trousers which made the narrator call him "the young gentleman." (Dickens 68) Not only did Dawkins' appearance made him look like a grown up man, but even his ways of walking and talking contributed in his reincarnation of the personality of a noble adult.

Henry Peter comments on Dawkins' appearance by saying that "the Artful Dodger draws attention to the social conditions which forced children to become adults before their time" (qtd in Kermani and Fazli 35). Where he believes that Dodger was obliged to deal with his harsh living conditions which made him grew up before his time given that it was necessary for him to hold responsibility towards the different concerns of life while he was still young.

The omniscient narrator mentioned that "Whenever the Dodger or Charley Bates came home at night, empty-handed he would expatiate with great vehemence on the misery of idle and lazy habits; and would enforce upon them the necessity of an active life, by sending them

super less to bed. On one occasion, indeed, he even went so far as to knock them both down a flight of stairs." (81-82) As if being a young worker was never enough suffering for Dawkins, as he was spending nights without a place to sleep, food to eat, and clothes to wear which means he lived in an extreme poverty and that made him find his own rescue in Fagin's house just like the other young boys whereas Fagin had his specific reasons for affording Dawkins a shelter when he was young and weak, a shelter that was dirty and locating in a very bad place in London yet, still like heaven for a child who was suffering from extreme poverty.

Another poor character is Nancy, who was among the protagonists of the story, she embodies the example of the miserable weak poor girl who wishes to live among the upper class ladies and she expresses her desire addressing Rose Maylie saying "Thank Heaven upon your knees... 'That you had friends to care for and keep you in your childhood, and that you were never in the midst of cold and hunger, and riot and drunkenness, and--and—something worse than all--as I have been from my cradle. I may use the word, for the alley and the gutter were mine, as they will be my deathbed.'" (Dickens 385) Nancy narrates to Rose about her miserable childhood, how she suffered from hunger, riot, and living outside in the cold days where Fagin's house was her only rescue from these harsh conditions.

Nancy had no other choice but to consider herself a part of the underworld where she mentions how her life would remain worthless forever; believing that nothing can be done to rescue her because she does not deserve to have a good life since it is her destiny to live poor until her last breath. In short, she feels worthless as if she is accepting her situation of poverty, and those rules of the class structure because she was convinced that in the Victorian society who is poor remains poor or becomes even poorer, it is one of the rules or norms that was entrenched indirectly by the upper class and this is what the ideological state apparatus is about.

The readers get to know that Nancy was suffering from extreme poverty in another scene which is her dialogue with Fagin where she answered him after his comment about her speech about how she was working for him since her childhood by saying "It is my living; and the cold, wet, dirty streets are my home; and Fagin you're the wretch that drove me to them long ago, and that'll keep me there, day and night, day and night, till I die!" (148) In other words, her situation was bad and she had no place to go, she was young and powerless without a family to provide her the respectful living conditions or at least a home to sleep and food to eat. The bad conditions of Nancy's life were revealed when she advises Rose to thank god for blessing her with a respectful and wealthy family, considering her a perfect elegant lady with a family and friend to support her and help her while she considers herself as a miserable lonely poor girl who can never reach Rose's level.

The depiction of poverty by Dickens was mostly through those characters because they represented a paradox and complexity as Dawkins is a young boy acting, talking, and dressing like a noble man in the purpose of avoiding the appearance of a lower class boy and Nancy who is a part of Fagin's gang that still keeps her morals and shows some redeeming qualities which appeared in her successive tries of saving Oliver.

All in all, Dickens managed to captivate his readers' attention through his use of language and structure towards the dilemma of poverty by portraying some of the realistic events using a group of miserable characters whom were living in the degenerated streets of London, as he sheds the light on the successive changes made on the amendments by the nobles, through different apparatuses to remain in power causing a class struggle.

III.2 The Depiction of Criminality in "*Oliver Twist*":

The Victorians were having a wrong point of view on the criminal underworld, Dickens through his characters basically shows the hidden side of this world in two kinds of scenes, the first one is when the crime is committed, and the second one is the scene after the criminal being arrested which means, we must study all the characters' attitudes before and after their crime commitments and trials to state whether they deserve the punishments given to them or not.

III.2.1 Fagin as the Head Master Criminal:

Every story needs a villain to give it the sense of suspense, in "*Oliver Twist*" this villain must be Fagin the ugly evil who is one of the antagonists. The omniscient narrator describes Fagin several times through the novel, however, he mentions some interesting descriptions such as having red hair and beard, holding a three-prong fork, (71) and having "a hideous grin" (74) the first impression that the readers might have about Fagin's suspicious appearance is considering him as a symbol of the devil since the red color and the three-prong fork are related to Lucifer.

Fagin can be considered to be a paradoxical character due to his two totally contradicted sides or personalities, as he has a sarcastic and funny side that he generally maintains in his ordinary state, yet he still has occasionally another dark horrifying side that appears whenever he is driven by anger or threat, and that is what made him gain the name "the merry old gentleman" by the narrator. Fagin's paradoxical attitude can be marked in the following passage:

He closed the lid of the box with a loud crash; and, laying his hand on bread knife which was on the table, started furiously up. ... What have you seen?

Speak out, boy! Quick--quick! for your life... 'You were not awake an hour ago?' said the Jew, scowling fiercely on the boy. 'No! No, indeed!' replied Oliver. 'Are you sure?' cried the Jew: with a still fiercer look than before: and a threatening attitude... 'Tush, tush, my dear!' said the Jew, abruptly resuming his old manner ... 'Of course I know that, my dear. You're a brave boy. Ha! ha! you're a brave boy. (75)

Before feeling threatened by Oliver, Fagin was a very nice and sarcastic person, but the idea of Oliver is seeing him and knowing his secrets and his true identity made his darker side directly appear, terrifying Oliver through violently putting a knife in front of his face menacing him. In the previous quote it is noticeable how Dickens used the very adequate words such as "furiously", "speak out for your life", "fiercer look", and "threatening attitude" to describe the horrifying scene as well as to show the evil side of Fagin that appears from sudden, whereas he also used other expressions such as "I only tried to frighten you", and "Ha! Ha!" to shed the light on Fagin's other side. Through this passage Dickens combines both of Fagin's sardonic and evil sides that he manages to switch in-between smoothly and easily according to the different situations he faces.

