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The Use of Humour in Charles Dickens's Novel *Hard Times*

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Dedication

We dedicate this dissertation to our beloved parents for their endless patience and

support.

To our adorable sisters and our beloved brothers.

Acknowledgements

Abstract

The present study attempts to investigate and explore the use of humour in *Hard Times* ,through the investigation of satire and irony one of the most known novels of the social and realistic writer Charles Dickens. The novel portrays the reality of the English society during the Industrial Revolution in the Victorian period. The aim of this study is to know the significance of the use of humor in Charles Dickens style. The study is devised into three chapters, the first chapter provides a theoretical overview of humour, irony and satire. The second chapter gives general view of the Victorian novel language and style. The third chapter is an investigation of the motives behind the use of humour in Dickens's *Hard Times*.

Key words: Humour, irony, satire Victorian era, Industrial Revolution.

Table of Contents

Chapter One

Humour: A Theoretical Framework

Chapter Two: Victorian Literature
Language and Style

Chapter Three : Charles Dickens's Motives Behind Using
Humour in *Hard Times*

General Introduction

General Introduction

Literature is considered as a reflection of good values and lacks in society in a creative and imaginary way. Writers sometimes create stories to criticize their societies by depicting people's life and situations. They generate that through the setting, characters and mood in the story. The writer's choice of words and his way in arranging them are done on purpose. Language is the vehicle which writers use to shift from real life into fictitious one. The question of how the writer conducts his novels and his style has always been a subject of investigation (Singh, 2012).

As readers, we expect that literature is not just for entertaining. In fact, we can go beyond the content of the literary work, by focusing on the form and style of the writer. The British history is remarked by Queen Victoria reign from 1837 to 1901, her age was referred to as the Victorian Era. This age is characterized by realistic and materialistic values (Bloom, 2008). Most of writers were seeking for a purely ideal life (ibid.). It was an idealistic age where the great ideals like truth, justice and brotherhood are emphasized by poets, essayists and novelists of the age (ibid.). Some of the enduring authors of the Victorian Era are Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, William Thackeray and Samuel Butler Yeat...etc.

Dickens is one of the Victorian writers, who had an interest in politics and social affairs of his community; his novels cover both the middle and lower classes (Smiley, 2002). *Hard Times,* one of his known novels, aims at calling attention to the social and economic pressures of poverty in the industrial world of England. *Hard Times* is the novel that requires clearly to be read not as a mere fiction, but as a critic on a contemporary crisis (Bloom, 2006).

Charles Dickens wrote the novel *Hard Times* in January 1854, and published it in July in the same year in his weekly periodical *Household Words;* the sales increased despite the mixed responses from many critics, such as F.R. Leavis who celebrated *Hard Times* as a moral fable, and this view of the novel has dominated the critical response ever since (Bloom, 2008).

Dickens in *Hard Times* describes the people's life in the Victorian era, and how poverty influenced their life and their children's education which was based on fact and nothing else. Children's imagination was dulled down, and they became like the machines of the factories. Dickens presents himself as a humorist by using satirist in *Hard Times* and using powerful irony, bitter sarcasm, and a ridiculous language in various situations. Humour, satire and irony have in general a moral and corrective purpose. His satire is against certain evils, abuses and false values of the Victorian society.

Humor means the quality of being funny (Singh, 2012). It refers to the ability to perceive and express a sense of amusement (ibid.). Humour consists principally of the recognition and expression of incongruities or peculiarities which are present in a situation or character (ibid.). In the present study we shall cast the light on Dickens's style in creating those incongruities. The present study aims at answering the following questions:

1. How does Charles Dickens make use of humor in his novel *Hard Times*?

2. What are Dickens's reasons behind the use of humor in *Hard Times*?

Charles Dickens is one of the most significant social critics who uses different devices to criticize educational, economic, social and moral abuses in the Victorian era. To answer the research questions, the following hypotheses are formulated:

1. In *Hard Times,* Dickens uses satire and irony to create humour as a sort of social criticism.

2. In the novel, Dickens uses his humorous style to get the reader's attention, and to expose the negative part of the Industrial Revolution, education, social classes and poverty.

The present study is divided into three chapters. The first chapter presents theory of humour, and it provides some tendencies about irony and satire referring to the Marxist theory. The second chapter presents the Victorian Age. It also deals with the language of Victorian novel and the style of Charles Dickens during the Victorian literature. The third chapter is the analytical study of the novel *Hard Times* by exhibiting Charles Dickens's motives behind using humour.

Finally, we hope that we would be able to reach the aim of this research work which is figure out the motives behind the use humour. We also hope that this study would help the reader to understand how humour is used in Dickens's *Hard Times.*

Chapter One

Humour: A Theoretical Overview

Introduction

Humour, satire and irony are closely related, but there are important distinctions between the three. As a form of criticism, satire uses humour to accomplish its goals. One technique that satire uses is irony (Keenoy, 2012). Irony focuses on the discrepancies between what is said or seen and what is actually meant; Simply, satire and irony are strongly related because one, satire, often uses the other, irony (Weisgerber, 1973). Just as a comedy uses jokes to make people laugh or an action movie uses explosions to thrill the audience, satire uses irony to make a humourous criticism (Wilcox, 2000). There are several types of irony, but they all base their humour in selective, often intentional ignorance. Using words in an opposite way in which they are intended is perhaps the simplest form of irony (ibid.).

1.1 Definition of Humour

Humour is that quality of action, speech or writing which excites amusement (Keenoy, 2012). Humour is defined as the quality of being amusing or comic and is the ability to make other people laugh especially as expressed in literature (Keenoy, 2012). Humour is one of the most effective literary devices used to please the reader; it develops characters and makes plots useful and memorable (ibid.). It serves many functions in any literary work, i.e. as it arouses interest among readers, attracts their attention, helps them connect with the characters, emphasizes and relates ideas and helps the readers picture the situation (ibid.). All the way through this tool, writers can also improve the quality of their works by pleasing the audience. Apart from that, the most dominant characteristic of humour is to provide surprise, which not only improves quality, but improves memorable style of a literary piece (Keenoy, 2012).

Humour is something that pleases the readers, a characteristic alone that can help writers improve the quality of their literary fictional stories. Good definitions and valid generalizations about humour are hard to come by (Don, 1998).

Don (1998) claims that humour is based on ideas that are often absurd, new awareness, comparisons, commonly understood and agreed upon disparities (ibid.). Irony resides in this

more intellectual end of the spectrum, arguably the most useful humour concept for writers of literary fiction. Whatever we might identify as humour is always dependent on numerous inciting conditions and receptive states that are constantly changing (Don, 1998).

1.2 Definition of Irony

According to Wolfsdorf (1992) irony is the use of a word in a specific way that its intended meaning is different from the actual meaning of the words, i.e. it is the difference between the appearance and reality, the ironic statement played a big role in any literary text because it forces the readers to use their imagination and their interest to comprehend the meaning of the text (Wolfsdorf, 1992).

