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A binary approach to Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*

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Dedication

It is with genuine gratitude and warm regard that, we dedicate this dissertation to those who

Are dear to our hearts; our dear parents for their unending patience and support. To all

Our family, our adoring siblings, the symbol of love and giving.

Fouzia & Bouthaina

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First and foremost, we are grateful to Allah for his protection and provision throughout our

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Abstract

This study, which consists of three chapters in total, aims to analyze the Victorian classic "*A Tale of Two Cities*" by the English writer Charles Dickens, relying on the binary opposition provided by deconstructive theory, which aims to open new horizons of thinking and knowledge, and through which Derrida tries to find blind spots in literature and discover hidden meanings. Where binary opposition relies on related terms and concepts, which are contradictory in meaning, in order to show the duality that exists in reality. As a result, we chose the narration of "*A Tale of Two Cities*" in order to consider it a realistic historical novel, displaying the binary opposition at the level of setting, characters, and themes. Finally, we find that the discrepancies establish meanings, and that the dual opposition assisted the reader in understanding the text and achieving the writer's goal.

Key words: Realism, Binary Opposition, Duality, Deconstruction theory, *"A Tale of Two cities"*.

الملخص

ترمي هذه الدراسة التي في مجملها ثلاثة فصول إلى تحليل رواية قصة مدينتين للكاتب الإنجليزي تشارلز ديكنز بالاعتماد على ما توفره المعارضة الثنائية المنبثقة من النظرية التفكيكية التي تهدف إلى فتح آفاق جديدة للتفكير والمعرفة حيث من خلالها يحاول دريدا إيجاد النقاط العمياء في الأدب واكتشاف المعاني الخفية حيث تعتمد المعارضة الثنائية على المصطلحات والمفاهيم ذات صلة والتي تكون متضادة في المعنى وذلك لإظهار الازدواجية الموجودة في الواقع لأجل ذلك اخترنا رواية قصة مدينتين لاعتبارها رواية واقعية تاريخية، باضهار المعارضة الثنائية على مستوى المكان و الشخصيات والموضوع . لنتوصل في النهاية أنه من خلال الاختلافات يتم تأسيس المعاني و أن المعارضة الثنائية ساعدت القارئ في فهم النص و حققت غرض الكاتب في إيصال رسالته.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الواقعية، المعارضة الثنائية، النظرية التفكيكية ،قصة مدينتين.

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List of Abbreviations

BO: Binary oppositions

DT: Deconstruction theory

TTC: A Tale of Two Cities

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

The historical novel can be traced back to the early nineteenth century. In 1814, *"Waverley"*, a novel published by Walter Scott, is considered as the modern historical fiction. In his book and later works, Scott brought two key innovations to his representation of the past. Firstly, he focuses on representing small details of everyday life to create a vivid image of reality for the reader. Secondly, he connects the personal experiences of fictional characters to historical events. Such combination of fact and fiction was the most popular style of writing in the Victorian Era (1837-1901).

Charles Dickens is a unique writer in the modern English novel and a great genius who achieved wdsprea popularity. He is the Shakespeare of English fiction (Fielding, 1986). Through his writings, he portrays the Victorian era as a time of darkness, poverty, and injustice, particularly for the lower classes. The best way to put a spotlight on social and political issues is to write stories based on themes of imprisonment, injustice, and social anarchy.

The first historical novel of Dickens's was Barnaby Bridge, in which he narrated the story of the Gordon Riot; *"A Tale of Two Cities"* is the second attempt at historical fiction by him, and the French Revolution is his subject. It has always been one of Dickens's most popular and best-loved novels (price, 1967).The novel offers a powerful melodramatic plot pitting private individuals against political systems. *"A Tale of Two Cities"* (Charles Dickens, 1859) has magnetised readers and critics for generations, inspiring endless amounts of literary criticism. Critics have examined the novel from historical, formalist, and feminist angles.

The story was picked because there are many sentences that highlight disparities, and it was a mixture of duality and paradoxes that characterized the 18th century. We employed binary opposition to bring these discrepancies to light.

"Binary Oppositions are categorized under the category of semantic opposition" (Ahmadi, 1992, p. 398). In English, Binary means dual. This term was used by the Russian morphologist Nikolay Sergeyevich Trubetskoy (1890-1938) for the first time (Schulrez, 2004). Trubetskoy introduced it as the main foundation of hierarchical values, rooted in cultural history. The term can be considered a key concept in linguistics, semiotics, and literary criticisms. Binary oppositions in literary criticisms is one of the fundamental

concepts underlying construction and post construction (Deconstruction) (Habibie, 2014). In construction philosophy, the majority of concepts have been created based on binary oppositions. Constructionists believe that the nature and real origins of things are not in the things themselves, but in relations created among them that are then perceived by us. (Mousavilar& Pourmahmoud, 2021)

Derrida's concept, the theory of Deconstruction, which is classified as a poststructuralist method, was utilized to analyze Binary Opposition. Deconstruction Theory is defined as a theory that deconstructs existing general perspectives. In order to make a comparison, the concept of Binary Opposition is used to examine the differences between two items that are thought to provide a new perspective and may be accepted by a wide range of people. The Deconstruction perspective can expose the text's true meaning by revealing the hidden meaning underlying it.

2. Statement of the Problem

Deconstruction is a sort of philosophical and literary study in which fundamental conceptual differences or oppositions are questioned through a close examination of philosophical language. First, we look at the theory question; then we look at whether Binary Opposition is workable or not; if it can provide meaning to language; and finally, we look at whether Binary Opposition can be generalised to all texts. How does this contradict the ideological theme that gives meaning to the text's never-ending meanings?

3. Research Questions

Our thesis intends to answer the following questions:

To what extent is Binary Opposition shown in Dickens' *"A Tale of Two Cities"* in settings, themes, and characters?

How can Binary Opposition rebuild a text by generating new meanings from the novel?

4. Purpose of the Study

The study aims to investigate the meanings that can be derived and generated from a work of literature, in providing a new reading of Dickens's *"A Tale of Two Cities"*, while also introducing the use of Binary Opposition and how it helps to show the interaction between

individuals and society in Dickens' novel *"A Tale of Two Cities"*; and how this approach opens the reader's mind to see other meanings.

5. Methodology

The Deconstruction Theory is an applicable theory to utilize when studying Charles Dickens' *"A Tale of Two Cities."* This idea is based primarily on philosophical and literary language analysis. We shall use a descriptive analytical technique based on Deconstruction Theory for this corpus-based research.

6. Dissertation Structure

This dissertation has three parts, in addition to the general introduction and conclusion. The first chapter presents a theoretical review of the Binary Approach in Deconstructive Theory. The second chapter covers the historical background, including important events and literary background from the Victorian Era; the third chapter is dedicated to the analysis of the novel *"A Tale of Two Cities"* and the study's conclusion.

Chapter One

Deconstruction Theory

Introduction

Deconstruction theory, which is our main concern, is a method of reading that focuses on critical reading of a written text to uncover ways of thinking. In the following chapter, it is important to understand what Deconstruction theory is and how it evolves, with a focus on Derrida's influential ideas that established the theory of Deconstruction as well as binary opposition, which is the procedure that proves the theory's assumptions.

1. Theory of Deconstruction

The term "deconstruction" is related to the French verb "deconstuire", which in English connotes "to undo the improvement of or the development of, to take to pieces."(Gnanasekaran, 2015). In philosophy, however, the word "deconstruction" was coined by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) in the late 1960s as a response to the idea of "destructive" analysis rendered by the German word *'destruktion'* of Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), which literally means "destruction" or "de-building." Thus, the word "deconstruction" is genealogically linked to Heidegger. Instead of applying Heidegger's term of *destruktion* (destruction) to textual readings, Derrida opted for the term "deconstruction". Since then, the word "deconstruction" has entered the philosophical, literary, and political vocabulary, though it existed before, at least in grammatical and architectural jargon (Neuenschwander, et al, 2017).

Deconstruction does not fall under the literary umbrella. It comes from the scope of philosophy, as Derrida's deconstruction approach is informed by the works of other philosophers.

" Derrida's method always involves the highly detailed "deconstructive' reading of selected aspects of other philosophers' works, and these deconstructive methods have been borrowed by literary critics and used in the reading of literary works" (Barry, 2002, p. 68).

Derrida remarked in Of Grammatology that deconstruction is concerned with the unseen rather than the obvious. It's the same as in the prior quote. "A deconstructive reading must always aim at a certain relationship, unperceived by the writer, between what he commands and what he does not command of patterns of language that he uses...[It] attempts to make the not- seen accessible to sight" (1975, p. 158-163).

Deconstruction suggests about "reading the text against itself". It denies any final explication or statement of meaning; it questions the presence of any objective structure or content in a text, "The practitioners of deconstruction celebrate the text's self-destruction that inevitable seed of its own contradiction, as never ending play of language" (Guerin, 1999, p. 340).

Structuralism, as the name implies, focuses on the underlying and governing principles of language as a system. In general, everything we encounter and recognise in everyday life is a surface structure, a chimaera strictly speaking, because the true nature of everything is not directly met. When we see a building, it is not really it; it is rather the end of a structure made up of pillars and a certain design that forms the fulcrum of the building. Every aspect of life, whatever it is, encompasses an inner reality without which we would not have been able to perceive the surface. The skeleton of some living creatures is the unifying and organising principle of their posture.

Deconstruction identifies textual features like structuralism, but it concentrates on rhetorical rather than grammatical. It also accepts the analogy of text to syntax, like Ferdinand de Saussure's theory. When structuralism finds order and meaning the in the text as in the sentence, deconstruction finds contrary, it concerns in disorder and constant tendency of the language to refute its apparent sense "text are found to deconstruct themselves rather than to provide a stable identifiable meaning." (Guerin, 1999).

The methodology of the DT itself also has some steps and terms. The first is acknowledging binary operations'' in Western thought Derrida derives this idea from Platonic and Aristotelian thought. In this case speech is awarded presence, and writing is absence. This makes writing which is inferior became the symbol of speech, a second-hand representation of ideas. Once the speech/writing hierarchy or any other is recognized and acknowledged its elements can be easily reversed. The reversal is possibly done because truth is never elusive. It is always possible to decentre any centre which is found. But; it Joes not mean neither to substitute one hierarchy for another nor to involve it in a negative mode. Derrida says that when the hierarchy is reversed, it becomes possible to examine the values and beliefs that give rise to both the original hierarchy and the newly created one. This examination then reveals how the meanings of terms arise from the differences between them (Bressler, 1999).

Supplement is Derrida term, which is used to refer to the unstable relationship between elements in a binary operation. For instance, in speech/writing, writing supplements speech and in actuality takes the place of speech (arche-writing). This supplementation happens in all BO (Bressler, 1999).

The last term is "difference" It is believed that understanding the" difference" is also the basic key to understand DT, as the etymology of this word. Which comes from French word differ, this words means to differ or to be different from. Derrida's aim by this difference is nothing can be studied or learned in isolation, since the meaning of something is known because it differs from something else, which is related (ibid).

The Theory of Deconstruction is founded on the notion that nothing is solitary since the meaning of something can be deduced from its opposite. It's a kind of philosophical perspective that clarifies what's going on in a text.

1.1. Deconstruction Theory in Literature

Deconstruction is a way of understanding a text that is based on philosophical principles. In the 1970s, Jacques Derrida popularized this strategy in his writings. This term is used to describe the progression of post-structuralism.

"Deconstruction itself arises out of structuralism; it purposes to fix the weaknesses in structuralism" (Guerin, 1999, p. 340). "The term Post structuralism itself, emerged in France in the late 1960's" (Barry, 2002, p. 65). Deconstruction discusses a text that is analyzed outside of the structure of the reading itself. According to Derrida (1976), Deconstruction is a literary criticism theory which shows that the meaning in the reading text experiences contradictions and opposing oppositions. Unlike the structuralist approach which always relies on the structure in the text, DT explains that outside of the text structure there are many meanings that experience differences according to the content of the text itself.

In Derrida's strategy of analysing and dismantling texts or, more usually, parts of texts in order to reveal their inconsistencies and inner contradictions. At the heart of deconstruction is the effort to dismantle the cover-ups that texts use to create the semblance of stable meaning; their

attempt to create 'privileged' centers – implicit or explicit binary oppositions with the help of all sorts of rhetorical means. (Bertens, 2014)

Because deconstruction's point of departure is that language is by definition uncontrollable, it expects to find unwarranted privileging in all texts. No matter whether a text is literary or non-literary, it can always be deconstructed and can be shown to rely for its internal stability on rhetorical operations that mask their origin in difference and also mask the surplus meaning that is the result of difference. DT tries to demonstrate that the apparent either/or patterns of texts mask underlying both-and situations and to reveal those texts' fundamental undecidability. In literary terms, a text never achieves closure—which literally means that its case can never be closed; there is no final meaning; the text remains a field of possibilities. In Jeremy Hawthorn's (1998) apt formulation: "Thus for Derrida the meaning of a text is always unfolding just ahead of the interpreter, unrolling in front of him or her like a never-ending carpet whose final edge never reveals itself" (p. 39). According to Derrida (1976), small and marginalized things are important to be given meaning.

Deconstruction is a method in reading text with use conceptual and differentiation. Through differentiation, there is a Binary Opposition which explains that each reading text has opposite but related meanings. Binary Opposition leads the reader to the uncovering and reconstruction of signs or meanings which in turn invites the reader to reflect on the philosophy of truth and human existence as God's creatures. The Binary Opposition that the writer presents and wants to break at the same time is the main strength of the story which deserves to be deconstructed. (Aprilia & Arianto, 2021)

By peering into what isn't there, deconstruction is used as an approach in literature, with guidelines for reading, interpretation, and writing, as well as new lenses for reading material.

1.1.1. Binary Opposition

In Post-structuralism, the French philosopher Jacques Derrida introduced the idea of binary opposition. This Binary Opposition was included in Derrida's method, which is known as Deconstruction in practice.

One of the most important applications in structural and post-structural criticism is BO, in which the essence of everything is revealed through opposition with another thing that has no quality at all and the perception of every subcategory is related to its distinction with another object. This kind of distinction is interpreted as opposition. Our knowledge of things depends on our knowledge of what is in opposition to them (Caddon, 1999).