Dickens through his villainous looking character, Fagin, reflects the idea that there were Jew criminals during the 19th c by frequently referring to him as "the old Jew" where "Jew" was an indication to Fagin's race and ethnicity rather than his religion. Norman Lebrecht considers that referring to Fagin as a Jew more than calling him by his name was intended since it was used several times; he claims that the successive use of this word is kind of racist. (para 5) Indeed, Dickens intended using Fagin as a Jew to shed the light on the idea that the Jews were commonly known as they were obsessed with the wealth and luxuries, so

most of them preferred using their tricky minds to get fortune by following the criminal path especially as heads of pickpockets’ gangs, during the 19th century

Through the novel, Fagin was presented as the pioneer of the criminals who brutally trains the young boys on pick pocketing and receives the stolen things in exchange for feeding and harboring them. The narrator described how was Fagin using his intrigue in planning to mold Oliver into a willing member of the gang by using the other boys as samples to make him feel that thievery is a permissible act that always benefits them and provides them with a livelihood by saying “The wily old Jew had the boy in his toils. Having prepared his mind, by solitude and gloom, to prefer any society to the companionship of his own sad thoughts in such a dreary place, he was now slowly instilling into his soul the poison which he hoped would blacken it, and change its hue for ever.” (171) Fagin was a professional criminal that knows how to influence others by studying their conditions, his awareness of the criminal behaviours’ factors that are generally loneliness and weakness, bad environments, and the hopeless situation helped him in manipulating and poisoning the boys thoughts and enabled him to corrupt both their souls and morals to convince them to derive to the criminal path.

Many critics tackled the issue of Fagin’s pick pocketing game including Mahmut Terci and Petra Čásenská who commented on his method of persuasion where Terci mentioned that pick pocketing started by an unofficial tutorial made by Fagin who showed the kids the techniques of “stealing” without “being noticed” that appeared as an entertaining and joyful game for them, whereas Čásenská added that Fagin is not only a criminal but a manipulative thief who can easily convince children committing crimes by providing them with fake excuses, however he believes that we cannot assume whether Fagin is a criminal or not since he also rescues the kids from death. (124; 55) These comments give the impression that Fagin can be seen as a destructive element of Victorian social realm who creates an illegal system beneath the streets of London in a manipulative and tricky way. Yet, he can be considered as a

good person since he is helping the poor, hungry, and homeless children by providing them with the food and a shelter to survive.

According to the strain theory Fagin is that type of criminals who thinks about perusing his dreams by following several strategies and methods without taking in consideration the legality or the morality of those methods, which means that as long as killing, manipulating, or blackmailing would helps him to reach his objectives and fulfill his desires it is acceptable to him.

Fagin's trail was very serious; the last scenes were where he was in the courtroom and everyone was looking at him and wanting for the prosecutors to declare the right punishment with no sympathy or mercy. Dickens gave Fagin the harshest form of punishments which are first going to Newgate prison and then sentencing him with the death penalty where he would be hanged in front of all the public. (512-513) In fact, Fagin deserves the death penalty because besides never caring about both the ethical and the legal acceptance of his acts where all what mattered for him is his self-interest, he created a new criminal system beneath London where he was not only manipulating the young children and making dangerous thieves from them, but he was also more of a threatening on the Victorian realm.

III.2.2 The Artful Dodger as a Professional Pickpocket:

Dickens portrayed another type of criminals through the creation of his fictional character Dawkins and gave it the nickname "The Artful Dodger" that is describing his true personality as a professional, wise, and skilful thief, who can pick people's pockets in a quick, smooth, and unremarkable way where he masters the art of stealing and robbing seeking only about his self-intresst.

Oliver described Dodger as having a snub-nose, flat brows, and the most important thing is having a ugly sharp eyes, Juliet John mentions that "For Dickens, eyes are ideally the mirrors of the soul" (116) In other words, Dickens believes that the eyes are the windows for

the souls through which a lot of things about the person's inner souls can be revealed. By saying that dodger have ugly and sharp eyes he means that Oliver felt that dodger has a dangerous and bad personality that is appearing through his eyes and revealing his bad intentions towards him.

The Artful Dodger has his own way of thinking where he believes that his acts are neither unethical nor illegal but on the contrary are normal. This appears when he tells Oliver that "If you don't take pocket-handkechers and watches,'... 'some other cove will; so that the coves that lose 'em will be all the worse, and you'll be all the worse, too, and nobody half a ha'p'orth the better, except the chaps wot gets them—and you've just as good a right to them as they have.'" (Dickens 169) Dodger's words mean that he has his own philosophy that criminals are everywhere waiting for the opportunity to steal and do whatever they can to provide a living for themselves.

Valerie Kennedy and Katrina Kitsy-Mitakou commented on Fagin's major student the Dodger attempt of corrupting Oliver saying that "he...internalised the culture and the ideology of crime and has moulded all his routines with a view to making the best use of what they can offer him" (132) supporting the idea that Dodger adopted the same strategy of Fagin which is making use of their tricky minds in manipulating the others, which means that Fagin's influence has diseased the Dodger's mind where he kind of stereotyped him and turned him to a small version of himself.

The Artful Dodger's last scene was in the courtroom where he shows his skills on playing with the other's minds which was due to his acquisition of the art of dodging speech and persuasion. Although Dodger was caught pick pocketing where the evidence of his crime, a silver snuff box, was found in his pocket, he warns his prosecutors confidently that he is a victim and then asks if there is any witnesses since he is pretty much confident about his pick pocketing skills that he learnt and practices since ever. After many attempts by Dodger, his

conviction was confirmed, and a sentence that was seen suitable for his actions was signed by his prosecutors, and the penalty was transportation for life to Australia where he would work harder as a punishment for his thievery. (418- 423)

According to the sociological theories of crimes, specifically the social disorganization theory, there are only two possibilities to justify the Dodger's criminal acts, it can be said that his character was either shaped by the bad environment where he lives known by its poor conditions, or by the mixture of races and ethnicities of the surrounding people since he was diseased by Fagin's, the Jew, thoughts. Either ways it can be concluded that Dodger is a very young boy that always lived as a grown up man since he was influenced by the environment where he lived and abused by the Jew Fagin whom converted him to a skillful criminal through manipulating his thoughts. Taking in consideration Dodger's age and conditions that pushed him to the criminal path, it is reasonable to say the punishment that was giving to him was very harsh in comparison to his situation.

III.2.3 Bill Sikes as the Murderer:

Sikes or "The Housebreaker" as referred to throughout the novel is considered to be one of the controversial antagonist characters as he is mostly known for his strong personality and sowings terror among the people's souls who he passes by because of the bad reputation he earned after being always a violent man in the streets of the London.

