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Bakalářská práce představuje genezi postavy sirotka ve čtyřech různých britských publikacích. V teoretické části se práce zabývá tvorbou Charlese Dickense, zaměřenou zejména na jeho známé dílo *Oliver Twist* a poté srovnává vývoj postavy sirotka v Dickensově knize a v novodobé literatuře, konkrétně v dílech *The Jungle Book*, *Harry Potter* a *Ausuf Azeiz*.

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Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto bakalářskou práci Fenomén sirotků v britské literatuře vypracovala pod vedením vedoucího bakalářské práce samostatně a uvedla jsem všechny použité prameny a literaturu.

V Hradci Králové dne.....

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Klíčová slova: Britská Literatura, Sirotek, Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Viktoriánská Anglie

Annotation

CAFOURKOVÁ, Kateřina. *The Phenomenon of Orphans in the British Literature*. Hradec Králové: Faculty of Education, University of Hradec Králové, 2023. 40 pp. Bachelor Degree Thesis.

This thesis presents the genesis of the figure of the orphan in four different British publications. In the theoretical part, the thesis examines the work of Charles Dickens, focusing in particular on his famous work *Oliver Twist*, and then compares the development of the orphan character in Dickens' book and in modern literature, specifically *The Jungle Book*, *Harry Potter*, and *Awful Auntie*.

Keywords: British Literature, Orphan, Charles Dickens, Oliver Twist, Victorian England

Abstrakt

Sirotek, postava vyskytující se v mnohé světové literatuře jak minulé, tak současné. Postava sirotka se stala velkým fenoménem v mnohých velice známých, a i světově uznávaných dílech a není tomu jinak právě ani v britské literatuře, kde se postava sirotka jako hlavního hrdiny vyskytuje poměrně často. Ačkoli dnes už nám to tak moc nepřijde, sirotci neměli vždy ve společnosti zrovna vážené postavení. Spousta sirotků doslova přežívala ve velmi krutých podmínkách, jelikož bez rodičů a příbuzných byli doslova spodinou společnosti. V dřívějších dobách skončila většina osiřelých dětí v sirotčincích, v domech, ve kterých se měli o nebohá neviňátka postarat cizí lidé k tomu určeni. Bohužel ani v těchto „záchranných“ zařízeních se dětem příliš lásky nedostávalo a byly velice zanedbávány. Sirotci spávali všichni dohromady ve velké místnosti a nedostávalo se jim ani dost jídla či hygieny. Většina dětí byla velice zanedbaná, podvyživená a slabá a aby toho na ně už tak nebylo málo, musela ještě pracovat, a to buď přímo v sirotčinci anebo vykonávala nějaká podřadná zaměstnání nebo činnosti, kterými se dospělí nechtěli zabývat. Tyto nepříznivé podmínky panovaly mimo jiné též v Londýně v období tzv. Viktoriánské Anglie, kdy se v ulicích vyskytovala spousta bezdomovců, lupičů a pouličních kapsářů a byly zde velice špatné hygienické podmínky. Tato skutečnost je velmi dobře vyobrazena právě v Dickensově knize *Oliver Twist*, kterou se z velké části tato práce zabývá, kde malý Oliver bojuje o svůj holý život tak, že se nakonec dostane do party zlodějů jen proto, aby si loupením vydělal na střechu nad hlavou a trochu jídla.

Sirotci se vyskytují ve spoustě literárních děl, a to jak jako postavy vedlejší, tak i jako hlavní hrdinové. Vůbec nezáleží na tom, jakého je kniha žánru či o jaký literární druh se jedná. Tento hrdina je většinou velmi odvážný a je ochoten čelit vlastnímu osudu, který nebývá vždy optimistický. Některé příběhy sirotků přinášejí spoustu zvrátů a napětí, ale pro uspokojení čtenáře bývají většinou završeny šťastným a velmi často i dojemným koncem.

Tato bakalářská práce je pomyslně rozdělena do dvou částí – teoretické a praktické. Práce je zaměřena na postavu sirotka v britské literatuře a vývoj této postavy v průběhu věků v různých literárních formách. V teoretické části se čtenář seznámí s životem a tvorbou významného britského autora Charlese Dickense, který žil a tvořil v devatenáctém století v oblasti Velké Británie. Tvorbu tohoto autora významně ovlivnila nejen Viktoriánská éra, která za dob jeho působení v Británii panovala, ale také zkušenosti a zážitky z vlastního života, kterými se později nechal inspirovat v psaní svých nejznámějších děl. Nejvýznamnějším dílem pro tuto práci je Dickensova kniha *Oliver Twist*, která vypráví příběh osiřelého chlapce, žijícího nejprve v nuzných poměrech britského sirotčince, později ve špinavých a nelítostných ulicích viktoriánského Londýna. Chlapec zažívá radosti i strasti a v jeho postavě se zčásti zobrazuje Dickensovo dětství. Praktická část se zaměřuje na porovnání postavy sirotka v dalších, modernějších dílech britských autorů právě s Oliverem.

Oliver Twist je velice nadčasový příběh, sahající až do období současnosti. Je to kniha plná překvapení, lásky, nenávisti, zákeřnosti, ale i důvěry a pomoci. Oliver na své životní cestě nachází spoustu překážek a nástrah, se kterými se mu ale vždy podaří nějakým způsobem vyrovnat. Je to velice silný hrdina s velkým srdcem. Oliverovo dětství bylo plné smrti a nespravedlnosti. Vyrůstal v sirotčinci, kde žil spolu s ostatními sirotky ve velmi nuzných podmínkách a trpěl hladu. Pro to, aby se v životě někam posunul, se nakonec rozhodl utéct ze sirotčince a vydat se do Londýna. Na krátký čas se stane členem bandy loupežníků. Bohužel potká spoustu zlých a falešných lidí, kteří se z něj snaží udělat darebáka, ale nakonec se jim to

nepodaří a Oliverův příběh tak skončí tím, že v životě konečně nalezne trochu štěstí a lásky, která mu celý život chyběla.

První knihou, která je součástí porovnání v praktické části, je *Kniha Džunglí*. Tato kniha pochází z pera známého spisovatele Rudyarda Kiplinga, který je známý nejen pro svou prozaickou tvorbu, ale i pro četná díla v oblasti poezie. Kniha pojednává o malém chlapci jménem Mauglí, který téměř od narození žije se smečkou vlků, která ho vychovává jako jejich vlastní mládě. Mauglí potkává spoustu zvířecích přátel, kteří ho učí zákonům džungle a jejímu řádu. Během své knižní cesty Mauglí prožívá spoustu dobrodružství, ale kromě přátel na své cestě potkává také nepřátele. S těmi se mu ale naštěstí vždy povede vypořádat, a tak si dál může žít spokojeným životem v džungli. Vše je sluncem zalité až do doby, kdy si Mauglí uvědomuje, že mezi své zvířecí kamarády úplně nezapadá, a že jeho přirozené prostředí je mezi lidmi. Proto se Mauglí na konci příběhu vrací do svého původního domova, k lidem.

Další část práce je věnována sérii knih o Harrym Potterovi od současné britské spisovatelky J. K. Rowlingové. Její knihy o mladém čaroději jsou světovým bestsellerem již od dob svého vydání a provází spoustu čtenářů, ať už děti či dospělých, již několik let. Harry přišel o své rodiče zhruba ve věku dvou let a od té doby žije se svou tetou, strýcem a nepřejícným bratrancem Dudleym. Jelikož všichni členové rodiny, ve které Harry vyrůstá, jsou Mudlové (ti, co neumějí kouzlit), Harry žije až do svých jedenácti let bez vědomí toho, že je čarodějem. Poté se ale vše změní a on nastupuje do školy čar a kouzel v Bradavicích, kde začíná jeho skutečné dobrodružství. Příběh Harryho Pottera je rozdělen do sedmi knih a byl také zfilmován, a to do osmi celovečerních rodinných filmů, které si zasloužily stejně jako knihy obrovský celosvětový úspěch.

Poslední publikací je kniha pro děti od Davida Walliamse, která nese název *Příšerná Teta*. David Walliams se mimo dvě herecké kariéry proslavil také jako spisovatel pohádek pro děti. Tato kniha má zcela odlišný styl než knihy předchozí. Je určena opravdu spíše pro dětské čtenáře a příběh opět pojednává o postavě sirotka. Příšerná Teta je příběh o dívce jménem Stella, která se po několika měsících probouzí z kómatu a zjišťuje, že během autonehody přišla o oba rodiče. Nyní je odsouzena žít v rodinném sídle se svou tetou Albertou, která se o ni má postarat. Teta je ale velice vypočítavá a jejím plánem je se dívky co nejrychleji zbavit, aby zdědila rodinné sídlo sama pro sebe. Proto pro Stellu vymýšlí různé nástrahy a je ochotna zajít tak daleko, aby Stellu sprovodila ze světa jednou provždy. Stelle se ale spolu s jejím novým přítelem daří tetě vše oplácet stejnou měrou, a i tento příběh nakonec končí šťastně.

V závěru této práce zjišťujeme, že po přečtení různých publikací, ve kterých se postava sirotka vyskytuje dojdeme k názoru, že se charaktery těchto hrdinů mohou velmi lišit i přes zdánlivou podobnost v jejich osudech. Sirotek, stejně jako každý jiný hrdina, má moc svůj osud změnit a snahu udělat život lepší nejen pro sebe samého, ale zejména pro lidi kolem sebe. Celkově ale můžeme říci, že sirotek je hrdina odvážný, skromný a má obrovské srdce plné lásky ačkoli jeho příchod na svět nebo ranné dětství nebyly zhmotněním představ o bezstarostném životě.