Binary Opposition explains that a text has opposite sides and does not always have one absolute meaning. This concept has the goal of not seeing a thing or problem from one side only, but it can be seen from the other side, which makes more sense and has more value. As the American critic Barbara Johnson (1980) described it, "The deconstruction of a text does not proceed by random doubt or arbitrary subversion, but by the careful teasing out of warring forces of signification within the text" (p. 5).

According to Bertens (2003)

> Such hierarchies between centre and margin (or periphery) take the form of binary oppositions (one of post structuralism's most obvious debts to structuralism). Texts introduce sets of oppositions that function to structure and stabilize them. Quite often these oppositions are implicit or almost invisible – they may be hidden in a text's metaphors, for instance – or else only one of the terms involved is explicitly mentioned. That explicit mention, then, evokes the other, absent term. There is a wide range of such oppositions, with some of them pretty general, while others are more culture bound. Rather general sets of oppositional terms include good/evil, same/other, truth/falsehood, presence/absence, masculine/feminine, thought/feeling, mind/matter (or body), nature/culture, pure/impure, and so on. A notorious oppositional set within Western culture is white/black. One of these terms always functions as the centre – it is privileged, in poststructuralist terms, and accorded a natural status. Some terms have always been privileged – good, truth, masculinity, purity, whiteness – while others may be found in either the centre or the margin (p. 112).

In other words, Binary Oppositon, considered a key concept, is used to represent hierarchies between the centre and margin (or peripheral). Sets of opposition are introduced in texts to structure and stabilise them. These oppositions are frequently implicit or nearly undetectable— for example, in metaphors in a text—or only one of the concepts involved is expressly addressed. The other missing phrase is evoked by this clear mention. There are many different types of such conflicts, some of which are more universal and others which are more culturally specific.

According to Roland Barthes (1992), the most fundamental concept in structuralism is Binary Opposition. The Binary Opposition concept is divided into three parts; difference, text, and dissemination.

First is the concept of difference. This concept is to explain that one thing has many different meanings. The text's meaning cannot be reduced to a single interpretation. An example is the meaning of the word "good person". There are many perceptions that define a good person. There are some people who think that a good person is someone who does not take care of other people's business, but there are also those who think that if a good person does not interfere in other people's affairs, it means that the person is ignorant. Indifference is categorised as a bad attitude.

The second is the concept of text. According to Derrida (1976), the important thing in a text is that there is no outside text or that everything is in the text. Although, according to Derrida, it does not mean the text is considered a prison text. Through Derrida's discussion above, the meaning of a text cannot be taken from outside the text itself. The meaning must be related and in line with the text (linking each other). An example is if there is a reading text that contains the life of a prostitute. From the word "prostitute," we can interpret it into two things related to the text itself, namely a job and an act that is considered despicable by society. This reading text deals with a person's personal and social life. The reader cannot relate the text of reading the life of a prostitute with meanings outside the text, such as linking the text with things that contain politics and food.

The last one is the concept of dissemination. The concept of dissemination explains how the meaning in literary texts varies but is related and cannot be combined into a single meaning. According to Tyson (2006), the concept of dissemination can be understood through the following steps:

(1) Find out interpretations in the text.

(2) Show the interpretations are in conflict with one another.

(3) Show the conflict has resulted in new interpretations.

Through this concept of dissemination, readers are directed to read more critically and be able to relate one meaning to another and show the opposite side of the meaning of the text in order to produce new meanings that are related to the previous meaning (Aprilia & Arianto, 2021).

Each reading text contains contrary but connected meanings, as explained by BO. The reader is led to the discovery and reconstruction of signs or meanings through binary opposition.

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Post-Structuralism Approach

(1960)

Language as system

Deconstruction Theory

Jacques Derrida (1976)

Language as no system – Resystemizing   Language

Binary Opposition

Dichotomies: Dual opposition

Compare /Contrast

Generating new meaning
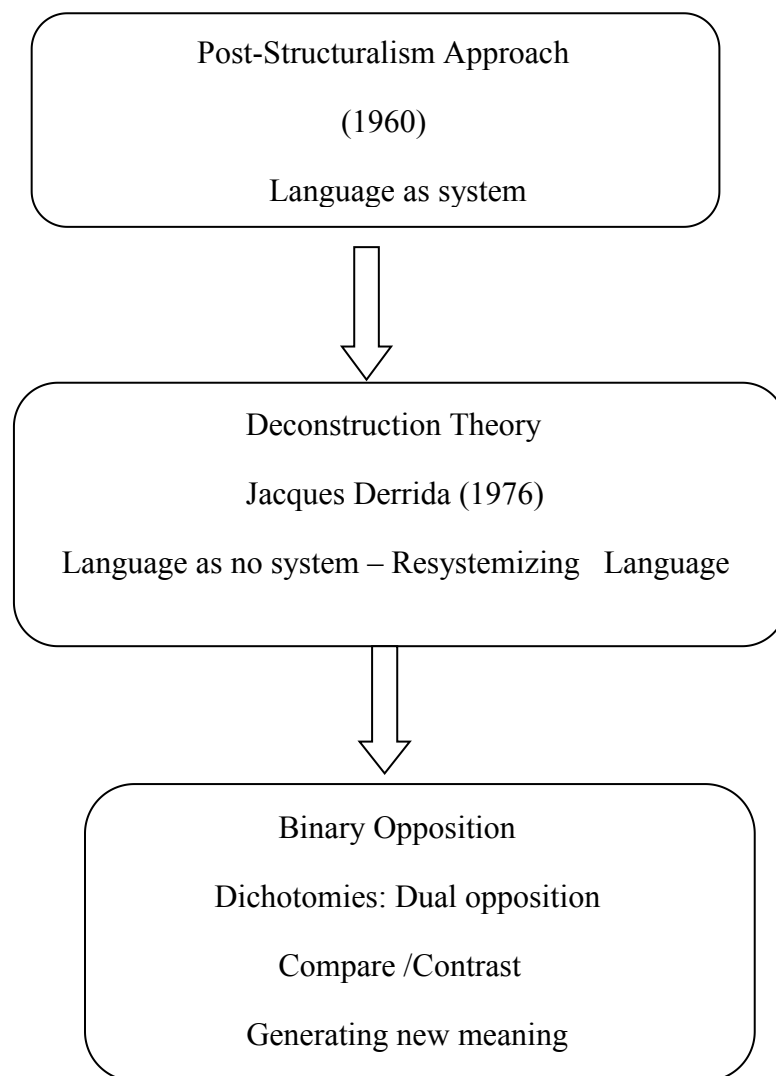
1.1.2. Language for Deconstruction

The language serves as a tool for communication and follows a set of rules. In order to make sense of things, people try to decipher the ways in which language is used because it is fluid and imprecise, but more importantly, how individuals might use and deal with them.

Linguistic studies have been triggered by different interests in the constitution, function, evolution, and use of language. That is why disciplines like grammar, neogrammar, syntax, semantics, semiotics, phonology, phonetics, and others have been used to approach language from multiple perspectives. However, they all assume that the nature of language is structurally articulated in an organic form; that meanings are coined into conventions and conventions are logo-centric. The main theory in charge of articulating such ideas was structuralism. Even nowadays, the linguistic field is strongly influenced by the Saussurean linguistic view about meaning-making processes (Araya, 2008).

Language, strictly speaking, controls all of our beings. It shapes what we understand and, thus, the way we act. We do not really mean what we mean. In light of what has previously been proved, therefore, Derrida's point is, "Whenever we use a word, we put it under erasure to indicate that we use a common word for a new meaning" (p253). In this sense, Deconstruction offers a different perspective on the way language works and meaning is conveyed because it denies the hierarchical, linear process traditionally grounded in language. DT is certainly based on a subversive philosophical approach that provides a very different conception of the world from that one developed by the structuralist perspective. Even though some authors question the validity and reliability of deconstructionist analysis, the nature and use of figurative speech evidence that there is more than conventional and organic relations when referring to meaning-making processes (ibid).

Figurative language shows that meaning is created by the destruction of conventional connotations (structures). In doing so, language becomes more than a system that is structurally organized. The ways people understand and use figurative language represent clear proof that deconstruction is necessary to conceive the world. To mean something, individuals certainly

need a platform of signification, but such a situation does not mean that stability is needed to convey meaning. Instead, it is the structure's chaos that allows meaning to exist (Araya, 2008).

Jacques Derrida never set his ideas down in literature. But he did apply some of his central thoughts to literature as long as it was part of language, part of the universal phenomenon. Thus, Deconstruction deals with topics such as language, thought, and identity, concerns that are tendentious to philosophy (Norris, 2002). Moreover, the writings of the Deconstructionists tended to be ambiguous and evasive, never settling on one idea, and subsequently, the reader is lost in that trend of production. Indeed, an inclination as such further asserts and confirms the idea that a text must be a form of that which it speaks. Derrida's writings require prior knowledge so as to understand them the way he meant them. For a long time, philosophy had been the mother of sciences and celebrated a sovereign position, the kind of privilege Derrida refuses, and so he proves that philosophic style makes use of literary embellishments, metaphors, rhetorical devices, and so forth, and proves, at last, that philosophic writing cannot do without these elements of writing. Seen from that perspective, Derrida's critique resonates more with literary criticism than philosophy (Norris, 2004).

Literature does not represent reality, since what we call reality is nothing more than a chimaera that we convince ourselves of. For DT, concepts like reality, certainty, and truth have no ground in concreteness; they rather perform, along with human identity, a conventional code, and systems of belief and principles, because we have alternatives in our proposals. As a result, how can literature say otherwise than what is itself etherised.

To have a "meaning" to literary texts, one must find the instability and slippery nature of meaning; instability and the free play of signifiers, their dissemination, and the deferment of signified manifest themselves greatly in literature, manifesting themselves in various ways through different interpretations. After all, it is language that shapes our experience, not the other way around. The originality of literary texts does not have any space; all texts are interconnected and intertextually, and this is because the words used in otherwise yielding to the encircles of the literary work (Eagleton, 1966).

Derrida believes that his own language is different, whether it is spoken or written. He also knows that the countless connotations do not allow him to escape from the centering effects of language. In its deconstructionist form, he focuses on language and argues that language, even if

we have no alternative, is a fundamentally unstable and unreliable medium of communication. Human perception and knowledge are fundamentally flawed because we rely on language to articulate and formulate our perceptions of reality (Bertens, 2014).

Deconstruction claims that language is the foundation of our understanding of the world in which we live and that language is an infinite text. Contrasts lead the way.

1.2. Deconstruction and other literary theories

The Marxist view of the economy was drawn upon from its criticism of the capitalists. Indeed, it proved the monstrous doctrines of capitalism and how they create tensions inasmuch as stability is concerned, as they shed light on the life people will unconsciously live; the law of the jungle. What is arguable or criticisable about Marxism is how solutions are drawn as they precisely correspond to the opposing pole, as though to follow the deconstructive agenda of criticism.

Indeed, some literary theories count so heavily on the opposition battle that deconstruction takes as fundamental to making its way through and sustaining a state of dignity among theories that already possess sovereign status. The period in which Deconstruction "free played," according to other theories, was called by its name, the era of Deconstruction. In "Writing and Difference" (1976), Derrida stated that "still the medievalists, always acutely sensitive to the differentness of their period of study, might well be inclined to wonder about its place in the history of deconstruction, and in the deconstruction of history." And so for Derrida, since the past and history are deconstructed, it goes without saying that unless DT is the criterion, the future will be only a replication.

The twentieth century manifests itself in that it escapes trends' precursors, escaping centrality, the very basis of Deconstruction:

in the twentieth century, however, these centers were destroyed or eroded;
sometimes this caused by historical events-such as the way the first world war
destroyed the illusion of steady material progress, or the way the holocaust

destroyed the notion of Europe as the source and the center of human civilization; sometimes it happened because of scientific discoveries such as the notion of relativity destroyed the ideas of time and space as fixed and central absolutes; and sometimes, finally, it was caused by intellectual or artistic revolutions-such as the way modernism in the arts in the first thirty years rejected such central absolutes as harmony in music, chronological sequence in narrative, and the representation of the visual world in art. (Barry. 2002)

Michael Foucault thought history was better conceived as changes and ruptures rather than long periods of time. Historians should investigate "several parts, several forms of connections, several hierarchies of importance" (1969). A history is thus seen not as the progression of this to that, but as what caused this to become and have that as a result.

When a point of view is given to any domain, it is referred to as, or used to be, "he" for both genders; males and females. This trend shows a deeper social and cultural attitude that considers the opinion of men as superior and of higher status than women; it shows a "habit of seeing". This "inclusive he" seems to present the two genders, but in fact it shows how society disregards the position of women (Tyson, 2006). Women have been for a while disprivileged from their opinions in different areas of life, social, economic and political and subsequently in arts and literature, as the last mirrors the formers.

Literary writings also were not an exception as woman did not celebrate respectable consideration, and had been so for a time, indeed, P. Widdowson account for that was sufficiently marvellous a he stated that history of literary theory had been "his-story". It would not be surprising if women, particularly writers, turned to Deconstruction to gain the position they desired. Deconstructions deconstructed the "habit of seeing" that dominated and subordinated women's perspectives.DT, by turning the table the other way around, could retrieve the true position of the woman. Since earlier societies degraded women, any text would reveal women to be second to men. To the advantage of the odds, if texts are read backward using BO, they will reveal the neglected elements of the texts and how manly conduct is privileged over that of woman. BO of Deconstruction would place men and women side by side, revealing that women have the same importance and influence as men, and that women can contribute in ways that men can. By doing so, Feminists, aided by Deconstruction, can break the structure that marginalizes females, and as a result redefine gender(Deutscher, 2002).

This deconstruction does stop but moves to other oppositions that do not seem to have gender issues, while in fact, for feminists, they are there, oppositions such as culture/nature, political/personal, and so forth, and it is in these areas that feminism is coded. It is apparent that Feminism makes great use of BO in destroying the hierarchy that gives precedence to males.

