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BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

**Charles Dickens: Satire and Sentiment in Selected Novels  
(Hard Times, Oliver Twist, Great Expectations,  
Bleak House, Nicholas Nickleby)**

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Olomouc 2014

Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci na téma Charles Dickens: Satire and Sentiment in Selected Novels (Hard Times, Oliver Twist, Great Expectations, Bleak House, Nicholas Nickleby) vypracovala samostatně pod odborným dohledem vedoucího práce a uvedla jsem úplný seznam citované a použité literatury.

V Olomouci dne 7.5.2014

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Děkuji Mgr. Emě Jelínkové Ph.D., za odborné vedení práce, poskytování rad a materiálových podkladů k práci. Mé poděkování patří též Mgr. Ladě Rybničkové za cenné rady a pomoc při zpracování této práce.

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## 1. Introduction

In my bachelor thesis I will give a detailed summary of how Charles Dickens (1812-1870) used satire together with sentiment to depict Victorian society with all the horrors occurring at that time in five selected novels: *Hard Times*, *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, *Bleak House* and *Nicholas Nickleby*. In every one of those five novels can be found an example of exploitation or mistreatment of child, Dickens also focuses his satire on injustices of Victorian institutions and middle-class snobbery. Dickens does it with unmistakable techniques, characterization and unique naming of characters.

In second chapter I will give general description of vices of Victorian society and satire of that time, which mingles with different genres. There is also specified which satirical devices Dickens used to satirize (reiteration, emphasis, naming, characterization, etc.) the society. Dickens's use of sentiment to underline the satire is very nicely used in most of the selected novels.

In the rest of my thesis the description and analysis of each one of the selected novels follows. Consequently, third chapter is concerned with *Hard Times* (1854). I chose this novel because it is full of utilitarian satire from Dickens's greatest years. The novel is also being concerned with what seems as Dickens's main objective – the mistreatment of children. It uses contrasts, mockery, reiteration, and emphasis in typical Dickensian way as satiric devices.

In fourth chapter I will analyse probably the best known Dickens's novel – *Oliver Twist* (1839) – which is also second Dickens's novel. This is the first book where Dickens applied satire on such a scale. Focused on satire of workhouses and their impact on crime and poverty using contrasts Dickens concentrates on opposition of characters which he did perfectly. It becomes typical Dickens's feature to employ exaggeration, here he uses it to portray the horrors of poverty in practice. The novel employs great deal of sentiment as the main part of the sentiment is in the main protagonist.

Chapter five concerned with *Great Expectations* (1861) latest of the selected novels will show how Dickens's style evolved during his life. This novel satirizes the viciousness of money which changes lives of people and affects whole generations in a bad way. Even though at the beginning Pip sees money as means of happiness and independence. Dickens describes the main protagonist – Pip – as concept of false

gentleman who will come to his remedy; however, he will still be punished for his vices. Another large theme in this novel is injustice connected with money and institutions. Really interesting is Dickens's characterization in this novel, the other characters are used to sketch the character of the main protagonist. Dickens again employs sentiment in *Great Expectations*, but the sentiment is not as extensive as in for example *Oliver Twist* or *Bleak House*.

Next chapter, Chapter six, will analyse *Bleak House* (1853) with unique usage of two different narrations – first person narration (Esther's story) and third person narration (traditional Dickensian narration). This novel gives reader the insight into the monstrosity of the legal system of Victorian England which is its main satiric theme. He also introduces the theme of differences between high and middle class – where high class is portrayed as passive observer of actions and middle class as the source of the vices in society. Another important theme of this novel is philanthropy, which is satirized through two mothers not caring about children.

The last chapter's analysis is concerned with Dickens third novel *Nicholas Nickleby* (1839) which is the least mature of those five novels. However, as Dickens was still looking for his style, he was able to capture in deep satire with sharp irony and comic characters the thorny problem of Yorkshire schools. Here he portrayed with horror and comic relief his favourite theme - the mistreatment of children. On the other hand, this novel lacks sentiment the most of those five novels. Dickens is using juxtaposition of characters to satirize – as for example the contrast between Nicholas and Smike. With this introduction I would like to proceed to the individual chapters.

## **2. Victorian Age, Satire and Dickens**

To begin with, I would like to give a definition of satire, in my opinion, Abrams gives a good one:

“Satire can be described as the literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward it attitudes of amusement, contempt, scorn or indignation.” (1999, 275)

However, in Victorian era (1837-1901), as previously in history, satire got mixed with many genres, because, as Quintero suggests, from medieval period “satire was not a genre [...] but a mode of writing” (Quintero 2011, 52) and this mode was

applicable on most genres. So it is hard to define one writing of Victorian literature as clearly satiric, and it applies also on Dickens. In this era the satire, as Sutherland writes, “suggests that stupidity and ignorance and extravagance are so widespread that merely to see clearly and speak the truth is enough to make most people think you are being sharp and satirical and disillusioned” (1958, 116), this quote is telling us what was wrong with Victorians – they were unable to see the injustices and wrongs done around them, and it makes those, who were able and not afraid to see the vices and to point at them, exceptional writers. This for sure applies for Dickens, whose “particular genius [was] that he could always put his finger on the social evil which hurt the sufferer the most” (Ford 1958, 126) and was able to “[see] a great deal more in every day of his life than his average readers in threescore years and ten” (Gissing 1902, 129). In this point arises the problem with reader:

“Victorian reader was not particularly fond of satire, but in fact he got a good deal of it from his novelists, and either put up with it, or else, when he felt that that could not be applied to himself, presumably enjoyed it.”  
(Sutherland, 123)

The reason why Dickens became so popular even though his works were more or less influenced by satire is that he was able to mix the satire with other elements as was mentioned above, like sentiment or comedy, so it was not so offensive for Victorians. He succeeded in making relationship with his readers as he “[relates] to his Victorian reader” (Cooperman 1960, 157) However, as I mentioned above Dickens had the urge for depiction and correction of Victorian society, and as Walters suggests, “Dickens was born with an intense dislike for every form of insincerity” (Walters 1911, 220). So, it is not surprising why he chose Victorian society, because the Victorian social injustices themselves almost called for correction. The theme of social and institutional injustice appears as I said in most of Dicken’s novels: “Bounderby’s mother in *Hard Times* rises to reveal her son’s hypocrisy to the crowd, he has bullied for so many years; [...] society’s injury to Lady Dedlock, her lover, and her child, are all unearthed in the end.” (Hagan 1954, 174) These are just two examples Hagan gives, but in following chapters you will find more of them.

As for sentiment, Dickens wrote the most sentimental pieces between 1837 and 1850 (*Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *David Copperfield* and others) (Ford 1958, 122)

also some kind of sentiment but in other form occurs in his later novels for example *Great Expectations* or *Bleak House*. It is interesting that “the lowest sentimentality among the Victorians was not usually produced by women but by men writing about women” (Ford 1958, 121). So it is not surprising that the most sentimental characters in those selected novels are in most cases women (Sissy Jupe, Rose Maylie, Esther Summerson etc.). He achieved to use the sentiment as a balance for satire and at the same time he uses it to underline his satire at work. Purton describes it as “dramatized opposition of sentimentalism and irony [which] is precisely what gives Dickens’s early novels their power” (2012, 94).

Satiric devices mostly found in those selected novels are for example exaggeration, for which Dickens is commonly criticised, however, which is “able to raise a hearty laugh even whilst pointing [Dickens’s] lesson” (Gissing 1902, 130). Another device which Dickens works with is “the reiteration of shared values in mockery” (Quintero 2011, 33) which as Quintero suggest “can be more successful than defiance” (2011, 33). In Dickens’s case it proves to be true. He is able to see deeper into the heart of Victorian society than others; or as Leavis describes it: “his moral perception works in alliance with a clear insight into the English social structure” (1950, 246). And he is praised by Gissing that “he did not deliberately sacrifice the truth to refinement” (1902, 84) and that “he wrote as his soul dictated” (1902, 85).

Another interesting point is that Dickens’s satire concentrates mostly on “the faults [...] of the Victorian middle class” (Cooperman 1960, 157) and how the institutions which they have under control are mistreating in the first place children, and continues to mistreat everybody else, which means low class, other members of middle class and also high class.

Between these selected novels it can be seen clear development of Dickens writing and change of style. Despite the geniality of *Oliver Twist* (1839) we can see in *Nicholas Nickleby* (1839) how he was searching for his place in fiction writing. In *Bleak House* (1853) and *Hard Times* (1854) we can see how he transformed his writing during the years into more deliberate and in latest of the selected novels – *Great Expectations* (1861) he achieved almost mastery of his writing, since the sentiment here in relation to satire is much more delicate and mature. Now I would like to proceed to analysis of satire and sentiment in these selected novels.



### **3. Hard Times**

*Hard Times* I consider as one of the most satirical novel. Targeting many social vices of Victorian society, the novel is regarded for example by John Ruskin as “the greatest he has written” (11, Unto This Last 1862) but on the other hand it is the one criticized as “very poor” (Gissing 1902, 136) or “not a difficult work” (Leavis 1950, 227). In my opinion, it shows brilliance of Dickens satire, since it is deep, witty and sharp.

#### **3.1. Gradgrind’s System and its Outcomes**

The main concern of the *Hard Times* is the satire of Utilitarianism and partly Industrialism. The Utilitarianism in this novel, after suffering a lot of degradation and mockery, is confuted “by life” (Leavis 1950, 236).

##### **3.1.1. The Philosophy**

Thomas Gradgrind, the main utilitarian of the novel, wrongs not only his own children but also pupils of his schools by teaching them “nothing but Facts” (Dickens 2012, 3). The children are considered by Gradgrind “as empty vessels to be stuffed with facts” (Davis 2007, 153). What Dickens achieved to show by this approach to children is how this system turns the young generation of Gradgrind’s pupils into people without any feeling or human compassion or as Leavis marked it: “an inhumane spirit” (Leavis 1950, 228). This development is demonstrated in the character of Bitzer, one of Gradgrind’s pupils.