Irony is an abstract rhetoric and writing device that has been utilized for a long time as a part of discourse, workmanship and regular life, in spite of the fact that it has been utilized for quite a while; there is not an accurate meaning of the word itself (Kaufer, 1977).

There are many definitions that have been recommended throughout the years, one of them being that irony is a disagreement or confusion between what is normal and what really happens. According to Keenoy (2012) the term "Irony" has its roots in the Greek comic character 'Eiron', a clever underdog who by his wit repeatedly triumphs over the boastful character 'Alazon'. The Socratic irony of the Platonic dialogues derives from this comic origin (ibid.).

Keenoy (2012) defines irony as a figure of speech in which the intended meaning is the opposite of that expressed by the words used, usually taking the form of sarcasm or ridicule in which laudatory expressions are used to imply condemnation or contempt. The word irony originates in the eironi, which describes the main features of the characters in classical Greek comedies revolving around the conflict between two characters (Claire, 2004). the 'imposter' versus – the 'ironical man', the imposter was depicted as the pompous fool who pretended to be more than he actually was, while his antagonist was the cunning dissembler who posed as less

than he was. The conclusion always displayed the victory of the ironical man, who pretends that he is ignorant (ibid.).

1.3 Types of Irony

There are three types of irony that may give us the clue to the true definition of an ironic statement. An ironic statement must appear as if it is sincere, there must be no hint of sarcasm, and the reader must not be self-consciously droll .The lines are delivered straight, so that the recipient misses the hidden message but the reader gets it loud and clear(Trizenberg, 2004).

In the first instance, Fell (2013) states that Verbal irony is the use of words to mean something different from what a person actually says, the main feature of verbal irony that sets it apart from the other different types of irony is that it is used by a speaker intentionally. It occurs in a conversation where a person aims to be understood as meaning something different to what his or her words literally mean (ibid.). Verbal irony succeeds when intended audience groupes that speaker is highlighting are aware of the falsity of the literal meaning of the utterance otherwise irony will fail in transmitting the message, and the humorous effect will not exist (Fell, 2013)

Secondly, Claire (2004) claims that situational irony occurs when the final ending is contradictory to what was expected. Usually, the episodes in the plot of the story will lead the reader to predict a particular resolution or ending. If such an expected conclusion fails and another one occurs instead, the absurdity is termed situational irony. Such a form of irony is the result a difference in viewpoint, such that what is known and expected at one moment differs with what is known later on. Some might only consider situational irony to be ironic rarely if at all. Rather, in most cases, it seems more like coincidence (Claire, 2004).

Irony of situation or ironies of existence are both forms of irony that cover everything from statement and they are a course of human events and intentions (Claire, 2004). it occurs when the final results or outcomes is the opposite to what predict and many writers use

strong words associated with this form of irony to add a variation and refreshing to the story (Claire, 2004).

Thirdly, dramatic irony occurs when the words and actions of the characters of a work of literature have a different meaning for the reader than they do for the characters. This is the result of the reader having a greater knowledge than the characters themselves (Hutcheon, 1992). The concept of irony is more literary concept of dramatic or tragic irony (Fell, 2013). It appears more when the audience watches a drama, that have an already prepared outcome and the drama could only unfold an already given destiny in this situation the irony will be mourning in predetermine plot. The Dramatic irony takes place when the reader is made aware of disparity between the facts of situation. In contrast to the characters that remain ignorant about what is happening around them (Claire, 2004).

1.4 Definition of Satire

Weisgerber (1973) defines satire as a genre of literature; irony is the reasoning rhetorical tool; humour is the substance. Also, he defines satire as a graphic and performing arts, in which vices, follies, abuses, and shortcomings are held up to ridicule, ideally with the intent of shaming individuals, and society itself into improvement. Although satire is usually meant to be humorous, its greater purpose is often constructive social criticism, using wit as a weapon and as a tool to draw attention to both particular and wider issues in society (Weisgerber, 1973).

A common features of satire are strong irony and sarcasm (in satire, irony is confrontational) but parody, burlesque, exaggeration, juxtaposition, comparison, analogy, and double entendre are all frequently used in satirical speech and writing, to create a sense of humour that helps in refining the criticism and make it acceptable (Singh, 2012) .This militant irony or sarcasm repeatedly professes to support (or at least accept as natural) the things the satirist wishes to attack (ibid.). Satire is nowadays found in many artistic forms of expression, including literature, plays, commentary, television shows, and media such as lyrics (Singh, 2012).

Satire is a technique used by writers to depict and criticize foolishness and corruption of an individual or a society by using, irony, exaggeration to make humorous statements (Wilox, 2000). Satire intends to improve the humanity by criticizing its follies and foibles (ibid.) .A writer in a satire uses fictional characters, which stand for real people to expose and condemn their corruption. A writer may point a satire toward a person, a country or even the entire world. Usually, a satire is a comical piece of writing which makes fun of an individual or a society to expose its stupidity and short comings (Wilcox, 2000).

Satire and irony are interlinked (Singh, 2012). Irony is the difference between what is said or done and what is actually meant. Therefore, writers frequently employ satire to point at the dishonesty and silliness of individuals and society and criticize them by ridiculing them. From the political cartoons which we witness every day in newspapers, magazine and TV shows *the daily show* to Gorge Orwell *Animal farm* (1945) and Swift's *Gullivers Travels* (1726) are examples of satire (Leyburn, 2015). These fables criticise actions and issues in a comical way. They claim to target what they think are stupid in social viewpoints.

One of classical satirists was the Greek dramatist Aristophanes, whose *play The Clouds* (423 BC) satirizes Socrates as the embodiment of atheism and sophistry, while The Wasps (422BC) satirizes the Athenian court system .The satiric styles of two Roman poets, Horace and Juvenal, became models for writers of later ages .The satire of Horace is mild, gently amused, yet sophisticated, whereas that of Juvenal is vitriolic and replete with moral indignation. Motto and Clark (2015) state that, a writer may point a satire toward a person, a country or even the entire world. Usually, a satire is a comical piece of writing which makes fun of an individual or a society to expose its stupidity and shortcomings.