On the other hand, as stated in the answers, deconstructionists do not really share feminists' concerns or even "care" about their analysis. The female is merely an object of analysis used to deconstruct the opposition created in texts; the focus of deconstruction is simply to break down the hierarchy created in texts and question this privileging. Ideas of Derrida are supportive in as much they are deconstructive, they can prove the unjust categorizing of women in the same way they can deconstruct women identity as they try to make present the role of women in human experience and sciences (bearing in mind that Deconstruction doubts human identity and considers it an illusion and/or a matter of convention).(Deutscher, 2002).

Feminism also adopted the principle of difference in order to make a change. Difference shows how two contradicted terms (male and female), one dependent on the other and "its" value thereof, and whose existence is present only in regard to the presence of the other, are present while at the same time absent, that is to say, deferred. The writings of some French feminists were characterised by a disruption of phallocentric discourse.

Queer Theory is very similar to Feminism. The ideas of Michael Foucault deconstruct the homophobic allusion, as they call it, which holds the assumption that gender is a matter of cultural instruction and not a natural phenomenon. Beauvoir (1952) said that "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (p. 249). What is put in question is the oppositions of male and female, or rather, all male/all female, heterosexual/homosexual construction, the aim of Queer theorists is to change the politics of heteronormative constructions and into pragmatic steps to change the views regarding sexuality and performance (Sullivan, 2003). Its goal, they claim, is to shift the focus of "public sensibilities" toward norms and, as a result, influence people's perceptions of gender identity without appearing to undermine human morals. Such an urge demolishes hegemonic notions that enclose their freedom, freakiness and immorality, which some regard, and attitudes and principles that they seek to make public.

The implications of BO assisted other theories and created disputes among opponents of actions that endanger humanity's survival. DT is a two-edged sword that should only be used when it is appropriate for the situation. It can also be flipped on its head if it is refused.

1.3. Deconstructive Literary Criticism

If the observers and belligerents of recent critical debates could agree on anything, it would be that contemporary critical theory is confusing and confusing. Once upon a time, it might have been possible to think of criticism as a single activity practised with different emphases. The acrimony of recent debate suggests the contrary: the field of criticism is contentiously constituted by apparently incompatible activities, even to attempt a list: structuralism, reader-response criticism, deconstruction, Marxist criticism, pluralism, feminist criticism, semiotics, psychoanalytic criticism, hermeneutics, and antithetical criticism (Culler, J. 1982).

In all the fields it influenced, deconstruction called attention to rhetorical and perfor-mative aspects of language use, and it encouraged scholars to consider not only what a text says but also the relationship—and potential conflict—between what a text says and what it "does." In various disciplines, deconstruction also prompted an exploration of fundamental oppositions and critical terms and a re-examination of ultimate goals. Most generally, deconstruction joined with other strands of post-structural and post-modern thinking to inspire a suspicion of established intellectual categories and scepticism about the possibility of objectivity.

Consequently, its diffusion was met with a sizeable body of opposition. Some philosophers, especially those in the Anglo-American tradition, dismissed it as obscurantist wordplay whose major claims, when intelligible, were either trivial or false. Others accused it of being historical and apolitical. Still others regarded it as a nihilistic endorsement of radical epistemic relativism. Despite such attacks, deconstruction has had an enormous impact on a variety of intellectual enterprises (Britannica, T. Editors, 2020).

Deconstructive literary criticism aims to demolish Binary Opposition by locating textual evidence that contradicts a work's major ideological subject. By detecting the binary oppositions and, more precisely, which of the two is privileged, the reader is able to determine the ideologies at work inside the text. The opposition deconstructs itself by demonstrating how the work's key

ideological premises are undermined by particular textual evidence, or as Tyson says, "we do not deconstruct a text; we show how the text deconstructs itself."

Language, according to deconstructive critics, is a dynamic, unstable, liquid, and ambiguous system of clashing ideas. One of the numerous advantages of critical theory is in "make[ing] us aware of the oppressive role ideology can play in our lives" (Tyson, 2006, p. 249).

Most people are unaware of the extent to which ideologies shape their experiences, their world, and their identity. But what is *it*? What is it that is creating the hidden ideologies that define our existence? Jacques Derrida and other deconstructive critics would argue that it is language itself. They argue it is the language into which we are born that "mediates our experience of ourselves and the world. And for deconstruction, language is wholly ideological: it consists entirely of the numerous conflicting, dynamic ideologies- or systems of beliefs and values-operating at any given point in time in any given culture "(Tyson, 2006, p. 253). In other words, our world is created and constructed by language, and it is beyond our capacity to move outside of its domain (Deconstructive literary criticism, 2012).

One of the reasons for deconstructing literature, Tyson calls a text's undecidability. "To reveal the text's undecidability and/or to reveal the complex operations of the ideologies on which the text is constructed" (Tyson, 2006, p. 259). Deconstructive critics argue that meaning is formed in literature via the process of reading. "Moments" of meaning are produced while the reader is reading, but they inevitably give birth to even more meanings, with each new reading establishing its own unique meaning ad infinitum. This is why Tyson describes art and literature as "a seething cauldron of meanings in flux," because a book can have a wide range of interpretations, making the ultimate meaning impossible to determine. Undecidability means that reader and text alike are inextricably bound within language's dissemination of meanings. That is, reader and text are interwoven threads in the perpetually working loom of language "(ibid).

Originally conceived to challenge fundamental assumptions of the Western metaphysical tradition, deconstruction was not considered by its founder (Derrida) as a theory unified by any set of consistent rules or procedures. In contrast, deconstruction is nowadays presented variously as a philosophical position, a political or intellectual strategy, and a mode of reading. It has

become a way of criticising political and social institutions, etc. Today, "deconstruction asserts that texts, institutions, traditions, societies, beliefs, and practises do not have unambiguously definite meanings, as they do not have very strict and rigid boundaries." (Nellickappilly, 2002).

Its movement has now constantly been to follow up the given determinations of institutions, legal systems, culture, etc. not in order to destroy them or to cancel them, but to open debate on complexities and issues that are ignored or suppressed in them. Its target is to show that things—texts, institutions, traditions, societies, beliefs, and practises of whatever size and sort you need—do not have definable meanings and determinable missions, that they are always more than any mission would impose, that they exceed the boundaries they currently occupy (Caputo, 2000).

Deconstruction has become a way of giving things a new twist, or a new bent. It is looking to open and loosen things up, essentially to be "anti-essential and highly unconventional, not to let its eyes wax over at the thought of either unchanging essences or ageless traditions, but rather to advocate an inventionalistic incoming, to stay constantly on the lookout for something unforeseeable, something new." (ibid).

With deconstruction, all the structures and institutions can be taken down to their foundations and then be put back together in some new way, thus being reconstructed and restored. Deconstruction, according to this logic, is used to expose the inner workings of systems rather than to destroy them. Rather, it implies reconstituting things according to the conditions (previously hidden) within their institutions. Rather than simply destroying, deconstruction attempts to understand how an ensemble or structure was once constituted and then reconstructs it to this end more authentically. As the word deconstruction does not only bear the prefix "de", indicating separation, but also its opposite "con", indicating union, "every gesture of deconstruction, as it brings apart some discourse or structure, must also at the same time bring it together in some new configuration." (Neuenschwander, p.591) In that way, deconstruction is not the closing down of one institution or discourse in order to set up another in its place. It is, however, the ongoing opening up of institutions and discourses to their own more authentic alterity.

Figure 2: The analysis methods
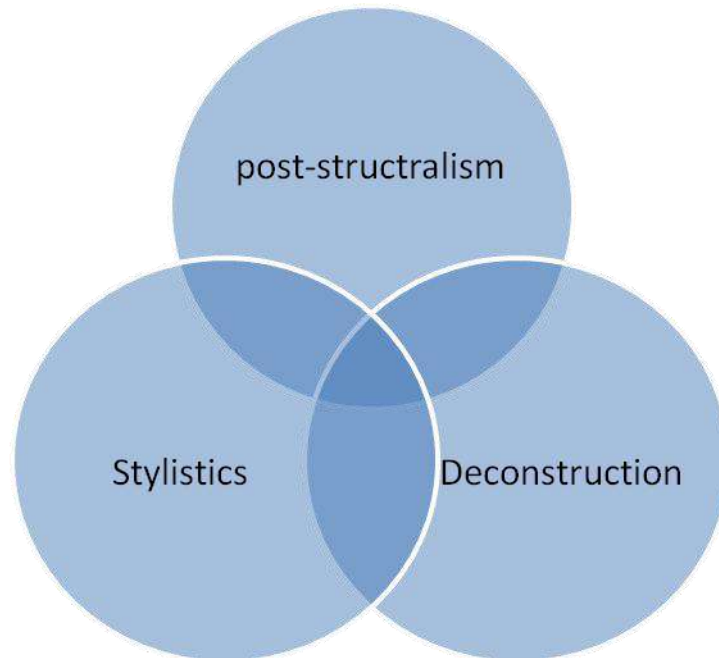
Conclusion

The systematic study of the nature of literature and literary analytic tools is known as literary theory. Deconstruction was chosen to help readers grasp the relationship between test and meaning and focuses on the critical reading of a written text to find discrepancies and inherent contradictions. The above-mentioned theories seem to be the most likely to employ Binary Opposition in order to further their goals and establish credibility for their claims.

Chapter Two

Victorian Literature: Historical Literary context

Introduction

The Victorian Era was a time of great prosperity in the arts, sciences, innovations, and literature on all levels. Literature can be defined as a mirror of society, in which the author can portray an image of his society, as was the case with Victorian literature. The goal of this chapter is to provide an overview of the material in order to pique interest. We begin by introducing Victorian literature by focusing on the novel and its major characteristics, then move on to the backdrop of Realism, with a greater emphasis on Dickens' style.

2. Victorian Era

The term "Victorian" was first used in 1851 (Asa, 1988). The Victorian era was the period of Queen Victoria's reign. It was the second-longest reign of a British monarch after the Elizabethan monarch. Queen Victoria ruled Britain for over 60 years, from 20 June 1837 until her death on January 22, 1901; the Victorian Era played an important role in the history of Great Britain. According to E. Burns, England from 1827 until 1901 was so powerful and strong that it reached the height of its power (p. 154). This was an extensive period of prosperity, peace, and significant national self-sufficiency for England.

During the nineteenth century, Britain was revolutionised by the industrial revolution. The decades preceding the Victorian era were not as well-known or significant as the Victorian era. The Victorian Era is known for its remarkable shifts. It was a period of rapid growth in urban scale and population (Williams, 2004). And the population was about 2 million in London, and then the population increased to become about 6 million. Also, Britain became the most powerful country in the world (Carter & Mc Rae, 2016).

Because of the inventions in manufacturing and the economy and the developed railways that connected the big towns and the steam-powered vessels used for trade. However, this age was characterised by rapid change and development at all levels. Even this era could not survive itself from the social class struggles and many problems caused by the industrial revolution reflected the bad image of development and industry in society. According to that, Burgers Wilson said that:

The Victorian age, thus, had a large number of problems to face. In many ways, it was an age of progress, of railway-building, steamship reforms of all kinds, but it was also an age of doubt. There was too much poverty, too much injustice, too much ugliness, and too little certainty about faith or morals. Thus, it became also an age of crusaders and reformers and theorists (p. 80).

Furthermore, England was the origin and motherland of the industrial revolution, which paved the path for Britain to become an industry-driven nation.

Figure 3: The Victorian England
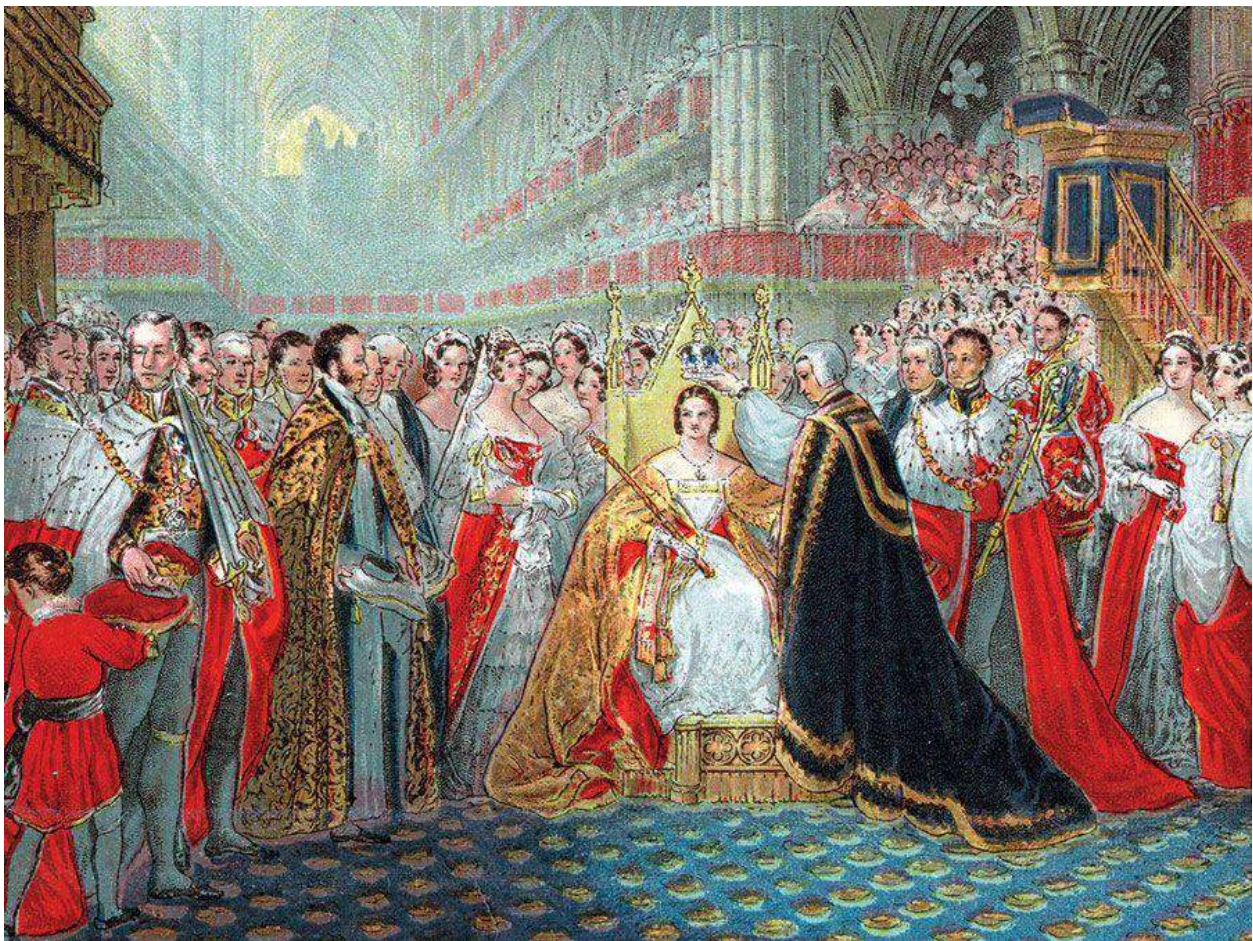
(Britannica, 2022)

2.1. Overview of Victorian English Literature

Victorian literature is the literature written in England during the reign of Queen Victoria from 1837 to 1901. It was a time of contrasts: prosperity and poverty; morality and depravity; peace and protest. Queen Victoria herself embodied a number of contradictions and influenced scores of writers, both directly and indirectly. As an increasing proportion of the population became literate, so too did the demand for new types of literature, a demand that was met by many authors. The nineteenth century is often regarded as a high point in European and Victorian literature, including the works of Emily and Charlotte Bronte, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, and Oscar Wilde.