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Introduction

The motif of childhood appears in British literature very often. Children are frequently not only one of the supporting roles, but they quite usually appear as the main character of the whole book. The character of a child changes depending on the time, and the historical background, but especially depending on the society of the time. But children were not always considered so important that they could appear as one of the more important roles in books of any genre. Šárka Bubíková says in her publication that “the concept of childhood and adolescence and its experience undergoes historical changes and that the perception of childhood as a specific phase of development comes relatively late, at the turn of the 17th and 18th century” (Bubíková, 2009, 7). Bubíková also says that this does not mean that our ancestors “did not realize that childhood is not the same as adulthood” (Bubíková, 2009, 7), but it seems that children for them were not “the center of family life and the society did not give them so much attention as it is common since the mid-nineteenth century” (Bubíková, 2009, 7). When the children became part of the structure of many books, the orphanage was one of the more popular motifs in British literature. Especially in the times of the 18th and 19th century. This was due to the influence of the society and living conditions of that time, but this topic is quite usual even in the literature of the modern era.

The orphaned children were often described as individuals living in poor conditions. As lower-class people or as people on the margins of society. The standard of living often forces poor orphans to live in the streets on their own and to steal for a living. This kind of lifestyle unfortunately quite often leads to some diseases caused by bad weather, lack of food, or sleep deprivation.

In the past, the little orphaned children were used for stealing by gangs of robbers. Because of their height, they could easily squeeze through the small windows and cracks. The main one of the robbers offered the orphan a place to live and some food at the cost of stealing for him. The child was happy to have the new kind of so-called “family” and did everything he/she was asked to do.

In other cases, especially in more modern literature, there were not any robber gangs, but the orphaned children were often given a new so-called “foster family”. The foster family could be other relatives of the child or some foreign people, who just simply wanted to have a child and they could not or felt lonely and sad when their own children left the nest. Many of those children lived in their foster families happily ever after, but some of them did not. In the books I would like to mention in my thesis later there are mostly the children who did not have that much luck and their foster families were not as great as they had hoped.

In this thesis, I would like to briefly introduce the life and the work of one of the most popular and famous authors of the time of 19th century Britain, Charles Dickens. His life also pretty much influenced some of his novels. The greatest example for this is his famous novel *Oliver Twist* which also concerns the topic of orphanage which is the main subject of this thesis. This document will also show the situation in 19th-century Britain and how the milieu and society looked like in this period.

The practical part will concern the comparison of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* with other books including the topic of orphans and waifs from different time periods. First will be Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* which was first published in the year 1894. It is a book

about a boy named Mowgli who happens to live in a pack of wolves who take care of him. During his adventures, he meets many animal friends and enemies, and all these experiences are described in short stories dedicated especially to children. The second work will be J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter*, first published in 1997. It is a well-known series of novels about an orphaned boy named Harry who discovers he is a wizard and goes to the School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in Hogwarts where he meets new friends, and he is having lots of adventures in the world full of fantasy and magic. The last one will be David Walliams' *Awful Auntie* which is a story about a little girl named Stella who is after the death of both of her parents forced to live with her awful aunt Alberta who is trying to harm her in every possible way.

The character of an orphan is a big topic and in different books, they appear as different people in different levels of society, but they also have something in common. And that is, which was already mentioned, that they had to live their life differently than other children. They did not have their parents, or family at all and it very much influenced their personality and behavior. This can be seen in many literatures and every piece, it is described differently. The lives of the main heroes are dissimilar to each other. Every story has its original plot and its original point of view on the hero himself and the surrounding society.

This is the main reason why this thesis consists of not only an analysis of one piece of literature and one author, but also of analysis of more pieces with the same type of hero, but each of them has its own story. Each of the heroes is somehow original and somehow diverse from the others. This shows how the view of society on the figure of an orphan and a child as such has changed in different books written in different ages and centuries. The practical part will compare the works and analyse the main figures and the milieu of the whole story.

To be an orphan is a great topic even in the modern time. At this time, the society is more developed and there are many more options for the orphans. They do not have to earn their money by working long hours under unfavourable conditions, they do not have to live in orphanages with cruel staff. They can more easily live their life happily and find a loving home where they can feel loved and needed and where they can find the best of them.

The number of orphaned children in today's society is much lower than in the past. The level of criminality is lower and the level of the health care system is much higher. There are only a small number of diseases for which cures have not yet been developed, so mortality rates are much lower and life expectancy has increased greatly. As far as maternal deaths in childbirth are concerned, this is only rare with major health complications. So the problem of overpopulation and the orphans without a home and place to live in are very rare and exceptional.

1 Theoretical Part

The theoretical part is focused on the famous author Charles Dickens, his life, and mostly on his work. It also considers the historical period Dickens lived in because it influenced his work a lot, which can be seen in his most famous book, *Oliver Twist*.

1.1 Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens, also known as Charles John Huffam Dickens, is one of the most famous British authors of the 19th century. He is generally considered the greatest novelist of the Victorian era. Dickens was born on February 7, 1812, in Portsmouth, Hampshire. Because of his popular works, Dickens enjoyed a wider popularity during his life than any author from the time before. His books had a wide readership; much of his work could appeal to the simple and the sophisticated, to the poor and the queen, and technological developments as well as the qualities of his work caused his overlap and spread, he became famous worldwide very quickly. During his long career, the novels suffered several fluctuations in reception and sales, but none of them was insignificant or uncharacteristic or browsed, and his popularity never ceased, although many aspects and phases of his work, which are admired today, were not regarded by the people of his time. Dickens is also considered more than a great entertainer. He is one of the great forces in 19th-century literature and an influential spokesman of the conscience of his age since he planted the range, compassion, and intelligence of the apprehension of his society and its shortcomings in his entire work (Collins). Charles Dickens is one of the most significant figures in 19th-century British literature and his works are still very popular in modern times.

1.1.1 Historical and Social Background

Charles Dickens lived in the so-called Victorian era, which is one of the well-known historical periods of Great Britain. The Victorian era, in British history, is the period between approximately 1820 and 1914, not exactly corresponding to the period of Queen Victoria's reign, which was between the years 1837 and 1901. This historical period is characterized by a class-based society, a growing number of people able to vote, a growing state and economy, and Britain's status as the most powerful empire in the world. During this period, Britain was a powerful nation with a rich culture; it had a stable government, a growing state, and an expanding franchise, and it also controlled a large empire. Britain was a wealthy country, in part because of its degree of industrialization and its imperial holdings and because three-fourths of its population, or more, was working-class. Late in the period, Britain began to decline as a global political and economic power in comparison with other major powers, such as the United States; this decline was not as noticeable until after World War II. (Steinbach). The Victorian era is well known not only for the positives it brought, but unfortunately also for the negatives which were observed especially by the boiled society and poor people.

1.1.1.1 Situation in Britain

Queen Victoria was the first British monarch to see her name given to the period of her reign during her lifetime. The Victorian Age was characterized by rapid changes and development in nearly every sphere; it brought advances in medical, scientific, and technological knowledge, but also changes in population growth and location. This rapid transformation started with optimism, an economic boom, and prosperity, but in the end, it also brought uncertainty and doubt regarding Britain's place in the world. Today is the age of the 19th century mostly associated with the Protestant work ethic, family values, religious observation, and institutional faith.

As for the society; the families were mostly large and patriarchal, and they encouraged hard work, respectability, social deference and religious conformity. The contemporaries of this time, however, frequently challenged this view in the nineteenth century. Women were usually portrayed as either Madonnas or prostitutes even though the increasing education and employment opportunities gave them the chance to find themselves a job and not just be a housewife.

The Victorians believed in the perfection of their evolved representative government, and they wanted to export it throughout the British Empire; so, Politics was important for them. This brings us to the fact that this age saw the birth of political movements like socialism, liberalism, and organized feminism and that they tried to spread them around the entire world. The Victorians were also excited by geographical exploration, especially by the opening up of Africa and Asia to the West, but at the same time were troubled by the intractable Irish situation and humiliated by the failures of the Boer War. What, on the contrary, remained largely unchallenged throughout the century, was British supremacy at sea.

During the heyday of this historical period, work and play expanded dramatically. The national railway network stimulated travel and leisure opportunities for all, so by the 1870s there was a massive boom in travelling abroad to seaside resorts etc. The growth of literacy caused the popularity of journalism and the ascendancy of novels, which became a powerful icon.

The progress of scientific thinking led to significant changes in medicine, with increased specialization and developments in surgery and hospital building. Even many breakthroughs appeared; chloroform started to be used for anaesthetics, and also many antiseptics were found. The erection of specialized workhouses and asylums emerged, for the most vulnerable members of society (*History in Focus*). The society of the 19th century was disparate. There was the aristocracy living the high life, the middle class, and the working class, but unfortunately also a lot of poor and homeless people living in terrible conditions in the dirty streets of the cities.

1.1.1.2 Orphanage

Albeit the up to now description of the Victorian era may seem quite happy, the truth for lower societies was a bit different. Being an orphan was quite common in those days. Victorian children and people at all lived very different lives from those in the present time. During the 19th century the population of London grew rapidly. As a result, the problems of overcrowding and poverty came. There also appeared diseases, such as cholera, measles, scarlet fever, diarrhoea and tuberculosis, and many people were dying earlier even at a very young age. This was a major problem not only for the poor but also for the rich (Museum of London). There are many different definitions to describe an orphan. To say it as briefly as possible; “orphan is a child whose parents have died” (*Orphan*). Some orphans are lucky enough to have a loving family to take care of them, but unfortunately, not everyone is successful in life.