From the beast fables, fabliaux, and Chaucerian caricatures to the extended treatments of John Skelton, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Erasmus, and Cervantes, the satirical tradition flourished throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, culminating in the golden age of satire in the late 17th and early 18th centuries (Bloom, 2006).The familiar names of Swift,

Samuel Butler, John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Richard Steele, Henry Fielding, and William Hogarth in England and of Nicolas Boileau-Despreaux, La Fontaine, Moliere, and Voltaire in France suggested not only the nature of the controversies that provided a target for the satirist's darts in both nations, but also the rediscovery and consequent adaptation of the classical models to individual talents. In the 19th century, satire gave way to a more gentle form of criticism .Manners and morals were still ridiculed but usually in the framework of a longer work, such as a

novel .However, satire can be found in the poems of Lord Byron, in the librettos of William S. Gilbert, in the plays of Oscar Wilde and G. B. Shaw, and in the fiction of W. M. Thackeray, Charles Dickens, Samuel Butler, and many others. American satirists of the period include Washington Irving, James Russell Lowell, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and Mark Twain. (Leyburn, 2015)

Although 20th-century satire continues to register Horatian or Juvenalian reactions to the enormities of an age dominated by fear of the atom bomb and plagued by pollution, racism, drugs, planned obsolescence, and the abuse of power, critics have discerned some shifts in its source . In some instances the satirist is the audience rather than the artist. The so-called put-on, whether a play (Samuel Beckett's Breath, in which breathing is heard on a blacked-out stage), a joke (Lenny Bruce's nightclub routines), or an artefact (John Chamberlain's smashed-up cars), seeks to confuse the audience by presenting the fraudulent as a true work of art, thus rendering the whole concept of "art" questionable. More conventional contemporary satirists of note are Sinclair Lewis, James Thurber, Aldous Huxley, Evelyn Waugh, W. H. Auden, Philip Roth, and Joseph Heller (Singh, 2012)

1.5 Types of Satire

Satire cannot function without a standard against which readers can compare its subject. We praise with delight what we admire, enjoy, or profit from, and we censure with indignation the despicable or what causes ill because we have an acquired sense of what the world should or might be (Leyburn, 2015). There are two types of satire .which are as follows:

A) Horatian Satire: Horatian satire is tolerant, funny, sophisticated witty, wise, self-effacing and aims to correct throughout the use of humour. The name relates to the Roman satirist from the Augustan period in Rome Horace, this playfully criticizes some social vice through gentle, mild, and light-hearted humour. It directs wit, exaggeration, and self-deprecating humour toward what it identifies as folly, rather than evil. Horatian satireic's sympathetic tone is common in modern society sympathetic tone is common in modern society (Leyburn, 2015).

B) Juvenalian Satire: Juvenalian satire is angry, caustic, personal, relentless, bitter, and serious. Named after Augustan period's Roman satirist Juvenal, this type of satire is more contemptuous and abrasive than the Horatian. Juvenalian satire provokes a darker kind of laughter; addresses social evil and points with contempt to the corruption of men and institutions through scorn, outrage, and savage ridicule. This form is often pessimistic, characterized by irony, sarcasm, moral indignation and personal invective, with less emphasis on humour (ibid.).

1.6 Marxist Literary Theory

Marx (1880) states in his notes on Adolph Wagner's Lehrbuch Marxism is a way of thinking critically, but it is not a system I have never established a socialist system, wrote *Der Politischen Ökonomie* (Recluse, 2013 cited by Williams, 2009).

Marx (1818-1883) is above all the theorists and historians. After examining social organization in a scientific way he created a methodology for social science, political science, in addition to that he absorbed the human history to have consisted of a series of struggles between classes and between the oppressed and the oppressing. Whereas Freud saw "sexual energy" to be the motivating factor beyond human endeavor (Tatchell, 1989)

Marxism is a critical theory and movement in the valuation of literature. It has a long and complicated history. Although it is often thought of as a twentieth-century phenomenon, partly because it was the basis of the social-governmental system of the Soviet Union, it actually reaches back to the thinking of Karl Heinrich Marx, a nineteenth-century (1818-1883) German philosopher and economist.

In addition, Marxist theory is considered as a sociological approach to literature that views works of literature or art as the products of historical forces that can be analyzed by looking at the material conditions in which they were formed. In Marxist ideology, what it often classified as a world view such as Victorian age is actually the articulations of the dominant class (Eagleton, 2006).

Marx states that historical materialism is the ultimate driving force for nations, involving the distribution of resources, gain, production, and such matters (Williams ,2009). Marxism was developed primarily as a way of examining historical, economic, and social issues. Marxist principle does not deal explicitly with theories of literature; consequently, there is no one conventional Marxist school as there is a conventional Freudianism, but rather a diversity of Marxist readings.

Abrams in his book *Marxist Criticism* (1999) says that the political evolution involved and will in the future involve feudalism leading to bourgeois capitalism leading to socialism and finally to utopian communism. In bourgeois capitalism, the privileged bourgeoisie rely on the proletariat--the labor force responsible for survival. Marx theorized that when profits are not reinvested in the workers but in creating more factories, the workers will grow poorer and poorer until no short-term patching is possible or successful. At a crisis point, revolt will lead to a restructuring of the system. Meanwhile, the political economist Friedrich Engels (1820 -1895) discovered that he had arrived at similar views of Marx. That's why they decided to collaborate and explain the principles of communism and later called Marxism and to organize an international movement (Eagleton, 2006).

For a political system to be considered communist, the under classes must own the means of production neither the government nor the police force (Singh, 2012). Therefore, aside from certain first-century Christian communities and other temporary communes, communism has not yet really excited (ibid.). Marxism generally focuses on the clash between the dominant and repressed classes in any given age and also may encourage art to imitate what is often

termed "objective reality". The Frankfurt School is also associated with Marxism, and it rejects realism (Williams, 2009).

The Proletariat is the factory workers, those who have nothing but their hands. Marx believed that money and the means of production in a society both creates and controls all human institutions and ideologies. This superstructure includes all social, legal institutions, all political and educational systems even all religions, and art. These ideologies develop as a result of the economic means of production not the reverse. Also, he introduced the concept of dialectical materialism, and argued that the means of production controls a society's institutions and beliefs, he asserts that history is progressing toward the eventual success of communism.

The concept of socialist realism marked an important advance in the development of Marxist (Eagleton, 2006). It was considered to be a continuation and development of bourgeois realism at a higher level. Socialist realism as the official Communist artistic method seemed drab and blinkered to Western readers and treat the class nature of art as a simple matter of the writer's explicit class allegiance (Eagleton, 2006).

Conclusion

Through this chapter, we showed that humour, satire and irony are forms of comedic criticism. Most of times, satire and irony are used to create a sense of humour that helps in softening the criticism, although their major concern is not cruelty but rather to point out the faults in government, society, individuals or the human condition. Humour is an attempt to draw attention to these faults, either to encourage the change or to force awareness, just as a comedy uses jokes to make people laugh or an action movie uses explosions to thrill the audience. Satire uses irony to make humorous criticism.

Chapter Two

The Victorian Novel: Language and Style

Introduction

Humour, comedy and laughter occupy a large space in the accounts of the Victorian literature and culture (Wilcox, 2000). Comic representations were everywhere, and attained a high cultural prominence. Many of the Victorian novelists recognized as masters in using humour such as Charles Dickens and William Makepeace Thackeray being the most prominent in the use of comic techniques (ibid.). Meanwhile, it was a comic period, it was the time that the publication was most connected with the popular culture of the period. At the same time, the writers in the Victorian period produced a stereotype of the humourless and repressed Victorian novels that seems to be distrustful of laughter and gaiety. In this chapter we will deal with Victorian novel, language and style.

