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**THE VICTORIAN GENTLEMAN IN
CHARLES DICKENS'S FICTION**

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THE SUMMARY

(The Victorian Gentleman in Charles Dickens's Fiction)

Abstract:

In this thesis, we have attempted to investigate 'The Victorian Gentleman in Charles Dickens's Fiction' in detail. In 'Part One', we have aimed at analyzing the evolution of the idea of the gentleman from its earliest appearance in Chaucer's Prologue as a 'parfit gentil knyght' to the 'social force' it represented when the concept reached its peak in Victorian England to get a better overall picture. In 'Part Two' we have applied the concept to some of Charles Dickens's major novels in order to reflect his perspective on the gentleman as he was one of the most important Victorian writers and we have distinguished his spectacular approach to the concept. With this thesis we have aimed at doing a research on the idea of the gentleman to see its metamorphosis or evolution in various fields: especially in history, sociology, philosophy and literature. The idea of the gentleman has always attracted many historians, philosophers, religious figures and writers. Countless comments have been uttered and a large number of studies have been written about it and probably many more will be published in the future. Thus, the purpose of this thesis is to offer a clearer picture of the gentleman in the Victorian times (in Part One) and in Dickens's fiction. For this aim a few novels by Dickens are selected to illustrate the concept (in Part Two).

Key Words:

Gentleman, types of the gentleman, the English gentleman, the Victorian gentleman, the Dickensian gentleman, the gentleman of birth, the gentleman of wealth, the gentleman of manners, the wicked/devious gentleman, the Victorian novel, Dickens's fiction

In ‘Chapter One’, ‘the concept of the gentleman in English culture’ has been analyzed from the early ages to the nineteenth century when its great social force and influence was felt deeply in the Victorian society. When the term first appeared in Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, it was used ironically to describe a ‘*verray, parfit, gentil knyght*’ (qtd in Pollard, 3-4). The chivalrous characteristics were the main focus in the connotation of the term. In the following centuries (the 16th and 17th), the ‘gentlemen’ were a social group in the English gentry just below the baronets, knights and esquires. Prestigious professions or wealth made the lower class people call the upper class social status as ‘gentleman’. The developments in economy and sciences within the expanding of the English empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had a great influence on scientific, social and moral issues. The term was preferred to be used to envisage the manners of the people rather than class signification in the Victorian age. Conduct books were extremely popular in the nineteenth century. In the modern times the reputation of the concept has almost faded away, but to become a real ‘gentle’ and ‘kind’ man has never lost its importance.

Recent research on the concept of the *gentleman* has pointed out various definitions and interpretations of the term taking into consideration distinct approaches by writers, sociologists, historians, philosophers and religious figures. Not only have the varied perspectives on the concept of the *gentleman* by different people in different periods made it more difficult to pinpoint the term, but also the changes in the class system related to the expansion of the empire, those in the education system, in people’s moral values and social behaviors have added a plurality of additional meanings to the word. In addition, the concept is really ambiguous because its meanings depend so much on the context. Philip Mason, who traces the rise and the fall of the ideal English gentleman from Chaucer to the nineteenth century, states that “there is hardly a book in the whole range of English literature or a character in English history who has not something to say somewhere about the idea of the gentleman” (Mason, 14) When he compares the past to the present in terms of the influence of the idea on the people, he considers that the idea of the *gentleman* is no longer a social force at all.

Other writers, who have done research on the image of the gentleman in English culture, such as Christine Berberich and David Castronovo, share the similar view that the gentleman is no longer a central figure in English culture. Berberich writes that “These men lived and, more poignantly, died according to the rules of an ideal which had been in existence in Britain for centuries. It had changed and been modified over the ages, but it was still going strong by the

time Titanic went down, and held values which were understood, followed and admired – albeit sometimes ridiculed as well – all over the world' (Berberich, 3). On the contrary, David Castronovo, suggests that although "the gentleman is no longer a central figure in culture, [...] the issues of status, power, self-assertion, and self-cultivation never seem to disappear" (Castronovo, x).