##### **3.1.2. Bitzer**

This character, as shown in second half of the book, became due to Gradgrind’s education incapable of humanity. Bitzer was deformed by education, and since the only thing he is able to do with everyday matters is “[cutting] them up analytically into bits and pieces” (Davis 2007, 155). So it is not surprising that at the end of the novel Gradgrind is punished for his teachings by Bitzer – the product of Gradgrind’s own utilitarianism and as he is described by Leavis “the truly successful pupil, the real triumph of the system” (Leavis 1950, 241) – when he denies his help to young Tom even after being offered money, because he calculated the matter as he was taught:

“Knowing that your clear head would propose that alternative, I have gone over the calculations in my mind and I find that compound a felony,

even on very high terms indeed, would not be as safe and good for me as my improved prospects in the Bank.” (Dickens 2012, 329)

Bitzer’s utilitarian behaviour – acting according to what will maximise his benefits, and not according intrinsic nature (Merriam-Webster.com 2011) – is mockingly justified by Dickens latter in the book:

“It was a fundamental principle of the Gradgrind philosophy that everything was to be paid for. Nobody was ever on any account to give anybody anything, or render anybody help without purchase. Gratitude was to be abolished, and the virtues springing from it were not to be. Every inch of the existence of mankind, from birth to death, was to be a bargain across a counter. And if we didn’t get to Heaven that way it was not a politico-economical place, and we had no business there.” (Dickens 2012, 330)

This problem with Bitzer’s personality of true Utilitarian and the problem of turning children into calculating and cold-hearted shells are the ones which Dickens remonstrated against in general way the most, Cooperman sums it up: “negation of humanity [...] is Dickens’s basic objection and satiric point” (Cooperman 1960, 159).

### **3.1.3. The Whelp**

Dickens did interesting thing with addressing young Tom, from certain part of the book his name is almost no longer used in indirect speech and instead of it he is called “the whelp”. The reason for being called “the whelp” I see the cruel exploitation of his own sister throughout the book, also the place where his description as “the whelp” is used for the first time supports my opinion. Firstly it is used by Harthouse while he is thinking about Louisa: ““This whelp is the only creature she cares for.”” (Dickens 2012, 151).

As young Tom appears later in the book, I consider him having similar personality as Bitzer, since their decision making is based only on their self-interest. Yet, it is no surprise, because they were both brought up by the same philosophy. This was by my judgement satiric goal of Dickens; likewise, his goal was to show that Utilitarianism does not cover love. Therefore, Tom is much more utilitarian than Bitzer, because Tom has selfishly used his sister, having “no empathy for anyone but himself”

(Davis 2007, 154), to marry Bounderby and to ensure himself her support in anything he needs. As his contrast in this point serves Louisa who loves him to the end.

### **3.2. The Self-made Man**

The distortion of reality is caused by Bounderby, “the captain of industry who represents the triumph of economics” (Davis 2007, 154). He always, when he has an opportunity, expresses how he is the model of self-made success after being abandoned by his mother who he calls: “the very worst woman that ever lived in the world” (Dickens 2012, 39). However, as we find out and as Ford describes it, “his mother slaved to give him his start in life” (1958, 135) and in her naivety believed her son:

“My dear boy knows, and will give you to know, that though he come of humble parents, he come of parents that loved him as dear as the best could, and never thought it hardship on themselves to pinch a bit that he might write and cipher beautiful, [...] I can keep my pride in my Josiah to myself, and I can love for love’s own sake! And I am ashamed of you, sir,’ said Mrs. Pegler, lastly, ‘for your slanders and suspicions. [...]. And for shame upon you, Oh, for shame, to accuse me of being a bad mother to my son, with my son standing here to tell you so different!’” (Dickens 2012, 300-301)

The irony and ludicrousness of his statements approached its climax here in the quote above. This Dickens’s criticism of boasting and false snobbery

The boasting of Bounderby expressed by repetition of the same false story over and over again. This emphasis and repetition I consider as one of the crucial satiric device of Dickens’s satire and it occurs in most of those selected books and I agree with Gissing who says:

“His art, especially as satirist, lies in the judicious use of emphasis and iteration. Emphasis alone would not have answered his purpose; the striking thing must be said over and over again till the most stupid hearer has it by heart.” (Gissing 1902, 146)

Therefore, this Dickens’s speciality is mostly visible in his character of Bounderby, who always (properly speaking – twenty-one times in the book) when he

address himself, calls himself “Josiah Bounderby of Coketown” (Dickens 2012, 21), while nobody else ever call him that way in the book.

### **3.3.Contrasts and the Human Part of Hard Times**

#### **3.3.1. Sissy Jupe**

The persona of Sissy Jupe is first of the sentimental characters which Dickens incorporated as an alleviation of satire. Dickens wrote Sissy as a “[incapable] to acquire this kind of ‘fact’” (Leavis 1950, 230); however, this characteristic of hers is portrayed as an advantage in contrast with Bitzer or the two young Gradgrinds. Sissy’s trait being unable to learn Gradgrind’s philosophy is produced as indication of “her sovereign and indefeasible humanity” (Leavis 1950, 230).

The use of juxtaposition in the case of the classroom scene where Sissy Jupe and Bitzer are sitting is the most picturesque and apposite book’s scene which manifests the difference between humanity and inhumanity visible for eye. So, Sissy, as Dickens writes, “seemed to receive a deeper and more lustrous colour” (Dickens 2012, 7), on the other hand, in case of Bitzer the sun “when it shone upon same rays appeared to draw out of him what little colour he ever possessed” (Dickens 2012, 7). In addition as I mentioned above and as Davis develops there are other contrasts:

“The contrast between the living, organic, world that [Gradgrind] stifles and the deadly realm of fact that drains life from the children.” (Davis 2007, 153)

I should mentioned that Sissy is never portrayed as bad persona; on the contrary, she is “generous [...] finding self-fulfilment in self-forgetfulness – all that is the antithesis of calculating self-interest” (Leavis 1950, 231) which is represented by many characters such as Bitzer, Bounderby and Tom.

#### **3.3.2. Stephen Blackpool**

The character of Stephen Blackpool is used as a demonstration of how wronged is the Victorian society’s working class – it shows “how the “laws” of Coketown constrain and oppress the worker” (Davis 2007, 154). The character of Stephen Blackpool is another one which shows Dickens’s ability to create human but sentimental character (Leavis 1950, 235). Stephen, the good-natured man of the working class, becomes the victim of Bounderby and Slackbridge, since they both only “deal with workers in terms

of abstract and therefore inhuman and irresponsible economic force; both crush the individual” (Cooperman 1960, 159). Hence they are also part of the inhumanity within Utilitarianism, mentioned above in Chapter 3.1.

However, coming back to Stephen, his sentimentality lies in how he endures the strokes of fate which readers will find as Leavis describes it: “supremely edifying and irresistibly touching as the agonies are piled on for his martyrdom” (Leavis 1950, 235).

### **3.4. Harthouse**

The meaning behind the names Dickens chose for his characters is certainly one of his satiric devices. Starting with Harthouse name is suggesting person full of affection and empathy, however, ironically it is the exact opposite:

“He was quick enough to observe; he had a good memory, and did not forget a word of the brother’s revelations. He interwove them with everything he saw of the sister, and he began to understand her. [...] he soon began to read the rest with a student’s eye.” (Dickens 2012, 192)

Harthouse is only another person of ‘facts’ – another product of the utilitarian philosophy – and with this approach he starts to study Louisa and does not think about Louisa’s feelings at all – for him “it would be a new sensation” (Dickens 2012, 192) to gain her affection. His contribution for Louisa is that, as Davis suggests, “he does act as a catalyst to make Louisa aware of her own heart and inner needs” (2007, 155).

To sum this chapter up, according to Leavis the book is filled through and through with “richness of life” (Leavis 1950, 234). However, some critics finds Dickens characters unreal and exaggerated. In my opinion, the exaggeration is also tool used to depict on vices of the Victorian society as a satirical device. And so I must agree in this point with Santayana who says:

“When people say Dickens exaggerates, it seems to me they can have no eyes no ears. They probably have only *notions* of what things and people are; they accept them conventionally, at their diplomatic value.” (Santayana 1922, 65)

As mentioned many times above, *Hard Times* were written as a satire on the Utilitarianism and the inhumanity which it includes, with this is related the exploitation of working class of Victorian society portrayed also in the book.

## 4. Oliver Twist

In contrast with *Hard Times*, this earlier Dickens's novel, *Oliver Twist*, is much more light-hearted (Ford 1958, 125) and therefore much more sentimental, as I mentioned in chapter 2. The basis for the *Oliver Twist*'s satire of is the *Poor Law Amendment Act* of 1834 (widely known and hereinafter referred to as *New Poor Law*), which gave rise to the workhouses notoriously known from the novel and which "was [...] the main cause of the misery of those people unfortunate enough to be separated from their families under the new rule." (Ford 1958, 126) However, the novel is also concerned with satire on those institutions, which were put in charge of the poor and the orphaned children, and more importantly there is an "intense sentiment behind *Oliver Twist*, shaped partly by Dickens's own childhood experiences and partly by his outburst at the living conditions of the poor" (Shakury 2011, 220).

### 4.1. Workhouses

The main portion of this novel's satire is incorporated in the workhouse chapters at the beginning and even during the novel. These chapters are the most praised from the book and they are superior to the sentimental and melodramatic rest of the book (Ford 1958, 126-127). For example, as Ford writes, they are "among the best things that Dickens ever wrote" (1958, 125). His aggressive and ironic opinion on the "reformed workhouses" (Ford 1958, 126) is apparent when describing the *New Poor Law*:

"So, they established the rule, that all poor people should have the alternative (for they would compel nobody, not they), of being starved by a gradual process in the house, or by a quick one out of it." (Dickens 1902, 11)

Dickens is also pointing out the fact that the institution itself is not the problem. The problem are the "individuals anxious to assert their authority at someone else's expense" (Ford 1958, 126). The tone of these chapters, for example Chapter II, also suggests, with which I agree with Gissing, that Dickens fought more against blockheadedness than against cold-bloodedness of the workhouse board in the novel

(1902, 134). Another example of the hypocrisy of individuals leading the workhouse is following description:

“It was rather expensive at first, in consequence of the increase in the undertaker's bill, and the necessity of taking in the clothes of all the paupers, which fluttered loosely on their wasted, shrunken forms, after a week or two's gruel. But the number of workhouse inmates got thin as well as the paupers; and the board were in ecstasies.” (Dickens 1992, 11)

This supports Shakury with his study, when commenting the novel:

“The story portrays the hypocrisy of the mean middle class bureaucrats, who treat the orphan Oliver Twist brutally while lending their voice to the belief in the Christian virtue of providing charity to the less fortunate.” (Shakury 2011, 221)

In Chapter II of *Oliver Twist* the Board of the workhouse is showing no kindness and understanding to little Oliver, for he is just an “item of mortality” (Dickens 1992, 1). And the character of the gentleman in the white waistcoat is mainly used to satirize the board. In this character Dickens again used repetition as I mentioned above in Chapter 3.2 the case of Bounderby in *Hard Times*, the gentleman always repeating regarding Oliver that “that boy will be hung” (Dickens 1992, 13).