Fagin's crime partner, Sikes, committed several crimes through the novel where his very first crime, which took place in the sixteenth Chapter, was kidnapping the young boy Oliver and bringing him back to Fagin by force. Sikes' second crime was breaking into Rose Maylie's house where he threatened and forced Oliver to help him, this crime ended in fiasco causing Oliver's severe injury that almost led him to death. The last and the most horrible crime he committed was killing Nancy whom was the only one who truly loved him. The omniscient narrator pictures Sikes' unmerciful decision of murder, where he dragged Nancy

in the middle of the room making sure that no one can see what he is going to do and then started his process of killing, as follows:

The housebreaker freed one arm, and grasped his pistol. The certainty of immediate detection if he fired, flashed across his mind even in the midst of his fury; and he beat it twice with all the force he could summon, upon the upturned face that almost touched his own. It was a ghastly figure to look upon. ... The murderer staggering backward to the wall, and shutting out the sight with his hand, seized a heavy club and struck her down. (460)

It can be seen how enraged was Sikes when he killed his girlfriend Nancy without having mercy on her, only because he was thinking that she betrayed him as well as revealed his secrets. He thought of a way of killing her without being heard and caught doing such a gruesome crime, emptying his entire anger on her weak body, and ending her life. Dickens might be using Sikes as an example of the future self of the other pickpockets, which means that they started thievery at a very young age and whenever they reach the same age of Sikes they would probably be dehumanized and have the same skills he have, where they would start committing all types of crimes and might climb the same criminal ladder he did, since the degrees of his crimes rose from pick pocketing to theft to kidnapping to breaking houses, and ended by brutally murdering.

According to the rational choice theory Sikes has decided to be a criminal since he was not forced in any way to commit the crimes he committed. But he was rather the instigator of crimes which he was planning with all provisions. So he must be sentenced for his criminal acts and the most suitable punishment for him would be the death penalty. Sikes was hunted by Nancy's ghost, wanted by the police, and pursued by an enormous number of angry people which made him flee from one place to another hoping to survive. However, “In *Oliver Twist*

Providence is not asleep. Sikes is terrified by his guilt and, like Macbeth, is transfigured by the act of murder."("Crime Writing: Text overview - *Oliver Twist*" Para 16)

Dickens chooses for Sikes another kind of punishment where his end was described as follow "The noose was on his neck. It ran up with his weight, tight as a bowstring... There was a sudden jerk, a terrific convulsion of the limbs; and there he hung, with the open knife clenched in his stiffening hand." (494) As opposed to the other character's, Sikes' was given a whole different court-free penalty which was represented in divine justice where he accidentally hanged himself when he was running from the angry people. Dickens' use of this particular end for Sikes might be a depiction of the Victorian citizen's religious belief in God's power and justice which is another way of persuading his readers and keeping the realism in his novel "*Oliver Twist*".

III.2.4 Monks as the Greedy Criminal:

Monks first appears as a mysterious character that is shown as a shadow during the novel, he is a wealthy person who is used in the plot for a specific objective that is destroying his half-brother's values for his self interest. Nancy Described Monks to Mr. Brownlow and Rose Malyie, saying that:

His face is dark, like his hair and eyes; and, although he can't be more than six or eight and twenty, withered and haggard. His lips are often discoloured and disfigured with the marks of teeth ... he was covered with a large cloak. ... Upon his throat: so high that you can see a part of it below his neckerchief when he turns his face: there is... a large burn mark. (147-148)

After reading this passage, the readers would get the impression that Monks frequently tries to hide his appearance, his invisible and shadowy character made him suspicious and untrustworthy, whenever he appears in the novel the readers get the feeling of the dangerous and warning atmosphere. His strange attitudes such as biting his lips, that is generally related

to stress or thinking a lot, triggers the readers' attention and makes them wonder what big story or secret he is hiding behind his invisible and covered body.

Monks represents the sinister moral evil, he is always obsessed by corrupting Oliver's morals as he keeps paying Fagin successively to make a thief out of him or at least to bring him down to commit unethical or illegal act to make sure of corrupting his pure soul to prevent him from fitting in the terms of his father's will. Monks and his actions show how criminality can also be acted by wealthy people or by individuals from all the social class. Monks preferred hiring people from the underworld to do the evil acts for him and kept himself unseen to maintain his reputation, because the wealthy are often known by their nobility as opposed to the underworld's citizen whom were labeled by barbarism and criminality. Monks has the characteristics of a born criminal since he neither inherits his family's high morals nor fit to the characteristics of the upper-class citizens.

Monks was offered so many advantages such as wealth, good living conditions, and social status, which the young kids in Fagin's gang have never dreamt of. Instead, he preferred spending much of his time in the criminal field. Even though he was given another chance by Mr. Brownlow to fix his mistakes and behave in the adequate behavior that goes with his social status, he could not bear with being a good person where he ended up by returning to his old illegal attitudes by accompanying criminals again and getting involved in the criminal world until he died in an American prison for being greedy and money addict.

III.2.5 Nancy as the Innocent Prostitute:

The only female criminal belonging to Fagin and Sikes's gang is Nancy, she is considered to be a prostitute by many critics including Collin although the text does not mention that she is a prostitute. Nancy is described in the novel as "[Nancy and Bet] they

wore a good deal of hair, not very neatly turned up behind, and were rather untidy about the shoes and stockings. They were not exactly pretty, perhaps; but they had a great deal of colour in their faces. ...Being remarkably free and agreeable in their manners" (79) Dickens' descriptions of the two ladies gives hints that those two ladies do not correspond to the proper traditional image of the Victorian women, their unsuitable way of dressing and the great amount of makeup that they painted their faces with and their manners give the readers the impression that they have the status of prostitutes.

Collin argues that "Dickens intended for her to be read as a prostitute, but felt the need to maintain a sensitivity in regard to how the readers would react to her" (qtd.in Sample 30) where he believes that the idea of making Nancy appear as a prostitute was intended by Dickens to trigger the readers' curiosity and to see how would they interpret her as character and how would they react to her role and actions in the novel.

Throughout the novel, Nancy successively tried to warn and protect Oliver especially when he fell in the hands of the gang again; Nancy spoiled Fagin's evil soul since she wanted to adjust her sin and protected him after feeling guilty about bringing him back to the gang. After diagnosing Nancy's actions, it comes to the readers' minds that she believes that Oliver should have a chance to run away from the evil criminal world since she lived the same events, that she did not want Fagin and Sikes to corrupt his good soul and make him a copy of themselves, her new attitude of helping Oliver and defending him made her appear as a good person, and at the same time provides the readers with the impression that she was driven to the underworld by force.