During the time of the Victorian era, Great Britain witnessed technological and economic advancements. Society was divided into separate social classes from which were separated especially the people of the middle class. The orphans were excluded from the Victorian model because they were abandoned children without a past or any relations. Orphans were not given any status in society, but they often appeared in Victorian literature, as respectable but troubled heroes and heroines. The authors of the Victorian period portrayed orphans as people living in overcrowded cities in unsanitary conditions after they lost both of their parents. These descriptions of the Victorian authors are probably the only source that can be used to find out

what the real life of the Victorian orphans looked like (*Victorian Era*). One of these depictions is Dickens' *Oliver Twist*.

Today orphans are relatively rare in developed countries, but at the time of 19th century Britain it was quite a common thing (*Orphan*). Orphans usually did not have an easy life and were not treated well. They usually had to do some hard work to make a living, or even had to steal or join a robbery gang. Even small children were often forced to steal to earn their new “family” and have a home.

Some orphanages provided food and shelter for the poor orphans in return for hard, unpleasant work. That is why many orphans, who could not find a place in an orphanage, had to live on the streets or in workhouses, which was the last resort for them due to the harsh conditions (Museum of London). The orphanage staff often had no mercy on orphaned children and prepared a real hell for them.

1.1.1.3 Child Labour

Child labour is another common topic of the Victorian era. Child labour is any kind of work done by children which deprives them of their childhood, forestalls them from attending school regularly, or is mentally, physically, socially, and morally harmful to them (*Child Labour*). In the 19th century it unfortunately appeared on a daily basis.

At the time of the 19th century child labour occurred very frequently. Children were supposed to do many different jobs, especially those that adult people were not capable of doing. Many of the children worked at home with their parents, or in workshops. They were making matchboxes or sewing. Because of their small figure, they were able to fit in very small spaces, so that they could work for example as chimney sweeps. The fact that they could fit in everywhere was often exploited by gangs of thieves who used the children to steal for them in exchange for an offer of food and housing. Other occupations which the children of the Victorian era did were messengers, crossing sweepers, errand boys, shoe blacks, builders, or they were selling cheap goods such as flowers. The girls often worked as domestic servants for wealthy families (Museum of London). Charles Dickens personally worked in a blacking factory as a child.

The Victorian era became disreputable for the conditions under which children were employed. Even at the age of four, they were employed in production factories and mines working long hours in bad and dangerous working conditions. They often worked in coal mines where they would crawl through tunnels too narrow and low for adults to fit in. This work was often fatal for them. Working hours were too long; 52 to 64 hours a week for the builders, 80 hours a week for the servants, and the children were not given much money either; it was only 10-20 per cent of an adult man's wage. A high number of children also worked as prostitutes (*Child Labour*). Today, this is unacceptable and unimaginable.

The children of the poor were supposed to contribute to their family income, so the families were sending their children to work because when they would go to school, the family would lose the money they could earn if they worked. So, it was quite usual that the children did not go to school very often, but they were encouraged to attend school by giving them School attendance medals (Museum of London, *Child Labour*). From this, we can easily deduce that education was mainly for the higher society.

During the second half of the 19th century child labour began to decline due to regulation from the earliest beginnings of the Industrial Revolution and the growth of trade unions. As technology improved, more educated employees were needed. Today, with some exceptions, child labour is prohibited worldwide by the law (*Child Labour*), but there are still several countries in which small children have to work to support their families.

1.1.2 Dickens' Youth and its Effect on His Work

1.1.2.1 Dickens' Childhood

Charles Dickens was born as the second of eight children of Elizabeth and John Dickens. His father worked as a clerk in the Navy Pay Office and was temporarily stationed in the district. In January 1815 the family moved to Norfolk Street in Fitzrovia and then, when Charles was four years old, they relocated to Sheerness and then to Chatham in Kent. Chatham was the town, where Dickens spent most of his childhood till the age of eleven. Although his life seemed idyllic at those times, he thought himself to be “very small and not-over-particularly-taken-care-of boy” (Wikipedia Contributors, *Charles Dickens*). Charles spent a lot of time outdoors, but he was a passionate reader too. His father's work as a clerk afforded him a few years of private education. He studied at a dame school first, then at a school run by William Giles in Chatham.

This period ended in June 1822, when the family moved to Camden Town in London, because of John's work and rapidly mounting debts. In the year 1824, John was forced to time in a debtor's prison in Southwark in London. His wife and youngest children were forced to join him there, as was the practice at the time. Twelve-year-old Charles lived with a family friend, Elizabeth Roylance, in Camden Town. Later, he lived in a back attic with an agent for the Insolvent Court, Archibald Russell, and his family (Wikipedia Contributors, *Charles Dickens*). Here we see that Dickens' childhood was very varied and, in many ways, also very challenging, and later we will come to how these times influenced his work.

1.1.2.2 Dickens in Work

To earn money for a living, Dickens was forced to leave school and started working. He worked every day for ten hours in Warren's Blacking Warehouse, located on Hungerford Stairs, and he earned six shillings a week pasting labels on pots of boot blacking. The hard work in this factory had a huge impact on his fiction and essays. He strived for the reform of socio-economic and working conditions, which were, unfortunately, and he believed also unfairly, borne by the poor (Wikipedia Contributors, *Charles Dickens*). The impact of his own life is very well shown in his most famous novel *Oliver Twist*.

A few months after his father got imprisoned, Dickens' grandmother died which brought an unexpected heritage to his family. This largely helped the family with their debts and John Dickens was released from prison (Wikipedia Contributors, *Charles Dickens*). And with these facts, the life of the Dickens family was back on track at least.

1.1.2.3 Effects on his Work

Dickens became interested in children who experienced a similar childhood to his. A childhood without a home and family, where they were left to fend for themselves. He also visited many

charity events. At the age of fifteen, he worked as a lawyer's scribe and then as a court reporter. He wanted to become an actor, but he did not go with drama very well. His career as a writer began when he worked as a journalist. Later on, he worked as a parliamentary journalist for *The Morning Chronicle*. In the print also appeared his first works in the form of small sketches under the nickname "Boz". This launched his prolific writing career (SPISOVATELE.CZ, BBC – History). Some of the sketches were then published as books under his real name.

His work was influenced by his relationship with both of his parents. Many of the people he met throughout his childhood and his whole life, he portrayed, more or less truly, in his later works. Including some of the people mentioned above.

1.2 Oliver Twist

Oliver Twist, also called *The Parrish Boy's Progress*, is one of the most famous books of Charles Dickens. It is Dickens' second novel. First, it was published serially under his pseudonym "Boz" from 1837 to 1839 in *Bentley's Miscellany*, and in between it was written into a Three-volume book in 1838. It was Dickens' first novel realistically depicting the bankrupted city of London and its underworld. In this book, he also wrote about his belief that poverty leads to crime (Wikipedia Contributors, *Oliver Twist | Summary, Context, and Reception*, Lohnes). This brings us again to what Dickens personally saw in his life.

1.2.1 Introduction to the Plot

The titular character of this book is an orphan boy, Oliver Twist. Oliver has been an orphan since birth, and he spent much of his childhood in an orphanage. In the orphanage live too many children, so they do not get enough food and space for living. The facility is located outside London, at a distance of approximately seventy miles.

One night Oliver asks for a second helping during the dinner, which is considered unacceptable. That is why Oliver is sent to work and becomes an apprentice to an undertaker. He suffers mistreatment and misbehaviour and finally decides to run away to London. In London, he meets Artful Dodger, who advises him to stay with an "old gentleman", named Fagin, with some other boys. All these boys were trained pickpockets and Oliver was later also supposed to learn this profession.

One day Oliver becomes a witness of a theft when the boys take a handkerchief from an old gentleman, Mr. Brownlow. Due to this situation, Oliver was prompted to run away in fear and confusion; until now, Oliver had no idea who he was dealing with. Mr. Brownlow mistakes Oliver's behaviour for guilt and has him arrested. But after he realises that he made a mistake, when he thought Oliver was a thief, he offers him a home and takes care of him.

Oliver hopes that he got rid of Fagin and his boys, which is unfortunately not true because, according to Fagin, he knows a lot, which does not sit well with them. So, they seek Oliver out and send Nancy, a prostitute and mistress of Bill Sikes, one of Fagin's men, to take Oliver back to Fagin, where she pretends to be his relative. Nancy manages to pull off this spectacle, and Oliver is sent on a burglary mission to the countryside around London together with another boy from the group.

During one of the robberies, Oliver is shot in the arm and then he is taken in by the Maylies, the family he was forced to rob. He often tells them about good Mr. Brownlow and the nanny who took such good care of him. Meanwhile, Fagin, together with Monks, plots to get him

back. Rose Maylie gets to London to meet with Nancy, along with Mr. Brownlow. Nancy has slipped away from Sikes to tell them about Fagin's plans to get Oliver back. She describes Monks and tells them when he might most easily be apprehended. Unfortunately, Nancy is beaten to death by Sikes, who finds out about her betrayal. Sikes accidentally hangs himself soon after.

Oliver reunites with Mr Brownlow, who forces Monks to explain who he is. They finally find out that Monks is Oliver's elder half-brother, and that Oliver is entitled to a large fortune. In the end, Oliver receives his money, Fagin is hung, and Oliver, together with the Maylies and Mr. Brownlow, moves to the countryside to spend the rest of their lives together (Lohnes). The story of Oliver is very emotional and full of tension and reversals which helps the reader to get into the story.

1.2.1.1 Introduction of the Main Characters

In Dickens' novel, *Oliver Twist* appears many different characters of many different personalities and qualities. Here is the list of those, who were more important for the whole plot of the book.