Probably the most famous is the scene from book where Olive is asking for “some more” (Dickens 1992, 12) and the reaction of Mr. Bumble and the board:

“‘Mr. Limbkins, I beg your pardon, sir! Oliver Twist has asked for more!’ There was a general start. Horror was depicted on every countenance. ‘For more!’ said Mr. Limbkins. ‘Compose yourself, Bumble, and answer me distinctly. Do I understand that he asked for more, after he had eaten the supper allotted by the dietary?’ ‘He did, sir,’ replied Bumble. ‘That boy will be hung,’ said the gentleman in the white waistcoat. ‘I know that boy will be hung.’” (Dickens 1992, 13)

Their reaction is overflowing with irony and shows “the hyperbolic horror” (Shakury 2011, 223) of the board that anyone could know step up and ask “more”.

#### **4.1.1. Bumble**

In the case of Bumble, what Dickens is trying to point out is that not Bumble's innate nature is his main vice but what the institution he works for made of him is (Ford 1958, 127). What state of mind his position rebuild him into. As revealed in Chapter IV, Bumble also shows a quiver of human feelings when Oliver is crying while he is taken to Mr. Sowerberry:

“Mr. Bumble regarded Oliver's piteous and helpless look, with some astonishment, for a few seconds; hemmed three or four times in a husky manner; and after muttering something about 'that troublesome cough,' bade Oliver dry his eyes and be a good boy. Then once more taking his hand, he walked on with him in silence.” (Dickens 1992, 26-27)

On the other hand, to show his institutionalized inhumanity, there is one example for all:

“‘Yes, I think it rather pretty,’ said the beadle, glancing proudly downwards at the large brass buttons which embellished his coat. ‘The die is the same as the parochial seal – the Good Samaritan healing the sick and bruised man. The board presented it to me on New Year's morning, Mr. Sowerberry. I put it on, I remember, for the first time, to attend the inquest on that reduced tradesman, who died in a doorway at midnight.’” (Dickens 1992, 24)

Also the name suggests his “bumbling arrogance” (Shakury 2011, 221). What differentiates Bumble from other villains from the novel is the nature of his evilness, makes him also much worse character than for example Sikes and Fagin are. Davis sums it up when saying: “[Fagin's and Sikes's] evil is metaphysical; [Bumble's] is earthly and opportunistic.” (2007, 280). Now let me continue with the other evil characters mentioned in this paragraph.

#### **4.2. The Villains**

Dickens did not stop with the poverty in the workhouses in *Oliver Twist* but he deepens his portrayal of the poor with image of “London's squalid streets, dark bars, and robbers' dens.” (Shakury 2011, 221) Fagin, Sikes, Dodger, Bates, Nancy and Betsy – all these characters are extracted from Victorian society and their prototypes most likely actually



existed (Ford 1958, 125). Their bad sides are multiplied so they are sometimes, for example by Walters, considered “too black” (Walters 1911, 36). While creating them Dickens looked for “eccentricities” (Walters 1911, 144) which allowed him to make his exaggerated satiric portraiture even more exquisite. Later I would like to talk about Nancy, but now let me consider Fagin and Sikes.

#### **4.2.1. Fagin – the Jew**

He is putted in to the story in kind of “satanic allusions” (Davis 2007, 284):

“The walls and ceiling of the room were perfectly black with age and dirt. There was a deal table before the fire [...]. In a frying-pan, which was on the fire, and which was secured to the mantelshelf by a string, some sausages were cooking; and standing over them, with a toasting-fork in his hand, was a very old shrivelled Jew, whose villainous-looking and repulsive face was obscured by a quantity of matted red hair.” (Dickens 1992, 56)

The background, the fire and his appearance all is adding to his bad demonic character. Though his villainous description, he is, to which Davis gives remark, “the first person to treat Oliver kindly” (2007, 278). And, as he continues, Dickens satirizes again the Workhouse Board:

“He provides food and lodging for the boy and devotes himself to Oliver’s education. That Fagin should provide what the indifferent representatives of the parish have denied to Oliver heightens the satiric message and describes a world in which an indifferent society colludes with the powers of darkness to destroy the innocent.” (Davis 2007, 278)

Equally, Dickens added the contrast of the terror of workhouse and the Fagin’s joyous games (Davis 2007, 284). This point completes the irony of contrasts of Fagin’s badness, he is bad but workhouses and their boards are still worse.

#### **4.2.2. The Man with the Dog**

Another villainous character is Sikes, he is bad no matter how you put it. However, to support my opinion that Dickens always tried to find some goodness inside people of low class, so at the end, after Nancy’s murder, Sikes is haunted by his consciousness. It suggests that deep down there is still some humanity as in the case of

Bumble mentioned above. He shows the fear and he is, as Shakury writes, harmed by “his mental fetters of guilt” (Shakury 2011, 222). Also, Dickens in his preface of *Oliver Twist* writes:

“I fear there are in the world some insensible and callous natures that do become, at last, utterly and irredeemably bad. But where this be so or not, of one thing I am certain: that there are such men as Sikes, who, being closely followed through the same space of time, and through the same current of circumstances, would not give, by one look or action of a moment, the faintest indication of a better nature. Whether every gentler human feeling is dead within such bosoms [...]” (Dickens 1841)

So what Dickens suggests is that even though Sikes did show his “better nature” during the novel, he still could be redeemed in contrast with the nature Dickens fears – “irredeemably bad”.

#### **4.3. Unrealistic Goodness in Oliver and his counterpart**

Let me start with Dickens’s choice of name. Twist suggest constantly changing plot and it is what reader gets. Nevertheless, the plot changes not thanks to Oliver, but all the other characters and above all the bad ones. The hero of this novel – Oliver – is mainly passive character with “lack of dynamism” (Shakury 2011, 221). He only break out of the passivity when beating Noah Claypole and escaping for London (Chapters VI-VII).

Mostly the critique of this character arise in the point of his nature, which is overly exaggerated. Oliver Twist is “so inherently and unrealistically ‘good’” (Shakury 2011, 220) and remains good even after living through hell. However, according to Dickens himself it is what he tried to achieve:

“I wished to show, in little Oliver, the principle of Good surviving through every adverse circumstance, and triumphing at last [...]” (Dickens 1841)

As result, the character of Oliver Twist is the main source of sentiment in the book, primarily when he starts living with Maylies. Shakury supports my opinion by writing that “we can feel sympathy, regard, even praise for the victim” (Shakury 2011, 224) and that the character is made “to appeal to our emotions than to our literary sensibilities” (Shakury 2011, 226). However, this Dickens’s statement is what

contradicts with satire of the novel. As Davis says: “Satire is existential; it assumes that experience molds and changes people [...]” (Davis 2007, 279); notwithstanding, Oliver is not corrupted by any evil he experienced. On the contrary, “he remains angelic to the end” (Davis 2007, 278) and this idealism only highlights the satire of the novel a little bit (Shakury 2011, 220).

#### **4.3.1. Dodger**

The sentiment is used to highlight the satire of John Dawkins’s character. Dodger is used as the polar opposite of Oliver. He shows character where the corruption of children was successful unlike Oliver’s case. In Dodger’s case (and also for example in Noah Claypole’s case) Dickens is describing how child’s character is broke. And I agree with Davis who says, that Dickens exposes “the ways in which oppressive social institutions corrupt children and turn them into thieves and criminals.” (Davis 2007, 278) Dodger is the example of Victorian society’s depravedness. When he firstly appear in the story, from Dickens’s description is clear that Dodger have many adult-like characteristics:

“He was a snub-nosed, flat-browed, common-faced boy enough; and as dirty a juvenile as one would wish to see; but he had about him all the airs and manners of a man. [...] He wore a man's coat, which reached nearly to his heels. He had turned the cuffs back, half-way up his arm, to get his hands out of the sleeves: apparently with the ultimate view of thrusting them into the pockets of his corduroy trousers; for there he kept them. He was, altogether, as roystering and swaggering a young gentleman as ever stood four feet six, or something less, in the bluchers.” (Dickens 1992, 53)

This is an example of “a child forced into adult responsibilities by a society that neglects and abuses its children.” (Davis 2007, 280) And this is what Dickens satirizes about all Fagin’s apprentices in contrast with sentimental character of Oliver.

### **4.4. The Feminine Contrasts**

#### **4.4.1. Angelic Rose**

Let me now consider Rose Maylie the feminine counterpart of Oliver Twist. Let us have a look at her description in Chapter XXIX:

“She was [...] so mild and gentle; so pure and beautiful; that earth seemed not her element, nor its rough creatures her fit companions. The very intelligence that shone in her deep blue eye, and was stamped upon her noble head, seemed scarcely of her age, or of the world; and yet the changing expression of sweetness and good humour, the thousand lights that played about the face, and left no shadow there; above all, the smile, the cheerful, happy smile, were made for Home, and fireside peace and happiness.”  
(Dickens 1992, 212)

The description of Rose is rather sentimental, since Dickens describes her in “angelic innocence” (Davis 2007, 277), which is mainly true considered his usage of words, such as “earth seemed not her element” or “of the world”. Also her name suggests her nature to have “relation with flowers and springtime, youth and beauty” (Shakury 2011, 221). However, this Dickens’s sentiment is what is mostly criticised about his novels. Therefore, also Rose is said by many Dickens’s critics to be “the most irritating” (Walters 1911, 148) or “merely immature work” (Gissing 1902, 118).

#### **4.4.2. Nancy**

Notwithstanding, in my opinion this sentimental character is what Dickens had in his mind from the beginning. The character of Rose Maylie is designed to be the counterpart not only to Oliver but more importantly to Nancy. After reading the novel reader most likely does not have deformed opinion about Nancy’s nature. That is another example of what Dickens believed in, that “goodness [...] [is] inherent in all human nature” (Shakury 2011, 220). Dickens defends this character himself in his Preface of the book as being “true” (Dickens 1841) and not being “exaggerated” (Dickens 1841) at all.

Even though she is influenced by vicious background and many distorting life experiences, she is good in the bottom of her heart and shows us “how Virtue turns from dirty stockings” (Dickens 1841). The story of Nancy shows us that the decision between who is virtuous and who is vicious can be sometimes be really hard to make (Shakury 2011, 226). Though Rose and Mr Brownlow can be considered the ones who saved Oliver, in fact it is Nancy who saves him thanks to her courage and love. Nevertheless, her love which is, as Davis says, a “contradictory love she bears for both Sikes and Oliver” (Davis 2007, 287), prevents Nancy from accepting Rose's offer.

In my opinion, these two personnel – Nancy and Rose – are the two most juxtaposed characters of the *Oliver Twist*. They show contrasts between upper class and poverty, “values and survival” and between “morality and nobility” (Shakury 2011, 224-226).