In addition to her poverty, Nancy has other reasons that led her to belong to the criminal underworld; one of the reasons was her inner beliefs that she has no other solution but to be part of Fagin's gang since she mentioned how her life will remain the same forever

until her death, she believes that this is her destiny and she cannot change it. (Dickens 385) Nancy's belief is the effect of the ideological state apparatus where the poor people believe that they will remain the same forever and they can neither prosper nor have a better life. She later mentioned that nothing can be done to rescue her because she is drowned in that criminal world (385) where she willingly accepts her life in the criminal world and feels that she is worthless and she does not deserve to have a good safer life.

Overall, Dickens has used different types of criminals committing different types of crimes for different reasons providing each criminal with a different type of punishment. Afaf Alkhidiri states that "The effect is that these scenes seem almost journalistic-it's like we are reading a newspaper expose on criminals in London, instead of a novel" (612) shedding the light on the idea that the aim of Dickens' plot is not only entertaining and satisfying his readers, but also reflecting the realistic fact brought up from the beneath of the Victorian society especially the boost of the criminal rates.

Conclusion:

Dickens' way of reflecting the miserable living conditions of his society through his novel is a way of reform by which he attracts his readers' attention to the truth of the criminal underworld, how and why most criminals commit their crimes and how some young children were driven to the criminal world because of their struggles and the obligation of their life circumstances where professional criminals, who rationally chose that dangerous world, easily manipulated them basing on the idea that poverty is considered as a symptom of criminality.

Chapter Four:

Oliver a Thief or a Victim

Introduction:

Charles Dickens is a writer who has always been known by the diversity of his fictional characters representing different social issues or themes. Of these characters, we have Oliver Twist the little orphan that once became an eponymous character through his role as a main character whom one of Dickens' stories revolves around. Debates held by different scholars and critics, like Dr. Terzi and Baldrige, differed about Oliver being a thief or a victim of the dark world surrounding him. So this chapter is dedicated to say whether Oliver is a thief or a victim, where the decision in this matter can only be made by analyzing each of Oliver's thoughts, behaviors, ethics, and actions in both worlds, the monstrous and villainous underworld, where he meets Fagin and his gang, versus the trusted and the secure upper world, where he meets Mr. Brownlow and Mrs. Maylie.

IV.1 Oliver in the Underworld:

Oliver is shown at the beginning of the novel as an anonymous orphaned newborn who was later overwhelmed with many negative predictions about his future by people who met or saw him. Through the very first chapters of the novel, many hints about the later predestination life of this orphan boy are constantly visible, it is noticeable that Oliver is always deemed to end up in prison for life or be sentenced to death by almost everyone surrounded him, these thoughts are results of the state apparatus that entrenched the idea that poverty often leads the poor to commit disgraceful acts, especially if the child is stubborn just like Oliver that constantly opposed to what he deems inappropriate.

Oliver is first introduced to the readers as a child who may belong to the upper class as he may belong to the lowest social layer, Dickens gave his character Oliver a first meeting with the outside world as an orphaned child with an unknown future, a child deprived of his parents' tenderness. The readers get to know Oliver and his tragic birth story that ends with

the death of his mother, which was his last hope to determine his origins, his mother who would have done the least to spare him the society's view of him as an unwanted child, where they might think that this orphan boy will surely have the sympathy and the protection of the surrounding people, but with further reading, they will be shocked by the reversal of their expectations for Oliver who is neither rational nor conscious, yet, he confronts the harshness of society and the political system that monopolized his rights. Dickens uses satire in describing Oliver's dress through his omniscient narrator by saying:

What an excellent example of the power of dress, young Oliver Twist was! Wrapped in the blanket which had hitherto formed his only covering, he might have been the child of a nobleman or a beggar. ...But now that he was enveloped in the old calico robes which had grown yellow in the same service, he was badged and ticketed, and fell into his place at once--a parish child--the orphan of a workhouse--the humble, half-starved drudge--to be cuffed and buffeted through the world--despised by all, and pitied by none. (6)

These combinations of descriptive words used in a skillful way by Dickens are not written in vain, he rather used them to reflect the other Victorian orphans and poor boys, at the same time to point out how Oliver's life would be miserable just like the others in the workhouses where no one would pity his situation as a waif. The literary character Oliver represents the children who suffer from oppression and repression by the state or the prestigious personalities, because of their social and personal status that are considered to be miserable.

Terci discussed the use of the blanket's yellowish color by relating it to sadness and suffering where it also symbolize how harsh the experience of Oliver at the workhouse would be (117) where he supports the idea that Oliver's future life might be as miserable as the blanket he was wrapped by that became yellow, Terci's comment sheds the light on the

foreshadowing used by Dickens through the yellowish blanket that is most accurately to hint that Oliver will be deprived of his childhood which is recognizable that he will have to work harder until he withers. This use of foreshadowing reveals how the stylistic use of Dickens gives an aesthetic glimpse to enrich the readers' understanding of his eponymous novel.

Oliver's next suffering in the poor world is when he was brought up to the workhouse at the age of 9 according to the new regulations imposed by the government or what is called "the poor law amendment of 1834", he had to work for 10 successive hours daily for neither enough food nor clothing for a small sum of money. (Dickens 7-9) It can be said that the child labor that was imposed on the workhouses was part from the repressive state apparatus where the upper class never cared about these poor people while imposing the new poor law since they consider the poor as foreigners where they underrated them.

Other thing that captivates about Oliver is his identity, since his mother died just before giving him a name that can shape his identity, the parish authorities, namely Mr. Bumble, had to name him, but the name given to him, Oliver Twist, was thought provoking to the other characters like Mr. Mann, since when Mr. Bumble was asked the reason why he picked "Twist", he did not explain the reason or the source of it. Rather, he hid the secret behind this name by pretending that it was time for a name that began with the letter "T". (Dickens 11) Some critics relate the name to the process of hanging saying that "'Twist' implies death by hanging – think about the body "twisting" on the rope at the gallows, the "twisting" that goes into making the rope, and the rope "twisting" around the neck of a soon-to-be-very-dead person. "Twist" is just full of gallows implications, even if it were not a common slang term for hanging, (which, by the way, it is)." ("Oliver Twist in *Oliver Twist*" Np) The naming of Oliver was another hint made by the authorities that this child's future will be dark; it was like they were defining Oliver's fate in advance according to his state of

being an unknown boy besides being a poor orphan, as if Mr. Bumble assumed that this little child would end in the gallows just like most of the other children in the workhouses.

After his suffering in the workhouse, Oliver was then taken by the Undertaker to work as an apprentice undertaker where he committed his first aggressive reaction that was against Noah who cruelly insulted his mother. The narrator describes Oliver's unexpected and involuntary aggressive reaction by saying "his whole person changed, as he stood glaring over the cowardly tormentor who now lay crouching at his feet; and defied him with an energy he had never known before". (52) Despite Noah's awareness of the sensitivity of talking badly about Oliver's dead mother that might end up by driving him to react aggressively, he decides to challenge his naivety. Oliver could not control himself where he blows up forgetting about his pure soul and calm character and became very violent and aggressive.