2.1 The Victorian Novelists

Victorian period is related to the name of Queen Victoria (1837-1901) (Louis, 2006). Britain was moving relentlessly forwards turning into Europe's most steady and prosperous nation. In addition to that, there were many different ideas emerged in England because there was an interest in scientific investigations and inventions. The Victorian period saw the absolute and most critical improvements in England's history (Louis, 2006). Fast industrialization, mechanization, social and welfare change that paved the way to the rise of literature and critical literary movements. Victorian literature reflects to the readers the effects of mechanization and Industrial Revolution on the social and economic structure (ibid). Many writers try to represent the truth and real life that the reader may experience in his life through using humour (ibid.). Also, many novelists such as Charles Dickens support of his works with different literary devices like humour to satirize issues he finds ridiculous, and this is represented in his novel *Hard Times* (Ford, 1982).

The Victorian age is portrayed as materialistic; the majority of the writers magnify a simply perfect life (Bloom, 2008). It is an age of idealism where the considerable beliefs truth, equity, love, fellowship, brotherhood are accentuated by poets, and novelists of the19th century,

as well as the novel described as a leader of literature at that time: The novel continued to thrive through this time. Its importance to the era could easily be compared to the importance of the plays of Shakespeare for the Elizabethans (Taibi, 2008). Many extraordinary literary works produced by a great famous novelists in the 19th century depicted the reality some of those writers Charles Dickens (1812-1870) is a great novelist who has the power to render the external traits and habit of his town population (Bloom, 2008).Dickens tries to portray their psychological character and their conception of daily life, their feelings with the same honesty as their speech and manner (Bloom, 2008). Ruskin described Charles Dickens as the master of stage fire and this fire stolen from Shakespeare (ibid.).Throughout his life he was one of the persons who uses his sensations, eyes and ears rather than his muscles (Bloom, 2006). Dickens inspires his works from the social concerns; his works include *David Copperfield, Great Expectation, Hard Times, and Oliver Twist.* His fellow-feeling with his race makes him genius (Bloom, 2008).

In addition, George Eliot (the pseudonym of Mary Ann Evans) who is Dickens's important novelistic concurrent described as a psychological realist and spirit (Bloom, 2008). There is a great contrast between their style in which Charles Dickens focuses on speech, manner, and action alternatively unlike George Eliot who focuses on emotional and psychological nuance (ibid.). Bloom (2006) sates that she is one of the women novelists who deals with the issues of society and women; she wrote many works like *The Mill on The Floss, Daniel Deronda, Brother Jacob, Romola* and others.

William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863) was Dickens's great rival at the time. With a similar style but a slightly more detached, acerbic and barbed satirical view of his characters, he also tended to depict situations of a more middle class flavour than Dickens. He is best known for his novel *Vanity Fair*, which is also an example of a form popular in Victorian literature: the historical novel, in which very recent history is depicted. Away from the big cities and the literary society, Haworth in West Yorkshire held a powerhouse of novel writing, the home of the Brontë family had time in their short lives to produce masterpieces of fiction although these were

not immediately appreciated by Victorian critics. *Wuthering Heights*, Emily's only work, in particular has violence, passion, the supernatural, heightened emotion and emotional distance, an unusual mix for any novel but particularly at this time. It is a prime example of Gothic Romanticism from a woman's point of view during this period, examining class, myth, and gender (Bloom, 2008). The realistic portrayal of social life is an important subject matter in the Victorian works to represent the issues in the society through characters, themes and setting at that time (Bloom, 2008).

2.2 Humour in the Victorian Literature

During the Victorian period, humour was an important tool to criticize society and it was a way to manipulate people (Don, 1998). The amusement of humour like laughing is an effect, but not an important purpose as Triezenberg (2004) demonstrates that laughing can make people think things are funny by association. The aim of humour is to reveal the uncomfortable truth and to transmit the real events and problems within Victorian society (Don, 1998).

Many great novelists such as Charles Dickens, George Eliot and Oscar Wild use literary devices like humour to satirise and send a message to their audience to search and find treatment and solutions for defects of society, for better understanding of humour readers must be educated on the social customs and context of the Victorian era.

Victorian writers used formal language to mock the values of the their soceities by making their opinions on the shortcomings. Humour that transcends the time and place of its origin and can be understood and enjoyed centuries afterwards, is even more difficult to achieve, but the reason these plays and novels continue to be funny is that they deal with issues of universal human interest and even as some parts become dated. And only an educated reader on the details of the Victorian community can understand them. any steal a laugh yet because they reveal truths about ourselves as individuals and as a society (Trizenberg, 2004) .

for exampel we have *An Ideal Husband* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Wilde are written in similar styles. Both are ironic and satirical plays based on relationships and witty dialogue between boisterous characters that are both frustrating and endearing. The word play and irony that he employs make every scene a hoot, and bring depth to the meaning of the piece as a whole.

Wilde uses epigrams frequently in his work. They add to the humour and irony of each piece. This style of humour is employed throughout both plays, as Algernon in *The Importance of Being Earnest* notes: "All women become like their mothers. That is their tragedy. No man does, and that is his," (Wilde 421). There is a distinct art in Wilde's humour, and it is what makes his work so enjoyable. Only Wilde can get away with his innuendos and sly jabs at society, which he makes every page in his places.

Irony is also a favorite tool of Wilde, especially in *The Importance of Being Earnest* with the main conflict regarding the name "Ernest." By letting the reader in on the joke, Wilde adds dimension to the story and adds character to his plot. The role that these words have in the play is huge, as the Gwendolen and Cecily are drawn to men who claim to be "Ernest" because of the meaning behind the name.

Oscar Wilde is fond of satire, especially the use of dramatic foils. One such example is the relationship between Lady Chiltern and Mrs. Cheveley, who differ in manner, poise, attitude, and moral character. While Lady Chiltern takes great pride in her husband and his morality, it is left to the reader to assume that Mrs. Cheveley sleeps around and is quite manipulative.

2.3 Characteristics of Charles Dickens's Literary Style

Style is presented as a value and pleasure in Dickensian habits of characterization, especially in the way characters talk (Talor, 2003). Charles Dickens was criticized for portraying characters talk in the same way, Henry James states in (1990) that action is character; talk is action; talk is character but without ignoring how this character feel, behave and look (Talor, 2003). Hyland (1981 cited by Al-Maliki, 2014) states that Dickens has developed and enhanced the techniques of suspense to a good art in his works. Charles Dickens representes his honesty and truth with kind of caricature (Bloom, 2006). He never stops performing in his works, he is a superb performer (ibid.).