In short, *Oliver Twist* is as other Dickens's novels full of juxtaposition which is his main device to express satire combined with the sentiment, of which the novel is full. In *Oliver* the most important contrasts shown between characters by sentiment are described above (Rose and Nancy, Oliver and Dodger). However, we must not forget the wonderful beginning of the novel, which is Dickens's critique of *New Poor Law* and associated institutions. Dickens is describing crime and poverty as a fault of these laws and institutions. Shakury captures at the end of his study where he wrote:

“When crime is the result of poverty, it completely dehumanizes society.” (Shakury 2011, 228)

## **5. Great Expectations**

In my opinion, the novel *Great Expectations* (1861) is contrasting to the previously mentioned *Oliver Twist*. The most differentiating point is, while *Oliver Twist* is concerned with many different story lines written in detail, *Great Expectations* are focused “on a single story line” (Davis 2007, 133). The novel is, however, being more appreciated because of the fact being different than the previous ones, for example, Davis comments on it as having “concise narration, balanced structure, and rich symbolism” (Davis 2007, 127). This difference also caused that the novel gives the impression of more realistic (Davis 2007, 133) than for example already mentioned *Oliver Twist*. It also being later Dickens’s novel is considered more careful with slackening pace (Ford 1958, 137-138) and on the other hand, at the same time Dickens is correcting the previous mistakes of his novel (Gissing 1902, 60-61). As the primary objective of the novel Dickens set the “study of snobbery” (Ford 1958, 331), where the sentiment is less prominent than satire. However, when it occurs it is, as in Dickens’s other later novels, “greatly modified” (Ford 1958, 122).

## 5.1. Critique of Money-oriented Middle Class Snobbery

The main focus of this social novel's satire becomes the money-centeredness of the Victorian society. As the novel focuses on Pip's story line the main source of satire is his character and action to which he is involved. So let me start with him as the main part of this chapter.

### 5.1.1. The False Gentleman

We are left with two Pips – one is the young Pip with disagreeable character, who evolves into the second Pip – the mature Pip who learned from his mistakes and is narrates the story. On his character the main moral of the novel is shown in full detail – “the demoralizing effect which materialistic expectations have” (Wentersdorf 1966, 203). Pip is led by his sister and Pumblechook to take money as the most important thing in life. Encouraging Pip as for example Mrs Gargery do when she says to Joe:

“[...] this boy's fortune may be made by his going to Miss Havisham's [...].” (Dickens 2010, 45)

Also the money for Pip embodies the idea of “escape and freedom” (Hagan 1954, 172) from his sister, Pumblechook and from all misery of his life. So when Mr Jaggers appears to bring forward Pip's great expectations, Pip does not hesitate to do everything he is asked without remorse even if it is rejecting his life (Davis 2007, 135). The satire is shown when he again and again “fails to overcome his illusions” (Davis 2007, 144) and does not see what is important.

However, Pip is by Dickens masterly drawn as believable and true character to life in similar ways as Gradgrind of *Hard Times* (Ford 1958, 138) and on the contrary in first two parts of the book lives idle and passive life influenced by many different circumstances and people around him (Davis 2007, 134). The whole time Pip is just a “victim in a long chain of widespread social injustice” (Hagan 1954, 170), which I will describe in detail in Chapter 5.3. Wentersdorf describes Pip as “more than merely a personification of the false values of the Victorian dream” (1966, 204) and I must agree with him in the point that in majority of the book Pip is just “superficially good” while being “basically evil and repulsive” (Wentersdorf 1966, 204) as we are able to see the train of his thoughts.

What Dickens is showing is how Pip tries to become part of higher class, only to become what Davis describes as “false ideal of the gentleman” (Davis 2007, 140).

There are certain changes visible in Pip's character during the course of the novel. For example, when Pip arrives to London for the first time, he describe the city as the filthiest and most undesirable city with people very similar to it:

“I was scared by the immensity of London, I think I might have had some faint doubts whether it was not rather ugly, crooked, narrow, and dirty. [...] a hackney-coachman, who seemed to have as many capes to his greasy great-coat as he was years old, packed me up in his coach and hemmed me in with a folding and jingling barrier of steps [...]” (Dickens 2010, 145)

Or later in the chapter he continues in his unforgettable descriptions:

“Of course I had no experience of a London summer day, and my spirits may have been oppressed by the hot exhausted air, and by the dust and grit that lay thick on everything. [...] So I came into Smithfield; and the shameful place, being all asmeared with filth and fat and blood and foam, seemed to stick to me [...], I found the roadway covered with straw to deaden the noise of passing vehicles; and from this, and from the quantity of people standing about smelling strongly of spirits and beer [...]” (Dickens 2010, 147)

However, not long after this, Pip changes his mind completely and describes “London streets, so crowded with people and so brilliantly lighted in the dusk of evening” (Dickens 2010, 165) when he becomes part of its life and as “the true gentleman” he embraces the city. Nevertheless, the turning point for Pip's character comes when he finds out who his real benefactor is. Firstly he is with his pride of “gentleman” almost disgusted, see how Dickens describes it:

“All the truth of my position came flashing on me; and its disappointments, dangers, disgraces, consequences of all kinds, rushed in in such a multitude that I was borne down by them and them and had to struggle for every breath I drew. [...] The abhorrence in which I held the man, the dread I had of him, the repugnance with which I shrank from him, could not have been exceeded if he had been some terrible beast.” (Dickens 2010, 283-284)

However, as the story continues he starts accepting Magwitch and with it he “[comes] to terms with those parts of himself that he repressed and rejected” (Davis 2007, 136). This process allows him to come to “psychological wholeness” (Davis 2007, 145) and realize his vices. Dickens is using Pip to manifest the vices of Victorian society, in other words “to reveal [...] complex truths about society and its organization” (Hagan 1954, 169).

### **5.1.2. Pip’s Counterparts**

In *Great Expectations* Dickens used really interesting technique to draw Pip’s character. Almost all of the characters in the book are used to define and to sketch Pip more closely. Stone in his study summarizes this Dickens’s technique of characterization perfectly:

“Pip is contrasted with many other realistic characters who reflect or extend or illuminate his personality. He is contrasted with Estella, who has been distorted by the same agencies which twist him; with Biddy, who resists those distorting forces; with Joe, who also remains uncorrupted; with Herbert, a superior version of himself [...]; with Miss Havisham, whose sin, and punishment, are linked to his; with Drummle, who is a degenerate version of himself [...]; and with Orlick, who is Pip’s most terrifying extension, an extension of nascent, inexplicable malignancy.” (Stone 1962, 668)

However, in this part I would like to look more closely at the two polar opposites who balance Pip between his good sides and his bad sides – at Herbert and Orlick. To contrast those two with Pip to the greatest extent Dickens used “parallelism and antithesis” (Wentersdorf 1966, 207). The good – Herbert – and the bad – Orlick – “and these two opposites are unified in Pip” (Wentersdorf 1966, 205).

Let me start with Herbert, he appears in the book for the first time in the garden of Satis House, where he is described as “pale young gentleman” (Dickens 2010, 79), and when he meets Pip and fights with him. What is also shown on Pip and Herbert’s first encounter is how Pip admires Herbert for his endurance:

“His spirit inspired me with great respect. He seemed to have no strength, and he never once hit me hard, and he was always knocked down; but, he would be up again in a moment, sponging himself or drinking out of



the water-bottle, with the greatest satisfaction in seconding himself according to form, and then came at me with an air and a show that made me believe he really was going to do for me at last. He got heavily bruised, for I am sorry to record that the more I hit him, the harder I hit him; but he came up again and again and again, until at last he got a bad fall with the back of his head against the wall. Even after that crisis in our affairs, he got up and turned round and round confusedly a few times, not knowing where I was; but finally went on his knees to his sponge and threw it up: at the same time panting out, ‘That means you have won.’” (Dickens 2010, 80-81)

This action can be seen as a defeat of the good in Pip, after this action Pip’s nature is the darkest in the whole book until he meets Herbert again. When it happens, Herbert grown into kind gentlemen who “has more realistic view of the world” (Davis 2007, 135) than Pip does, because he is able to see what Pip rejects to see, for example “Miss Havisham’s madness and Estella’s cruelty” (Davis 2007, 135). He becomes Pip’s true friend since he is described as having “in every look and tone, a natural incapacity to do anything secret and mean” (Dickens 2010, 158).

More interesting character is Orlick, who appears to be “a kind of evil alter ego to Pip” (Davis 2007, 143). What terrifies Pip about him is that he sees himself in him and he also meets him in every important part of his life. Firstly, he is also Joe’s apprentice at blacksmith’s, and the list follows with Orlick’s attempts to catch Biddy’s attention, then he interferes with Pip again when he works as doorkeeper at Satis House, which Davis describes as “[symbolic] blocking of Pip’s access to Estella” (Davis 2007, 143). He serves for Pip as reminder of his bitter past.

In contrast with Pip, Orlick is able to let his anger go and punish those who wronged him; ironically they are also the ones who wronged Pip, namely Pip’s sister – Mrs Gargery, and Mr Pumblechook. In his description he contrasts with Herbert in appearance and in the mood around him:

“[...] he was a fellow of that obstinate disposition [...]. He was a broadshouldered loose-limbed swarthy fellow of great strength, never in a hurry, and always slouching. He never even seemed to come to his work on purpose, but would slouch in as if by mere accident; and when he went to the Jolly Bargemen to eat his dinner, or went away at night, he would slouch out, like Cain or the Wandering Jew [...].” (Dickens 2010, 98)

About Herbert we had feeling of bravery and determination; however, that does not apply in Orlick's case. On the contrary, Dickens himself implies about Orlick bad atmosphere, almost atmosphere of death, as he is comparing Orlick with "Cain", the man who committed the first murder.

## **5.2.Sentimental Characters**

Also in this novel we can find some sentiment. However, it is much less than in *Oliver Twist*. As I mentioned it has much different style since it is one of his later novels. Nevertheless, Dickens, in my opinion, uses sentiment to magnify the effect of satire on readers. So, also in this novel, there are some sentimental characters. The two most important in this novel are Joe and Biddy.

### **5.2.1. Joe Gargery**

Let me start with Pip's brother-in-law, Joe Gargery, his sentimentality is visible right from the beginning. He behaves not only to Pip but to all people overly nicely with respect. His most memorable and sentimental quote appears when Magwitch is found in the marshes and is taken by soldiers to blacksmith's. After Magwitch apologizes for stealing the pie, Joe says to him:

“‘God knows you're welcome to it – so far as it was ever mine,’ [...] ‘We don't know what you have done, but we wouldn't have you starved to death for it, poor miserable fellow-creetur. – Would us, Pip?’” (Dickens 2010, 34)

There again is shown the absurdity of Pip's character, because he is often ashamed of him and does not understand him, or, as Davis describes it, he “is unable to see the depths in Joe's character” (Davis 2007, 135), even if Joe and him promise to ever be “the best of friends” (Dickens 2010, 125). Even if the promise is broken from Pip's side, it's never broken from Joe's. That's how Dickens wrote those two to be contrasts - “Joe remains loyal” (Davis 2007, 140), even though Pip would gladly pay him money to keep him from visit (Dickens 2010, 194). And after all wrongs Pip did on Joe, he comes back when he needs him in his sickness:

“I opened my eyes in the night, and I saw, in the great chair at the bedside, Joe. I opened my eyes in the day, and, sitting on the window-seat, smoking his pipe in the shaded open window, still I saw Joe. I asked for

cooling drink, and the dear hand that gave it me was Joe's. I sank back on my pillow after drinking, and the face that looked so hopefully and tenderly upon me was the face of Joe.” (Dickens 2010, 413)

Joe Gargery defines what is good about human nature and relationships, he never gives up on Pip. I agree with Davis who writes, “Joe defines the moral message of the novel, representing the ideal of ‘gentle Christian man’” (Davis 2007, 140).