Oliver under the influence of his intense anger also hit the undertaker's wife, who contributed to describe his mother with the ugliest characteristics, as she said the same thing about him, and insulted him for being poor. This scene depicts the Victorian class struggle where the poor were seen as savages. Oliver's aggressive behavior can be considered as a code used by Dickens to say that from time to time people must forget about their naivety and pure soul to punish the bad and the cruel people.

The only analysis given on Oliver's bad behavior throughout the story is by Mr. Bumble where he refers to this act to well feeding Oliver by saying "'Meat, ma'am, meat,' replied Bumble... 'You've over-fed him, ma'am. You've raised *a artificial soul and spirit in him... It's quite enough that we let 'em have live bodies*. If you had kept the boy on gruel, ma'am, this would never have happened.'" (58) (Emphasis Added) In other words, meat will make the poor children having an artificial power which is not supposed to be one of their qualities. The rich people believe that the poor children should be feed only the amount that

helps them survive, this way they can be controlled easily. Since the reality is the source and fiction is one of the ways to reflect it, perhaps Dickens in this scene reflects both the ideological and repressive state apparatuses which are all about violence and prohibiting the poor from the means of life to be able to control them and at the same time making them believing that their destiny is to work for the others and be grateful for what they are given as they entrench this idea in their minds from a very young age.

Oliver's situation became more complicated after his first contact with the underworld that was after he flees from the authorities, whom mistreated him, to London. His poverty and loneliness in London were one of the reasons he went with Dodger and settled with Fagin's criminal gang, he was always subjected to the misinformation and manipulation of the others, especially Fagin who made him believe that pick pocketing is just a game that enables him to be richer triggering his curiosity on how can a game make him a great man.

Dickens through Oliver who fell into the abyss of criminals sheds the light on the corruption of the system that is considered as a contributing factor to the somewhat inflated crime rate in the Victorian society, by reflecting the reality of the abused and hungry children whom found their own rescue in abandoning the workhouses to escape the cruelty of its responsables where they end up weak and lonely and why not trapped in the criminal world since besides being easy to be modeled, corrupted, and mislead, children are just like white papers that one can write anything on.

In addition to being a little orphan boy, the thing about being a protagonist of an eponymous novel is being the center of the reader's attention and that is one of Dickens' ways of making his readers aware of the situations of the poor that they might not acknowledge only by sympathizing with Oliver's case more than they do with the other younger antagonists. Dickens through the comments of his narrator applied this strategy of reform

where he states “think how young he is; think that he may never have known a mother’s love, or the comfort of a home; that ill-usage and blows, or the want of bread, may have driven him to herd with men who have forced him to guilt.” (279) Dickens uses this description of Oliver Twist as a matter of persuasion especially by his use of the word “Think” to make the readers sympathize with Oliver and at the same time to draw their attention in sympathizing with the orphans in their own society those orphans whom are thrown in the workhouses, how they are abused, and at the same time how they suffered.

Oliver was successively put into danger and exposed to criminality against his will from the day he stepped in Fagin’s house till the day he was rescued by Rose Maylie. The first time being considered as a criminal by the police and the court was when the Dodger and Bates stole a handkerchief from an old man where Oliver was the one to be accused. (Dickens 80-85) Mio Hatada comments on the scenes where Oliver was misled and tricked in an outrageous way by saying that “Oliver who is trying to run away from the spot of theft, is a criminal to be perused and arrested, even if this is actually the first time for him to know the nature of Fagin’s job and their trainings” (7) arguing that Oliver was deceived regarding Fagin’s true identity where he also confirmed his previous puzzles regarding the game that the children were playing. Yet, it was a bit late since it was just after him being swindled due to his unawareness of the ugly truth.

Little Oliver again fell under suspicion where he was later accused of committing another crime which was breaking The Maylie’s house, however, this time differs since he knew the truth and the seriousness of what he would do and kept bagging Sikes to let him go saying “have mercy on me, and do not make me steal.” (208) As opposed to the first time, Oliver at this scene was aware that he was obliged to do something illegal, he was looking for a way to get rid of this act, he was bagging Sikes not to involve him in an illegal act.

Later in this scene the readers get to know what was going in Oliver's mind during his obligatory attempt of housebreaking through the narrator who in a way determines how the child was thinking of a way that prevents him from committing what he believes is inappropriate, dangerous, and illegal by saying "In the short time he had had to collect his senses, the boy had firmly resolved that, whether he died in the attempt or not, he would make one effort to dart upstairs from the hall, and alarm the family." (209) With a striking literary tone and style Dickens allows his readers to read Oliver's mind through his omniscient narrator where they can see the innocent good soul of Oliver which made him think about warning the house owners of the danger that surrounds them knowing that this decision might end up his life, yet, all his concern was to get rid of the guilt of committing an illegal act that does not suit his morals.

Terci comments on this scene saying that "Oliver's inborn qualities make him a gentleman, not his allegedly noble parents. In other words, Oliver becomes the image of the democratic gentleman, the person who goes through suffering but does not lose his pure heart." (115) Indeed, the essential feature of a gentleman should be his care about the others, Dickens probably used Oliver's gentleman behavior to affect his readers to open their eyes to the presence of some innocent abused children in the underworld whom might be threatened by powerful people to carry out criminal acts.

With continued reading, the readers get to know that a hidden character was the cause of Oliver's suffering, that a secret shadowy character was trying his best to make a thief out of Oliver, its attempts can be resumed in one quote "I tell you again, it was badly planned. Why not have kept him here among the rest, and made a sneaking, snivelling pickpocket of him at once?" (247) Oliver's half brother, the shadowy character, was addressing Fagin telling him that he should have kept Oliver as a pickpocket rather than sending him to rob a house that ended in depriving them of the opportunity to turn him into a criminal. Monks' saying reveals

that Fagin and he wanted to plan Oliver's destiny, by corrupting his ideals and morals to make a thief out of him, although Oliver had no intention to do that.

The day of breaking Maylie's house was Oliver's last day in the wild criminal world where he was shot by a bullet that would have led to the end of his life. The bullet's shot can be considered as rebirth for him, a second opportunity to make up for what went on in his life, it was an end of a dark chapter of Oliver's life, a chapter that all he was doing in is sailing against the frequent stormy winds that strengthened him, and the beginning of a brighter chapter full of opportunities to move away from the mysterious and dangerous place, that Oliver can neither fit nor coexisted in, to a joyful and safe place. The bullet was fulfilling Oliver's wishes for freedom from the cruelty while he was forced to rob Maylie's house.