The concept of the gentleman has been categorized according to three significant types in this chapter. Since, even a simple term like 'book' has varied images in everybody's mind, it is quite a natural fact that the vague term 'gentleman' "has different meanings in different mouths and even the same person would use it in different senses, covers interpretations of a thousand shades." (Berberich, 4) There have been varied considerations whether it has lost its social force in the modern world or its morality still exists even in the modern and/or post-modern world. Considering varied views of critics, writers, philosophers and important figures on the concept of the 'gentleman' throughout the ages, a close overview has been achieved to see the portrait of the gentleman from various perspectives. We have traced these views not only in Robin Gilmour's *The Idea of the Gentleman in the Victorian Novel* (1981), Philip Mason's *The Rise and Fall of the English Gentleman* (1982), Philip David Castronovo's *The English Gentleman: Images and Ideals in Literature and Society* (1987), Shirley Robin Letwin's *The Gentleman in Trollope: Individuality and Moral Conduct* (1997), Arlene Young's *Culture, Class and Gender in Victorian Novel* (1999), and Chiristine Berberich's *The Image of the English Gentleman in Twentieth-Century Literature: Englishness and Nostalgia* (2007) but also in academic articles to look upon the perceptions of the English gentleman in different periods.

It has been clearly observed that the changes in the English society in their cultural and moral environment have had the most important impacts on the concept of the gentleman. The complex mixture of qualities expected in a gentleman such as his 'birthright', 'education', 'wealth', 'income', 'vocation', 'civic responsibilities' and 'personal virtue' have made it difficult to pinpoint the exact definition.¹ Although it has been hard to reach a precise definition of the term because of its relation with 'masculinity', 'social class', 'manners', 'morality' and 'Englishness' we have introduced distinct views of critics, writers and important figures to observe their points of view. We have analysed the gentleman's social position in the English

¹ For details see Mark C. Nitcholas. *The Evolution of Gentility in Eighteenth-Century England and Colonial Virginia* Texas: University of North Texas, 2000.

gentry and his evolution from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century. While the gentleman's chivalric qualities as well as his social status and wealth in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries used to play important roles, the gentleman's manners and morals gained more importance in the subsequent centuries. Moreover, the Victorian age was the high time when gentlemanliness was in its rise and was considered almost a religion due to its popularity. The historian Penelope J. Corfield's research, *The Rivals: Landed and Other Gentlemen* (1996), has made it obvious that the term 'gentleman' has had both social and moral connotations throughout the ages. The important point that "the concept of the gentleman was not merely a social or class designation but there was also a moral component inherent in the concept" (Cody, 1) has also been emphasized by David Cody.

However, on the one hand, Letwin's philosophical and critical approach to the concept of the gentleman has been useful to overview its moral aspect as she claims that "how people conduct themselves" depends on "how people understand themselves and their world" rather than on social 'forces', biological or psychological 'drives', 'class struggles' or universal 'structures'. (Letwin, x-xi) On the other hand, Cardinal Newman's definition of the gentleman has shown that Christian values have been attached to the gentleman. Newman's 'gentleman' collected all the *goodness* in his character. Some other varied views of Sir Thomas Smith, Guy Miège (authors), Adam Smith (philosopher), Richard Steel (public figure), John Locke and Edmund Burke (leading writers) have also been added to see their perspectives of the gentleman in their times. Ruth Kelso's emphasis on the quest of the *perfect man* has opened new horizons in search of the perfectness in public and private behavior as well as of the idea of the *gentle man*.

We have also preferred to analyze the gentleman in three main categories according to their significant characteristics in the evolution of the concept from past to present. While the 'gentleman of birth' has been attached to 'nobility', social status as well as to chivalric characters especially in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, 'the gentleman of wealth' has been connected with his rise to upper-class through marriages or with the money he gained from wars, land or trade in the seventeenth, eighteenth and even nineteenth centuries.