Similar function as Joe has Bidly, who together with him “defines the ideals of simplicity, honesty and love in the novel” (Davis 2007, 138) and so it is not surprising when they end up married. Pip’s attitude towards her is similar not to say worse as to Joe, he does not appreciate what he has in her. It is shown by Dickens that Bidly is not enough to Pip in his pride:

“She was not beautiful – she was common, and could not be like Estella – but she was pleasant and wholesome and sweet-tempered.” (Dickens 2010, 110)

In contrast with Joe, Bidly is smarter and serves to Pip as his confidential in their talks, he opens to her and she gives him her advices and hopes he listens to her, but emphasizes: “You know best, Pip.” (Dickens 2010, 112). In her case, in contrast with Joe, Pip does not have the chance to win her back as Joe, because when he wants “humbled and repentant” (Dickens 2010, 421) ask for her forgiveness and her hand, he finds out that she is married to Joe and this is the part of his punishment.

### **5.3. Injustice in Great Expectations**

Dickens always in his novel concentrates on more than one theme for satire. The main theme of *Great Expectations* is already mentioned money-oriented society, however, there as always other themes, for example Dickens’s favourite child abuse or injustice committed on people by institutions like police, courts, workhouses, and so on. In this chapter I will focus on the theme of injustice. In *Great Expectations*, as Hagan writes, is shown that “impartiality in the courts is often a myth” (Hagan 1954, 170). For example, the satire is bursting out of the scene where Mrs Gargery is attacked and the police comes to investigate:

“The Constables and the Bow Street men from London [...] were about the house for a week or two, and did pretty much what I have heard

and read of like authorities doing in other such cases. They took up several obviously wrong people, and they ran their heads very hard against wrong ideas, and persisted in trying to fit the circumstances to the ideas, instead of trying to extract ideas from the circumstances. Also, they stood about the door of the Jolly Bargemen, with knowing and reserved looks that filled the whole neighbourhood with admiration; and they had a mysterious manner of taking their drink, that was almost as good as taking the culprit. But not quite, for they never did it.” (Dickens 2010, 107)

Here Dickens suggest that no help or justice comes from institutions which are established to pursue it.

### **5.3.1. Jaggers and Wemmick**

As great example of wronged authority serves Jaggers, sometimes it seems that he has no morals, bullies his clients and under no circumstances does not want to know the truth (Davis 2007, 142). He also washes his hands as if he could “washed his clients off, as if he were a surgeon or a dentist [...] and he would wash his hands [...] whenever he came in from a police court or dismissed a client from his room.” (Dickens 2010, 187). This custom is symbol for washing off the dirt he has on his hands. He is corrupted through and through.

On the other hand, his right-hand man, Wemmick, found the way how to stay uncorrupted. They only way according to him “is to live two separate lives” (Davis 2007, 147) – the personal life and the life in the corrupted world.

### **5.3.2. Magwitch**

As the main victim of judicial system is shown the benefactor of Pip – Magwitch. This character even being “a criminal” cannot be mistaken for bad character, because him being a criminal is “great social evil: the evil of poverty, and the evil of corruptible judicial system” (Hagan 1954, 171). Then the irony of Pip’s statement over Magwitch’s dead body arises: “O Lord, be merciful to him, a sinner!” (Dickens 2010, 411), because as Hagan points out, “was more sinned against than sinning” (1954, 171).

### **5.3.3. Vicious Circle of Injustice**

What Dickens succeeded to show in the novel is the extensiveness and continuance of injustice as it never fails to find its victim. Hagan summarizes it with his statement:

“Once an act of injustice has been committed, there is no predicting to what extent it will affect the lives of generations yet unborn and of people far removed in the social scale from the victims of the original oppression.”

(Hagan 1954, 173)

Since we look closely to the origin of the injustice in *Great Expectations*, we can track it down the only one source. Pip is wronged by Miss Havisham and Magwitch, also Estella is wronged by Miss Havisham. And those two – Miss Havisham and Magwitch – were wronged by Compeyson – the source of injustice (Hagan 1954, 172-173).

The society, in which “the worst qualities” (Hagan 1954, 172) tends to settle, cannot escape the “chain reaction” (Hagan 1954, 174) caused by many social injustices.

The *Great Expectations* is built on the character of Pip, who is evolving during the novel, who pursues money only to find out that without it he was better. It is also his benefactor’s thought, because the only thing he wants to do for Pip is to help him. I must agree with Davis who describes that Magwitch’s and society’s belief “that money can make a gentleman embodies Dickens’s criticism of the money society that fails to appreciate the true gentility of a common man” (Davis 2007, 143). It would be probably more accurate to say, that Compeyson is not the origin of injustice of the novel, because he is also driven by money, as well as Miss Havisham, Pip, Pumblechook, Mrs. Gargery and many others. In other words Dickens shown successfully that money are the origin of society’s destruction and changed values.

## **6. Bleak House**

Similarly, as *Great Expectations*, *Bleak House* (1853) is one of Dickens’s late novels. Moreover, it is considered his 1<sup>st</sup> of his late novels. The story has many critics, for example Gissing remarks Dickens’s “abuse of ‘coincidence’” (1902, 62) on which the story is built; however, there are also admirers of the story, as example serves Crompton, who says that the story “[portrays] social order [...] with a power and vividness” (1958, 284). Nevertheless, everyone agrees that this time Dickens’s “social criticism strikes a good deal deeper” (Ford 1958, 134) and that “the story [...] in combination with Dickens’s genuine powers [...] produces designed effect” (Gissing 1902, 61-62).

What Dickens succeeded to portray is the condition of England, which is portrayed as “diseased” (Davis 2007, 41). For this chapter I chose division similar to four groups of characters Dickens used in this story according to Crompton:

“The first are those who, either by virtue of their social status or psychological orientation, are connected with the world of fashionable elegance. [...] The second are the legal and commercial parasites [...]. The third group pretend to social or religious benevolence but are actually indifferent to other people [...] a fourth group, the victims of social oppression and their champions [...]. (Crompton 1958, 288)

In other words, I would like to begin with the sentimental characters of *Bleak House*, then move to high class contrasted with middle class, followed by legal side with lawyers as main characters, and then there are the philanthropists.

### **6.1. Esther’s sentimentality**

The point in which this novel differs from Dickens’s other novels is that it uses two types of narration – first person narration from Esther’s point of view and third person narration. The difference between the two narrations is clearly visible. The third person narration has clear Dickensian features – like sharp wit, hard irony, hyperbole, etc. Esther also as narrator gives “her quick observation and her sound judgements of other characters” (Davis 2007, 58).

It is the main sentimental character of the novel, everything about her is likable and we feel pity for her as she suffers from her godmother, being child of “no one” (her father uses name Nemo – Latin for no-one), then she suffers from her mother, from the illness and her love problems. In psychological way she is similar to Oliver from *Oliver Twist* (Davis 2007, 42), she is also “too passive, too deferential to others, too repressed, too coy” (Davis 2007, 42). In spite of this, she is able to influence the other characters and “she projects her self-consciousness onto others” (Davis 2007, 58). Her name Summerson suggests “restorative powers” (Crompton 1958, 289) of sun which contrast with the omnipresent fog. With those powers she is able to use these powers to correct the households where parents failed (Crompton 1958, 289).

## 6.2.High vs. Middle Class

What Dickens is showing in his contrasts of high class (represented by Dedlock family) and middle class (represented for example by Rouncewells, Jarndyces, etc.) are the differences between old ways and new ways. Another target of high class satire is the stiffness of aristocracy.

The old is projected into the story by Sir Dedlock whose family is “as old as the hills” (Dickens 1991, 9) with importance to the world because as Sir Dedlock thinks “the world might get on without hills but would be done up without Dedlocks” (Dickens 1991, 9). On the other hand the new order is represented by the ironmaster Mr Rouncewell, the example of self-made man who “has risen by honest ability and work” (Gissing 1902, 243) and represents “the middle-class ideal” (Gissing 1902, 243) of Victorian society.

Firstly, you expect that the high class will be pilloried by Dickens as the cause of the social evil. Nevertheless, the high class is shown as “bored and weary, dead emotionally as well as morally and politically” (Crompton 1958, 285). On the contrary, middle class is the one taking lead as is shown in Rouncewell – he is not ashamed of his origin, he worked his way up himself and defeats Sir Leicester in elections. So as Crompton summarizes it:

“Dickens makes it clear, as the novel progresses, that the aristocracy by itself is completely helpless; it has fallen into the hands of its middle-class servants [...]” (Crompton 1958, 285)

Therefore, the figure of Sir Leicester Dedlock is the main one conveying satire on high class. Also the name suggests that he is “dead-locked” in his pathetic state, or as Davis suggest, him being deadlocked socially and his wife psychologically (2007, 48). Dickens is using his superficiality to show “the indifference of fashionable society to social misery” (Crompton 1958, 292). In contrast, in the novel there is shown humanity of Sir Leicester when he has forgiven his wife, he is shown in “a chivalrous and humane manner” (Crompton 1958, 287), which is surprising, because most of the satirized Dickens’s character lacks this quality (for example Bounderby of *Hard Times*, Juggers of *Great Expectations*).

Function of Rouncewell in the novel, on the other hand, as mentioned above is to contrast with the stiffness of aristocracy and to more emphasize the impact of high-class satire. Gissing describes the contrast aptly:

“[Rouncewell] represents a coming triumph; [Dedlock], a sinking cause; but, in the meantime, it remains very doubtful whether the triumphing order will achieve more for the interests of humanity than that which has received its death-blow.” (Gissing 1902, 244)

Dickens sees the character of Rouncewell as the honest, hardworking, middle class man, as a chance for “change and growth” (Davis 2007, 44) of England, but is not sure if only this is enough for Victorian England to be cured.