IV- Oliver in the Upper World:

Dickens intentionally presents the character of the poor miserable Oliver in the upper world as a new different experience for him in the purpose of giving the readers a real picture about Oliver's innocence so as they will be able through this picture to wonder if Oliver and the other homeless children are put in a safer environment and grow in healthier conditions, their destiny could prevent them from integrating into the world of criminality, In other words; according to him and the other critics, the children of the upper class are the elite younger generation despite the fact that their morals and principles based on discrimination and vanity towards the poor people of the lower class.

Oliver's refusal to the underworld has developed so much that he refuses to hear or even read about it. The omniscient narrator mentions that Oliver refused to read the book after knowing that it was dealing with the theme of criminality by saying "It was a history of the lives and trials of great criminals; and the pages were soiled and thumbed with use...The terrible descriptions were so real and vivid, that the sallow pages seemed to turn red with

gore... . In a paroxysm of fear, the boy closed the book, and thrust it from him.” (187) Oliver closed the book in a strange way; expressing the terror of the experience he had with the poor of the lower class. Oliver thought he was vulnerable to becoming a criminal by just reading a book regardless of his connection to a crime-ridden society. While Oliver was reading the book that describes crimes and criminals, the detailed terrible experiences, and the trails sentenced for these crimes, he noticed that these crimes were described in a real way that made him feel like he was living those scenes again. Since he was afraid of being influenced by this volume and imitating what is written in it, his innocence made him close the book to avoid being influenced by it.

The very first person Oliver was blessed of being rescued by is Mr. Brownlow, Dickens tried to highlight all the good qualities of Mr. Brownlow, such as the period of employing Oliver as a book seller in his store, and his suggestion to Oliver to become a writer due to his attachment to books and the wonderful atmosphere that he found in that store, that Oliver rejected expressing his satisfaction with selling books only because he underestimated his academic and culture, “I think I would rather read them, sir,' replied Oliver. ‘What! Wouldn’t you like to be a book-writer?’ said the old gentleman... he should think it would be a much better thing to be a book-seller.” (122) It is notable that the characteristic of learning is only for the noble class where the scholars of the state are mainly the sons of the upper world, while it is impossible for the underworld to produce effective individuals in society.

Moreover, Oliver was experiencing a new feeling in Mr. Brownlow’s house, the people and the servants of that house were kind, generous, and supportive which made Oliver desire to spend his entire life there. Oliver begged Mr. Brownlow to allow him to stay at his house as a servant rather than making him return back to the villainous underworld by saying “‘Oh, don't tell you are going to send me away, sir, pray! ... 'Don't turn me out of doors to wander in the streets again. Let me stay here, and be a servant.’” (122-123) Here, Dickens tries

to show Oliver's refusal to return to the world of crime and poverty, Dickens uses this scene to make the readers get the impression that Oliver preferred having a more decent and honorable life where he did not want to return to the underworld and live an immoral and disgraceful life where he tries to avoid returning to his previous, full of crimes, experience in London's street.

Oliver's first challenging situation in the upper world was when Mr. Brownlow asked him to deliver some books to certain people. Unfortunately for Oliver, who was again accused of being a thief, his happiness or desire to work as a book seller was not completed where he lost his opportunity to prove himself as an innocent to Mr. Brownlow after being kidnapped by Sikes and Nancy before returning back. The omniscient narrator mentioned "Send Oliver with them,' said Mr. Grimwig, *with an ironical smile*; 'he will be sure to deliver them safely.'" (135) (emphasis added) In fact, Mr. Brownlow did his efforts to make sure that Oliver is safe inside his house, but Mr. Grimwig with his ironical smile that stereotyped Oliver as a poor money seeker who would steal the books and the money and never come back, provoked Mr. Brownlow to accept risking Oliver's life to prove that his suspicions about Oliver are wrong.

Oliver was blessed for the second time to be rescued by a new gentle person Rose Maylie, that can symbolize goodness and benevolence, the beautiful, kind, and lovely young lady from middle class whom always tried to see the good side in all people, whatever mistakes they commit. Rose Maylie might be portrayed by Dickens as a symbol that carries all the meanings of tenderness and calmness within her heart, her tenderness and wisdom were contributing elements to her sense that Oliver is an innocent child as soon as she saw the pureness in his face him, and the fact that it is impossible for such a little boy to be a wicked person or a criminal as she decided to keep him by her side and take care of him. (278)

Considering the innocence emanating from his face, Rose Maylie tried to help Oliver by teaching him and taking him to the countryside, that symbolizes health, happiness, and

security, where the comfortable and calm atmosphere exists where he found his good inner and pure side. Dickens refers to the happy experience of the poor boy through the portrait of the Victorian society classes; Oliver mentioned that the happy environment, the pure atmosphere, and purity of the hearts and the simplicity of the country's inhabitants were better than the dirty polluted climate and the evil dangerous people in city of London, where he witnessed the first crime in front of his eyes. Dickens' aim is to indicate the goodness of Rose Maylie so that the readers can imagine her as an angel who brought joy and happiness to Oliver's soul. The omniscient narrator describes the healing countryside as follows:

Who can describe the pleasure and delight: the peace of mind and soft tranquility: the sick boy felt in the balmy air, and among the green hills and rich woods, of an inland village! Who can tell how scenes of peace and quietude sink into the minds of pain-worn dwellers in close and noisy places, and carry their own freshness, deep into their jaded hearts!... Oliver, whose days had been spent among squalid crowds, and in the midst of noise and brawling, seemed to enter on a new existence there. (303)

Dickens through this passage tends to show Oliver's innocence in specific events in order to indicate that he found his pure and real inner just when he lived in the upper class, and that is due to the support that he gets from Mr. Brownlow and Rose Maylie. The real reason of Dickens was making his readers get deeper in the happy experience of Oliver in the Upper world to the extent that he actually forgot all the bad situations he faced in the gloomy streets of London.

Equally important, the surroundings of the country, in contrast with the dark streets of the poor, where Oliver took refuge together with Rose must work as a balm to his suffering soul. Moreover, Oliver always honestly spoke to Mr. Brownlow and Rose Maylie about the

horror of his experience in the city whenever he found an opportunity, asking them to allow him to stay with them and educate him to be a future gentleman where this honesty was due to two reasons; the first one is that he was trying in various ways to escape from the underworld in which the noble man and the loving lady were his two guarding angels. Whereas the second reason was in the kindness, tenderness, and the real attention which he found with them, taking into consideration that he lived his whole life as an orphan.