The conventional three-volume format is the first to debut. These triple-deckers, on the other hand, were prohibitively expensive for the middle and lower classes. Novels were the primary genre of English literature as the prevailing publishing format for the era made them more affordable to the rising masses of new readers. "The novel as a form became hugely popular, and it was the novelists rather than the poets who became the literary representatives of the age." (Carter & McRae, 2016, p. 244).

Romanticism preceded this period's literature, which was followed by modernism and realism. Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, and George Eliot were all novelists. By distributing their novels in installments, they serialised their work. Writers usually leave each episode on a cliffhanger, leaving the reader eagerly anticipating the next installment. "The richness of the picture, drawing as it does from all aspects of Victorian life, provides a seemingly endless resource for understanding issues of class, gender, race, and nationality in Victorian England and for examining the fitful processes through which change is affected or stalled (Brantlinger & B.Thesing, 2002, p. 396). Writers were impelled to depict life as it affected them, representing a social reality told through social problem novels, adventure tales, and even fantasy.

2.1.1. The characteristics of Victorian English Literature

Victorian society is associated with the period (1837–1901) during which Queen Victoria ruled over Britain, thus it is referred to as the Victorian Era. Queen Victoria's sixty-four year reign is the longest in British history and the cultural, political, economic, industrial, and scientific changes that occurred during her reign were regarded as the greatest public virtue (Chesterton, 1966).

It was an age alive with new activities. There was a revolution in commercial enterprise due to the great increase in available markets. As a result of this, there was an immense advance in the use of mechanical devices. On the other side of this commercial expansion we see the terrible social conditions of the new industrial cities, the squalid slums, and the exploitation of cheap labor, often of children (Albert, 1923).

The challenge of new science to old Christian faith presented a notable problem for writers. Darwin's Revolutionary Theory of 1859 hit at the Book of Genesis. It demonstrated that man had evolved from lower forms of life; he had not been created completely by God (Burgees, 1974).

Materialism, which rejected the existence of everything but matter and claimed that man has no soul, despite the fact that it is secreted by the brain in the same way that bile is secreted by the liver, posed another challenge to traditional beliefs (ibid).

Utilitarianism is another social problem that means too much freedom in trade and industry. Furthermore, utilitarianism allowed squalid homes and towns disfigured by factories, refuting the importance of beauty and the ethical aspects of life, and it was concerned only with its profits (Sanders, 1994).

The Victorian Age thus had a large number of problems to face in many ways; it was an age of progress, with railways, buildings, steamships, and reforms of all kinds. But, it was also an age of doubt. There was too much poverty, injustice, ugliness, and too little certainty about faith or morals. It became an age of crusaders, reformers, and theorists (Burgees, 1974).

The literature of realism Victorian writers found it interesting and important to describe the lifestyles and surroundings of middle and lower class citizens. The importance of detailed surroundings in creating the realistic quality of people and situations has grown.

Therefore, the Victorian novel confronts the reader with grim depictions of human suffering and misery. Moreover, Victorian writers agree that the machine principle, the manifest antithesis to the spirit, was corrupting the life of England (Trilling & Bloom, 1973).

2.1.2. Novel as main literary genre in Victorian literature

The Victorian era is regarded as the golden age of the English novel, with the novel being seen as a literary leader at the time. "The novel as a form became hugely popular, and it was the novelists rather than the poets who became the literary representatives of the age" (Carter & McRae, 2016, p.244). The novels dominated the literary market in three volumes because they mirrored the tremendous social changes of the time; they were well-known among the middle class, particularly among the educated; they gained widespread attention and were extremely popular. Most writers represented social reality by describing and communicating messages about social issues through adventure stories, science fiction, detective fiction, and fantasy. However, the novel and its events convey the issues and the suffering of Victorian society; "novels were valued for being a fictitious meditation on and the meditation of reality" (Brantlinger & B.Thesing, 2002, p. 388)..

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 written by famous novelists at the time depicted reality. Jane Austin's and Walter Scott's works paved the way for the novel to become the dominant genre in the nineteenth century. Reading those works was done by people of different social statuses. Novels were distinguished by the linear plot and narrative structure because they were primarily descriptive in time and space. of their extensive description, those works were very long (Flint, 2011).

Those novels tend to deal with the same topics, including the workers' or the poor's struggle to have a better life; good against evil; and situations in which innocent people. Also, they portrayed the industrialization effect and conditions. Authors intend to give moral lessons through this type of novel (V.U. Ameera, 2021). They used heavy words in order to have their direct effect on the readers' ears but were simple and accessible in presenting it. The characters were given a full description till they seemed to be real, and the majority were from the working class. Many of them were published in serial form, which influenced other writers in the British colonies (ibid).

The realist novel first developed in the nineteenth century and is the form we associate with the work of writers such as Austen, Balzac, George Eliot and Tolstoy. According to Barthes, the

narrative or plot of a realist novel is structured around an opening enigma which throws the conventional cultural and signifying practices into disarray. In a detective novel, for example, the opening enigma is usually is usually a murder, or a theft. The event throws the world into a paranoid state of suspicion; the reader and the protagonist can no longer trust anyone because signs--people, objects, words--no longer have the obvious meaning they had before the event. But the story must move inevitably towards closure, which in the realist novel involves some dissolution or resolution of the enigma: the murderer is caught, the case is solved, and the hero marries the girl. The realist novel drives toward the final re-establishment of harmony and thus re-assures the reader that the value system of signs and cultural practices which he or she shares with the author is not in danger. The political affiliation of the realist novel is thus evident; in trying to show us the world as it is, it often reaffirms, in the last instance, the way things are (Realism and the Realist Novel, n.d).

The realistic novel was quite different from what has been seen with earlier literature. The most popular form of literature has always been poetry. The realistic novel changed that. This form of literature used journalistic techniques in order to make the literature something closer to real life with facts and general stereotypes of human nature. The attention to detail was made to just report the facts, not comment or judge on the scene or character (Mccan, 2008).

A historical novel is a novel set in a period earlier than that of the writer. As a form is generally considered to have originated during the early nineteenth century, which is also an example of a form popular in this era, particularly with the writings of Sir Walter Scott, this mode of writing clearly has many antecedents before that period. As many critics have pointed out, Scott himself was merely developing the novel's fascination with history. Similarly, he was concreting a novel from something that had been a mainstay of other types of literary production for centuries. The use of creative forms to conceptualize, question, and simply present history is a fundamental cultural practice, as can be seen in early examples like Homer, Virgil, or Wu Cheng'en. The rebirth of interest in the classical period in Europe during what has been termed the Renaissance led to a tranche of texts taking historical events as their subject, an early version being Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde (c.1380-87). History as a subject for dramatic consideration, for instance, found its initial flowering in the 1590s with the plays of William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson and others. Subsequently, plays that took history as their subject

became commonplace. The first historical fiction that might be considered a "novel" is Marie-Madeleine de Lafayette's *The Princess of Clevès* (De Groot, 2009).

2.2. Realism in literature

The early decades of the nineteenth century were chaotic and vibrant. Romanticism had tilted the scales of reason, introducing a desire for constant change and an ever-increasing subjectivity. There were styles or moods in literature such as realism, naturalism, regionalism, and impressionism that fell under the banner of realism. They virtually corresponded with generations of European and American history from 1848 to 1914. According to the concept that each generation feels obliged to express itself in a distinctive way, these literary movements might be said to have reversed changing tastes. The restless century that followed the French Movement and the romantic revolution gave no respite for nineteenth-century writers, and this was especially true in the restless century that followed the French Movement and the romantic revolution.

2.2.1. Realism

First of all, realism has always been a debatable issue since it was first introduced to literature. It had a great influence on the 19th century when it started to exist as a reaction to sentimentalism and romanticism. The introduction of realism to the literary world and the basic difference between realism and sentimentalism, as suggested by Kenneth Warren, is that "the redemption of the individual lay within the social world," but in sentimental fiction, "the redemption of the social world lay with the individual" (Chase, 1980).

This distinction gives the reader an introduction to realism by using romanticism. Moreover, since realism was born as an objection to romance, it replaced the vague background of romance with distinct, specified settings. It has been used in literature to diversify the truth. The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms defines realism in literature as "a mode of writing that gives the impression of recording or "reflecting" faithfully an actual way of life" (Baldick, 1990, p.184).

More explicitly realism is:

> A literary method based on detailed accuracy of description as it is in verisimilitude and to a more general attitude that rejects idealization, escapism, and other extravagant qualities of romance in favor of recognizing soberly the actual problems of life. Modern criticism frequently insists that realism is not a direct or simple reproduction of reality (a 'slice of life') but a system of conventions producing a lifelike illusion of some 'real' world outside the text, by processes of selection, exclusion, description, and manners of addressing the reader. In its methods and attitudes, realism may be found as an element in many kinds of writing prior to the 19th century (e.g. in Chaucer or Defoe, in their different ways); but as a dominant literary trend it is associated chiefly with the 19th century novel of middle or lower class life, in which the problems of ordinary people in unremarkable circumstances are rendered with close attention to the details of physical setting and to the complexities of social life (ibid).

The definition of realism is easy to apply to Austen's works, as Scott observed. In Austen's works, characters tend not to be perfect heroes or heroines, but to have flaws or blind spots. Most of the dislikable characters are not outright villains, they are just ordinary selfish or short-sighted people who have both bad and good qualities all mixed up together.

Austen's fictional realms also reflect the social class structure of the real world of her day. We always know what social class a character is from they are rooted in a social class. We also see Austen's characters interact with a large variety of other characters that come from different social strata, showing that society is a complex network of differently defined tiers (Defoe and the Invention, 2020).

As a result, realism is an endeavour to deal with reality without the use of romanticism. In contrast to idealisation and romantic subjectivity in literature, realism attempts to eradicate the traits that characterised the romantic age. Realism as a literary aspect, in terms of methods and attitudes, may be traced back to authors like Geoffrey Chaucer and Daniel Defoe (Baldik, 1990).

2.2.2. Characteristics of Realism

This type of literature aspires to be as true to reality as possible in its portrayal. In writing, realism is about reproducing life. This style was used by the majority of writers throughout this time period, and it has a distinct quality that can be found in every piece of realistic writing. Realism is an aesthetic mode which broke with the classical demands of art to show life as it should be in order to show life as it is. The work of realist art tends to eschew the elevated

subject matter of tragedy in favor of the quotidian; the average, the commonplace, the middle classes and their daily struggles with the mean verities of everyday existence—these are the typical subject matters of realism.

The attempt, however, to render life as it is, to use language as a kind of undistorting mirror of, or perfectly transparent window to, the "real" is fraught with contradictions. Realism in this simplified sense must assume a one-to-one relationship between the signifier (the word "tree," for example) and the thing it represents (the actual arboreal object typically found in forests). Realism must, in effect, disguise its own status as artifice; it must try and force language into transparency through an appeal to our ideologically constructed sense of the real. The reader must be addressed in such a way that he or she is always, in some way, saying, "Yes." That's it, that's how it really is. " (Realism and the Realist Novel, n.d).

Realism can never fully offer up the world in all its complexity, its irreducible plenitude. Its verisimilitude is an effect achieved through the deployment of certain literary and ideological conventions that have been invested with a kind of truth value. The use of an omniscient narrator who gives us access to a character's thoughts, feelings, and motivations, for example, is a highly formalised convention that produces a sense of psychological depth; the characters seem to have lives independent of the text itself. They, of course, do not; the sense that they do is achieved entirely by the fact that both the author and the reader share these codes of the real. The consensual nature of such codes is so deep that we forget that we are in the presence of fiction. As Terry Eagleton notes, "The sign as reflection, expression or representation denies the productive character of language: it suppresses the fact that what we only have a world at all because we have language to signify it." (p. 136).

Realism emphasised the accurate portrayal of ordinary, everyday life. Realism focuses on the immediate, the here and now, the specific actions and their verifiable consequences. Realism strives for a one-to-one correspondence between representation and subject in order to show reality as it is; this form is also known as mimesis. Realists are concerned with the effect of the work on their reader and the reader's life, a pragmatic view. Pragmatism requires the reading of a work to have some verifiable outcome for the reader that will lead to a better life for the reader. This lends an ethical tendency to realism while focusing on common actions and minor catastrophes of middle-class society (Scheidenhelm, Para. 3).

Realism was a reaction to the imaginary worlds of Romanticism. Realist authors wanted to embrace ordinary life, not to escape from it as the Romantics often did. The realist's portrayed characters and events as they actually were and wrote about everyday experiences as they saw, heard, und felt them broadly defined as "the faithful representation of reality" or "verisimilitude," realism is a literary technique practiced by many schools of writing. Although strictly speaking, realism is a technique, it also denotes a particular kind of subject matter, especially the representation of middle-class life. A reaction against romanticism, an interest in scientific method, the systematizing of the study of documentary history, influence of rational philosophy all affected the rise of realism. According to William Harmon and Hugh Holman, "Where romanticists transcend the immediate to find the ideal, and naturalists plumb the actual or superficial to find the scientific laws that control its actions, realists center their attention to a remarkable degree on the immediate, the here and now, the specific action, and the verifiable consequence" (Hugh Holman & Harmon,1992).