### **6.3. Legal Machinery**

#### **6.3.1. Fog**

The novel opens with description of fog, which is the main symbol of the novel and it penetrates the whole story. It symbolizes the main theme of satire in the story – “lawyers and clients lost in a fog of legal obfuscation” (Crompton 1958, 284). Dickens’s description of the fog itself has really depressing influence:

“Fog everywhere. Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits and meadows; fog down the river, where it rolls defiled among the tiers of shipping and the waterside pollutions of a great (and dirty) city. Fog on the Essex marshes, fog on the Kentish heights. Fog creeping into the cabooses of collier-brigs; fog lying out on the yards and hovering in the rigging of great ships; fog drooping on the gunwales of barges and small boats. Fog in the eyes and throats of ancient Greenwich pensioners, wheezing by the firesides of their wards; fog in the stem and bowl of the afternoon pipe of the wrathful skipper, down in his close cabin; fog cruelly pinching the toes and fingers of his shivering little 'prentice boy on deck. Chance people on the bridges peeping over the parapets into a nether sky of fog, with fog all round them, as if they were up in a balloon and hanging in the misty clouds. [...]

The raw afternoon is rawest, and the dense fog is densest, and the muddy streets are muddiest near that leaden-headed old obstruction, appropriate ornament for the threshold of a leaden-headed old corporation, Temple Bar. And hard by Temple Bar, in Lincoln's Inn Hall, at the very



heart of the fog, sits the Lord High Chancellor in his High Court of Chancery.  
(Dickens 1991, 1-2)

This opening conveys the atmosphere of bleakness to the reader, which is connected as Davis writes “to the law and the system of injustice” (Davis 2007, 43). It literally says that the “heart of the fog” is the Court of Chancery which is seen as the “disease” (Davis 2007, 43) of England. In contrast, with the atmosphere of London and the Court of Chancery the Bleak House itself is everything but bleak.

### **6.3.2. Lawyers**

Dickens offers us, as Crompton describes it, the “gallery of monsters” (1958, 295) of the legal world. The appearance of Mr Tulkinghorn, the most important lawyer of *Bleak House*, is used to describe his personality as well:

“One peculiarity of his black clothes and of his black stockings, be they silk or worsted, is that they never shine. Mute, close, irresponsible to any glancing light, his dress is like himself.” (Dickens 1991, 11)

This middle-class gentleman doesn’t apply to “the best interests of his clients but rather seek power for its own sake” (Davis 2007, 43). He also sits at the heart of bleakness and he is looking for secrets of others, for example Lady Dedlock’s secret, because it is his “way to power, a power that turns people into objects” (Davis 2007, 60) which he can manipulate. As he does with Lady Dedlock.

Next monster, maybe even worse than Tulkinghorn is Vholes, firstly he is described by Mr. Kenge as “diligent, persevering, steady” (Dickens 1991, 548); however, we are set right as the story continues. Here again Dickens played with the name of the character, Vholes name suggest “vole” – rodent – “parasite that destroys crops” (Crompton 1958, 300) and it is a perfect fit, since Vholes is the cause of Richard’s decay and death. The character is also compared with cannibal in the narration of Esther in Chapter XXXIX:

“As though, Mr. Vholes and his relations being minor cannibal chiefs and it being proposed to abolish cannibalism, indignant champions were to put the case thus: Make man-eating unlawful, and you starve the Vholeses!” (Dickens 1991, 549)

In this example the lawyer “[is] making a lingering meal of Richard” (Crompton 1958, 300). The character of Vholes written by Dickens, as Davis points out is “[sucking] the life from Richard, [and he] represents the law in its most murderous form.” (2007, 60).

Dickens described the legal system of the Victorian England parasitizing on its society, which is pulled in, in its worst state, with Krook’s spontaneous combustion as symbolism for “legal England ending in fire” (Davis 2007, 43). In other words, Davis describes England as “a constitutional society grounded in the law that neglects its citizens is like an irresponsible parent who neglects or abuses his children” (Davis 2007, 44). I would like to continue with the topic of actual children suffering due the philanthropy in the next chapter.

#### **6.4. Philanthropy of Bleak House**

In the novel there two main examples of the parents that are doing charitable works at expense of their children being neglected and abused by them. Those vivid examples comes as much more shocking as they are coming from mothers who neglect their children, we would probably expect maternal love. However, Mrs Jellyby and Mrs Pardiggle are both doing “charity” without caring about their own households, more correctly speaking without caring about their children’s needs and both mothers became being resented by them. They both are example of women who have gone too far (Gissing 1902, 152) and it is probably better to call their work false philanthropy.

##### **6.4.1. Mrs Jellyby**

As Gissing describes the state of Mrs Jellyby’s philanthropy, she “comes near to losing all humanity” (Gissing 1902, 152) as she exploits her daughter to write letters for her and neglects all the other children. It comes to the state when Caddy Jellyby while talking to Esther says:

“‘I wish Africa was dead!’ she said on a sudden. I was going to remonstrate. ‘I do!’ she said ‘Don't talk to me, Miss Summerson. I hate it and detest it. It's a beast!’” (Dickens 1991, 43-44)

It is again the false philanthropy of “those like Mrs Jellyby who are so obsessed with missionary work in Africa that they neglect the children of England” (Davis 2007,

44) and more importantly their own children who will grow up into the individuals who resent any charity or any help for lower classes.

#### **6.4.2. Mrs Pardiggle**

Another example is Mrs Pardiggle, who is described by Gissing as “fiercely charitable lady who goes about with her tracts and her insolence among the cottages of the poor” (Gissing 1902, 153). Dickens wrote her to show us that even charity located on local people doing from wrong reason or in wrong way is not something what is good for society. Mrs Pardiggle introduces her children to Esther and her associates together with the description of their charity, we can clearly see the boys’ discomfort:

“We had never seen such dissatisfied children. [...] they looked absolutely ferocious with discontent. At the mention of the Tockahoopo Indians, I could really have supposed Egbert to be one of the most baleful members of that tribe, he gave me such a savage frown. The face of each child, as the amount of his contribution was mentioned, darkened in a peculiarly vindictive manner, but his was by far the worst. I must except, however, the little recruit into the Infant Bonds of Joy, who was stolidly and evenly miserable.” (Dickens 1991, 101)

She also created what Mrs Jellyby did, children resentful about any kind of charitable work. This “satire of feminism” (Davis 2007, 52) is another great example of Dickens’s mastery of exaggeration and irony.

The novel is unique, as was mentioned, because Dickens succeeded in using two different narration to deliver his message, which is to portray “England devastated by an irresponsible and self-serving legal system” (Davis 2007, 35), in different way than before. He combined humane (sentimental) point of view of Esther’s narration with his characteristic sharp criticism of third person narration. In this novel what Dickens achieved “as a satirist is to play [...] ‘realities’ and ‘idealities’ against each other for the sake of ironic contrast” (Crompton 1958, 302), where Crompton by idealites means characters idealized by Dickens for satire’s purpose and as realities he means the real characters portrayed convincingly in real details.

## 7. Nicholas Nickleby

This Dickens's third novel *Nicholas Nickleby* (1839) is unique, because it is the first one showing us young man as a protagonist of the novel. Also as I said, it is his third novel, it came up after *The Pickwick Papers* and *Oliver Twist*, so Dickens was at that time still "experimenting with the novel form and seeking his own place" (Davis 2007, 236). In my opinion, this is maybe the reason why it is criticized as full of "crudeness" (Ford 1958, 123) or "the least satisfactory" (Gissing 1902, 49) of Dickens's novels and also the reason why there is much less sentiment than in his other novels. However, over some faults Dickens shows us while "mixing the picaresque with satire and social reform" (Davis 2007, 236) many much greater faults of Victorian England. As he achieved to portray institutions which really existed in Victorian England with their vices and he satirized them so deeply, for example The Dotheboys Hall, the Mantalini's millinery, and Crummle's theatre (Davis 2007, 238).

### 7.1. Yorkshire Schools

The satire and critique of the educational system of England is the main objective of *Nicholas Nickleby*. As Davis says, the "initial idea [...] was to attack Yorkshire schools [...] where unwanted children were banished by uncaring parents" (2007, 236). Dickens was repelled by the state of English education, because as he said himself in the preface of the novel "any man who had proved his unfitness for any other occupation in life was free, without examination or qualification, to open a school anywhere" (Dickens [1900?], 13).

It is, after *Oliver Twist*, second novel where the main theme are "mistreated children" (Davis 2007, 237) because we can see that in most novels Dickens was advocate of children rights. It is exceptional how he was able in order to satirize mix "horror and jocosity" (Gissing 1902, 133). Before writing the novel he visited some of the Yorkshire schools to verify the real conditions there and after it he wrote in the preface:

"[...] although schoolmasters, as a race, were the blockheads and impostors, [...] these Yorkshire schoolmasters were the lowest and most rotten round in the whole ladder." (Dickens [1900?], 13)

Dickens achieved to make England focus on the “deplorable conditions prevalent in these institutions” (Adrian 1949, 237). His description of Nicholas seeing the boys at school for the first time is showing children who are resembling prisoners:

“Pale and haggard faces, lank and bony figures, children with the countenances of old men, deformities with irons upon their limbs, boys of stunted growth, and others whose long meagre legs would hardly bear their stooping bodies, all crowded on the view together; there were the bleared eye, the hare-lip, the crooked foot, and every ugliness or distortion that told of unnatural aversion conceived by parents for their offspring, or of young lives which, from the earliest dawn of infancy, had been one horrible endurance of cruelty and neglect. There were little faces which should have been handsome, darkened with the scowl of sullen, dogged suffering; there was childhood with the light of its eye quenched, its beauty gone, and its helplessness alone remaining; there were vicious-faced boys, brooding, with leaden eyes, like malefactors in a jail; and there were young creatures on whom the sins of their frail parents had descended, weeping even for the mercenary nurses they had known, and lonesome even in their loneliness.”  
(Dickens [1900?], 94-95)

He is showing children with no hope for better days or as Adrian describes it the children are staying at Dotheboys Hall “until they are incapable of expressing their individuality” (1949, 240). Dickens gives “detailed and doubles exaggerated picture” (Adrian 1949, 240) of the schools and most importantly of the schoolmaster and his family.

### **7.1.1. Squeers**

It can seem that the main character used to underline the terror of schools – Mr Squeers – is much exaggerated for the use of satire, because nobody wants to believe that something like that could happen with a person. In my opinion, there is certainly satiric exaggeration, but on the other hand as Gissing says “who shall declare with assurance that Squeers’s brutality outdoes the probable in his place and generation?” (1902, 132) In description of Squeers’s family Dicknes achieved to illustrate “the hearty gusto with which they pursue their monstrous business” (Gissing 1902, 133).

The character of villainous Squeers is most important for Dickens satire of the missing educational laws, because as Adrian writes, “Squeers pursues his reprehensible practices because no supervisory body acts as deterrent” (1949, 240). There is nobody to stop people like Squeers from torturing children. In pursuing his business Squeers’s values are wronged, we can see it in ironic example Dickens’s wrote in the novel’s scene when Squeers returns home and animals are prior to children in his mind:

“‘How is my Squeery?’ said this lady in a playful manner, and a very hoarse voice.