Not all the people from the upper world thought that Oliver would be a good person, for example, his father, Leeford, made a special condition for him to inherit his money where he wrote a will before his death stating “If it were a girl, it was to inherit the money unconditionally but if a boy, only on the stipulation that in his minority he should never have stained his name with any public act of dishonor, meanness, cowardice, or wrong.” (Dickens 502) It is a strange scene that triggers the readers’ mind to ask why Leeford would prohibit his son from the inheritance if he commits an illegal act or even a small mistake. It can be said that his father was ready to punish him in case he made any mistake, consequently, Dickens try to hint to another point through his contradiction which is the impact of the repressive statue apparatus entrenched thoughts.

In short, Oliver just like his name was obliged to twist from the underworld to the upper world in order to make the difference between correct and wrong behavior, meeting with good and evil characters who played a major roles in changing his destiny. This leads the readers to conclude that if Oliver did not face the underworld criminals, he might neither meet his family nor know his origins as he would rather spend the rest of his life as a poor citizen in a workhouse.

IV.3 Oliver with a Pure Soul in an Evil World:

Through the novel, there were always a battle between the good and the evil surrounding Oliver, he was at first exposed to the evil during his life starting from Mr. Bumble, moving to more evil people, such as Noah, who bullied him and pushed him to be aggressive, ending by him falling into the hands of Dodger and Fagin and their criminal gang, whom were repeatedly trying to make him a bad person, where he was struggling with their principles and always rejecting them. In his battle to remain pure, Oliver also got the chance to meet good people whom have observed the purity of his soul and tried to preserve his values and good manners, as well as to develop and solidify him for the long term such as Mr. Brownlow and Rose Malysie who prevented him from experiencing successive abuses to become a thief just like the other young boys in the story.

Opinions and diagnoses differ as to whether Oliver is a thief or a victim, but after analyzing all of his morals, thoughts, and actions throughout his experiences in both the lower and upper worlds, we can label Oliver as a victim. How can a boy who was once afraid of even reading crime fiction in order not to be influenced and imitate these novels, a little boy that even when he is threatened and put in danger thinks of others by looking for a way to save them, avoid committing a heinous act, and escape from the hands of the criminals whom were trying to pollute his thinking in a way or another be considered as a criminal, whereas he was a victim of both the monstrous underworld and the corruption of the system?

There are some other clues that Oliver has a pure soul in the novel rather than his thoughts, morals, and actions, for example, Mr. Brownlow thought that Oliver is an innocent boy who does not match with the characteristics of a criminal where he said “‘There is something in that boy's face!...something that touches and interests me. Can he be innocent?’” (88) Mr. Brownlow doubted Oliver’s state of being a criminal from the very

beginning, he had a feeling that Oliver is an innocent and that was due to his appearance and innocent face that made him appear like an honest and a respectful boy unlike the other boys he saw in the courtroom, as if he felt that Oliver has no experience in pick pocketing and does not belong to the monstrous underworld.

Another character that certainly knew about Oliver's innocence was Fagin, who has a long experience in manipulating the children and changing their thinking radically yet, still could not pollute Oliver where he asserted to Oliver's half brother that "I had no hold upon him to make him worse'...'*His hand was not in*. I had nothing to frighten him with; which we always must have in the beginning, or we labour in vain.'" (248) (Emphasis added) Fagin knew that Oliver's hand will never commit any crime since he saw his innocence and good heart that never enable him to be easily corrupted and driven to the criminal path like the other boys. Indeed, Oliver was very innocent and at the same time brave to the point that he could resist Fagin's strategies and threatening to convert him to criminality.

Cates Baldrige commented on the case of Oliver being an innocent by saying that it is somehow unrealistic being raised in poor environment that is full of criminals and not get involve in their world (qtd.in Terzi 114) Baldrige just like Shaw and McKay, the leaders of Social Disorganization Theory, believes that poverty always lead to criminality where there is no escape from this fact, in addition to being raised in a poor environment, Oliver also was surrounded by criminals and that is what made Baldrige believed that there is no way that Oliver could not be affected by the criminals since children's behaviors can easily be modeled and shaped.

Despite the fact that Fagin has created an illegal system beneath the streets of London by turning homeless children into criminals in an easy, manipulative, and tricky way, he could not manipulate or corrupt Oliver's ideals, although he used all means of circumvention,

manipulation of the mind, and even the threatening. For more clarification of Oliver's immunity only two hypotheses were created to be as hypothetical solutions to this mind-boggling question that might occur on the readers' minds through the events of the novel.

The first analysis of Oliver's remained innocence is that he was saved, helped, and protected at the right time once by Mr. Brownlow and the second time by Rose Maylie in addition to Nancy's several attempts of saving him and ensuring he will remain good and pure. Mr. Brownlow was the first person from the upper class that Oliver's life circumstances introduced him to, he has always supported Oliver after taking him to his place and trusting him but he did not have the opportunity to stay with him for long. Another character that Oliver was blessed to know was Rose Maylie who was keen to educate him and provide him with all sources of comfort. Dickens used the help of these generous noble people to Oliver as a way to shed the light that there are some poor people who are sincerely needing help since this kind of support and help between the classes is quite absent in the real life.

Despite the fact that Oliver had once begged Mr. Brownlow to keep him as a servant in his home than to bring him back to Fagin, the idea that he is an unprotected orphan boy, who has no family, food, money, clothes, or even a shelter, who could just like the other boys either fall in the hands of the criminal gang, whom would manipulate his thoughts and make him one of them, or die in the monstrous streets, makes the readers vulnerable to think about the possibility of Oliver becoming a professional thief over time if he was deprived of the opportunity of meeting good people like Mr. Brownlow, Nancy, and Rose Maylie who gave him a good safe life preserving and shaping his morals as happened in the story.

The second analysis is that Oliver remained innocent due to his nature that he inherited from his family, from Mr. Brownlow the noble man with the qualities of generosity, respect, and humility, who is revealed at the end of the story events as his grandfather and Rose

Malyie the loving, giving, and motivating lady who turned out to be his aunt, in addition to his father Leeford who did not accept behaving badly, even the slightest degree of criminality was rejected by him, by the evidence of the will that he left, which stipulates all the conditions that Oliver must have in order to get the inheritance.

Baldrige argued on Oliver's nature as a factor of his goodness by saying that "nature" – in the sense of a physical and moral inheritance – becomes the only explanation we can reasonably consider once we begin to discover the identities of the hero's parents. Oliver physically resembles his progenitors." (qtd. in Terci 115) where he argues that Oliver's good morals, actions, and principles are due to his affiliation with the respectable class which indirectly saved him from getting involved in criminality. Baldrige's argument reinforces the idea that Oliver's refusals of the criminal attitudes were related to his nature where he naturally rejects the idea of crime. A vivid example of his natural reactions to crimes would be when he naturally runs away from Dodger and Bates after recognizing that they were picking Mr. Brownlow's pockets which proved that the way his body reacted was in response to the goodness of his soul.