Realism examines the facts of any situation without regard to personal predisposition, idealism, or romantic coloration. The mundane was treated honestly, and characters from everyday life were used. Society's upheavals, such as the aftermath of the Civil War in the United States and the advent of Darwin's Theory of Evolution and its impact on biblical interpretation, prompted this focus (Scheidenhelm, para. 5).

2.3. Charles Dickens

2.3.1. Dickens Biography

Charles Dickens was born on February 7, 1812, in Portsmouth, on the southern coast of England. He was the eighth child of his father, John Dickens, a marine writer, and his mother, Elizabeth Barrow, who had tried but failed to become a teacher. The family of Dickens remained poor, despite their tremendous efforts. The first transfer was in 1816 to Chatham, Kent, and then in 1822 to the slums of Camden Town, London, where their financial condition got worse. In 1824, his father was imprisoned for debt, and Charles was forced to leave school at the age of 12 to work in a boot-blacking factory to support his family. His father, luckily, received a family inheritance, which helped to pay off his debt and gave Charles a chance to return to school.

In an ideal world, Charles Dickens would have left fifteen novels, besides short stories, essays, articles, and novels. His second novel, after his first book sketches, was Oliver Twist, which is a reflection of his miserable childhood.

Charles Dickens died at home on June 9th, 1870 after suffering a stroke. Contrary to his wish to be buried in Rochester Cathedral, he was buried in the poets' corner of Westminster Abby (Fletcher, 2007).

2.3.2. General Characteristics of Dickens Works

Style is presented as a value and pleasure in Dickensian habits of characterization, especially in the way characters talk (Talor, 2003). Charles Dickens was criticised 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 feels, behaves, and looks (Talor, 2003). Hyland (1981, cited by Al-Maliki, 2014) states that Dickens has developed and enhanced the techniques of suspense to a high art in his works. Charles Dickens represented his honesty and truth with a kind of caricature (Bloom, 2006). He never stops performing in his work; he is a superb performer (ibid).

He utilises images that he creates and themes that deal with social issues. Dickens's style in "*Hard Times*" is 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 labelled Charles Dickens as a feminist, realist, and satirist. Al-Maliki (2014) states that the novel "*Hard Times*" is an example of the standards of female discourse in which the females of the fictional world are restricted by their social position, living under Grad Grind's powerful system of discourse. The use of satire is a common feature in Charles Dickens's style as a way to criticise 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 is what makes his writing colourful (Boghain, 2010).

Naturalism is another feature characterised 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 Grad Grind's

family story in *Hard Times* (Makati, 2008). The use of humour by Dickens is an abuse and it is observed that he rarely uses it just when he portrays the head of Mr. Grad Grind (Collins, 1970).

Charles Dickens's style is characterised by the use of figures of speech and tropes to criticise Coketown's issues, particularly the lives of labourers in "*Hard Times"* and make 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 is florid and flowery, with a strong comedic undercurrent. He is well-known for his satires of British aristocratic elitism, in which he refers to one character as the "Noble Refrigerator." Some of Dickens' famous flights of fancy include comparing orphans to stocks and shares, people to tugboats, and dinner-party guests to furniture. Many of his characters' names give the reader a clue as to their involvement in the plot, such as Mr. Murdstone in David Copperfield, whose name is clearly a combination of "murder" and "stony coldness." His writing style is a blend of imagination and realism.

Characters

Dickens is famed for his depiction of the hardships of the working class, his intricate plots, and his sense of humor. But he is perhaps most famous for the characters he created. Early in his career, his novels were praised for their ability to capture the average 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 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 Moocher 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

Even though he made measures to hide what he considered his humiliating, humble origins, Dickens' autobiographical components are clearly obvious in his writings. The scenes from "*Bleak House"* of endless court proceedings and legal disputes are based on the author's brief work as a court reporter. *David Copperfield* is one of the most plainly autobiographical. Dickens' own father was imprisoned for debt, and this became a recurring motif in his works, with the vivid picture of life in the Marshalsea jail in *Little Dorrit* based on Dickens' personal experiences there. Many of his works, such as *David Copperfield's* Little Emily, include childhood sweethearts and 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 (Chouiref & Aidi, 2016).

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 and accessible, and the series of regular cliffhangers 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' 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 month's 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 numbers. Rather, the reading public was forced to wait two months to discover if the boy lived (ibid).

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 able 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 series, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, which is a chase story. In this novel, Nell and her grandfather are fleeing from the villain, Quilp. The progress of the novel follows the gradual success of that pursuit. As Dickens wrote and published the weekly installments, 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 structures of a comedy and 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 (Chouiref & Aidi, 2016).

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, which 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).

Conclusion

Victorian literature is a subject far too extensive and complex to be covered in a single chapter. This chapter presents a historical overview of English literature throughout the Victorian Era, demonstrating how the period's complexity resulted in significant changes in literature. When considering how the Realism movement influenced numerous writers during this time period, Charles Dickens stands at the top of the list as one of the Realism movement's markers.

CHAPTER THREE

The application of Binary opposition in *"A Tale of Two Cities"*

3. Introduction

This chapter is a literary analysis of Charles Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities. Its aim is to understand how Binary Oppositions in the text contribute to the formation of many themes present in the tale, its characters, and setting. First, a brief description of the novel's historical backdrop is presented, followed by a plot summary. Second, the chosen work is being examined. Finally, a conclusion is reached based on the comparison of the analytical results.

3.1.1. Methodoology

The method used in this research is analytical-descriptive. Since it is corpus-based, we seek to analyse at least the third of the novel in which relevant passages from the novel are chosen and examined using the main principles of the Binary Opposition Approach, with reference to setting, themes, and characters, with a comprehensive discussion at the conclusion. Then, we give and explain the findings of this analysis.

3.1.2. Corpus Description

The novel *"A Tale of Two Cities"* is the second historical novel written by Dickens during his lifetime. It is divided into three parts, the first of which is named "Recalled to Life" and has six chapters. The second, "The Golden Thread," has twenty-four chapters, while the third, "The Track of the Storm," has fifteen chapters. Charles Darnay is the novel's protagonist. One of Charles Dickens' most intriguing novels is a tale of contradiction, revenge, and sacrifice; hate and love. It portrays the journey of a family threatened by the horrible events of the past. In this study, which is corpus-based, we examined the BO in setting, themes (light and darkness, life and death), and characters. We examined only four, which are Lucie and Madame Defarge, Charles Darnay and Sydney Carton.

3.2.1. Historical context of *"A Tale of Two Cities"*

"A Tale of Two Cities" was published serially in 1859. As a historical novel about the French Revolution, however, it takes us back to 18th-century London and Paris.

Though "*A Tale of Two Cities"* begins in 1770 with Doctor Manette's release from the Bastille and ends in late 1793 or early 1794, the story as a whole covers a much broader period. In the larger view, the novel begins in 1757 (the year of Doctor Manette's incarceration under the *ancien régime*) and its final scene anticipates a post-revolutionary Paris. However, as a historical novel organised around the events of the French Revolution (1789–1794), the major historical features of "*A Tale of Two Cities"* are drawn from the major events of the revolutionary period in France – the fall of the Bastille (July 14, 1789), the September Massacres (September 2–6, 1792), and the Reign of Terror (1793–1794).

From a historical point of view, "*A Tale of Two Cities"* gives a rather compressed account of the French Revolution; yet this is appropriate in a novel concerned as much with the lives of private individuals as with public events. Dickens researched the revolutionary period carefully in preparation for writing "*A Tale of Two Cities",* and the novel maintains a high level of historical accuracy. Complete historical explanations will be found in the notes that accompany each issue of this re-serialization.

In 1859, when "*A Tale of Two Cities"* was first serialized, England was experiencing a period of social and political stability. It had long enjoyed a stable monarchy, and it had become—partly through its leading role in the Industrial Revolution and through colonial expansion—a prosperous nation and a major European power. France was comparatively tumultuous. After the French Revolution, Napoleon Bonaparte became emperor (in 1804) and started on his campaign to take over Europe. In 1814, the French monarchy was restored by the forces allied against Napoleon (including England), and the Emperor was sent into exile. He returned, however, and regained power for a brief period before his final defeat in 1815. France then had a king again, but monarchical rule was challenged by the revolutions of 1830 and 1848, the latter establishing the Second Republic. In 1848, Louis Napoleon, a nephew of Napoleon

Bonaparte, became president of the Second Republic; in 1852, however, he declared himself emperor. The Second Republic then became the Second Empire.

Though relations were essentially peaceful between England and the Second Empire, the British tended to perceive a second Emperor Napoleon as a possible threat, and the French were not endeared to the English by the events of 1858: An assassination attempt on Louis Napoleon and his Empress disclosed a plot organised by a group of French people living in England. This plot, perpetrated with grenades of Birmingham manufacture, increased French-English tensions in the year before "*A Tale of Two Cities*" was published; however, it did not have serious consequences for international relations.

Our own country was on the verge of a major historical event in 1859. Having gained its independence in the period represented in "*A Tale of Two Cities,*" America was about to embark, just after the novel's publication, on the Civil War (1860–65). (Discovering Dickens, 2004).

3.2.2. Plot summary of "A Tale of Two Cities"

"*A Tale of Two Cities*" is a historical novel written by Charles Dickens and published in 1859. It is the second historical novel written by Dickens during his lifetime.

With a magnificent opening, Dickens tells a story of contrasts and parallels between two European capitals, Paris and London, before and during the French Revolution of 1978. In a novel that seeks to examine the nature of revolution, the plot is set in and revolves around the circumstances that led to this revolution and the reign of terror.

The story begins with a mysterious message being delivered to Mr. Lorry, who responds with the words "recalled to life." the fact that his friend is still alive. Dr. Alexander Manette, who was imprisoned in the Bastille for 18 years in secret, When Mr. Lorry and Lucie arrive in Paris, they meet Ernest Defarge, the doctor's former servant, who is caring for him. Defarge owns and manages a wine shop in Saint Antoine's with his wife, Madame Thérése Defarge. Monsieur Defarge takes Mr. Lorry and Lucie to the garret chamber where he is holding Doctor Manette, telling them that the doctor's years in prison have damaged him significantly. Doctor Manette, thin and pallid, sits quietly and intently sewing shoes at a shoemaker's bench. He barely reacts to

Defarge and Mr. Lorry's questions, but as Lucie approaches him, he remembers his wife and begins to cry. Lucie comforts him, and they take him to England that night (Kondelik, 2021).

Five years later, Jerry Cruncher, the porter for Tellson's Bank, delivers a message to Mr. Lorry who is at a courthouse. Mr. Lorry has been called with Dr Manette and Lucie as a witness for the trial of Charles Darnay. Who is a French aristocrat accused of revealing secret information to King of France, is on trial for treason against the English crown. Lucie testifies that Charles was quite helpful in caring for her father during the trip, and Dr.Manette testifies that he can remember nothing before his arrival in London. Mr. Stryver, his defence lawyer, cross-examines one of the people who have come to testify against Darnay, John Barsad, who claims that he would recognise Darnay anywhere. So the lawyer points out that his assistant, Sydney Carton, shows a significant resemblance to Darnay. This evidence throws into doubt Darnay's positive identification as the person seen giving secret information, so the court acquits Darnay. Carton, Stryver and Darnay begin spending time at the Manette home after the trial, clearly attracted to Lucie's beauty and kindness. Stryver wants to propose to her, while Carton confesses his love to Lucie, but he realises that his love for her is unrequited, because he knows she loves Darnay. However, he promises that he would happily give his life to save the life of anyone she cares about.

In France, the Marquis St. Evérmonde (Darnay's uncle) runs over a boy and kills him, and the only thing the cruel Marquis worries about is whether his carriage was damaged. Charles Evérmonde (Charles Darnay) returns to France to visit his uncle, the Marquis, to renounce his inheritance from the Evérmonde family. He shows his displeasure with his family's treatment of the lower classes and declares that he is going to live a different sort of life. That night, Gaspard (the child's father) kills the Marquis while he sleeps, leaving a note signed "Jacques," a very common name for Frenchmen.

A year later, back in England, Darnay is a French teacher and fully in love with Lucie. He discusses marriage with Dr. Manette and confesses that his family name is "Evérmonde" and not "Darnay." As a result of this discovery, Dr. Manette falls into a short but deep depression. Because he remembers how he suffered at the hands of Charles's uncle and father, the doctor

suffers a relapse into his previous mental problem for several days. Despite this, he gives Charles his approval. Lucie and Darnay marry and soon have a daughter.

The French Revolution began in 1789 with the storming of the Bastille, led by Ernest Defarge. The revolutionaries (in which everyone uses the name Jacques) arrest aristocrats and execute them on the guillotine. Three years later, Charles receives a letter from his former servant, Gabelle, in France, informing him that he has been arrested and will be executed. His only chance of survival is if Charles returns to France and explains to the court how the servant helps the poor and how he is not responsible for what the Evérmonde family did. Darnay goes to France, feeling obligated to his servant and unaware of the danger that awaits him as an aristocrat. When he reaches there, revolutionaries take him to La Force prison in secret, with no way of contacting anyone and no possibility of a trial.

Tellson's Bank sends Mr. Lorry to Paris in order to rescue as many of the bank's French clients' assets as possible. Lucie and Dr. Manette, as well as her daughter and Miss Pross, soon follow. Because of Dr. Manette's horrific mistreatment as a previous prisoner, he has a significant influence on the revolutionaries whose misery he has shared. He is able to earn the trust and confidence of the audience and manages to keep Charles safe until the trial. Dr. Manette's powerful testimony at the trial frees Darnay. But he is arrested again by the revolutionaries just hours after being reunited with his wife and daughter, and is denounced by Monsieur and Madame Defarge and Dr. Manette. The doctor denies this. However, the Defarges presented a letter written in prison by Dr. Manette blaming all Evrémondes for the death of Madame Defarge's family and imprisoning him, and Dr. Manette cursed the entire family, down to the last descendent, not knowing, of course, that his daughter would marry the Marquis' nephew. At this time, Charles is sentenced to death and sent back to prison.