He utilizes of images that he creates and themes that deals with social issues, Dickens's style in *Hard Times* described as with this kind of thing before us, we talk not about style but about dramatic creation and imaginative fiction (Levis, 1970).

Many literary critics praised and gave Charles Dickens identity of feminist, realist, and a satirist writer, Al-Maliki (2014) states that the novel *Hard Times* is an example to the standards of female discourse in which the female of the fictional word restricted by their social position, living under Gradgrind's powerful system discourse. The use of satire is a common feature in Charles Dickens's style as a way to criticize his contemporary social system and philosophers (Matz, 2010 cited by Al-Maliki, 2014). He also uses various types of irony like situational, verbal and dramatic irony and this what makes his writing colorful (Boghain, 2010).

Naturalism as another feature characterized and adopted in Dickens's style and thus he is classified as a naturalistic novelist in his era and as an example when he portrayed Gradgrind's family story in *Hard Times* (Makati, 2008).The use of humour by Dickens is an abuse and observed that he rarely uses it just when he portrays the head of Mr. Gradgrind (Collins, 1970). Charles Dickens's style is characterized by much use of figures of speech and tropes to criticize Coketown's issues, particularly lives of labors in *Hard Times* and made his work colorful.

Dickens loved the style of 18th century Gothic romance ,although it had already become a target for parody. One "character" vividly drawn throughout his novels is London itself. From the coaching inns on the outskirts of the city to the lower reaches of the Thames, all aspects of the capital are described over the course of his body of work(Bloom, 2006).

His writing style is florid and poetic, with a strong comic touch. His satires of British aristocratic snobbery-he calls one character the "Noble Refrigerator"-are often popular. Comparing orphans to stocks and shares, people to tug boats, or dinner-party guests to furniture are just some of Dickens's acclaimed flights of fancy. Many of his characters' names provide the reader with a hint as to the roles played in advancing the storyline, such as Mr. Murdstone in the novel *David Copperfield*, which is clearly a combination of "murder" and stony coldness. His literary style is also a mixture of fantasy and realism.

Characters Dickens is famed for his depiction of the hardships of the working class, his intricate plots, and his sense of humour. But he is perhaps most famed for the characters he created. His novels were heralded early in his career for their ability to capture the everyday man and thus create characters to which readers could relate. Beginning with *The Pickwick Papers* in 1836, Dickens wrote numerous novels, each uniquely filled with believable personalities and vivid physical descriptions. Dickens's friend and biographer, John Forster, said that Dickens made "characters real existences, not by describing them but by letting them describe themselves."

Dickensian characters-especially their typically whimsical names-are among the most memorable in English literature. The likes of Ebenezer Scrooge, Tiny Tim, Jacob Marley, Bob Cratchit, *Oliver Twist*, The Artful Dodger, Fagin, Bill Sikes, Pip, Miss Havisham, Charles Darnay, David Copperfield, Mr. Micawber, Abel Magwitch, Daniel Quilp, Samuel Pickwick, Wackford Squeers, Uriah Heep and many others are so well known and can be believed to be living a life outside the novels that their stories have been continued by other authors(Collin, 1970).

Often these characters were based on people he knew. In a few instances Dickens based the character too closely on the original, as in the case of Harold Skimpole in *Bleak House*, based on Leigh Hunt, and Miss Mowcher in *David Copperfield*, based on his wife's dwarf chiropodist. Indeed, the acquaintances made when reading a Dickens novel are not easily forgotten. The author, Virginia Woolf, maintained that "we remodel our psychological geography when we read Dickens" as he produces "characters who exist not in detail, not accurately or exactly, but abundantly in a cluster of wild yet extraordinarily revealing remarks."

Autobiographical elements all authors might be said to incorporate autobiographical elements in their fiction, but with Dickens this is very noticeable, even though he took pains to mask what he considered his shameful, lowly past. *David Copperfield* is one of the most clearly autobiographical but the scenes from *Bleak House* of interminable court cases and legal arguments are drawn from the author's brief career as a court reporter. Dickens's own father had been sent to prison for debt, and this became a common theme in many of his books, with the detailed depiction of life in the Marshalsea prison in *Little Dorrit* resulting from Dickens's own experiences of the institution. Childhood sweethearts in many of his books (such as Little Em'ly in *David Copperfield*) may have been based on Dickens's own childhood infatuation with Lucy Stroughill. Dickens may have drawn on his childhood experiences, but he was also ashamed of them and would not reveal that this was where he gathered his realistic accounts of squalor. Very few knew the details of his early life until six years after his death when John Forster published a biography on which Dickens had collaborated.

Episodic writing Most of Dickens's major novels were first written in monthly or weekly instalments in journals such as *Master Humphrey's Clock* and *Household Words*, later reprinted in book form. These instalments made the stories cheap, accessible and the series of regular cliff-hangers made each new episode widely anticipated. American fans even waited at the docks in New York, shouting out to the crew of an incoming ship, "Is little Nell dead?" Part of Dickens's

great talent was to incorporate this episodic writing style but still end up with a coherent novel at the end.

Dickens's technique of writing in monthly or weekly instalments (depending on the work) can be understood by analysing his relationship with his illustrators. The several artists who filled this role were privy to the contents and intentions of Dickens's instalments before the general public. Thus, by reading these correspondences between author and illustrator, the intentions behind Dickens's work can be better understood. These also reveal how the interests of the reader and author do not coincide. A great example of that appears in the monthly novel *Oliver Twist*. At one point in this work, Dickens had Oliver become embroiled in a robbery. That particular monthly instalment concludes with young Oliver being shot. Readers expected that they would be forced to wait only a month to find out the outcome of that gunshot. In fact, Dickens did not reveal what became of young Oliver in the succeeding number. Rather, the reading public was forced to wait two months to discover if the boy lived.

Another important impact of Dickens's episodic writing style resulted from his exposure to the opinions of his readers. Since Dickens did not write the chapters very far ahead of their publication, he was allowed to witness the public reaction and alter the story depending on those public reactions. A fine example of this process can be seen in his weekly serial *The Old Curiosity Shop*, which is a chase story. In this novel, Nell and her grandfather are fleeing the villain Quilp. The progress of the novel follows the gradual success of that pursuit. As Dickens wrote and published the weekly instalments, his friend John Forster pointed out: "You know you're going to have to kill her, don't you?" Why this end was necessary can be explained by a brief analysis of the difference between the structure of a comedy versus a tragedy. In a comedy, the action covers a sequence "You think they're going to lose, you think they're going to lose, they win". In tragedy, it is: "You think they're going to win, you think they're going to win, they lose". The dramatic conclusion of the story is implicit throughout the novel. So, as Dickens wrote the novel in the form of a tragedy, the sad outcome of the novel was a foregone

conclusion. If he had not caused his heroine to lose, he would not have completed his dramatic structure. Dickens admitted that his friend Forster was right and, in the end, Nell died.