First of all, let me briefly introduce the main character, Oliver Twist, who is a young orphan boy whose mother died at birth (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, *Oliver Twist*; Wikipedia Contributors, *Oliver Twist*). Other important characters are the two men, who were the thieves for whom Oliver worked lately in the book, Fagin and Bill Sikes. Fagin is a villain, and he is considered one of the most notorious antisemitic portraits in English literature. He is an old man, teaching young homeless children how to steal and then fences their stolen goods (*Fagin*). Bill Sikes is a professional burglar and thief, who works together with Fagin and lives together with Nancy, who is another member of Fagin's gang (*Bill Sikes*; Wikipedia Contributors, *Oliver Twist*). These three kind of “work” together and make their own business to which they try to join little orphaned or lonely children to offer them shelter and some food.

These were the main negative characters of the book and now let me introduce you the ones, who helped Oliver find his good qualities and a new home. First of them is Mr. Brownlow, a kind old gentleman, who mistakes Oliver to steal his handkerchief, but then takes Oliver with him to his house and offers him a home (Wikipedia Contributors, *Oliver Twist*). Later in the book, Oliver meets Rose Maylie, who is a kind young lady, and who also offers Oliver a warm home, and later finds out that she is Oliver's aunt (Wikipedia Contributors, *Oliver Twist*). These two people were like guardian angels for Oliver, returning him to the path of goodness and showing him the love he receives.

In the book, there are many other characters: Mr. Bumble, a cruel beadle of the orphanage Oliver grows up in (*Mr. Bumble*). Mr. Sowerberry, and an undertaker, by whom is Oliver employed (Wikipedia Contributors, *Oliver Twist*). The boys, Charley Bates and Jack Dawkins called The Artful Dodger, who are the thieves for Fagin's gang. And the last one is Monks, who is also one of the villains and criminals, he also works for Fagin, and later appears to be Oliver's half-brother (Wikipedia Contributors, *Oliver Twist*). These are the characters that are not that important for the whole story.

1.2.1.2 Brief Summary of the Plot

Oliver Twist is a famous book by Charles Dickens. It is about an orphan boy, without any relatives, who tries to find his place in Victorian London. During his long journey, he meets

many different people of different characters and qualities and finds out who is good and who is bad. In some situations, he is even fighting for his bare life. Experiencing the ups and downs and navigating the many pitfalls of the poor orphan's life. Luckily, this famous, sometimes even heartbreaking story has a happy ending when Oliver is reunited with his relatives and lives the rest of his life alongside loving people.

1.2.2 Main Character Oliver

Oliver Twist is, as the name of the book suggests, the main protagonist of the novel. In this article of my thesis, I am comparing this character and his life with the current issues mentioned in the parts before.

1.2.2.1 Oliver and His Childhood

As a small child, Oliver was raised in a workhouse, where he was born also. His mother unfortunately died in childbirth, so Oliver grew up as an orphan. His father was unknown, and he was thought to be without any siblings and other relatives either. His childhood in the workhouse was very poor and full of work, disrespect, misbehaviour, and bad conditions to grow up in. But he had some friends, who loved him unconditionally, and to whom he was kind of an idol. A good example is one of his friends in the orphanage called Little Dick.

Many times, during his life, Oliver was punished for what he did. Because he was a problematic child, he was sent to get a job. He worked as an undertaker's assistant. During this period, when he worked, he met a few new people, who unfortunately did not like him much and blamed a lot of bad things on him.

Because Oliver is not happy with his life, he decides to leave and head to the city of London, to find some better living. This shows the maturity of his judgement and that he wants to make his own decisions about his life.

In London, he meets two boys, thieves, who take him to their boss, a gang leader, named Fagin. Fagin has a group of children he teaches and forces to steal for him. In return, he offers them some food and a place to sleep in. In the beginning, Oliver has no idea who he is dealing with, but when one of the boys steals a handkerchief from an old nobleman, Oliver runs away and is thought to be the thief. Mr. Brownlow, an old man mentioned before, believes in Oliver's innocence and takes him under his wing.

Oliver's life finally seems to come to a happy end, but Fagin's followers find him, and he is once again forced to live the life of a thief and a renegade. It all comes to a moment when Oliver's life is in danger. During one of the robs, he is shot and lies alone in the fields, condemned to a lonely death. Fortunately, he is found by a man, employed by the Maylies, a family whose house was about to be burglarized. The family saves his life and lets him explain what happened.

Oliver is given another chance to live a happy life, but the plot gets even more complicated by the fact that Fagin wants to find Oliver because he does not want to be found and convicted. A new character, Monks, emerges and is finally found to be Oliver's half-brother, which again twists the whole plot of the book.

Luckily enough, the story comes to a happy ending, when all the villains are punished and Oliver can live happily ever after with Mrs. Maylie, finally found to be Oliver's aunt, and dear Mr. Brownlow, who takes care of him and gives him a peaceful home.

1.2.2.2 Comparison of the Plot of the Book with the Situation in Britain

There are two main topics in the book, connected with the Victorian era in Britain. One of them is orphanage, which is the main topic of this thesis, and the second one is child labour, which is also an interesting topic and something unimaginable in the present time. This article will compare the current situation in the Victorian period with the situation in the book.

1.2.2.2.1 Orphanage

The orphanage is one of the great topics not only in the Victorian era, but it also appears in the literature nowadays. Orphans are heroes, who inspire compassion in the readers and the readers often try to empathize with their situation and understand their problems more deeply.

In the Victorian era medical care was at a very low level compared to the present-day health service. That is the reason why in the past many women died during childbirth and not only in exceptional cases, often the baby itself died because of infection or a bad medical procedure. This happened most often to women from poor families because they did not have enough money to pay the doctor and the midwife, so they did not do their job adequately and safely, as if they had used better medical equipment, drugs and disinfectant.

Our main hero, Oliver, is a little boy, growing up without parents in an inhospitable environment and conditions. The book describes the milieu of 19th century London quite naturalistically. The dirty streets of London, diseases, and death lurking everywhere. Orphan children of poor people grow up in workhouses, where they do not get enough food and have too little space to live in because they are in one room with many other children together. The employees of the workhouses are people, who do not get enough money for their job, and so they do not treat the children well and are often cruel and heartless. They are just trying to do their job well enough to not get fired, but that is all that can be expected of them for such a small salary. The children are forced to work, at least in the garden or in the fields and when they do not do their work properly, they are often punished, which means that they are either beaten or do not get their usual portion of food. These facts can be confidently compared to the situation in Victorian Britain.

When Oliver gets to the city of London, he meets many different people from the lower level of society. He meets a group of thieves, which is also an aspect of the Victorian era. Even in the big cities were gangs of thieves, who mugged citizens on the streets, especially those who appeared to be wealthy, even in broad daylight. Thieves often tried to recruit found children into their gangs, whom they could then use for their own benefit. The young children were often very small in stature, so they could easily crawl through even the smallest of cracks or hide somewhere, so they could steal in places an adult could not get to.

The children were so accustomed to being mistreated that they were quite comfortable staying with the scum of society because they felt they belonged somewhere and had a home and a family. This can be also compared to the situation in Britain because the criminality in the 19th century was rather high. In London, there were many gangs of thieves and housebreakers and murders were also not that uncommon phenomenon.

The character of an orphan can have two faces. The first, and maybe more common one, is a modest little underdeveloped child grateful for any trifle, who trudges through their miserable

life. And the second one is the rogue, who often appears as one of the supporting roles. In the example of *Oliver Twist*, there are at least two children of this quality; The Artful Dodger is a typical example of this character and the second that can be mentioned is Charley Bates.

1.2.2.2.2 Child Labour

Even as a little boy, Oliver was forced to go to work and earn some money for the workhouse he was born in. He had to earn money for himself, like for food and housing. His first job appeared when he worked as an assistant to an undertaker. This profession can be nowadays criticized for being practised by children, both physically and psychologically. It is horrible that as young children, as Oliver was, were so much in touch with death that has almost surrounded them for their whole lives. Hard work at all is of course not good for young children and that is why it is at present regulated by law and work as such is limited by age.

Oliver was used to hard work from an early childhood such as the children in Victorian Britain. Children were often employed in work that was incomprehensibly hard for them. This can be also compared with the life of the author, Charles Dickens, himself because he used to work in Warren's Blacking Warehouse when he was a young boy. In Victorian Britain, this was typical for children from lower society. The families often got into debt and many of the adults even went to prison, which destroyed the whole family. To help the family earn money that would guarantee freedom for the family member who had been sentenced, the children came to do the work. No matter how difficult the possible profession was.

The special case in this situation were the orphans who did not have any family and so they had to earn money for their living. They were the ones who were exploited the most. They had to work long hours and they especially did the professions that the adults were not capable of doing. They often worked in mines because they could fit in tiny spaces and also the thieves used them because of their height. This is also the case of our little Oliver who was caught by the gang of thieves in the cell with their leader, Fagin. Fagin was well known for having a group of children that he taught to steal for him.

Child labour is nowadays a very disputable topic. It seems hard to imagine how it looked like in the past when today we have a completely different society and laws at all. But there is a reason why child labour was abandoned. Physically and medically, it is not good for young children to work long hours and do some manually hard professions, it is not good for them to work at all, but in the past, they had a different take on it.