Sydney Carton arrives in Paris earlier, but he makes his reappearance only after the trail to help Lucie and her loved ones, as he promises her. That night, Carton hears Madame Defarge in her wine shop planning to kill Lucie and her daughter in order to destroy the Evérmonde dynasty. Sydney Carton meets John Barsad and discovers that he is working as a spy in prison. So he blackmails and threatens to reveal Barsad as a spy and forces him to help Charles. That night, Carton makes plans with Mr. Lorry to get everyone in a carriage and escape to England. With

Barsad's help, Carton enters Charles's prison cell, drugs him, and changes clothes with Darnay. Barsad carries Darnay to Mr. Lorry's carriage, which speeds away to England.

Meanwhile, Madame Defarge plots to have Lucie and her daughter arrested as part of her revenge on the Evérmonde's descendants. She comes to their house after they have left, but she is confronted by Miss Pross, who fights her. Madame Defarge is killed by her own hand when her weapon unintentionally fires. As the Darnays, Dr. Manette, and Mr. Lorry make their way to London, Sydney Carton is on his way to the guillotine in place of Charles Darnay. Carton walks to his death, strengthened and comforted by the knowledge that his sacrifice has saved the woman he loves and her family. He is executed, uttering another of the most famous lines in literature before he dies: "It is a far, far better thing that I do than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known" (Dickens, 1859, p.537).

3.2.3. Major Characters in "*A Tale of Two Cities*"

Figure 4: The major characters
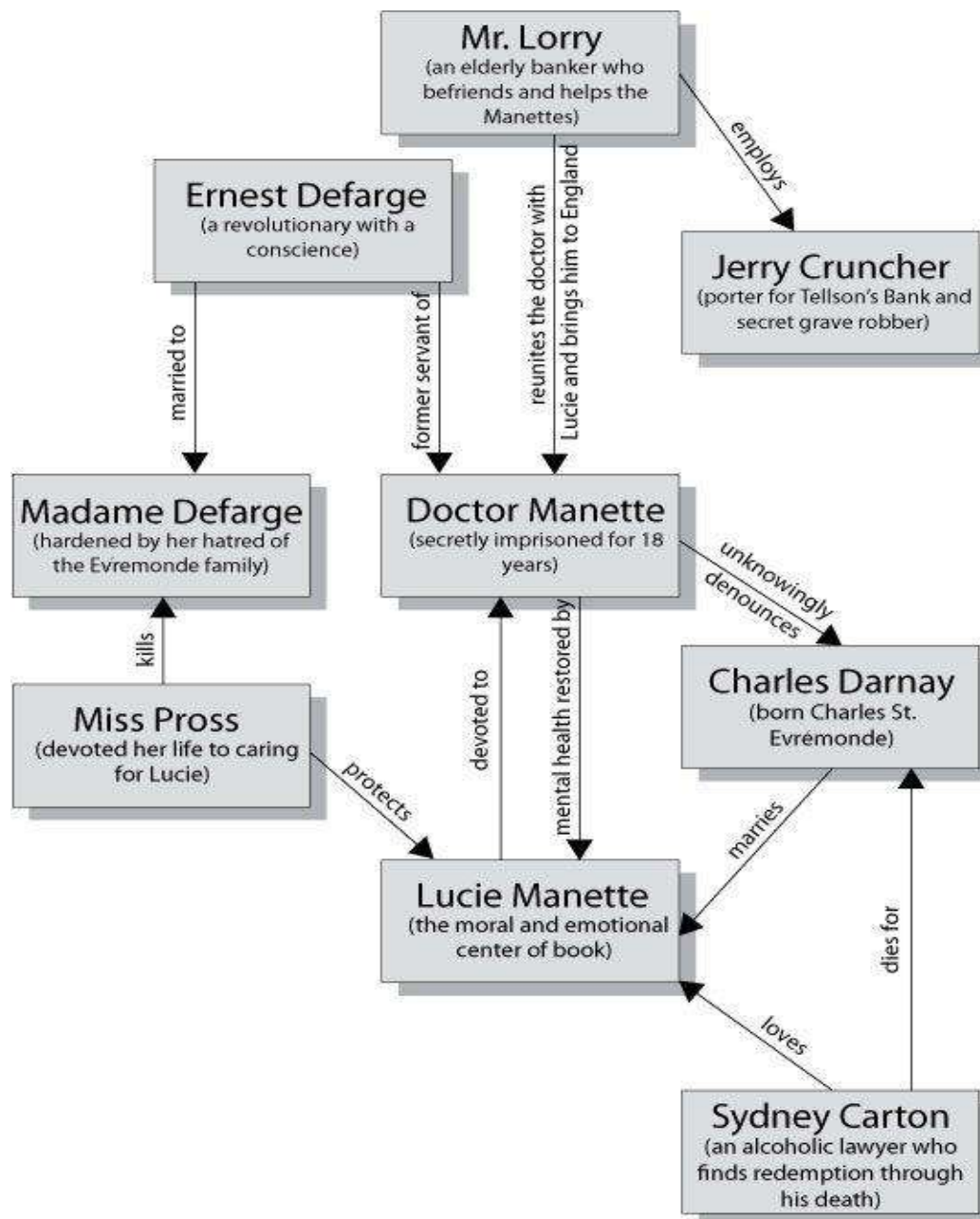
(Kalil, 2022)

Charles Dickens frequently employs key characters who appear to be at odds with one another; some are perfect, while others are not. The novel's characters are:

Dr. Alexandre Manette

The novel's enigma is one of the novel's most dynamic motifs. Lucie's father was a talented physician who was secretly imprisoned in the Bastille, where he spent 18 years of his life unjustly, causing him to suffer from mental trauma. When he was set free he made remarkable recovery under Lucy's devoted care.

Lucie Manette

Lucie is the golden thread who ties together all of the other characters, she marries Charles Darnay. And is adored by Sydney Carton; her goodness and connection to Darnay make her a target for Madame Defarge.

Charles Darnay

A French aristocrat renounces his family heirloom and adopts a new surname. Then he relocates to London. He meets and falls in love with Lucie Manette and marries her. His secret is that he is of the same French aristocratic family that imprisoned her father. During the revolution, he is put on trial for the sins of his family and is saved from the execution by Sydney Carton.

Sydney Carton

A lazy, alcoholic attorney who works with Stryver. Who can't seem to get even a smidgen of interest in his own life .The strong love that feels for Lucie, transforms him into a man of great worth. To ensure Lucie's happiness, he sacrifices his life to save Darnay from death. He replaces him at the execution.

Monsieur Defarge

A fair businessman and a wine-shop owner. He was Dr. Manette's servant before becoming a revolutionary leader; he is the husband of Therese Defarge. Monsieur Defarge is a compassionate man.

Madame Defarge

She is Ernest Defarge's spouse. Her motivation for a revolution, unlike her husband's, is personal vengeance against the French aristocracy. She is the embodiment of the revolution's brutal and violent side.

Mr. Jarvis Lorry

Jarvis Lorry is a Tellson's Bank manager, and a loyal friend to the Manette family. Lorry shepherds the family out of Paris twice; after the doctor release from prison and during the revolution.

Miss Pross

The servant who raised Lucie, and takes care of her while Doctor Manette is in prison. She calls Lucie her "Ladybird", to safeguard the family; she accidentally kills M Defarge while assisting Lucie Bag from Paris.

C. J. Stryver

Selfish and ambitious lawyer, he employs Carton and defends for Darnay in England.

3.3.1. Binary opposition in setting

As the title of the novel indicates, the setting is significant. Charles Dickens' *"A Tale of Two Cities"* tells about the chaos of the French Revolution by painting Paris at the beginning of the novel as a very gloomy and hopeless place; whereas and London is painted as a symbolic contrast to Paris which represents stability and peace.

> It was the **best of times**, it was the **worst of times**, it was the **age of wisdom**, it was the **age of foolishness**, it was the **epoch of belief**, it was the **epoch of incredulity**, it was the **season of Light**, it was the **season of Darkness**, it was the **spring of hope**, it was the **winter of despair**, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to **Heaven**, we were all going direct the **other way**—in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.(Dickens,1859,p. 3) (The words are highlighted by us, the researchers)

According to the quote above, Charles Dickens uses the antithesis technique. According to Abrams (1957), "an antithesis is a contrast or opposition in the meanings of contiguous phrases or clauses" (p. 11). In his famous opening, Dickens used opposed concepts and meanings as a comparison. He used this technique to show how the two cities were contradictory in religion, wisdom, hope...

Table 1: The use of antithesis in the setting in TTC

Words	Their opposites
Best of times	Worst of times
Age of wisdom	Age of foolishness
Epoch of belief	Epoch of incredulity
Season of light	Season of darkness
Spring of hope	Winter of despair
Heaven	The other way (Hell)

The first feature of Binary Opposition in the novel is explained in the two cities' relationships to one another. Dickens (1859) depicts the smallest details of Paris and London. And the majority of the novel's events take place at Tellson's Bank, the Bastille, the streets of Paris, and a few London locations. He paints a vivid picture for the readers through his description of the setting in both cities and gives them the opportunity to imagine how the two cities were at that time. And he starts by describing the Dover road in Chapter four.

> The little, narrow, crooked town of Dover hid itself away from the beach, and ran its head into the chalk cliffs, like a marine ostrich. The beach was a desert of heaps of sea and stones tumbling wildly about, and the sea did what it liked, and what it liked was destruction. It thundered at the town, and thundered at the cliffs, and brought the coast down, madly. The air among the houses was of so strong a piscatory flavour, that one might have supposed sick fish went up to be dipped in it, as sick people went down to be dipped in the sea. A little fishing was done in the port, and a quantity of strolling about by night, and looking seaward;

> particularly at those times when the tide made, and was near flood. Small tradesmen, who did no business whatever, sometimes unaccountably realised large fortunes, and it was remarkable that nobody in the neighbourhood could endure a lamp-lighter. (pp. 25-26)

Another description of the setting is the city of Paris. In chapter five, Dickens (1859) depicts Saint Antoine's Street as a gloomy, dirty, and poor place and paints the suffering of the people who are living there.

> Its abiding-place was in all things fitted to it. A narrow winding street, full of offence and stench, with other narrow winding streets diverging, all peopled by rags and nightcaps, and all smelling of rags and nightcaps, and all visible things with a brooding look upon them that looked ill. In the hunted air of the people there was yet some wild-beast thought of the possibility of turning at bay. Depressed and slinking though they were, eyes of fire were not wanting among them; nor compressed lips, white with what they suppressed; nor foreheads knitted into the likeness of the gallows rope they mused about enduring, or inflicting. The trade signs (and they were almost as many as the shops) were all grim illustrations of Want. The butcher and the porkman painted up only the leanest scrags of meat; the baker, the coarsest of meagre loaves. The people rudely pictured as drinking in the wine-shops, croaked over their scanty measures of thin wine and beer, and were gloweringly confidential together. Nothing was represented in a flourishing condition, save tools and weapons; but, the cutler's knives and axes were sharp and bright, the smith's hammers were heavy, and the gunmaker's stock was murderous. (pp. 42-43)

Both cities play a significant part in the novel because of the way Dickens compares and contrasts them. He prefers a combination in which he often selects a panoramic image for Paris, enabling us to see the streets and their interconnections, while London is obscured and restricted to a limited number of places. Moreover, the difference between them draws attention to issues that would not have been noticed before.

Binary Opposition is not only in place but also in the historical period in which the novel is set. While Dickens (1859) depicts England as a peaceful and stable place, France is in the midst of a revolutionary and horrific period in which people suffer from hunger and persecution.

> And now that the cloud settled on Saint Antoine, which a momentary gleam had driven from his sacred countenance, the darkness of it was heavy—cold, dirt, sickness, ignorance, and want were the lords in waiting on the saintly presence— nobles of great power all of them; but, most especially the last. Samples of a people that had undergone a terrible grinding and re-grinding in the mill, and certainly not in the fabulous mill which ground old people young, shivered at every corner, passed in and out at every doorway, looked from every window, fluttered in every vestige of a garment that the wind shook. The mill which had worked them down was the mill that grinds young people old; the children had ancient faces and grave voices; and upon them, and upon the grown faces, and ploughed into every furrow of age and coming up afresh, was the sign, Hunger. It was prevalent everywhere. Hunger was pushed out of the tall houses, in the

> wretched clothing that hung upon poles and lines; Hunger was patched into them with straw and rag, and wood and paper; Hunger was repeated in every fragment of the small modicum of fire-wood that the man sawed off; Hunger stared down from the smokeless chimneys, and started up from the filthy street that had no offal, among its refuse, of anything to eat. Hunger was the inscription on the baker's shelves, written in every small loaf of his scanty stock of bad bread; at the sausage shop, in every dead-dog preparation that was offered for sale. (Dickens, 1859, pp.41-42)

In 1775, France was in a state of extreme poverty, misery, and corruption. Dickens' use of contrast perfectly represents the instability of the historical period in France. He portrays Paris as violent and chaotic, with those in control of the feudal system exploiting their victims more and more each day. Minor infractions may lead to serious bodily penalties. However, the conditions in England are different. They are not perfect and the best, but at least people are living in peace.

> On this certain fine Sunday, Mr. Lorry walked towards Soho, early in the afternoon, for three reasons of habit. Firstly, because, on fine Sundays, he often walked out, before dinner, with the Doctor and Lucie; secondly, because, on unfavourable Sundays, he was accustomed to be with them as the family friend, talking, reading, looking out of window, and generally getting through the day; thirdly, because he happened to have his own little shrewd doubts to solve, and knew how the ways of the Doctor's household pointed to that time as a likely time for solving them....There ought to have been a tranquil bark in such an anchorage, and there was. The Doctor occupied two floors of a large still house, where several callings purported to be pursued by day, but whereof little was audible any day, and which was shunned by all of them at night....These, however, were only the exceptions required to prove the rule that the sparrows in the planetree behind the house, and the echoes in the corner before it, had their own way from Sunday morning unto Saturday night. (Dickens, 1859, p.128-129)

For two reasons, the novel portrays the setting of a certain time and location. Because it presents the historical side to highlight the violent aspect of the revolution in Paris and stability and peace in London as a message that reflects to the reader two contrasting realities, one about freedom and the other about oppression. It is obvious at this point that the title choice is not absurd. Based on its recurring appearance, BO appears to be a stylistic choice for Dickens to demonstrate that difference.