All in all, Although Oliver did not have the opportunity to challenge the cruel world more like the other young characters, whom were diseased by Fagin and his game, that were the same age as him, we can assume that Oliver's nature and the successive rescues and protections by good people prevented him from being a thief whereas the other young boys did not get the same chance. Oliver might be impacted by the criminals if he continued living with them, or at least he might be part of them as a matter of the obligation of life circumstances. As he might keep his pure soul and refuse to be part of the criminal underworld and flee again just like he fled once before to London from the oppression he was suffering from. The answer of whether Oliver is a thief or a victim can be summarized by saying that Oliver, just like other homeless children in the story, was always a victim, first a

victim of his society that considered him as a waif, then by the criminal gang that always tried tricking his mind and make a criminal out of him despite his repeated attempts to resist being cursed.

Conclusion:

Dickens through his character Oliver Twist criticized the stereotyping theory that considers the poor children as criminals known by acting in a barbaric way and committing criminal acts with their full desire to provide a living for themselves. Where he gave Oliver as an example that always had been deemed to be a future criminal by the surrounding people, however, he turned to be an honorable, honest, and pure little boy that showed his successive refusal for any illegal act shedding the light on the idea that poverty is not always a symptom of criminality. Dickens' use of Oliver is one of his ways of reform to the Victorians where he used Oliver as a central character to make his readers sympathize with him through following all the actions that happened to him where he made him a mind-boggling character to refer to the rest of the children who suffer in silence to satisfy all the greedy evils.

General Conclusion

Having a qualitative analysis of the novel in hand we would like to present the outcome of this study that draws the following conclusions. The first, Dickens, who lived at the same era where his solid fictional piece "*Oliver Twist*" took place, used realistic events from the Victorian daily life within its pages in order to expose the criminal world that threatened thousands of lives and to increase the public's awareness to certain social problems of that era of time proving that the literary fiction is not only used for merely imagination but also as a weapon that can be a civilized way of reform since it has a special heart and mind influence on people.

Our research highlights a strong theme throughout "*Oliver Twist*" which is the assumption that the higher the status of the individual is, the higher respect he will get in his community, portrayed in the characters of Mr. Brownlow, The Maylies, Mr. Bumble, Monks, and some of the other characters who reached the Victorian social definition of the successful class, as opposed to Fagin, Bill Sikes, and the others belonging to the criminal gang whom were shown as morally and financially poor.

This phenomenon led to another serious problem that appeared as a result of the big social gap created between the rich and the poor that prevented any relation or interaction between them, where the upper class estimated the lower class people as dangerous barbarian people that should be neglected and isolated and this made the poor get even poorer. Thus, finding no solution for their survival made them think to commit illegal acts without thinking of the others since they did get no help from the rich ones. And that was proved by The Dodger and Bates' technique of self-preservation that made them turn on Oliver and put him in the zone of suspicion in the eyes of justice and the angry citizens.

This extended essay was an opportunity to get a chance to plunge into the world of criminality and shedding the light on the causing factors of criminality during the 19th

century in London presented by Dickens in his fictional novel "*Oliver Twist*". The most obvious symptom of criminality was poverty since it was the main purpose that made several characters like Nancy and The Artful Dodger derive to the criminal path according to their desire of surviving.

Simply put, the Victorians labeled the most unfavorable lower-lower class as the underworld, the worst of the worst that do nothing but destroying the society with their criminal, heinous, and disgraceful attitudes. And this was illustrated by Dickens' attempt of making his readers often see this prejudice against the poor in "*Oliver Twist*" through the creation of fictional characters that are characterized by the untidy ugly appearance, the unknown roots, and poverty which made them easy to be identified as criminal for the other higher status characters. This stereotype, though, shows the class struggle and entrenching the state apparatuses in the heads of all classes Victorian citizens.

The issue of the unemployment that has a close relation to poverty was another cause of criminality that appeared right after the new trend of replacing men by machines during the Industrial Revolution that opened the door of hell to the poor, who not only became unemployed but also homeless which is even worse. As it is known with unemployment comes poverty, and with poverty come hunger and with hunger all attempts to survive come where criminality is the easiest and the fastest one since unemployed people have more spare time to plan and commit crimes. The issue of unemployment was indirectly presented by Dickens through the setting which is characterized by the degrading life conditions in the streets of London, especially where the criminal gang lives which triggers the terror, and the unemployed characters like Nancy, Sikes, and the little children.

In addition to poverty, other causes of criminality that were taking place in the Victorian era were illustrated through "*Oliver Twist*"; these causes consisted in committing

crimes to maintain in control and power that was portrayed through Fagin who created a dangerous and an illegal system in the center of England, as well as to solve inheritance problems which is illustrated through the character Monks who tried in various ways to include his brother in the criminal world to discredit him. In addition to the variety of crimes' causes mentioned in the novel, we find punishments of varying intensity that Dickens considers appropriate for every person according to his age and the circumstances of his commission of the crime.

Dickens used a sentimental way to show how our little uneducated protagonist Oliver, who lives in the lower class society, was squeezed in miserable living conditions that made him fall in the hands of the villainous criminals. Yet, he was neither influenced by the criminals nor converted to be one of them, it can be said that preserving the purity of his heart is due to his inheritance of the high morals as well as the help of the good people which is a chance that the other little children did not get.

Besides the fact of being entertaining and critical of the Victorian law, the social structure, and the authorities, "*Oliver Twist*" was written for the sake of advising the upper classes to help the lower ones and dominate them as well as to prevent them from having envy which can lead them to commit crimes thinking only for their own rescue rather than thinking of the safety of the others or the security of the country, as it was also written for the sake of shedding the light on the idea that the absolute poor people are not always criminals as the Victorians stereotyped them where everyone is born with a pure heart that can remain pure or be dirty over time with either grudge, envy, and hatred or by the influence and the obligation of the life's circumstances.

All in all, through the Marxist literary analysis of "*Oliver Twist*" it can be said that Charles Dickens like the other Victorian literature writers with the use of realism contributed

General Conclusion

in portraying the reality of the Victorian social and the political issues, through his characters, setting, and plot. In fact, in our work, we attempted to show that through realism, Dickens managed drawing his readers' attention towards the issues of criminality and poverty and to the extent these two issues are interrelated. Therefore, in the near future, we wish to conduct further studies about these two issues exploring different authors' writings from different eras that may lead us to different conclusions.

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