1.2.3 The History of the Orphanage

To sum it all up, in the theoretical part of the thesis we learned what the life in the Victorian era looked like. It was mainly focused on the life and work of the famous British author Charles Dickens, who lived in the 19th century in the period of so-called Victorian Britain. He wrote many novels and publications, which are famous even today and influenced British literature a lot. His work was mostly influenced by his own life. One of his popular novels is *Oliver Twist*, which is a story of an orphan boy growing up in Victorian London, trying to find himself and navigating the pitfalls of the big city and British society at the time. The plot of this work is contemporary with the time when the author himself lived and is also kind of a critique of that time.

Orphanage is an interesting, but also very sad topic which can be seen in many not only literary works throughout the whole world. Orphans are the children growing up without their biological parents, who unfortunately died. The question of orphanages was more common in the past because there were many diseases that had fatal consequences, which is today much better because of improved health care. The orphan children were often put in orphanages, where they grew up under very bad conditions and were mistreated. The orphanage can be also connected with the topic of so-called child labour, which also occurred not only in Victorian Britain. Children were used to do the work which the adults were not capable of doing, or they had to earn money for their family. They often suffered due to hard work and lack of food.

Our author, Charles Dickens, is not only famous because of his work but is also well known for his childhood, which he partly depicted in his novels. Dickens' childhood is also connected with child labour because he had to work in a blacking factory while his father was imprisoned to earn money for his family. The motif of the working children is pretty much shown in the novel *Oliver Twist*, where Oliver has to work to earn money for a living, firstly by an undertaker and then in the gang of thieves.

Oliver Twist, or *The Parrish Boy's Progress*, is the most famous of all Dickens' novels and it pretty much shows the time and milieu, where Dickens himself grew up. The city of London is realistically depicted, and the book shows us how it looked like in Victorian Britain, it also shows the society and living of Brits at that time.

The main hero Oliver meets a lot of different people during his story. Some of them are good a try to find Oliver a better life and home and some of them are bad and lead him to dishonesty. But as almost all the great stories even the story of our little Oliver finally comes to a happy ending.

In the theoretical part, we found out what was Dickens' life like and how it affected his later work. It gave us a brief introduction to the book *Oliver Twist*, which is the famous book by Dickens. There was a brief introduction to the plot and the characters of this work and now the thesis is moving to the practical part which will show the comparisons of the orphan heroes, their personalities, characters, and the milieus they are depicted in, in other books of modern British literature.

2 Practical Part

The practical part of this thesis will compare Dickens' *Oliver Twist* with other works where the motif of an orphan appears. These are *The Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling, *Harry Potter* by J. K. Rowling, and *Awful Auntie* by David Walliams.

This part should compare their similarities, but also focus on the differences in the time and the milieu of the works.

2.1 Modern literature

The literature is changing during the time and so do the heroes and the whole concepts of modern literary works. This part of the thesis will briefly introduce other literary works, where the character of an orphan occurs and compare these works with the title *Oliver Twist*, in which this thesis interested the most.

2.1.1 *The Jungle Book*

The Jungle Book is a collection of stories and another famous work, in which the main character is an orphan. The stories were written into two books. The first publication of this book was released in 1894 and only a year later was published also *The Second Jungle Book*, which was a direct sequel to the first book. The author of these books is a famous British writer Rudyard Kipling.

2.1.1.1 Rudyard Kipling

Rudyard Kipling, in full Joseph Rudyard Kipling, was born on December 30, 1865, in Bombay, India. He was an English short-story writer, poet, and novelist. He is often remembered for his celebration of British imperialism, his interesting tales and poems of British soldiers in India, which is partly shown in *The Jungle Book*, and his tales not only for children. For his work, he received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1907.

John Lockwood Kipling, Kipling's father, was an artist and scholar. He became a curator of the Lahore Museum, and he had an appreciable influence on Kipling's work. Kipling's mother was Alice Macdonald, due to the marriages of her sisters to successful men of that time, Kipling had connections of lifelong importance. Both of his parents were part of the highest Anglo-Indian society.

Much of his childhood was unhappy because he was taken to England by his parents at the age of six and was left at a foster home in Southsea for five years. In this foster home, he suffered horrors which influenced his later work. After years in a foster home, he went on to the United Services College at Westward Ho, North Devon, which was a new, inexpensive boarding school. During the school years, he was a victim of bullying and beating.

In 1882 Kipling returned to India and worked as a journalist for seven years. The journals he worked for were filled with his prose sketches and light verse and he published some collections of poetry and some short stories. After seven years, in 1889, he returned to England again and his reputation there had preceded him, within a year he was recognized as one of the most brilliant prose writers of his time. He was the first poet since the time of Lord Byron who had achieved his reputation so rapidly.

Later, in 1892, Kipling moved with his wife to the United States, but he was not happy there and after four years he moved back to England again. In the 1890s Kipling wrote his best-

known novels. Among *The Jungle Book*, these were for example *The Light That Failed*, *Captains Courageous*, and *Kim*.

In 1907 he received the Nobel Prize for Literature, and he was the first English man to be so honoured. He died on January 18, 1936, in London (Stewart). Kipling's most famous work is a collection of stories called *The Jungle Book*.

2.1.1.2 *The Jungle Book*

The Jungle Book and its sequel *The Second Jungle Book* are collections of stories, first published in 1894 and 1895. The stories written in those two books are connected by short poems, sometimes in the form of songs.

The plot of this book is mainly focused on a main hero named Mowgli who is an Indian boy raised by a pack of wolves. The boy lives with the wolves in a jungle, meets interesting new friends and learns wisdom and self-sufficiency from animals, especially from an old giant brown bear called Baloo who teaches him the laws of the jungle society. The whole book describes the natural order of life in the jungle and its justice as well as the social life of the wolf pack.

Among the animals who are Mowgli's friends and important characters of the book and individual tales are Akela the wolf; Baloo the brown bear; Bagheera the panther; Kaa the python; and Shere Khan the Bengal tiger and Mowgli's enemy.

Mowgli is a fictional character who is the main character of this work. He is an Indian boy raised by wolves in the jungle. Mowgli as a character first appeared in Kipling's story "In the Rukh", but in this story, he comes across as an adult who refers to his unusual childhood (*The Jungle Book*). Mowgli became popular among many children in the world, his story was filmed several times.

2.1.1.3 Comparison with *Oliver Twist*

This part will compare Kipling's work *The Jungle Book* with the story of the main work on which this thesis focused, *Oliver Twist* by Dickens. The main purpose is to compare the similarities of these two books and then mention some of the main differences that these two interesting works distinguish.

2.1.1.3.1 Similarities & Differences

Now let me mention the similarities and differences between these two works. There are a couple of things similar to these works, but also many things different that are worth mentioning.

In these books appears the motif of an orphan which is the main topic of this thesis, but there is a huge difference between the life of both children. In *Oliver Twist* the main hero and the orphan child is named Oliver, he lives in an orphanage from his birth. In *The Jungle Book* is the main hero little boy named Mowgli. He is kind of a foundling, and he is raised by a pack of wolves, so he is also considered an orphan. The first aspect that these two boys have in common is that they are both living without their parents from the beginning of their lives. But their lives are completely dissimilar.

Oliver lives in an orphanage and is very unhappy there. That is why he decides to leave and head to the city of London, where he tries to find a better life. In contrast to this, Mowgli is

found in the jungle as a baby and is raised by a pack of wolves who take care of him as if he was their own wolf cub. From these facts we can simply deduce that Oliver's childhood is quite unhappy and horrible while the childhood of our second hero Mowgli belongs to the happier ones even though his life journey brings him many difficulties too.

Another great topic is the milieu of the plots. Both children live in completely different places, societies, and conditions which has a huge impact on their lives. Oliver lives in the horrible conditions of the poor people in Victorian Britain with no relatives, or people who would love him at all while Mowgli grows up in the Indian jungle surrounded by animals who mostly represent his friends and family.

The environment of Victorian London was very unpleasant, the streets were dirty, and many homeless people often made their living by stealing things from the rich. At first unknowingly, Oliver became a part of a robber gang, where there were many orphan children, as he was, who were taught how to steal things. When Oliver found out what was going on it was too late for him because he was mistaken to steal a handkerchief from an old nobleman. Fortunately for Oliver, everything was explained soon, and the old gentleman took Oliver under his protection and gave him a new home at least for a while.

Compared to that, the jungle was a completely different environment to live in. If Mowgli had not found the willingness and friendliness of the animals that took him in, he would not have been able to survive on his own in this environment inhospitable for humans. This gives the story a completely different perspective of the reader.

What is more, both works are intended for a different readership. *The Jungle Book* is dedicated more to the children as a collection of tales while *Oliver Twist* is aimed more at adult readers because the children would not completely understand the whole plot, which is a little bit complicated and unimaginable for them. *Oliver Twist* gives the reader a more serious and realistic environment while in *The Jungle Book*, the reader encounters a much lighter theme and a more light-hearted atmosphere.

Another similarity is that both of our heroes meet a lot of new people during their journey through the whole work. But what is divergent are the societies both boys live in. Oliver meets a lot of new people, both good and bad, but the people around him are not that stable, which means that the people surrounding him change a lot during the story. On the other hand, Mowgli lives in the relatively same group of people, with the exceptions, during all the action.

The characters and personalities of the two orphans themselves are very different. Oliver is a humble little child who is used to not getting much attention and being ignored. He is simply one of many other orphan children. He is malnourished, all arms and legs, is small in height and is poorly dressed, and he often gets sick. Mowgli is Oliver's true opposite. Because he is living in the jungle with wild animals, his meals contain a lot of fresh meat, fruits and other greens which give him enough energy and form enough muscle. Mowgli is a strong, tall, and vital young man who is energetic and happy, and he is also quite self-confident, ambitious, and strong-minded which is among other things the opposite of Oliver.