3.3.2. Binary opposition in themes

"A Tale of Two Cities" is a novel that depicts the social life in London and Paris between 1775 and 1792. It represents the conflict between good and bad, love and hate, light and darkness, peace and violence, rich and poor, life and death...

Through the novel, Charles Dickens draws a realistic picture of the French Revolution, which is a period of misery, hunger, violence, and blood lust. The novel is about contrasts, from the title to the last line. And he emphasizes the duality between the two cities.

3.3.2.1. Light and Darkness

The novel is dominated by the theme of light and darkness. These concepts are used to contrast the two societies and the characters. Light refers to London as being peaceful, ordered, and stable. While Paris is the city of revolution, persecution, and danger, which is a representation of the darkness, And Dickens (1859) identifies this contrast in the opening lines:

> It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of **Light**, it was the season of **Darkness.** (p.3)

These lines describe perfectly how the two cities are contradictory. It is the season of **light** for London. While France is in a **dark** period where the king is greedy and does not care about his people; there is corruption in the church; and only the poor people suffer. Dickens (1859) depicts this process most vividly in his description of the depraved Marquis de St. Evérmonde and his brutal   treatment of the lower classes who reside in the region under his rule. He writes in the second book, chapter eight:

> The village had its one poor street, with its poor brewery, poor tannery, poor tavern, poor stable-yard for relays of post-horses, poor fountain, all usual poor appointments. It had its poor people too. All its people were poor, and many of them were sitting at their doors, shredding spare onions and the like for supper, while many were at the fountain, washing leaves and grasses, and any such small yieldings of the earth that could be eaten. Expressive signs of what made them poor were not wanting; the tax for the state, the tax for the church, the tax for the lord, tax local and tax general, were to be paid here and to be paid there, according to solemn inscription in the little village, until the wonder was, that there was any village left unswallowed . . . Monsieur the Marquis cast his eyes over the submissive faces that drooped before him, as the like of himself had drooped before Monseigneur of the Court—only the difference was, that these faces drooped merely to suffer, and not to propitiate—when a grizzled mender of the roads joined the group. (pp.160-161)

The previous passage explains the suffering of the lower class in that period. And to make this vivid for the readers, Dickens (1859) gives the opposite side of that, which is the life in the other

city. At the same time, people in England have a good and comfortable life. In chapter seventeen of the second book, he depicts the joyful life of Lucie and her father.

> NEVER DID THE SUN go down with a brighter glory on the quiet corner in Soho than one memorable evening when the Doctor and his daughter sat under the plane-tree together. Never did the moon rise with a milder radiance over great London than on that night when it found them still seated under the tree, and shone upon their faces through its leaves.
>
> Lucie was to be married to-morrow. She had reserved this last evening for her father, and they sat alone under the plane-tree.
>
> "You are happy, my dear father?"
>
> "Quite, my child."
>
> They had said little, though they had been there a long time. When it was yet light enough to work and read, she had neither engaged herself in her usual work, nor had she read to him. She had employed herself in both ways, at his side under the tree, many and many a time; but, this time was not quite like any other, and nothing could make it so. (p.265)

Dickens uses the theme of light and darkness in his characters as well. Dr. Manette is a victim of the Evérmonde's tyranny. He was imprisoned in the Bastille for 18 years in secret. And after he is released from prison, he lives in the garret chamber of the wine shop. After that, his life is a constant conflict against the shadows of madness and misery that he got from the Bastille. He becomes a prisoner of his traumatic past, and he capitulates to darkness.

> The faintness of the voice was pitiable and dreadful. It was not the faintness of physical weakness, though confinement and hard fare no doubt had their part in it. Its deplorable peculiarity was, that it was the faintness of solitude and disuse It was like the last feeble echo of a sound made long and long ago. So entirely had it lost the life and resonance of the human voice, that it affected the senses like a once beautiful colour, faded away into a poor weak stain. So sunken and suppressed it was, that it was like a voice underground. So expressive it was of a hopeless and lost creature, that a famished traveller, wearied out by lonely wandering in a wilderness, would have remembered home and friends in such a tone before lying down to die. (Dickens, 1859, pp.55-56)

According to the quotation above, Dr. Manette is lost in the darkness; he forgets all about his past life, even his profession. However, his daughter, Lucie, is the only one who can save him and bring him from darkness to light. As Dickens (1859) writes:

> Only his daughter had the power of charming this black brooding from his mind. She was the golden thread that united him to a Past beyond his misery, and to a Present beyond his misery: and the sound of her voice, the light of her face, the touch of her hand, had a strong beneficial influence with him almost always. Not

absolutely always, for she could recall some occasions on which her power had failed; but, they were few and slight and she believed them over. (p.111)

Light and darkness are abstract ideas. They exist as concepts, but light requires a substance in order for a human to feel at ease with it. Many societies have varied perspectives on the concept of light and darkness. However, we concentrate on how these notions interact in literature to demonstrate the depth of the idea that the writer intends to convey, which is the reflection of these concepts on the social and individual levels.

3.3.2.2. Life and Death

These themes are central to the novel. Dickens ties the concept of death with the concept of sacrifice. Carton's death is the story's greatest sacrifice. He expresses his faith in the possibilities of sacrifice and rebirth, in both individual and societal. In the novel, Sydney Carton's death gives Lucie Manette, Charles Darnay a new peaceful life. And he achieves heroism by submitting to the guillotine, transforming him into a Christ-like figure, and his own life earns value and meaning. Additionally, the novel's last chapter tells that Carton, like Christ, will be resurrected, reborn in the hearts of those he sacrificed to save. Furthermore, in the novel, Dickens (1859) asserts that the demise of France's old system opens the door for a wonderful and reborn Paris.

I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith the Lord: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he **live**: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never **die** . . . I see Barsad, and Cly, Defarge, The Vengeance, the Juryman, the Judge, long ranks of the **new** oppressors who have risen on the destruction of the **old**, perishing by this retributive instrument, before it shall cease out of its present use. I see a beautiful city and a brilliant people rising from this abyss, and in their struggles to be truly free, in their triumphs and defeats, through long, long years to come, I see the evil of **this time**, and of the **previous time** of which this is the natural birth, gradually making expiation for itself, and wearing out. (pp. 535-536)

In the novel's last chapter, Sydney Carton, in his thoughts, imagines the peaceful and happy life of Lucie and her family. He is seen as a negative person, but his actions and thoughts reveal his inner intentions, which are noble. 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."

> I see the lives for which I lay down my life, peaceful, useful, prosperous, and happy, in that England which I shall see no more. I see Her with a child upon her bosom, who bears my name. I see her father, aged and bent, but otherwise restored, and faithful to all men in his healing office, and at peace. I see the good old man, so long their friend, in ten years' time enriching them with all he has, and passing tranquilly to his reward.
>
> I see that I hold a sanctuary in their hearts, and in the hearts of their descendants, generations hence. I see her, an old woman, weeping for me on the anniversary of this day. I see her and her husband, their course done, lying side by side in their last earthly bed, and I know that each was not more honoured and held sacred in the other's soul than I was in the souls of both. (p.536)

Table 2: The use of the opposed terms in TTC

Words	Their opposites
Live	Die
New	Old
This time	Previous time

The table above shows the opposed terms that Dickens uses. Binary opposition shows that a text contains opposing sides. The objective of this approach is to study a subject from many angles rather than just one, which has more value. Many people believe that a hero is someone who is born perfect. However, it is not necessary to be like that. Sydney Carton's character is an illustration of this. When he sacrifices his life for Lucie and her family, he makes it worthwhile. It is a far, far better thing that I do than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known. (Dickens, 1859, p.537) Why would a man so improved wish for death? Carton is not trying to escape his miserable life; he merely realizes that in exchange for his life, a new family can continue to prosper in England, safe from the radicalism that has taken power in France. In Carton's mind, there is only peace and absolute pride in this decision, not misery. (*Analysis of the Character of Sydney Carton in Charles Dickens' Novel A Tale of Two Cities,* 2021)

3.3.3. Binary opposition in characters

Charles Dickens is considered as one of the greatest character creators in English literature. According to Baxter (1966) "Dickens' character types established themselves in the public mind like personal experiences. Unreal and impossible as these types were, speaking a language never heard in life, moving like pieces of simple mechanism always in one way, these unreal figures affected the uncritical reader with the force of reality; and they did so in virtue of their embodiment of some real characteristic vividly presented. The imagination of the author laid hold of some well-marked physical trait, some peculiarity of aspect or manner which every one recognized at once; and the force with which this was presented made it occupy the mind to the exclusion of all critical doubts; only reflection could detect the incongruity." (p. 26) Dickens frequently uses major characters that appear to be somehow contradictory. In *"A Tale of Two Cities,"* he creates numerous well-loved and interesting characters, which he depicts and describes in a way that makes each one feel real, as John Forster said that Dickens made "characters real existences, not by describing them but by letting them describe themselves".

3.3.3.1. Miss Lucie and Madame Defarge

In the novel, Dickens tends to identify characters by their opposites. Duality is best exemplified by the characters of Lucie and Madame Defarge, who portray complex emotions and behaviours. Dickens (1859) starts by describing the physical appearance of both characters, which are totally the opposite.

> A young lady of not more than seventeen, in a riding cloak, and still holding her straw travelling hat by its ribbon in her hand. As his eyes rested on a short, slight, pretty figure, a quantity of golden hair, a pair of blue ees that met his own with an inquiring look, and a forehead with a singular capacity (remembering how young and smooth it was) of lifting and knitting itself into an expression that was not quite one of perplexity, or wonder, or alarm, or merely of a bright fixed attention, though it included all the four expressions—as his eyes rested on these things, a sudden vivid likeness passed before him of a child whom he had held in his arms on the passage across that very Channel, one cold time, when the hail drifted heavily and the sea ran high. The likeness passed away, say, like a breath along the surface of the gaunt pier-glass behind her, on the frame of which, a hospital procession of Negro Cupids, several headless and all cripples, were offering black baskets of Dead-Sea fruit to black divinities of the feminine gender, and he made his formal bow to Miss Manette. (pp. 27-28)

Charles Dickens describes Lucie in a way that the reader would imagine her character as a beautiful, conservative, and innocent lady. However, the French woman is portrayed as totally different, and Madame Defarge is an example of that.

> Madame Defarge, his wife, sat in the shop behind the counter as he came in. Madame Defarge was a stout woman, of about his own age, with a watchful eye that seldom seemed to look at anything, a large hand heavily ringed, a steady face, strong features, and great composure of manner. There was a character about Madame Defarge, from which one might have predicated that she did not often make mistakes against herself in any of the reckonings over which she presided. Madame Defarge, being sensitive to cold, was wrapped in fur, and had a quantity of bright shawl twined about her head, though not to the concealment of her large ear-rings. Her knitting was before her, but she had laid it down to pick her teeth with a toothpick. Thus engaged, with her right elbow supported by her left hand, Madame Defarge said nothing when her lord came in, but coughed just one grain of cough. This, in combination with the lifting of her darkly-defined eyebrows over her toothpick by the breadth of a line, suggested to her husband that he would do well to look round the shop among the customers for any new customer who had dropped in while he stepped over the way. (Dickens, 1859, pp.45-46)

In the previous passages, Lucie is described as a young lady with a beautiful figure, while Madame Defarge is older than her with strong features, and every detail about her gives a dark image. This description demonstrates the characters' dualities. Dickens represents Lucie as an elegant and simple lady who knows how to behave. And Madame Defarge appears to be a harsh character with strong features. These binaries between the two characters show Madame Defarge's struggles in life in an unfair country at that time.

Through the chapters, Dickens (1859) contrasts these two characters' emotions and behaviours toward other characters and toward life. Lucie, with her values of innocence, loyalty, and continuous love, has the ability to recall her father to life after his long and terrible imprisonment.

> If you hear in my voice—I don't know that it is so, but I hope it is—if you hear in my voice any resemblance to a voice that once was sweet music in your ears, weep for it, weep for it! If you touch, in touching my hair, anything that recalls a beloved head that lay in your breast when you were young and free, weep for it, weep for it! If, when I hint to you of a home there is before us, where I will be true to you with all my duty and with all my faithful service, I bring back the remembrance of a Home long desolate, while your poor heart pined away, weep for it, weep for it!... If, when I tell you, dearest dear, that your agony is over, and that I have come here to take you from it, and that we go to England to be at peace and at rest, I cause you to think of your useful life laid waste, and of our native France so wicked to you, weep for it, weep for it! And if, when I shall tell you of my name, and of my father who is living, and of my mother who is dead,

you learn that I have to kneel to my honoured father, and implore his pardon for having never for his (pp. 64-65)

Another passage from chapter four which describes Lucie's power to heal her father's wounds. Lucie's character demonstrates these virtues immediately when she meets her father for the first time. Lucie helps pull him out of his trauma with "the light of her face" and "the touch of her hand." (Dickens, 1859, p.111) The kindness in her face and the gentleness of her touch restore and redeem him. Her goodness is enough to assist a man who is struggling to see the kindness in the world after being entrapped in prison for years. (Enns, 2021)

> Only his daughter had the power of charming this black brooding from his mind. She was the golden thread that united him to a Past beyond his misery, and to a Present beyond his misery: and the sound of her voice, the light of her face, the touch of her hand, had a strong beneficial influence with him almost always. Not absolutely always, for she could recall some occasions on which her power had failed; but, they were few and slight and she believed them over. (p.111)

Dickens gives Lucie the symbol of the golden thread because she represents hope, fate, and life not only for her father but also for others. She is the only one who believes in Sydney Carton, while no one else does. Lucie listens to Sydney, recognises his wounds, and encourages him to see and find the good things in life, always inspiring him.