The idea of the gentleman has its roots in the term itself as it denotes noble birth and education. Although the 'noble birth' or 'man of ancestry' approach to the idea of the gentleman was criticized by some critics, writers used to feel proud of their ancestors' 'nobility' from which they could not detach themselves too easily. In some of Dickens's works this notion has been

observed. We have also investigated in detail that not only the gentleman's 'noble birth' but his 'wealth' – gained on the battlefields in the early periods mostly through trade and high rank professionals in the British colonies – also played crucial roles in his obtaining a social status in the traditional English gentry.

The nineteenth century, particularly in the Victorian England, saw the *rise* of the gentleman in two specific ways: first in *quantity* and then in *quality*. The increased opportunities in the social status in terms of 'wealth' and 'high rank' for the lower and middle classes caused a lot of *commoners* to gain a higher status in the English society. With the expansion of the British Empire, the upper class needed to share the *gentlemanly* status with more 'ruling class' gentlemen. The 'wealthy' gentleman was never rejected, he was easily accepted and welcomed by the upper class. The education of the *new apprentice* gentleman was a must in two aspects: his *manners* and *intellectual capacity* had to be improved. The new 'educated' or 'leveled up' gentleman in his manners, morals and mind power had significant contributions to the English society in two aspects. The integration of the gentleman in his new environment had deep impacts on preventing the bloody revolution in Great Britain – as it happened in France due to the huge gaps in life standards and the hatred between the upper and lower classes. The educated gentleman functioned like a seed in many fields of life from the rapid development in sciences, technology and industry to his engagement in political arena. His influence was felt even from the reduction of the crimes to the philosophical and sociological developments in Victorian England.

As a result of the development of social sciences, of the incredible increase in the number of the readers who bought newspapers, periodicals, and magazines regularly, there used to be heated arguments about the definition and characteristics of the gentleman. Significantly, in Victorian England, almost every intellectual approached the idea of the gentleman from various perspectives and it was time that the *morality* of the gentleman gained more importance than his *wealth* or *high status* in the traditional hierarchy. There was a significant tendency to perceive and describe the gentleman with his 'gentility', 'courtesy' and gentle 'manners'. Nevertheless, it became hard to distinguish the *true* gentleman from snobs and *devious* gentlemen. That is why we have tried to have a closer look at the distinctive characteristics which made a man a *true* or a *wicked/devious* gentleman particularly in the Victorian novels. While the true gentleman, playing his role as a leader, a social reformist, a benevolent humanist, a real peacemaker, an activist and

a hero dedicates his own life to his people's pleasure, happiness, comfort and welfare, the wicked/devious gentleman is selfish, never cares about the others and hurts the people he lives by. The importance of unofficial education acquired naturally at home and in the neighborhood and the official education taught at schools, colleges and universities as well as religious influences at church have been emphasized in the formation of the true gentleman.

Thus, in 'Chapter Two', we have analyzed 'Images of the Gentleman in Victorian Fiction' in general. First, we have attempted to offer a brief view on Victorian England and the Victorian novel in general and then we have tried to distinguish the images of the gentleman in the works of a few highly significant Victorian writers, such as W. M. Thackeray, C. Dickens and A. Trollope. As we have aimed to discuss the Victorian gentleman in Charles Dickens's fiction in 'Part Two', in this chapter we have outlined the general tendencies in Victorian England in terms of the progress in the fields of science, technology, ideology, art, literature, religion, politics while mentioning the great problems of the time, such as poverty, crime and social unrest. The key concepts: 'industry', 'democracy', 'class', 'art' and 'culture' of the age have been mentioned to understand the Victorian Age better. While the century progresses in three directions (economy, society and culture), we have underlined the varied impacts of democracy, industrial development, political reforms, urbanization, loss of religious faith, education at public schools, scientific discoveries, morality and class, the financial improvements of the middle class and the people's lifestyles, from their reading to travelling, from their table manners to addressing people, from their writing letters to leisure activities on literature. Moreover, by outlining the sociological trends and movements we have basically managed to mirror the Victorian history and culture connected to the idea of the gentleman.