The ends of the stories seem also different. We can practically say that both books end happily, however, there is a noticeable difference between them. In *Oliver Twist* the main hero finally finds his warm home and he gets to spend the rest of his life happily, which is almost the same as in *The Jungle Book*. The biggest contrast is in what the heroes leave behind. Oliver lived

a volatile and rather pathetic life, accompanied by all sorts of pitfalls and intrigues so it was not a big problem to put his whole past behind him. Opposite to that, Mowgli lived a happy and satisfied life in the jungle, surrounded by people who loved him, but in the end, he discovered that he was so different from the jungle dwellers, he decided to leave them and go back to the village where he was born to settle down and start a family.

With this example, we can prove that every literary work, presenting an orphan as the main character, can be completely different in plot and can have very few similarities.

2.1.2 Harry Potter

Harry Potter is one of the most popular book collections of modern literature. The story of Harry Potter was written into seven books, seamlessly following each other and the story became popular throughout the whole world very soon. The author of these books is J. K. Rowling.

2.1.2.1 J. K. Rowling

J. K. Rowling, in full Joanne Kathleen Rowling, was born on July 31, 1965, in Jate England. She is a British author and the creator of the popular series about Harry Potter, a young wizard who has lots of adventures.

Rowling graduated from the University of Exeter in 1986 and then she started working for Amnesty International in London. That was when she started writing stories about Harry Potter. Later, in 1990 she went to Portugal to teach English as a foreign language. But soon afterwards she married and gave birth to a daughter she decided to return to England and settled in Edinburgh. Back in England, she was living on public assistance for a while, and she used to teach French. Meanwhile, she also continued writing.

The first book of the collection of Harry Potter, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* or *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, was published in 1997 under the name J. K. Rowling. Her publisher recommended releasing it under a gender-neutral pen name. The book became successful not only among children, for whom it was originally intended but also among adults. The book offers its reader a vivid description and imaginative story of Harry Potter, a lonely orphan who discovers that he is a wizard and enrolls at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The first book received numerous awards, including the British Book Award, and Rowling wrote succeeding volumes that also became bestsellers, and were available in more than 200 countries and some 60 languages. The final novel, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, which was the seventh book, was released in 2007.

After many successes with the novels about Harry Potter, Rowling also wrote a few books primarily intended for adults. Her first book in the adult fiction category is a novel called *The Casual Vacancy*, published in 2012, a contemporary social satire set in a small English town. In 2013 it was revealed that the author had written a crime novel *The Cuckoo's Calling*, under the pseudonym Robert Galbraith. The second book of the series, *The Silkworm*, was released in 2014. Later were also published other sequels including *Career of Evil* (2015), *Lethal White* (2018), *Troubled Blood* (2020), and *The Ink Black Heart* (2022). These books were also made into a television series.

In 2020 Rowling published a new book, *The Ickabog*, which was published serially online due to the pandemic of COVID-19. Later she published another book for children called *The Christmas Pig* (2021).

During her lifetime, Rowling has already won numerous awards. In 2001 she was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire. She was named a chevalier of the French Legion of Honour in 2009 (*J.K. Rowling*). Rowling's Harry Potter is kind of a legend because it is one of the most popular characters in the world.

2.1.2.2 Harry Potter Books

Harry Potter is a series of books written by the British author Joanne Kathleen Rowling. The first novel about Harry was released in 1997 and its name is *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. After the first book became so successful, J. K. Rowling wrote six more sequels about Harry and his friends. The titles of these volumes are *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998), *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (1999), *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000), *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2003), *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (2005), and the great final is called *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007).

The books became popular all over the world very soon and were available in more than 200 countries and some 60 languages. Nowadays books are still on sale and facing great success. Film versions of these books have also been made between the years 2001 to 2011 and have become some of the top-grossing movies in the world. In addition to these novels, Rowling wrote the companion volumes *Fantastic Beasts & Where to Find Them* (2001), which was also made into a movie in 2016 and the second part in 2018, *Quidditch Through the Ages* (2001), and *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* (2008). All these companion volumes originated as books read by Harry Potter and his friend within the fictional world of the series. The proceeds from the sales of the books were donated to charity.

Rowling later co-wrote a story that became the basis for the play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, which premiered in 2016. It was a critical and commercial success, and it won nine Olivier Awards, including best new play. Harry appears in the production as an adult man with a family who is still struggling with his past. A book version of the script was released under the same title in 2016. The play transferred to Broadway two years later and won six Tony awards in 2018, best new play including. (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, *J.K. Rowling / Biography, Full Name, Books, And Facts*)

Harry Potter is a fictional character made by J. K. Rowling for her books. He is an orphan boy, whose parents were killed by the dark wizard called Lord Voldemort or He Who Cannot Be Named. Since the death of his parents, Harry has lived in the home of the Dursley family. His mother's sister Petunia Dursley, her husband Vernon Dursley, and their son Dudley. Harry is very unhappy there because he is forced to live in the cupboard under the stairs, and the family does not like him and treats him badly. The Dursley family are so-called Muggles, which means people who cannot do any magic. Harry lives with them until his eleventh birthday when a letter arrives with the news of Harry's admission to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Until then, Harry had no idea that both his parents were wizards, and that he had the power to cast spells. Harry goes to Hogwarts, where he learns everything about wizardry and where he meets lots of new friends who surround him throughout the whole story and give him a home he deserves, and he searches for (Eldridge). The Harry Potter books are timeless, especially for

their fantasy elements, and many children, and perhaps even adults, would like to get into the world of Harry Potter and have at least some adventures with him and his friends.

2.1.2.3 Comparison with Oliver Twist

Now let me again compare the similarities and differences between *Harry Potter* and *Oliver Twist*.

2.1.2.3.1 Similarities & Differences

In these two books again appears the motif of an orphan, but in stories about Harry Potter, it is shown in a different form. Both boys lived as orphans almost all their childhood. The parents of Harry died when he was a baby and since then, he has been raised by the Dursley family, where he had not had that happy childhood. Which is quite the same as Oliver. Both children lived in poor conditions and with a lack of food. The first big difference between these two is, that compared to Oliver's parents, who died of health complications, Harry's parents were murdered in cold blood. The lives of these two boys are again completely dissimilar.

Both children live in England, but the milieu of the stories is very much different. Oliver lives in London in the time of Queen Victoria. Harry lives in a fictional modern world at the turn of the 20th century, where some people can cast spells and know the mysteries of the wizarding world, while others have no idea that any wizards exist and about the pitfalls of their world. Both boys are very unhappy with their lives, which in the case of Harry changes when he turns eleven and gets the letter from Hogwarts and finds out, that his parents were wizards and did not die during a car crash, as he was told, but were killed by a dark wizard. He goes to the school of witchcraft and wizardry, where he meets lots of new people, who, with some exceptions, are very nice to him and give him the feeling that he has finally found a real family.

The milieus of the plots seem different in many aspects. Accept the fact that Harry lives in a fictional world full of magic, the societies, conditions, and the level of social life are very contrasting. Oliver lives in poor conditions among the poor people of Victorian England, while Harry lives in poor conditions with his guardians in a modern advanced world with many opportunities.

The environment in England has changed a lot since the 19th century when Oliver's story takes place. Oliver lived in the poor and dirty streets of London, while Harry lived in the peaceful town of Little Whinging in Surrey. Over the centuries, the view of orphans has also changed greatly. When Oliver was growing up, there were quite a few orphans. There was a period of severe illnesses for which no cures had yet been developed, and many mothers died in childbirth, as was the case with Oliver's mother. Because of the high number of orphaned children, special facilities were built for them, where workers were to care for the orphans. The conditions in those facilities were unfortunately very bad and the children grew up weak and malnourished. When Harry was growing up, the number of orphans was no longer so high that they had to live in orphanages, but they very often grew up with their relatives, which is also Harry's case.

What is more, Harry's world is fictional which is a great contrast to Oliver's world. The fictional world is almost always the complete opposite of the real world. In a fictional world, there appear supernatural beings and magical places which no ordinary mortal man has ever seen. This gives us the biggest difference between the two books.

Both of our heroes lived a quite sad life at first sight, but throughout the story, their fate evolves. They meet a lot of new people who completely changed their lives so far. Some of them are evil and make life a little difficult for them, but a lot of them are good people who win the hearts of our main characters throughout the rest of the story.

The characters and personalities of the two main heroes are quite similar. They both lived without their parents since they were little boys. The unhappy conditions they are living in at the beginning make them humble and kind beings. The lives of both children change after a few years a lot when Oliver decides to head to London, and when Harry gets his letter from Hogwarts. This is the first impulse, evoking a huge change in both boy's lives. What follows is a long journey full of development and twists and turns, which comes to a successful end for both young men.

The ends of both stories are happy but also seem a little different. While Oliver finds his relatives at the end of his story and can live happily with them, Harry chooses to live without relatives who have never been particularly kind to him and chooses to live a new life with his new friends.

We can find some similarities between these two literary works, but the whole stories are very different either in form, but also in the concepts of the plots. One most similar thing is the characters of the two main heroes which are very similar to each other. The concepts of the stories are completely different because *Oliver Twist* gives us a very realistic view of England in the Victorian era, while the books about Harry Potter introduce us a whole new fictional world, full of supernatural creatures and magic. From this fact, we can also deduce that these two works are intended for different groups of readers because the fictional world would be interesting also for the little ones, but the realistic picture of the life in the Victorian era is easier to understand for older readers.

2.1.3 Awful Auntie

As the last book, I would like to compare with Dickens' *Twist*, I have chosen one of the most reason literary works for children, which is David Walliams' *Awful Auntie*. It is a book which, of the four literary works mentioned in my thesis, has the greatest focus on the category of children's readers.