‘Quite well, my love,’ replied Squeers. ‘How’s the cows?’

‘All right, every one of’em,’ answered the lady.

‘And the pigs?’ said Squeers.

‘As well as they were when you went away.’

‘Come; that’s a blessing’ said Squeers, pulling off his great-coat. ‘The boys are all as they were, I suppose?’”

(Dickens [1900?], 87)

In the novel he achieved to portray the “importance that Squeers’s career be wrecked” (Walters 1912, 117) in course of satire as a means of better treatment of children.

## **7.2. Young Hero**

As was already mentioned it is the first book where Dickens used young man as the main protagonist. As the book more or less followed *Oliver Twist*, Nicholas is really similar to Oliver in the way that he “is more acted upon than acting” (Davis 2007, 237). Davis continues to elaborate the idea:

“His uncle, Crummles, and the Cheeryble Brothers do more to determine the course of his life than he does himself.” (Davis 2007, 237)

Chesterton describes Nicholas as having “no psychology” (Chesterton 1911, 32) and no character (Chesterton 1911, 32). Also the similarity of those two heroes is visible in their character. They both, Nicholas and Oliver, undergo many experience but both, as was mentioned in the case of Oliver, are unaffected by environment.

### 7.2.1. Smike

As a contrast to this unaffected character serves Smike, his character is deeply affected by his childhood experience not only mentally but also physically (Davis 2007, 238-249) who is his “shadowing double” (Davis 2007, 238). The difference between Nicholas and Oliver, however, lies in their sentimental side. Nicholas is much less sentimental than Oliver. The reason is that his character is not always likeable and it was Dickens’s objective. He writes in the preface:

“If Nicholas be not always found to be blameless or agreeable, he is not always intended to appear so. He is young man of impetuous temper, [...] and I saw no reason why such a hero should be lifted out of nature.”  
(Dickens [1900?], 16)

### 7.2.2. Hateful Uncle

Another double for Nicholas is his uncle Ralph Nickleby. Davis describes Dickens’s intention to contrast: “[Nicholas] whose youth and inexperience are contrasted with the worldly cynicism of his uncle Ralph” (2007, 247). Dickens also give us example of their contrasts when they meet for the first time:

“The face of the old man was stern, hard-featured, and forbidding; that of the young one, open, handsome, and ingenuous. The old man's eye was keen with the twinklings of avarice and cunning; the young man's bright with the light of intelligence and spirit. [...]

However striking such a contrast as this may be to lookers-on, none ever feel it with half the keenness or acuteness of perfection with which it strikes to the very soul of him whose inferiority it marks. It galled Ralph to the heart's core, and he hated Nicholas from that hour.” (Dickens [1900?], 37)

The character of Ralph is used to satirize the middle-class businessman, similarly as in *Hard Times*. Interesting is that Dickens does not give clearer description of Ralph’s business (Davis 2007, 230) and shows him as hateful and unable to “imagine others as different from himself” (Davis 2007, 248). As all Dickens’s villains Ralph is punished for his hatred and for maiming his son Smike (Davis 2007, 239). However, before he kills himself, he realizes that money are not important, but still he is not able to overcome the hatred of Nicholas:

“They had all turned from him and deserted him in his very first need, even money could not buy them now; [...] But one tender thought, or one of natural regret, in his whirlwind of passion and remorse, was as a drop of calm water in a stormy maddened sea. His hatred of Nicholas had been fed upon his own defeat, nourished on his interference with his schemes, fattened upon his old defiance and success.” (Dickens [1900?], 738-739)

Davis describes the process Ralph’s mind undergoes as “he is transformed from a stage villain into a self-conscious novelistic character” (2007, 239). Likewise, those change is at the end undergone by characters from other novels, for example by Fagin in *Oliver Twist* or by Pip in *Great Expectations*.

### **7.3. Women of NN**

Two most important female characters of *Nicholas Nickleby* are Mrs Nickleby, Nicholas’s mother, and Kate Nickleby, Nicholas’s sister. I would like to concentrate on them in this chapter.

#### **7.3.1. Kate**

Kate is one of a few sources of sentiment in this novel. She is exploited by her employer working twelve hours a day plus overtimes and also by her uncle being used as a bait for other wealthy businessmen. In this hopeless state she remains “until Nicholas returns, challenges the villainous Hawk, and rescues her” (Davis 2007, 238). By writing her, Dickens wanted to point out on women and their working conditions. In similar but maybe worse situation is portrayed Madeline struggling with work for her father’s debts.

#### **7.3.2. Mother**

More interesting still is Mrs Nickleby indifferent to her children’s needs, she satiric and comic example of “class snobbery, self-absorption, and egotism” (Davis 2007, 238). However, Dickens wrote her in the way that it is more comic than offensive as for example Ralph’s behaviour. She contrasts with Ralph being genteel and naive victim of class system (Davis 2007, 247) while he reduced “all his relationships to selfish monetary ones” (Davis 2007, 247).

Her characteristic behaviour – being easily influenced and changing loyalties easily – is comic relief from the wrongs portrayed and in the same time they are another tool to satirize naivety and shallowness of Victorian middle-class women. By Gissing



she is described as well-meaning woman with poor-intellectual equipment (1902, 169) which she also in my opinion is.

## 8. Conclusion

It is evident from the chapters above that Dickens used satire throughout his work and he saw himself as a moralist. Every book is concerned with different topic, but some themes they have in common. In each of them Dickens satirizes the treatment of children. In *Hard Times* it is the critique of teaching “facts” to the children which turns them into selfish calculating individuals. *Oliver Twist* shows how irresponsible English legal system is with respect to taking care of orphaned children and how they are exploited or forced to become criminals. Pip, the main protagonist of *Great Expectations* shows how money and upbringing wronged his values at early age. *Bleak House* shows children suffering through their mothers’ philanthropy and children suffering through poverty. And the last one, *Nicholas Nickleby*, offers probably the worst satire of children mistreatment and these are the Yorkshire schools with one shining example for all – Smike.

Another connecting element for all the novels is the passivity of main character. As was mentioned, the characters are “more acted upon than acting” (Davis 2007, 237). It applies for Oliver, Pip, Esther and also Nicholas. They characters are defined by their environment and by actions of people around them. This technique of characterization is one of the most typical for Dickens and it is the one which makes his novel so exceptional. Furthermore, Dickens frequently uses aptronyms. He plays with character’s names to satirize or to characterize them. There were examples above in the text – Harthouse (*Hard Times*), Twist (*Oliver Twist*), Summerson and Dedlock (*Bleak House*).

As the moral of each novel servers the punishment of the villainous character which is part of Dickens’s satire. Gradgrind in *Hard Times* is punished by selfish Bitzer who Gradgrind taught the calculations himself. In *Oliver Twist*, Sikes kills himself because he is after Nancy’s murder full of remorse and Fagin dies half-crazy in prison. Pumblechook and Mrs Gargery of *Great Expectations* are beaten by Orlick. Tulkinghorn of *Bleak House* is killed, his murder serves as punishment for exploiting his clients for his advantage. In *Nicholas Nickleby* Squeers’s business falls apart and Ralph kills himself from remorse of hurting his son.

What Dickens uses most to portray ill-treatment, injustice or to just as characterization is juxtaposition. Throughout all the chapters above there were many examples of contrasts and how they serve the purpose of satire. Now I would like to sum the most important contrast of each novel up. For the portrayal of character it is used in *Hard Times* where Sissy is contrasted with Bitzer (Chapter 3.3.1.), in *Great Expectations* it is how all the characters are used to form Pip's character (Chapter 5.1.2), and in *Nicholas Nickleby* the contrasts between Nicholas and Smike, and Nicholas and Ralph (Chapter 6.2). In the other two novels are contrasts for example for the use of satire, Fagin's games in *Oliver Twist* are contrasted with terrifying workhouses (Chapter 4.2.1), and in *Bleak House* one of the main themes is contrast between high and middle class (Chapter 6.2) portrayed by Dickens.

Sentiment is mostly concerned opposed to satire. However, Dickens achieved to use it as complement for satire. In Dickens's novels sentiment is underlining the criticism he portrays to convey his message to the reader. Interesting is that most of the sentimental characters are female – Sissy Jupe, Rose Maylie, Bidley, Esther. However, there are also male sentimental characters – Stephen Blackpool, Oliver Twist, Joe Gargery.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight that Dickens's work is greatly influenced by satire, as Gissing says "he had a moral purpose" (1902, 83) and went all out to convey his message. His stories are successful, because he lived through those horrors he portrayed himself and with his open eyes he delivered sharp and witty satire with comic reliefs and ironies as no one before him. I must agree with Leavis who says:

"The final stress may fall on Dickens's command of word, phrase, rhythm and image: in ease and range there is surely no greater master of English except Shakespeare." (Leavis 1950, 246)

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## Resumé

Bakalářská práce s názvem Charles Dickens: Satira a sentiment ve vybraných románech (*Hard Times*, *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, *Bleak House*, *Nicholas Nickleby*) se v úvodu zaobírá výběrem románů a tím, co bude v práci rozebíráno pro znázornění Dickensova užití satiry a sentimentu v této viktoriánské literatuře. Viktoriánská Anglie, období Dickensova života, výrazně ovlivnila jeho literární styl. Hrůzy a nespravedlnosti, které se odehrávaly v Anglii v době vlády královny Viktorie a především průmyslové revoluce, si sami říkaly o to, aby na ně bylo poukázáno. Dickens použil nejlepší prostředek, který mu pomohl doručit jeho poselství anglické veřejnosti, satiru. Za normálních okolností sentiment bývá většinou protikladem satiry, nicméně Charles Dickens používá sentiment pro vyzvednutí účinku satiry s velkým úspěchem. V Dickensově podání intenzivní kontrast mezi satirou a sentimentem vyvolává kýžený účinek.