Having emphasized that the novel was the *leading form of literature* in the Victorian age, its dependence on the eighteenth century heritage and its association with different kinds of realism, Defoe's documentary concreteness, Richardson's sentimentalism, Fielding's and Smollett's picaresque features, Jane Austen's refined comedy of manners, Scott's revelation of historical causes and conditions have been mentioned using as the bibliographical source A. Ciugureanu's *Victorian Selves* (2008). We have especially focused on her suggestions that "the character becomes a *rounded personality* [emphasis added], a complete human being, with biological and educational history, with an economic, social, domestic and intellectual life of its own" (Ciugureanu, 44) and "the Victorian novel becomes a means of educating people, of

healing society, of advocating morality, and progress" (47) as our major focus and consideration have been based on the characteristics of the protagonists and other male characters portraying the various qualities and aspects of the Victorian gentleman.

The idea of the gentleman in Victorian culture has also been described as "neither a socially exclusive nor an entirely moralized concept." (Gilmour, 12) Since the Victorian novelists' approaches to the idea were based on the social and moral dimensions at the time, the Victorian novelists we have focus on – Thackeray, Dickens and Trollope – came from various backgrounds and periods. We have indicated that the idea of the ideal gentleman was in the centre of their major works. While Thackeray came from an aristocratic family, lived in luxury both in India and England, had lavish expenses and wrote as a 'gentleman writer' reflecting the middle class very close to the upper class, Dickens came from a lower middle class community, lived in poverty, experienced hard times and mirrored the middle class close to the lower class. Trollope came from an aristocratic family, but his parents lost their fortune in the new world and both him and his mother had to work hard to gain their fortune and social status back through writing novels while his permanent job was working at the National Post Service at the same time.

Thackeray's views on the idea of the gentleman were ambivalent because of the period he lived in and of the severe criticism of the gentleman of birth, rank and wealth. The gentleman of manners was beginning to gain popularity. Gilmour's affirmation that "in novels like *Vanity Fair* and *Pendennis* he [Thackeray] portrays the interaction between the self-confident worldliness of the old order and angular, domesticated morality of the new, struggling to define and assert itself in the early decades of the nineteenth century" (Gilmour, 40) shows the writer's complex approach to the idea. Furthermore, Gilmour's view that Thackeray had significant superiority in grasping the Victorians' "hectic struggle for social position in a society rendered volatile by the influx of new money and ambition" (45) has been highlighted to understand its significance when compared with Dickens. As the writer who popularized the word 'snob' claimed that "an immense percentage of Snobs I believe is to be found in every rank of this mortal life", the expectation was that the word 'snob' referred to the people belonging to the lower class (qtd in Ray, 22-23). While Thackeray's ironical style mocking snobbishness, his realistic characters – even though they are not heroes or heroines – and the plot draw vivid pictures of the Victorian

age, his ideas have become milestones on the path of distinguishing the gentleman from the snob.

Unlike Thackeray and Trollope, Dickens had a humble origin – even though he felt deep and secret pride in his father's once having had a coat of arms, experienced hard times, witnessed social injustice and struggled a lot to climb the social ladder one step after the other. In his major novels he reflected the lives of the middle class very close to the lower class and many of his significant protagonists, like Pip in *Great Expectations*, David in *David Copperfield*, Oliver in *Oliver Twist* and Nicholas in *Nicholas Nickleby*, have struggled to become gentlemen and to enjoy the civilized world with their high moral standards. We have also noticed that behaving like a *true gentleman*, Dickens drew the public attention to the social problems of the time, such as poverty, abominable conditions in the workhouses, crimes, injustice suffered by the lower class, as well as to the utilitarian educational system applied in schools. The hidden faces of the wicked and devious gentlemen have been revealed to reach a better understanding of the concept. Though detailed analysis has been done in the second part of this thesis, the important facts about Dickens's style, characters and themes have been outlined in some of his major novels to show various types of the gentleman.