> I fear you are not well, Mr. Carton!"
>
> "No. But the life I lead, Miss Manette, is not conducive to health. What is to be expected of, or by, such profligates?"
>
> "Is it not—forgive me; I have begun the question on my lips—a pity to live no better life?"
>
> "God knows it is a shame!"
>
> ''Then why not change it?''
>
> Looking gently at him again, she was surprised and saddened to see that there were tears in his eyes. There were tears in his voice too, as he answered:
>
> "It is too late for that. I shall never be better than I am. I shall sink lower, and be worse."
>
> He leaned an elbow on her table, and covered his eyes with his hand. The table trembled in the silence that followed.
>
> She had never seen him softened, and was much distressed. He knew her to be so without looking at her, and said:

"Pray forgive me, Miss Manette. I break down before the knowledge of what I want to say to you. Will you hear me?"

"If it will do you any good. Mr. Carton, if it would make you happier, it would make me very glad!"

"God bless you for your sweet compassion!"

He unshaded his face after a little while, and spoke steadily.

"Don't be afraid to hear me. Don't shrink from anything I say. I am like one who died young. All my life might have been."

"No, Mr. Carton. I am sure that the best part of it might still be; I am sure that you might be much, much worthier of yourself."

"Say of you, Miss Manette, and although I know better—although in the mystery of my own wretched heart I know better—I shall never forget it!"

She was pale and trembling. He came to her relief with a fixed despair of himself which made the interview unlike any other that could have been holden. (Dickens, 1859, pp.212-213)

Carton believes that he is not good enough for Lucie despite loving her. He calls himself a "dissolute dog, who has never done any good and never will." (Dickens, p. 294) No one encourages Carton in the novel besides Lucie, leading him to believe in his wickedness. According to Enns (2021) Carton's belief in his wickedness comes from the fact that no one encourages him in the novel except for Lucie. Lucie declares faith in him by saying, "I am sure that he is capable of good things, gentle things, even magnanimous things." (Dickens, p. 296) Because Lucie concludes that Carton is good, he sees that he has the ability to be virtuous. Carton says, "The utmost good that I am capable of now, Miss Manette, I have come to realize. Let me carry through the rest of my misdirected life, the remembrance that I opened my heart to you . . ." (Dickens, p.215).Another quote in chapter thirteen that shows how Lucie is an inspiration to Sydney Carton. She is his only sanctuary and the only one who sees the bright side of him.

I wish you to know that you have been the last dream of my soul. In my degradation, I have not been so degraded but that the sight of you with your father, and of this home made such a home by you, has stirred old shadows that I thought had died out of me. Since I knew you I have been troubled by a remorse that I thought would never reproach me again, and have heard whispers from old

voices impelling me upward, that I thought were silent for ever. I have had unformed ideas of striving afresh, beginning anew, shaking off sloth and sensuality, and fighting out the abandoned fight. A dream, all a dream, that ends in nothing, and leaves the sleeper where he lay down, but I wish you to know that you inspired it. (p.214)

Lucie Manette is a supporter of everyone that comes into her life. Her nobility and kindness have always given her unique charm to everyone who knows her. On the other hand, there is Madame Defarge, who is a hard woman with no empathetic feelings for other people. While Lucie is loving and caring for the others, Madame Defarge is knitting the names of people that are going to be killed by her and the revolutionaries.

"Well, then," said Defarge, as if a thought were wrung out of his breast, "it is a long time."

"It is a long time," repeated his wife; "and when is it not a long time? Vengeance and retribution require a long time; it is the rule."
"It does not take a long time to strike a man with Lightning," said Defarge.
"How long," demanded Madame, composedly, "does it take to make and store the lightning? Tell me!"
Defarge raised his head thoughtfully, as if there were something in that too.
"It does not take a long time," said Madame, "for an earthquake to swallow a town. Eh well! Tell me how long it takes to prepare the earthquake?"

"A long time, I suppose," said Defarge.

"But when it is ready, it takes place, and grinds to pieces everything before it. In the meantime, it is always preparing, though it is not seen or heard. That is your consolation. Keep it."

She tied a knot with flashing eyes, as if it throttled a foe. (Dickens, 1859, pp.252-253)

In addition to the characters' appearances, speeches and thoughts are another Dickensian characterisation technique that depicts binary opposition in the novel. Both Madame Defarge and Lucie have a tragic past. They both grow up as orphans, but the difference is that Lucie finds the love of Miss Pross, while Madame Defarge is a victim of the aristocracy's oppression, who lives in a poor and persecuted place. The only thing that she cares about is revenge, and this desire kills her humanity. Charles Dickens created two diametrically opposed characters. Lucie as a kind, compassionate woman with good intentions who cares about others,

and Madame Defarge as a bad and vengeful woman who is bloodthirsty. According to Enns (2021) "In *"A Tale of Two Cities "*, women struggle with authority and find different ways to adapt to the patriarchal society they live in. These women's stories are interwoven with weave themes of revenge, blood, beheading, love, domesticity, and virtues. Each female character plays a key part in these themes."(P. 3)

Figure 5: BO between Miss Lucie Vs Madame Defarge, Charles Darnay Vs Sydney Carton
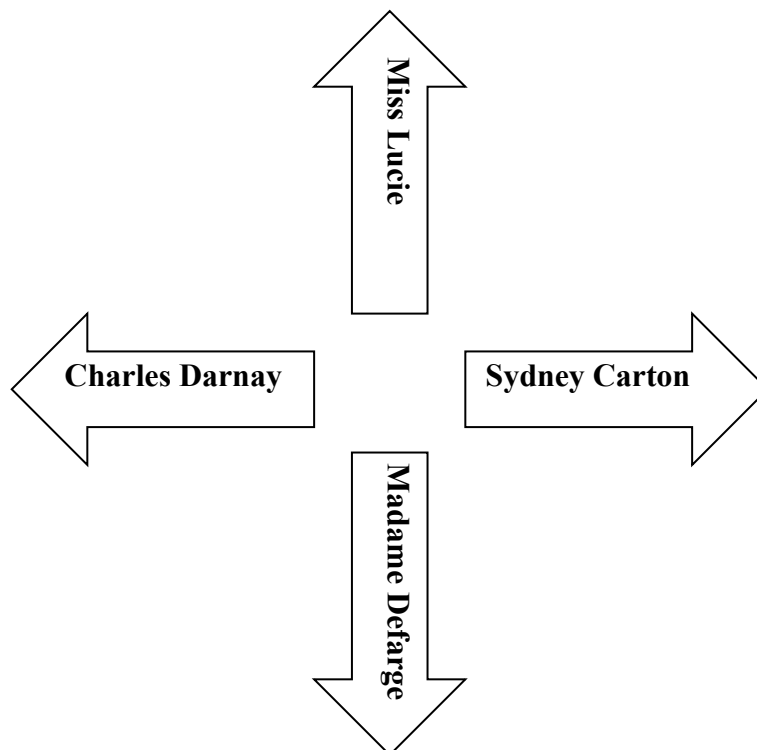
3.3.3.2. Charles Darnay and Sydney Carton

Another example of binary in characters is between Charles Darnay and Sydney Carton. Charles is a French aristocratic man, and Sydney is an English lawyer. Both are so alike that everyone in the court could not distinguish them. They are two faces of one coin. They have the same face, but they are different in other ways .And the passages from the second book in chapter three emphasize that resemblance.

Look well upon that gentleman, my learned friend there," pointing to him who had tossed the paper over, "and then look well upon the prisoner. How say you? Are they very like each other?"

Allowing for my learned friend's appearance being careless and slovenly, if not debauched, they were sufficiently like each other to surprise, not only the witness, but everybody present, when they were thus brought into comparison. My Lord being prayed to bid my learned friend lay aside his wig, and giving no very gracious consent, the likeness became much more remarkable. My Lord inquired of Mr. Stryver (the prisoner's counsel), whether they were next to try Mr. Carton (name of my learned friend) for treason? But, Mr. Stryver replied to My Lord, no; but he would ask the witness to tell him whether what happened once, might happen twice; whether he would have been so confident if he had seen this illustration of his rashness sooner; whether he would be so confident, having seen it; and more. The upshot of which was, to smash this witness like a crockery vessel, and shiver his part of the case to useless lumber. . . Something especially reckless in his demeanour, not only gave him a disreputable look, but so diminished the strong resemblance he undoubtedly bore to the prisoner (which his momentary earnestness, when they were compared together, had strengthened), that many of the lookers-on, taking note of him now, said to one another they would hardly have thought the two were so alike. (Dickens, pp. 103-104-106)

Darnay is accused of treason, but because of the great similarity between him and Sydney, he gets out of a big predicament. Dickens (1859) first describes their resemblance; later, as events unfold, it becomes clear that they are totally different.

"This is a strange chance that throws you and me together. This must be a strange night to you, standing alone here with your counterpart on these street-stones?". . ."As to me, the greatest desire I have is to forget that I belong to it. It has no good in it for me—expect wine like this—nor I for it. So we are not much alike in that particular. Indeed, I begin to think we are not much alike in any particular, you and I." (pp. 114-115)

Twelve months after the trial, Darnay reestablishes a new life in London after renouncing his family heirloom. He becomes a teacher of the French language. Dickens (1859) portrays him as a just man with good qualities. He is a man who cares about poor people and respects them.

MORE MONTHS, TO THE number of twelve, had come and gone, and Mr. Charles Darnay was established in England as a higher teacher of the French language who was conversant with French literature. In this age he would have been a Professor; in that age he was a Tutor. He read with young men who could find any leisure and interest for the study of a living tongue spoken all over the world, and he cultivated a taste for its stores of knowledge and fancy. He could write of them, besides, in sound English, and render them into sound English. Such masters were not at that time easily found; Princes that had been, and Kings that were to be, were not yet of the Teacher class, and no ruined nobility had dropped out of Tellson's ledgers, to turn cooks and carpenters. As a tutor, whose attainments made the student's way unusually pleasant and profitable, and as an elegant translator who brought something to his work besides mere

> dictionary knowledge, young Mr. Darnay soon became known and encouraged. He was well acquainted, moreover, with the circumstances of his country, and those were of ever-growing interest. So, with great perseverance and untiring industry, he prospered. (pp. 183-184)

On the other hand, there is Sydney Carton, who is "careless and slovenly, if not debauched" (Dickens, 1859, p.103). He is an alcoholic and a lazy lawyer who does not care about anyone: "Then you shall likewise know why. I am a disappointed drudge, sir. I care for no man on earth, and no man on earth cares for me "(p.118). Dickens did not give information about Sydney's past or the sufferings that made him a person like that.

> My last supplication of all is this; and with it I will relieve you of a visitor with whom I well know you have nothing in unison, and between whom and you there is an impassable space. It is useless to say it, I know, but it rises out of my soul. For you, and for any dear to you, I would do anything. If my career were of that better kind that there was any opportunity or capacity of sacrifice in it, I would embrace any sacrifice for you and for those dear to you. Try to hold me in your mind, at some quiet times, as ardent and sincere in this one thing. The time will come, the time will not be long in coming, when new ties will be formed about you—ties that will bind you yet more tenderly and strongly to the home you so adorn—the dearest ties that will ever grace and gladden you. Oh, Miss Manette, when the little picture of a happy father's face looks up in yours, when you see your own bright beauty springing up anew at your feet, think now and then that there is a man who would give his life to keep a life you love beside you!(Dickens, 1859, p.217)

Both men have the same face, and both love Lucie. However, they share conflicting personalities. At first, and from the first description of Sydney Carton, the reader thinks that he is a bad, violent, and flat character. But in fact, he is the hero of the novel. His love and affection for Lucie changes his bad behaviour. Although he does not win Lucie's love, he gives her a promise that he would happily give his life to save her life and the life of anyone she cares about.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, Dickens describes social life through literature. He has a distinct writing style that attracts readers because his writings mirror the social life of his time and other times. In his historical novel, *"A Tale of Two Cities,"* Dickens narrates the major events of the revolutionary period in France, and in order to make them more vivid, he compares and contrasts the two different cities, London and Paris, in the same era. In this chapter, we rely on textual evidence to

highlight the dualities in the novel. And this concept is shown through the setting, characters, and themes.

General conclusion

"A Tale of Two Cities" is a controversial novel by Charles Dickens and one of the greatest masterpieces of Victorian literature. This novel highlights the historical events during the French Revolution. As a renowned author and critic, Dickens sheds light on the revolution's dismal, violent, and gory aspects. This literary work speaks about a complex period with a lot of improvements and a lot of problems and contradictions.

In English literature, the nineteenth century is seen as a crucial period, where people at that time desire to know the truth. Dickens played an active role as a novelist in exposing social concerns, and he used his book writing to reveal these societal issues. Some historical critics have analysed how the novel, while set in the 18th century, is indicative of the 19th century Victorian culture of which Dickens was a part. They point out the heavy Christian symbolism in the book's recurring theme of resurrection and how it reflects the period's religious views. They point out that Lucie Manette, beautiful and completely selfless, embodied Victorian ideals about women. (A Tale of Two Cities Literary Criticism, 2016)

This study tried to review the meanings that can be derived and generated from the novel from a deconstruction point of view through the application of binary opposition pairs as the best way to represent the duality in the story. Also, this study explains how far it is workable and contributes to the creation of new interpretation strategies for themes, characters, and settings. According to the findings and debate, binary opposition can be seen in all components of the narrative. Everything in a narrative novel is subject to opposition, and it can be deconstructed to show how they relate to one another, as well as their proximity or distance in the hierarchy. However, binary opposition was more manifested in the setting, which is the major engine since everyone is impacted by their background, which naturally reflects their ideas and behaviors.

The study applied binary opposition pairs such as day and night, love versus hate, and bad over good. These pairs were used to help break down each part of the novel, such as the division between characters, events, and even diction choices made by the author himself. So we may infer that the meaning is formed by the differences and that what gives the reader the opportunity to comprehend the text and the author's intention. Charles Dickens used an antithesis term to

distinguish between the two cities. His critique was expressed through comparison, and he emphasized that technique as an exaggeration of the period and the situation at the time.

As a result, binary apposition helped in understanding the novel more and especially the author. So far, we have examined this work through binary apposition lenses, and deconstructive theory has assisted in deconstructing and simplifying the novel for the reader and rebuilding it again, but by preserving the meanings and the author's. This study is open to further research or analysis using other approaches, binary apposition at different levels, or deconstructive theory in general.

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