2.1.3.1 David Walliams

David Walliams is an English comedian, actor, writer, and presenter. He was born August 12, 1971, in Banstead, England. He first gained fame when he starred in a television show called *Little Britain*, a sketch comedy which he wrote with his frequent collaborator, Matt Lucas. Later Walliams became a successful writer of children's literature.

Walliams grew up in England, in a suburb of London, Banstead. His father worked as an engineer for London Transport, and his mother was a lab technician. He studied drama at the University of Bristol, where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1992. During his studies, he performed at the National Youth Theatre, where he met his future friend and coworker Lucas. When he joined the actor's trade union, he changed the spelling of his last name from Williams to Walliams.

Walliams and Lucas began writing and acting together. They also had some success on British television with the sketch comedy *Mash and Peas* (1996) and the parody called *Sir Bernard's*

Stately Homes (1999). They became famous with a spoof interview show *Rock Profile* (1999 – 2001, 2009) where the duo dressed as such famous musicians as Elton John, Bono, and Liam Gallagher, the frontman of the band Oasis.

The breakout hit of these two men came when they adapted their radio show *Little Britain*, which came to television in 2003. The two played eccentric, sometimes even grotesque characters living in all parts of Great Britain. This series of sketches could be coarse and controversial at times, but it became enormously popular. The show gained a wide audience, and it introduced a myriad of catchphrases to British speech. It also won numerous awards, including the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) award for the best comedy series in 2004 and 2005. After these successes followed a sold-out live tour and a spin-off *Little Britain USA* (2008), which aired on the American cable station HBO for one season.

With the success of *Little Britain*, he garnered numerous acting roles. He starred for example in the movies; *Capturing Mary* (2007), and *Dinner for Schmucks* (2010), and he also appeared in the TV miniseries *Partners in Crime* (2015). Besides, he also continued to write. Reteaming with Lucas, he created the British television series *Come Fly with Me* (2010 – 2011), in which they both acted. Walliams later wrote the TV series *Big School* (2013 – 2014), where he also appeared as one of the characters. In between his films and TV series, he also recalled his theatre training and appeared on stage in *No Man's Land* (2008) and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2013). In 2012 he became one of the panel of judges on the talent show *Britain's Got Talent*.

With all the successes of his previous career, Walliams found an additional one as a children's writer when he published his first novel, *The Boy in the Dress*, in 2008. This is a tale of a 12-year-old soccer player who likes to cross-dress combining compassion and gross-out jokes. The book was compared to the works of Roald Dahl. The book quickly became a number one best seller in Britain as well as Walliams' next book, *Mr. Stink* (2009). After the first two publications, a succession of novels followed, often with such alliterate titles as *Billionaire Boy* (2010), *Gangsta Granny* (2011), and *Demon Dentist* (2013). Many of his were made into movies, with Walliams acting as one of the most memorable characters. Several of his books were also adapted to the stage, including the book which will be analysed soon, *Awful Auntie* (2014). In addition to numerous novels, he also published some picture books such as *The Slightly Annoying Elephant* (2013), *The First Hippo on the Moon* (2014), and *The Bear Who Went Boo* (2015). Walliams also co-authored *Inside Little Britain* (2006) and wrote the autobiography *Camp David* (2012).

Offscreen, he gained attention for his charitable work. To raise money for the organization Sport Relief, he swam across the English Channel to France in 2006, across the Strait of Gibraltar to Morocco in 2008, and the length of the Thames River in 2011. David Walliams is a recipient of the Order of the British Empire (OBE), which he received in 2017 (Zelazko). Nowadays Walliams is a popular author, especially among children around age 10.

2.1.3.2 *Awful Auntie*

Awful Auntie is a children's book written by David Walliams and illustrated by Tony Ross. It is Walliams' seventh book, and it was released in September 2014. After its release, the book sold over 50,000 copies in a single week and it was very positively evaluated by its readers. In October 2014, the book had become the top-selling children's book of the year and in January 2015 it was confirmed as 2014's best-selling children's book. In 2014, *Awful Auntie* won

the Specsavers National Book Award for “Children's Book of the Year”. Later a theatre adaptation of this book was made. (Wikipedia Contributors, *Awful Auntie*)

It is a story about little Stella Saxby, who is nearly thirteen years old. She lived in a family mansion, called Saxby Hall, with her parents, aunt, and an ancient butler Gibon. Stella lived quite a happy life with her loving parents until everything completely changed, when the whole family; Stella, and her parents, had a car accident in which Stella's both parents died. Stella was in a coma few months and when she finally woke up her life had changed completely.

The main heroine of the book is a girl named Stella. At the beginning of the story, after finally waking up from the coma, Stella finds out that her parents tragically died in an accident and that she is the only person, who survived this car crash. Now, she lives with her aunt in the family mansion Saxby Hall which belonged to her father, but now when he passes away is Stella the rightful heir to all the property. Unfortunately, this turns out to be the main problem, thanks to which the girl will experience a lot of troubles in the next few days.

Let me briefly introduce you the main characters of the book to better understand the whole story. Stella is a young girl, nearly thirteen years old, who lives peacefully with her parents, aunt and an ancient butler Gibon in a large family residence called Saxby Hall in which many generations of the Saxby family have lived over the centuries. At those times Stella was a happy child with not that many worries. Aunt Alberta always seemed a little strange to little Stella, both in her taste in dress and manners and in her predilections. What was also strange about Alberta was her pet – a Bavarian Mountain owl named Wagner. Wagner was a giant owl with whom aunt Alberta had a very warm relationship and who did everything to make her happier. The last person worth mentioning is the ghost of a boy named Soot whom Stella meets after her dear aunt locks her in a dark cellar. Soot was a chimney sweep who died in the house of Saxby. These four characters in bold are the main characters important for the whole plot of this work (*Awful Auntie*). *Awful Auntie* is an interesting story with some aspects that do not often appear in any other kind of literature.

2.1.3.3 Comparison with Oliver Twist

This part will compare the similarities and differences between *Oliver Twist* and Walliams' *Awful Auntie*.

2.1.3.3.1 Similarities & Differences

First of all, we can say that *Awful Auntie* is a completely different book in terms of writing style. Not only is there a larger font and lots of illustrations and interjections, but it is also a book with a completely different story and theme.

In *Awful Auntie* again appears the motif of an orphan as well as in *Oliver Twist*, but again in a different form. While Oliver was an orphan from birth and throughout the whole story of the book, which included several years of his overall development, Stella was orphaned at the age of twelve, and is also an orphan child during the whole story, but the story includes only few days which is a big difference between the two books. Since both children have become orphans, they lived in very poor conditions. In Oliver's case, it was due to the bad conditions of the poor people at those times and in the orphanage where he lived. Opposite to this, in Stella's case, it was because of her aunt, who wanted to get rid of her and due to it she did not give her enough food and provided her with the worst possible conditions, which were unbearable.

We can again compare the deaths of the parents of both orphans. Oliver's parents died because of health complications, compared to that, Stella's parents died in cold blood because later in the story we find out that aunt Alberta staged their deaths and practically murdered them.

The story is again located in England, but the milieu is much different. Oliver lives in London, in poor conditions in Victorian Britain. Stella lives in a family residence and the whole story is located in the house of the Saxby family and its surroundings. Oliver lived in the 19th century, while Stella lived in the first half of the 20th century. We can again spot some differences between the two stories in terms of society, conditions, and the level of social life. But this will be only restricted because in *Awful Auntie* we learn nothing about contemporary society, but we only meet a limited number of characters in the Saxby family circle.

The environment of the books is very dissimilar too. The main part of *Oliver Twist* takes place in the dirty streets of Victorian London, but the whole story of *Awful Auntie* takes place in Saxby Hall, which gives the whole story only very limited perspective and options, and it gives us the main contrast between the works.

Both main characters, Oliver, and Stella, are living in very poor conditions and are very malnourished and neglected since they have become orphans. Oliver grows up in an orphanage with a pretty bad nature, while Stella lives in her own home, but with the nightmare in the form of her awful aunt Alberta, who is doing the worst possible things to her niece that the reader could imagine. (We have to take into account that it is a book for children.) So, in summary, we can say that both children suffer.

The characters and personalities of the main heroes are again slightly different. Oliver is a humble kid, who is used to bad behaviour and bad life conditions. Against him stands Stella, who was used to a normal happy life with her family, but suddenly everything has changed for her, and she is forced to live with her aunt who brings her to many traps that she has set for her. We can simply say that Stella is also a kind child, but as the daughter of parents from the upper classes, she was brought up in different conditions and with a different style of life.

In this work appears an additional kind of motif in the form of a spiritual or higher entity which is presented by the character of Soot. Soot is a ghost who appears to Stella after her aunt locks her in a dark cellar with no light at all. Soot is presented as a positive hero who tries to help Stella escape while helping her set up various traps for aunt Alberta to make Stella's escape successful. At the end of the story Stella realizes that Soot is her uncle who was as a baby sent away down the river in a wooden box by her aunt because she thought that if her younger brother would be away and lost, she could inherit the whole estate for herself. After a few years her brother suddenly came back as a little chimney sweep. Unfortunately, Alberta recognized him, and, fearing that it would come out who he was, set fire to the fireplace under him while he was cleaning the chimney, and so got rid of him for good. With the figure of a ghost that only Stella sees, the author tries to suggest that children have a much bigger imagination than adults and live in a completely different world full of the supernatural.