Social commentary Dickens's novels were, among other things, works of social commentary. He was a fierce critic of the poverty and social stratification of Victorian society. Dickens's second novel, *Oliver Twist* (1839), shocked readers with its images of poverty and crime and was responsible for the clearing of the actual London slum, Jacob's Island, that was the basis of the story. In addition, with the character of the tragic prostitute, Nancy, Dickens "humanised" such women for the reading public; women who were regarded as "unfortunates", inherently immoral casualties of the Victorian class/economic system. *Bleak House* and *Little Dorrit* elaborated expansive critiques of the Victorian institutional apparatus: the interminable lawsuits of the Court of Chancery that destroyed people's lives in *Bleak House* and a dual attack in *Little Dorrit* on inefficient, corrupt patent offices and unregulated market speculation.(Collins, 1970)

2.3.1 Humour in Charles Dickens's Style

Dickens has a special talent for evoking strong emotions that result in laughter, terror, or sympathy (Witkin, 2009). These emotions are used to support his dominant themes and effects, and although the earlier novels tend to be lighter in tone and the later novels more serious, there is seriousness in his humor throughout his way of writing (singh, 2012). Generally speaking, as Dickens progressed, he used humour perhaps for more serious purposes, attacking and persuading the reader more subtly (ibid.).

Charles Dickens's novels fall into two categories, Comedies of Manners where social, family and political issues were satirized, and Comedies of Humours where the characters are seen as weird (Singh, 2012). Talor (2013) claims that Dickens has two types of characters, the kind, generous, and lovable ones, and the absurd ones. Typically, the characters in the congenial society have kind and harmless abnormality, while the humours characters in the obstructing society reinforce the false standards and values of that society (Talor, 2013).

Dickens's novels can be seen as ironic tragic-comedies of deception. Dickens targets the injustices of the nineteenth century, namely, poor houses, boys' boarding schools, the lack of education for women, the oppression of family life, the over dependence on alcohol, and the effects of poverty.

> Mr.Dickens's humour is needed very much a result of two peculiarities his power of detailed observation and his power of idealizing individual traits of character sometimes of one or other of them, sometimes of both of them together (Bloom, 2008:24)

2.4 Satire and Irony in the Victorian Age

Satire is an important aspect and instrument of writing in the Victorian literature (Weisgerber, 1973). Satire uses irony to attack the stupidity of human and harsh system in Victorian society, in satire human shortcomings criticized by means of irony, burlesque and derision in addition to other methods (Weisgerber, 1973).

In the Victorian age, humour is not the primary concept and purpose of satire rather than the purpose is attacking issues and things the author is disappointed and disapproved with however, irony is described as militant in satire that possesses to approve things the writer hoped to criticize and attack such as social injustice, education system, poverty and others (ibid.). Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) is one of the famous satirical work in English literature in addition to Charles Dickens literary works that he is very apt by using satire and irony in the majority of his novels like *Oliver Twist* that full of humorous elements and also in *Hard Times* to comment on the bitter and miserable conditions of law and workhouses (Bloom, 2006).

Satire reappearance as an active form in the late of 1880's, Thomas Hardy and George Gissing presented and produces the urban and rural life by making ironical attacking and commentaries taking into consideration the social immorality.

Oscar Wilde (1854–1900) is a famous playwright and satirist whose social comedies satirise the moral conventions and narrative of drama in Victorian age (Louis, 2006). Gholami

and Joodaki (2014) states that the Victorian era is the production of many literary works that embodies and deals with social realities by portraying it through the use of irony and satire.

Conclusion

To sum up, the system of education, mechanization, and Industrial Revolution in the Victorian age changed England from agriculture into an industrial country that what led to the problem of class division in the social classes such as poverty, child labor. The various events led to the raise of literature and affected different novelists to write about the shortcomings of their society, via using satire and Irony to create a sense of humour to shift from the real setting, characters, themes and events to factious one such as *Hard Times*, *David Copperfield* by Dickens.

Chapter Three

Charles Dickens's Motives behind Using Humour in
Hard Times

Introduction

Hard Times is Dickens portrait of his philosophical values, specifically the opposition between fact and fancy and the contradiction between the social classes (Smiley, 2002). In the novel he shows his support to fancy and, the need for religious values in humanity. In addition to that, he writes in parallel to the literary context of the times, i.e. criticising capitalism and portraying the negative effects of industrialisation (ibid.). The novel is one of the many critiques written at the time and suggests numerous social developments and ideas. Dickens presents himself as a satirist in *Hard Times* using powerful irony, humour in various situations (Singh, 2012). In the novel satire and irony have in general a moral and corrective purposes (ibid.). In this chapter we will use the Marxism literary theory to approach the novel since it is social critic novel.

3.1 Humour for the Sake of Humour

The use of humour in *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens is certainly done on purpose, and mainly for the sake of awareness and amusement rather than for the sake of laugh except when Charles Dickens describes the character of Mr. Thomas, Gradgrind his square, ballad head which is full of facts (Collins, 1971 cited by Al-Maliki, 2014). This quote demonstrates Charles Dickens's description:

> The scene was a plain, bare, monotonous vault of a school-room, and the speaker's square forefinger emphasized his observations by underscoring every sentence with a line on the schoolmaster's sleeve (Hard Times:3).

In this quote, Dickens is mocking the director manner of speaking. He implicitly stating that, instead of making the pupils love school Mr. Thomas, Gradgrind make them fear it.

> The emphasis was helped by the speaker's hair, which bristled on the skirts of his bald head, a plantation of firs to keep the wind from its shining surface, all covered with knobs, like the crust of a plum pie, as if the head had scarcely warehouse-room for the hard facts stored inside. The speaker's obstinate carriage, square coat, square legs, square shoulders, - nay, his very neckcloth, trained to take him by the throat with an unaccommodating grasp, like a stubborn fact, as it was, - all helped the emphasis (*Hard Times*:3).

In this passage, Dickens is describing the school master Mr.Gradgrind in caricature way. As if his shape is influenced by his philosophy, that is to say that everything is countable, and has relation to mathematics even his head, legs and shoulders are square. Even his clothing style is influenced; it contains no colors or drawings. Form this passage Dickens is proving to the readers that there is no room to fancy or imagination, for Mr. Gradgring.

The lack of the sense of humour for the sake of humour characterises the literary works of Charles Dickens (Hyland, 1981 Cited by Benzoukh, 2006). The description of Mr.Bounderby bears a sense of humour.

> He had not much hair. One might have fancied he had talked it off; and that what was left, all standing up in disorder, was in that condition from being blown about by his windy boastfulness. (*Hard Time*: 18).