As to Trollope, he used to have an aristocratic background and got his education not in schools, but at home, as both his educated parents taught him as soon as he managed to hold the pen. Because his father's attempts to become a lawyer and to do farming to seek for fortune had failed, he became the naïve boy who used to endure the humiliations of other rich but cruel boys. Like Thackeray and Dickens, he did not face directly the growing pains of the Early Victorians, as that was the period in which the concept was under the influence of *aristocratic insolence* and the *moralizing gentry*. As a writer who has witnessed all these heated discussions, he shrank to give a definition of the term 'gentleman' because he used to be highly conservative in his understanding of gentlemanliness and was relatively unaffected by the modernizing tendencies which appeared in the Victorian period. It has also been stated that Trollope preferred to use *country gentleman* and *squire* in his works as a result of his background, his thirty three years spent as a post surveyor in Ireland and his intimate understanding of the landed order in the Victorian society. Another important difference between Trollope, Thackeray and Dickens, was that he had his own distinctive approach to the idea of the gentleman, which has also been pointed out. According to Gilmour this important distinction lies in the different ways in which

they looked upon the gentleman: “whereas Dickens and Thackeray could not forget that the gentleman was made possible by money, Trollope saw the traditional system of rank as a defense against the encroachment of money-worship.” (Gilmour, 152) The suggestion that, to Trollope, the *feelings* of a gentleman such as chivalry, unselfishness and manliness were as important as rank and appropriate manners have been explained in detail. And last, Trollope’s ‘Captain Marrable’ has been mentioned as the character – very similar to the wicked/devious gentleman – representing the “antithesis of almost everything Trollope believed a gentleman should be.” (Gilmour, 156) ‘Captain Marrable’ has almost all the qualities of a ‘wicked/devious gentleman’, which Trollope believes that a ‘true gentleman’ should never possess: *selfishness, dishonesty, lacking in principles, incapable of loyalty and patriotism*.

After all, two questions might come to mind. First, why have we particularly chosen Dickens’s major novels only and why not Thackeray’s or Trollope’s? Second, why has no Victorian lady writer’s novel been selected? Starting from the second question, we consider that it would be a good idea to do a separate research on this issue. The approaches of female writers – from early or late Victorian age or from any period of time – to the idea of the gentleman should also be analyzed. We have to admit that a separate detailed analysis is needed to see the idea of the gentleman from the women writers’ perspective. As to the first question, we have found it more appropriate to approach the idea in Dickens’s novels. Dickens’s background, his understanding of the idea, the themes he used in his novels and the rich characters he portrayed, representing various types of the gentleman have been just a few of the reasons for our preferring this author. It is obvious that Thackeray, Dickens and Trollope earned their living through writing, but the way Dickens used his genius, the multiple education themes and the complex characters he chose from the middle class, very close to the lower class, have functioned as educational stories for the reading public then and now. We have mentioned his hidden message to the government (the poor conditions in the workhouses and the crimes in the big cities, *Part II, Chapter 2*), the educational system, the rights of the working class (*Part II, Chapter 3*), the common people (e.g. psychological and sociological experiences and struggles of a common young man, Pip, who wants to become a gentleman, *Part II, Chapter 4*) and the ‘ideal’ people (kind, benevolent and generous). In fact these are messages for everybody as Dickens’s writing style appeals to a large variety of readers from various backgrounds now and at that time.

As our main concern in ‘Part Two’, has been to see how Dickens perceived the idea of the gentleman and how he portrayed his views through the characters he created in his novels, for specific purposes, we have chosen *The Pickwick Papers*, *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, *Hard Times*, and *Great Expectations*. Thus ‘Chapter Three’ discusses the ‘comic gentleman in *The Pickwick Papers*, ‘Chapter Four’ analyzes the gentleman of birth and manners in *Oliver Twist*, ‘Chapter Five’ introduces the category of the wicked and devious gentleman in *David Copperfield* and *Hard Times* and ‘Chapter Six’ uncovers the gentle ‘Christian’ man in *Great Expectations*.