Jako první se práce zaměřuje na román *Hard Times* (přel. *Zlé časy*), ve kterém je hlavním tématem satiry kritika utilitářství a špatné zacházení s dětmi. Thomas Gradgrind učí děti pouze „fakta“, což vede k tomu, jak se později v knize ukáže, že děti vyrostou ve vypočítavé bytosti téměř zbavené lidskosti. Mezi příklady dětí poznamenané touto výchovou, patří například Bitzer, prospěchářský mladík, který se stará jen o vlastní blaho, či Gradgrindův syn Tom, který zneužívá lásku a dobrotu své sestry ve svůj vlastní prospěch. Gradgrind je jako typická Dickensova záporná postava potrestán za své činy tím, že „fakta“ a utilitářství zničí život vlastní dceři i synovi. Bitzer, příkladný vzor Gradgrindova učení, mu v nejvyšší nouzi odmítne pomoci, jelikož se z něj stala jen prázdná schránka neschopná lidskosti a porozumění umějící jednat pouze ve svůj vlastní prospěch. Jako příklad užití sentimentu v kontrastu k satirě nachází postavy, kterou nesou rysy typické sentimentální postavy. V románu *Hard Times* jsou to Sissy Jupe a Stephen Blackpool. Sissy je ukázána v rozporu například s Bitzerem nebo Gradgrindovými dětmi, jelikož není schopná přijmout vyučovaná „fakta“, což je chápáno jako výhoda umožňující Sissy zůstat osobou plnou lidskosti. Na druhé straně stojí Stephen Blackpool, který je v románu zobrazen jako oběť průmyslové revoluce, přesněji řečeno obětí Slackbridge a Bounderbyho, majitelů továrny střední třídy, kteří s pracovníky nezachází jako s lidmi. V případě satiry již zmíněného Bounderbyho Dickens hojně používá repetici a její zdůraznění.

Dále práce analyzuje slavný román *Oliver Twist*, který se satiricky zaměřuje na kritiku chudobinců a týrání či zneužívání dětí. Tyto chudobince vznikly ve viktoriánské době na základě *New Poor Law* neboli veřejného systému chudinského práva z roku 1834. Toto právo stavělo chudinu do bezvýhodných situací, kdy se lidé museli rozhodovat mezi smrtí na ulici nebo smrtí v chudobinci. Dickensovy se podařilo zachytit hrůzy, které tyto chudobince a podobné instituce (například pro výchovu sirotků) přinášely. Dosahuje satiry především tím, že se soustředí na střední třídu, tedy na jednotlivce stojící v čele těchto institucí. V *Oliveru Twistovi* je to například rada chudobince nebo pan Bumble. Jsou zobrazeni jako lidé, kteří se vůbec nezajímají o osudy svých svěřenců. Dále Dickens satirizuje chudinu ve městě, především skrze žida Fagina a jeho zločinecké pomocníky, především děti. Pomocí satirických kontrastů Dickens například zachycuje, jak rozdílně malý Oliver vnímá bezútěšné prostředí chudobince v kontrastu s hrami a zábavou u Fagina. Největším kontrastem však zůstává neposkvrněnost a čistá mysl Olivera ve srovnání s ostatními chlapci, kteří pro Fagina pracují. Tento kontrast je zde opět zachycen pomocí sentimentu. Malý Oliver je silně sentimentální postava, jehož duch je i přes všechny prožité útrapy popisován jako nezničitelného. Dalšími kontrastními postavami jsou pak například Rose Maylieová a Nancy.

V Dickensově nejpozdějším z vybraných románů *Great Expectations* (přel. *Nadějně vyhlídky*) je kritizována především společnost posedlá penězi jako jediným zdrojem štěstí. Zobrazuje, jak peníze pokřivili charakter hlavního hrdiny Pipa, který je vidí jako jediný prostředek ke svobodě a k nalezení životního štěstí. Pip je ochotný vzdát se pro společenské postavení a peníze všeho důležitého ve svém životě – rodiny, zázemí i nejlepších přátel. Pipův charakter je zobrazen především prostřednictvím jeho dvojníků či protikladných postav. Charakter Pipa tedy nastiňují především postavy Orlicka a Herberta. Orlick je zobrazován jako stinná stránka, které Pip nedává v průběhu románu průchod, činící věci, na které Pip sám nemá odvahu. Na druhé straně stojí Herbert, Pipova kladná stránka, která je v dětství poražena a teprve až v dospělosti se opět setkávají jako přátelé. Kromě materialistické společnosti je dalším hlavním tématem nespravedlnost, která ovlivňuje životy nespočtu generací. V románu je zobrazena nespravedlnost soudu, při kterém je Magwitch nespravedlivě odsouzen, nebo nespravedlnost s jakou byla podvedena slečna Havishamová při neuskutečněném sňatku. Znovu je zde použit sentiment, tentokrát v podobě Joea a Biddy, dvou Pipových

nejbližších, kteří mu zůstávají věrnými přáteli i přes jeho chování k nim. Pip si na konci románu uvědomí, že se rozhodoval špatně, nicméně za své nesprávné rozhodování je potrestán nemožností sňatku s Biddy.

V románu *Bleak House* (přel. *Ponurý dům*) se Dickens zabývá především kritikou právního prostředí, tedy soudů a advokátů. Současně s tím také poukazuje na rozdíly mezi střední třídou a vyšší třídou, přičemž překvapivě spatřuje zdroj sociálních problémů ve viktoriánské Anglii především ve střední třídě stojící v čele institucí, které mají co dočinění s hrůzami společnosti, jak již bylo zmíněno u románu *Oliver Twist*. Aristokracie je zde naopak zobrazena naopak jako pasivní pozorovatel situace, především v podobě rodu Dedlocků. Vyskytuje se zde také silný symbolismus v podobě mlhy, která se románem prolíná v prostředí Kancléřského soudu. Dickens se zabývá především kritikou trvání soudních sporů, což skrze ironii výborně vystihuje případ Jarndyce a Jarndyce, při kterém je předmětem sporu dědictví, které nakonec propadne soudu a dokonce se stává příčinnou smrti mladého Richarda, dále také jednáním a chováním advokátů, zobrazené skrze Tulkinghorna a Vholese, které sám Dickens přirovnává ke kanibalům (Dickens 1991, 549). Dále je vedlejším cílem satiry zobrazení falešné dobročinnosti, kterou v románu představuje paní Jellybyová a paní Pardiggleová. Tyto dvě ženy „obětují“ svůj život charitě, nicméně o své vlastní domácnosti, a především o své děti, neprojevují sebemenší zájem. Děti těchto dvou dam „dobročinností“ svých matek opovrhují, což vede k tomu, že z nich vyrostou lidé pohrdající jakoukoliv formou pomoci bližnímu. Sentiment se v případě tohoto románu ukrývá v postavě mladé Esther Summersonové, která pomáhá na všech potřebných místech i přes překážky, které se jí staví do cesty.

V románu *Nicholas Nickleby* (přel. *Mikuláš Nickleby*) se značně projevuje Dickensova nevyzrálost, jelikož se jedná teprve o jeho třetí román. Nicméně je význačný především kvůli užití satiry. V románu *Nicholas Nickleby* se Dickens zaobírá satirou Yorkshirských škol, které hojně vznikaly a zneužívaly bezvýhodné situace některých rodičů v období vlády královny Viktorie. Románem Dickens zdůrazňuje důležitost školské reformy. Skrze rodinu Squeersů Dickens ukazuje, jak je „škola“ využívána jako podnik sloužící k získávání peněz a zneužívání dětí. Hrůznost tohoto systému je ukázána především na postavě Smika, kterého tato instituce nepokřivila jen psychicky, ale i projevila se i fyzicky. V románu používá Dickens k charakterizaci postav především kontrasty, a to například kontrast mezi Ralphem



a Nicholasem, a také mezi Smikem a Nicholasem. Dalším tématem satiry je opět střední třída, zde kritizována prostřednictvím Ralpa a jemu podobných. Vedlejším zdrojem kritiky je Nicholasova matka, satirizována díky své komice jako žena střední třídy, která se svou hloupostí není schopná podílet se na společnosti.

Tyto romány dokazují především to, že Dickens byl výborný satirik, který skrze různé nástroje byl schopný doručit své poselství čtenáři. Mezi jeho nejdůležitější nástroje patří kontrasty, které používá ať už jako nástroj pro charakterizaci postav, nebo pro vykreslení satiry ve větších detailech. Dále velmi často používá repetici a důraz na ni. Zajímavým prostředkem k satirě je jeho hra se jmény postav, kde používá tzv. mluvící jména, například u postav jako Harthouse, Twist, Rose, Summerson, Vholes, Dedlock. Nesmíme zapomenout zmínit, že všechny Dickensovi hlavní hrdinové jsou postavami pasivními. Místo aby Oliver, Pip, Esther, Nicholas zasahovali do dění spíše nechávají ovlivňovat ostatními postavy, které mění chod událostí kolem nich, a především také rýsují jejich charakter. V každém románu také najdeme špatné zacházení s dětmi, které zobrazoval, kdekoliv to bylo možné. Jak už bylo několikrát zmíněno, Dickens používá sentiment jako prostředek k zesílení účinku satiry, a ačkoliv jej soustřeďuje především do ženských postav (Sissy Jupe, Rose Maylie, Bidy, Esther Summerson), ale často jej nacházíme také v mužských postavách (Stephen Blackpool, Oliver Twist, Joe Gargery).



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Název česky: Charles Dickens: Satira a sentiment ve vybraných románech  
Hard Times, Oliver Twist, Great Expectations, Bleak House,  
Nicholas Nickleby)

Název anglicky: Charles Dickens: Satire and Sentiment in Selected Novels  
(Hard Times, Oliver Twist, Great Expectations, Bleak House,  
Nicholas Nickleby)

Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Ema Jelínková, Ph.D.  
Počet stran: 50  
Počet znaků: 84 026

Klíčová slova v ČJ: satira, sentiment, Charles Dickens, viktoriánská literatura,  
viktoriánská Anglie, Zlé časy, Oliver Twist, Nadějně vyhlídky,  
Ponurý dům, Nicholas Nickleby

Klíčová slova v AJ: satire, sentiment, Charles Dickens, Victorian literature,  
Victorian England, Hard Times, Oliver Twist, Great Expectations,  
Bleak House, Nicholas Nickleby

## **Abstract**

Selected novels (Hard Times, Oliver Twist, Great Expectations, Bleak House and Nicholas Nickleby) are used to display Dickens's satire of Victorian society. To underline satire Dickens often uses sentiment to create larger contrast. Other satirical devices Dickens is using are contrasts, emphasis, reiteration and aptronyms. Dickens's satire is concentrated generally on children mistreatment. Other themes of satire he employs in these novels are for example criticism of middle class, utilitarianism, money-centeredness of society, legal institutions, educational institutions and lack of institution's interest in the poor.

## **Anotace**

Vybrané romány (Hard Times, Oliver Twist, Great Expectations, Bleak House and Nicholas Nickleby) jsou použity k vyobrazení Dickensovy satiry viktoriánské společnosti. K přesnějšímu zachycení satiry Charles Dickens často používá sentiment, aby vytvořil větší kontrast. Dalšími nástroji satiry, které Dickens používá, jsou kontrasty, důraz, repetice a mluvící jména. Dickensova satira se soustředí obecně na špatné zacházení a zneužívání dětí. Další témata, kterými se v těchto románech zabývá, jsou například kritika střední třídy, utilitářství, přehnaného důrazu společnosti na peníze, právních institucí, vzdělávacích institucí a nedostatku institučního zájmu o chudé.