The fact that Soot was a chimney sweep who grew up in a workhouse takes us back to the 19th century and *Oliver Twist*. This is the motif which gives us the biggest similarity between the two books because we can see the life of the Victorian era where even small children had to work and did the employment that the adults could not or just barely do.

The ends of the book are also slightly contrasting, but also similar in a way. Similar is that both children live with their families and are surrounded by kind people, which is very satisfying for the reader. The ending of *Awful Auntie* shows the children that it is very important to be kind and generous because Stella, since she became an orphan and finding out what life is like without parents and relatives, made an orphanage for children in the Saxby Hall which was finally hers. But what can be for the reader a little bit shocking, is the death of aunt Alberta at the end of the book, which on the one hand is a good ending because Stella is no longer in any danger from her goofy aunt, but on the other hand it is a pretty brutal ending to a children's book.

What is more, we can simply say that some passages from the book are a bit misleading. Some even go so far as to incite children to dishonesty. (For example the chapter where Stella and Soot come up with some approvals to make it easier for Stella to escape. They give ants to her pants and so on.) I believe that for the children it is funny, but for the adult readers, it could be slightly disturbing.

The books are again intended for a different readership. *Oliver Twist* is more for readers who can take in the situation of the little orphaned boy and think more about the situation, milieu, and social situations. At the same time, this book is more depressing and sadder. In contrast to that is *Awful Auntie* for younger readers as a kind of entertainment and it is a piece of relaxing reading. There are many pictures and interjections which also indicates that it is designed for smaller kids.

2.2 Summary of the Comparisons

The practical part of this thesis compared three different books with the motif of an orphan with the main work, on which this thesis primarily focused, Dickens' *Oliver Twist*. Each of the three books, compared to *Oliver Twist*, has something in common, but mostly they are very different in terms of environment, social and historical background, or the period in which they were written. This gives us different aspects and different points of view on many situations described there.

All the books have the motif of an orphan in them. The motif of an orphan is quite common in the literature even nowadays, although there are not as many orphans in the world today as in the past. All four orphans in the works mentioned above have slightly different characters, but they always struggle with at least something that happens to them in life. That is the thing in which all these works agree.

In the plot of each book, we get to know better the world in which our heroes live, and we can better understand their problems and worries, but we can also experience happy moments together with them.

Some of the books show us real-life experiences and things that could happen to everyone. A good example of this is *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens which shows us the life of a little orphan boy, named Oliver, who struggle in the time of Victorian Britain. But some of the worlds presented in the books are not real, but only fictional. A good example of this is *Harry Potter* which gives us the image of a fictional fantastic world in which some people can use magic and see and experience fantastic things which in normal life we would hardly see or experience. By contrast, *The Jungle Book* gives us another dimension of perception by having the animals speak human language and befriend the little boy Mowgli. A chapter for itself is the book *Awful*

Auntie by the modern British author David Walliams. This book is designed specifically for children's readers and has a truly different concept from the other books mentioned in this thesis. It is written in a language that is easy for children to understand and has lots of illustrations. The topic of this book is partly lightened and not as binding as, for example, in *Oliver Twist*.

Conclusion

This thesis was focused on the phenomenon of orphans in British literature throughout the ages. It was supposed to introduce the brief history and development of the orphan as a literary hero. The main focus was given to British history because all of the authors mentioned are originally from Britain even though some of them wrote their greatest books abroad. The thesis is divided into two parts – the theoretical part and the practical part. Each of the parts gives the main interest in the character of an orphan and the influence of society.

The greatest interest was devoted to the British author Charles Dickens and one of his most famous books *Oliver Twist*. In this book, the reader can see the life of an orphan boy named Oliver, who suffers in a workhouse because his mother died in childbirth. But Oliver does not like the way he is being treated in the workhouse, so he decides to face the streets of Victorian London on his own. This book highlights the poverty and destitution of some Londoners during Queen Victoria's reign and is also kind of a portrait of Dickens' time. Many themes are reflected in the author's own life. These are child labour, poverty and disrespect for “inferior” people. Charles Dickens had a very interesting life almost going from birth. Charles' family moved several times during his childhood, so he did not live in a stable environment. His father got into a debt prison, so Charles had to work to earn money for the family instead of his father. He worked in a blacking factory. At the time when Dickens lived, it was quite usual that children had to do some job. Unfortunately, it was for only a little money, and they worked long hours which was harmful for them. Much of his experiences he reflected in some of his works and the greatest example of all is the book called *Oliver Twist*.

In the second half of the theoretical part is this famous work described and compared with contemporary history records with all the themes and motifs included. The main focus here is on the figure of the orphan, his fate and his overall position in society which then slowly began to change over the years. The streets of Victorian London were full of thieves, robber gangs, pickpockets, murderers, and diseases, and rubbish. The poor people were forced to live in those streets and try to find shelter or something to eat. These were hard times for the lower society and many people suffered and then often even died either from exhaustion and lack of food or from contracting a disease. This was a big problem not only in England but in other countries around the world.

Oliver Twist is a timeless story that reaches back to the present day. It is full of surprises, love, hate, insidiousness, trust and help. Oliver finds on his way many obstacles and traps. He was a part of a robber gang for a while although he has never personally stolen anything. His childhood was full of death and injustice. He has lived all his life without any family of any kind, which in itself is not easy and is a rather cruel fate for a young child. But fortunately for Oliver, not all of the people around him were so bad and he finally met some good souls who wanted to help him to get a loving home and embark on a better journey in life than he has ever experienced before. The book can seem a bit depressing and sad, but there are many happy moments too. And of course, for the satisfaction of the reader, there is a happy ending which beautifully completes the action of this book. Oliver as a hero himself is very brave because he sets out to find a better tomorrow all by himself. He is a very emotional creature full of love and trust, but the problem is that he often gives his trust to bad people which does not pay off. He has a kind heart, and he wants to make the people around him happy even at the cost of not being happy himself.

The practical part of the thesis is divided into three smaller parts. Each of these concentrates on one work of different authors with the main hero being an orphan. It tries to compare the character of an orphan between the works from different ages and it shows the evolution of the phenomenon of the orphans as such. The author and the work are first briefly described and then the similarities and differences of this work are compared with the aforementioned *Oliver Twist*. The books of interest are; *The Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling, *The Harry Potter Series* by J. K. Rowling, and finally *Awful Auntie* by David Walliams which represents the most modern work of all mentioned.

The works in the practical part are chosen from different periods to show how the character of an orphan and the attitude towards this person as such changed. Part of each section is a comparison of the main characters and their fates, and also a focus on the extent to which the book is inspired by reality or whether the reality in it is merely the invention and imagination of the author. All the books chosen have completely different stories based on a milieu and environment in which the particular plot takes place.

The First book included is *The Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling. The book is divided into two parts: *The Jungle Book* and *The Second Jungle Book*. Rudyard Kipling is another very famous British author who wrote many interesting works both in prose and poetry. *The Jungle Book* is, similar to *Oliver Twist*, famous all over the world and the book has also many movie interpretations. The main hero of these collections of tales mainly for children is Mowgli. Mowgli is a little boy who is raised by a wolf pack and grows up in a jungle full of many different animal species. He has many friends with the animals and the animals teach him how life in the jungle goes. Mowgli as a hero himself is a very strong and brave young man having a healthy self-esteem who is very happy with his beloved friends until he discovers that he is a bit different from other members of his huge “family”. The ending of this book can be perceived differently because Mowgli finally decides to leave the jungle and go to humans to rejoin his kind and start a family. On one hand, it seems sad that Mowgli left the animals who raised him and gave him love and education, but on the other hand, it is nice that he returned to the humans and decided to spend the rest of his life in the environment in which he was born, and which was his original home.

The second book, or better the collection of books, which was compared with *Oliver Twist* is *The Harry Potter Series* by J. K. Rowling. J. K. Rowling is a popular author of not only the fantasy literature of the modern age. She has written many books, but the most famous are the series of novels about a young wizard named Harry Potter. Harry Potter is an orphaned boy living with his aunt and her family. To them, he is the black sheep of the family because his parents were wizards, and the rest of the family cannot use magic. Harry does not know who he is until his eleventh birthday when he finds out that he is a wizard and that his parents did not die in a car crash but were killed by a dark wizard called Voldemort. Harry as a hero is loving, and sensitive, but also courageous and wilful. In the course of his story, he makes new friends and forms such a strong bond with them that he is willing to lay down his life for them. Harry's story is divided into seven books which were made into eight very successful movies.

The third and the last book whose similarities and differences have been compared in this paper is *Awful Auntie* by David Walliams. From the books already mentioned this one is the youngest. David Walliams has made a name for himself, in addition to his acting career, as a writer of children's books. He has written several books over the last few years that are kind of

unconventional fairytales for children. *Awful Auntie* is a story about a girl named Stella who wakes up from a coma realizing that she and her parents had a car accident in which both of her parents died. Now, Stella has to live with her awful aunt Alberta who tries to get rid of her to inherit the residence of the Saxby family. At this price, she is willing to do anything, even if it means getting rid of Stella for good. Stella as the main hero is a fragile little girl who does everything possible to stop her aunt from the things, she wants to do to her. As the heroes before she also meets a few people who try to help her and the whole story then comes to a happy ending again.

From the thesis as a whole, the reader gets to understand what life was like for orphan children in the story of the ages. It summarizes the life and the work of the great British author Charles Dickens and how his life influenced his work. It shows the similarities and differences between the four books with the motif of an orphan and in what ways are the individual heroes different. How the society changed and what the major problems in the books were. And it gives the reader an overall view of the phenomenon of orphans which occurred not only in British literature but was a big topic in many works of all literatures in the world.

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