From this extract, it is apparent that Charles Dickens is mocking at Ms.Bounderby's physical appearance,and his hair that is a little bit clumsy and incoherent. That is what somehow gives us a clue about him since he always prize himself that he is a man who built himself without the help of any one els, in view of the fact that he grew up in streets he has no sense of elegance he does not know how to take care of his look.

3.2 Dickens's Use of Irony for the Sake of Humour

In *Hard Times*, Dickens uses irony to criticise the Victorian society; in particular, he primarily condemns cities ongoing industrialism, and the nature of humans. Dickens uses irony to ridicule, and to condemn morals he finds ridiculous or bad (Nepal, 2012 cited by Singh, 2012).

Starting from the beginning of the first chapter, Mr Thomas Gradgrind's speech, in the opening paragraph to *Hard Times*, we can notice Dickens use of irony to create humour by taking the example below:

> Now, what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon Facts: nothing else will ever be of any service to them. This is the principle on which I bring up my own children, and this is the principle on which I bring up these children. Stick to Facts, sir! (*Hard Times*: 3).

Throughout this quote for the principal character speech, Dickens is making fun and criticising the educational system, and how the last one wants to stripe the children from imagination. In the first chapter, "The One Thing Needful", Dickens portrays Thomas Grandgrind in caricature way clearly to the reader.

"Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon Facts" *(Hard Times*:6). In this quote, Dickens mocks Gradgrind's primary concept of education. Dickens wants to expose mainly the Victorian society's hypocrisy through the use of irony. The quotation portrays Dickens' intentional irony. The latter part of the quotation,"considering how to go on shows how Gradgrind has no sense of direction.

This extract, "Plant nothing else, and root out everything else" exposes to the reader that Gradgrind treats children like machines which should be filled by what is needed i.e. facts, and nothing else. Here, Dickens mockes the education system in which Victorian children go all the way through. He seems that he agrees in which facts are an important part of life, but not the only one. That is apparent in the novel when he wrote the first chapter *Another Thing Needful* in The Third Book. The use of humour is apparent when Dickens describes Mr Bounderby:

> He was a rich man: banker, merchant, manufacturer, and what not. A big, loud man, with a stare, and a metallic laugh. A man made out of a coarse material, which seemed to have been stretched to make so much of him. A man with a great puffed head and forehead, swelled veins in his temples, and such a strained skin to his face that it seemed to hold his eyes open, and lift his eyebrows up (*Hard Times*:17).

By this description, Dickens ridicules strongly at Mr Bounderby. He does this to show middle classes' development: Mr. Bounderby is very large, which indicates greed, and very loud He criticises the middle and upper class: Mr. Bounderby is the principal character for this. He is portrayed as a very fat man "*A big, loud man*" which shows how prosperous and well-fed he is. In opposition, Stephen Blackpool, is described as the opposite of Bounderby, thin, quiet, and poor.

> A rather stooping man, with a knitted brow, a pondering expression of
> face, and a hard-looking head sufficiently capacious, on which his iron-
> grey hair lay long and thin, Old Stephen might have passed for a
> particularly intelligent man in his condition (*Hard Times*:71).

In this quote, Dickens prises a man with no education and who is at the bottom of the social scale. Again he is emphasising the contrast between the two classes by the use of irony.

3.3 The Use of Satire for Sake of Humour

As stated earlier, the second chapter of *Hard Times* is a social satire which explores the ills of an industrial Victorian society. Dickens uses his fictitious town in *Hard Times* to ridicule the industrialization of England at that time. In chapter nine in The First Book (48) Dickens satirises Mrs. Sparsit by describing her as follows " she was now, in her elderly days, with the Carolinian style of nose and the dense black eyebrows" (*Hard Times*:48).

What is funny is that she represents the superior, pretentious rich class who looks down on everyone. Even though she has lost her power she still thinks herself better than anybody else, Bounderby is shown to be stupid and is mocked when Mrs. Sparsit talks to him: "Rather young for that, is he not Sir?" Mrs. Sparsit's "Sir" in addressing Mr. Bounderby, was a word of ceremony, rather exacting consideration for herself in the use, than honouring him." Mr. Bounderby does not notice the fact that Mrs. Sparsit's overuse of "Sir" is actually a form of mocking him and gratifying herself.

To contrast Mrs. Sparsit higher class with the working class, Dickens uses Rachael to do so. She is the representation of all that is good in the world; she has nearly all of the values that Mrs. Sparsit contradicts: she is humble

"I am, as I have told thee, Stephen, thy poor friend. Angels are not like me*" (*Hard Times*: 97). Racheal does not accept any glorification for the help she has given. Also she is not selfish, at the end of the novel Dickens tells that she then takes care of Stephen's sick wife, even after he has died. She is totally the opposite of Mrs. Sparsit:

> It was a town of red brick, or of brick that would have been red if the
> smoke and ashes had allowed it; but as matters stood, it was a town of
> unnatural red and black like the painted face of a savage. It was a town of
> machinery and tall chimneys, out of which interminable serpents of

smoke trailed themselves forever and ever, and never got uncoiled *(Hard Times:* 25).

Dickens satirises the town by creating an image of agony. This bad image of the town has a reflection on the working conditions of the workers, who have to live in such conditions, namely misery. The reference to interminable serpents in relation to the pillars of smoke rising from the factory reminds the reader of bitter life. Even the river, a natural phenomenon is turned bad by industrialisation "It had a black canal in it, and a river that ran purple with ill smelling dye*"* (*Hard Times*: 25).

There is a strong sensation of dirt and disease that has probably spread to the workers. The workers themselves are affected by industrialisation. The town has become mechanised and everything is the same:

> Inhabited by people equally like one another, who all went in and out at the same hours, with the same sound upon the same pavements, to do the same work (*HardTimes*:25)

In this quote, Dickens humorously criticising industrialisation that has turned humanity into a machine without feeling and imagination.

In the novel, Dickens sheds light on negative effect of fact on Louisa, Tom, Bitzer and Mr. Gradgrind. Taking the example of Louisa, Dickens mocks her harsh emotions because of her father manner in rising her up, she is shown as:

> Not impulsive, you are not romantic, you are accustomed to view everything from the strong dispassionate ground of reason and calculation. (*Hard Times*: 116)

This is viewed as very positive in Mr. Gradgrind's eyes in contrast Dickens wants the reader to realise that this type of education is very wrong. He reinforces this idea by showing the emotional battle Louisa is experiencing because of this upbringing "There was a light with nothing to rest upon, a fire with nothing to burn, a starved imagination keeping life in itself somehow" (*Hard Times*:15).

From this quote, Dickens demonstrates that because of her father way in upbringing her she lost her emotions she even lost the ability to express them. What is ridiculous is that she does not know how. Dickens shows here that extreme use of fact has a negative effect on human physiological development. He presents the final consequence of this near the end of the book when Louisa confesses herself to Sissy:

> I am so proud and so hardened, so confused and troubled, so resentful and unjust to everyone and myself, that everything is stormy, dark, and wicked to me (*Hard Times*: 243).

In this quote, Louisa realizes the damage that education has done to her; as reader we feel very pity for her. This quote shows completely all the possible negative effects that Gradrind philosophy about education has on a person.

Tom is another example of the damages of factual education. Dickens portrays him as a selfish, orrogont, self-centred and morally corrupted man "Here Tom came lounging in, and stared at the two with a coolness not particularly savouring of interest in anything but himself" (*Hard Times*: 67).

Dickens describes him in such a way so as to make the reader dislike him considerably. The object of this is to show how this type of education creates a "bad" kind of person. In one hand we have Bitzer as an example of the Gradgrind philosophy. Dickens creates a character completely devoid of life and vitality through his description "His skin was so unwholesomely deficient in the natural tinge, that he looked as though, if he were cut, he would bleed white" (*Hard Times*:6).

Dickens describes him in this way to accentuate the fact that this education destroys the human part in people and drains them of all vitality. On the other hand, Dickens portrays Sissy, the representation of Fancy in the book, in an extremely positive way. He creates a character which is full of life and emotion "whereas the girl was so dark-eyed and dark-haired, that she seemed to receive a deeper more lustrous colour from the sun". (*Hard Times*:6).

The reader feels an instant attachment and sympathy for this character because she is one of the only characters with whom the reader can relate to. Dickens uses the character Sissy because she represents fancy. He associates a likeable character with the idea he supports so the reader will see that fancy is a positive thing that should exist in any normal human mind.

Facts and statistics are the only truth in life and all what is needed to have a healthy and productive life. The only truth to him is his very own vision of the truth. Simply put Thomas Gradgrind strived for perfection. He strives to be perfect, which is what his philosophy is based on, and he strived to make his children perfect and not to wonder. He raises his children never to wonder, never to doubt facts and to never entertain any vice or fancy. As soon as Gradgrind's children were old enough to absorb, he was feeding giving more lessons than they could hold. His children were brought up only knowing one way to live and that was the idea that if it is not fact, then it is false.

Dickens aims to expose the Victorian society's hypocrisy in humorous manner though the use of irony. The quotation below portrays Dickens's intentional irony. The latter part of the quotation, considering how to go on" shows how Gradgrind has no sense of direction.

> Strange to relate, Mr. Gradgrind was not so collected at this moment as his daughter was. He took a paper-knife in his hand, turned it over, laid it down, took it up again, and even then had to look along the blade of it, considering how to go on (*Hard Times*:106).

The use of irony to create humour is effective because Gradgrind was previously not a man who lacked direction and confidence; Gradgrind was a man full of assurance and felt that everything he did was correct. In this case, the irony is used to criticize Gradgrind's nature. Dickens shows the change of personality of someone who is initially a utilitarian and not the personality of someone who has always lacked assurance as if Dickens indirectly says that "Gradgrind is no longer the man he originally was, he has no self-confidence or direction".

Conclusion

From all the evidence provided, it is apparent that, in his novel *Hard Times*, Charles Dickens's uses irony and satire to create a sense of humour to criticize industrialism and human nature as well as many other issues within the Victorian society in which he finds ridiculous or bad. His use of humour is effective in order to prevail and draw the things that he did not like in his society from his own way.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Hard Times is a mirror that reflects the reality of Charles Dickens's society, and the causes that led him to create his own style of writing. It is a depiction of Victorian society. Charles Dickens uses a particular tool such as Humour to criticize and satirize ironically the hard conditions in Coketown. The social critic, Charles Dickens, devotes a deep influence on social analysis and he highlighted public awareness against the harsh system, injustice, poverty, child labor, class differences and class-based wealth during the Victorian age.

Dickens's use of humour in the novel is for the sake of awareness more than for the sake of amusement. Humour, irony and satire are a literary devices that Charles Dickens uses in his literary works specially *Hard Times* as a way to criticize and solve the problems of his society, his writing is a treatment for the social ills.

Hard Times is one of the most famous novels of Charles Dickens that focuses on the social classes, the gaps between lower and upper classes and the daily life of the Victorians and humour is the tool that Dickens selects to highlight those gaps. Many writers draw a picture of their way of living. In other words, *Hard Times* offers a realistic portrayal of the bad conditions that the poor, women, and children lived during his time throughout the use of humour.

In *Hard Times* humour is used to highlight the social issues and the problems of class division, specially the child labor and the bad system of education. Charles Dickens tries to attack and criticize the harsh system and what he finds ridiculous and bad through the use of satire and irony.

To conclude, we can say that humour as leading quality of Charles Dickens writing style is always present. In *Hard Times,* humour is not a source of laughter; in contrast it is a source of pathos. In the novel, Charles Dickens as a social realistic novelist uses humour to describe main characters such as Mr.Gradgrind, Bounderby and uses satire to criticize ironically the pessimistic Victorian society

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Résumé

La présente étude vise à étudier et à explorer l'usage de l'écriture humoristique dans *Hard Times* l'un des romans les plus connus de l'écrivain réaliste et social Charles Dickens, qui, longtemps, s'est dévoué à la critique de l'injustice sociale et la description de la réalité dans la société anglaise pendant la révolution industrielle de la période victorienne. Le but de cette étude est de connaître l'utilisation de la signification de l'humour dans le style de Charles Dickens. L'étude se divise en trois chapitres, le premier donne un aperçu théorique sur l'ironie et la satire en explorant la théorie littéraire du marxisme suivie par un deuxième chapitre montre une vision générale sur les romans victoriens. Le troisième chapitre est une enquête sur les motifs de l'utilisation de l'humour dans Dickens roman dans *Hard Times*.

 Mots clés: humour, ironie et satire, époque victorienne, révolution industrielle

ملخص

ترمي هذه الدراسة التي في مجملها ثلاثة فصول للتحقيق واستكشاف استخدام الدعابة في واحدة من الروايات الأكثر شهرة للكاتب الواقعي والاجتماعي تشارلز ديكنز الأوقات العصيبة . الرواية التي تنتقد الظلم الاجتماعي، و تصور المجتمع الإنجليزي خلال الثورة الصناعية في العصر الفيكتوري. الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو معرفة أهمية استعمال الدعابة في أسلوب تشارلز ديكنز. حيث، يقدم الفصل الأول عرض للآراء و النظريات حول الدعابة، السخرية والتهكم. من خلال تطبيق النظرية الأدبية الماركسية يليه الفصل الثاني الذي يقدم نظرة عامة حول أسلوب الرواية في للعصر الفيكتوري. أما الفصل الثالث فهو عبارة عن تحليل الطرفة واستخلاص الدوافع و الأهداف من وراء استعمالها في رواية الأوقات العصيبة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الدعابة ، الهجاء والسخرية ، العصر الفيكتوري، الثورة الصناعية .