The choice of *The Pickwick Papers* in Chapter 3 is due to the fact that Charles Dickens started to become a well-known writer with this serialized novel and that he outlined his subsequent work more or less in this novel. We have underlined H. N Maclean’s claim that the pattern Dickens used in this novel has become his style that he used in his later novels. As it has been pointed out, Dickens’s main concern was to make his readers ‘laugh’ at the comical scenes even though they were mixed with sentimentalism close to the end of the novel. In fact, Dickens was chosen by his publisher to write a few captions for the illustrations related to sporting scenes, but in time the whole project had was modified according to Dickens’s wishes. The more he approached his own style, the more the novel gained its popularity. With the appearance of Sam Weller, a bright and honest lower class character, who also dreamt to be a *respectable gentleman*, not only the publisher, but also the public noticed that the number of the readers had increased. Thus, Dickens shifted the focus from The Pickwick Club to “the idealistic Victorian Quixote and his cockney Sancho Panza,” because, “with the introduction of Sam Weller, *Pickwick* found its centre...The story of their relationship becomes the story of the novel...” (Davis, 327) In terms of gentility, the plot has included the funny adventures of the comic gentleman – Mr. Pickwick and his club members – and mixed them with the wicked and devious gentleman: Jingle, Dodson and Fogg. At the beginning of the novel we have noticed that Mr. Pickwick has *snobbish* attitudes, as he was the president of a club, enjoys going to parties as well as going to the theatre and watching sport activities. Later, especially after Weller’s appearance, we notice that he turned into a benevolent, kind and *true gentleman* with his comical qualities. *Wicked* and *devious* gentlemen like Jingle, Dodson and Fogg play important roles in Mr. Pickwick’s transition to a true gentleman. A close attention has been drawn to Mr. Pickwick’s true gentility when his earlier *anger* and *hatred* which he felt for Jingle turns into *generosity* and

benevolence although he had the power to punish or just ignore him. Because of his new identity he preferred to be *merciful* and to *forgive* Jingle and showed his *kindness*, *generosity* and *gentleness*. When the success of the novel became obvious, we think that Dickens preferred to keep the idea of the gentleman in the centre of his later works rooted in *The Pickwick Papers*.

After the ‘childish’ and ‘naïve’ Mr. Pickwick, our analysis has continued with a ‘real’ naïve child, Oliver Twist, in ‘Chapter Four’. For special purposes the protagonist’s important period of time in his life has been investigated from various perspectives in detail. While Oliver’s childhood experiences in *Oliver Twist* have been projected, Pip’s gentlemanly progress in *Great Expectations* during his youth and David’s struggles with the wicked and devious gentlemen in *David Copperfield* during his manhood have been in the limelight.

We have claimed that with *Oliver Twist* in ‘Chapter Four’ Dickens had a couple of purposes as well as some important messages to send regarding both the official and the unofficial education of the gentleman. His main purposes were to attract the public’s attention to the poor conditions in the workhouses, to make the government pass better laws to improve the conditions for the poor living in parishes, to lead both governmental and non-governmental organizations to find effective solutions for the rising crime activity in the large cities. While describing the wretched conditions of the lower class, he aimed at provoking the *good*, *gentle* and *merciful* side of those who read his novels so that they could become volunteers involved in different charities. Many examples of child abuse have been mentioned as well as the cruel and insensible behaviors of the ‘fat gentlemen’ and the ‘white waistcoat gentleman’ towards miserable children. To our surprise, we have noticed that Dickens used at times the term gentleman in inverted commas, so that he implied the reverse. This small detail has also led to write a separate chapter on the ‘wicked, devious gentleman’.

A young child, Oliver, finds himself without any parental support in the society is treated cruelly and instead of being pitied, he is hated and scorned. He is twisted with the merciless, heartless and brutal incidents. Dickens creates a kind of child hero who could be a good example for the other children facing a lot of difficulties in their childhood without parental support. There might be a difficult period for anybody to endure so that the result of the patience in these hard times might be very fruitful. While Dickens attracts the public attention to the poor conditions in the workhouses and implies that the government should pass a few laws to improve the conditions and standards of the people in these public places, parishes, he also gives a special

emphasis to the *benevolent gentlemen* who are ready to help these poor orphans who really need sincere love, close care and generous assistance during their hard times while growing up.

Is ‘nature’ or ‘noble blood’ the explanation of Oliver’s ideally kind character? Why does not Monk, Oliver’s half-brother, have kind and noble attitudes like him? And how come the two brothers are the opposite of each other? The same thing may be observed in *Nicholas Nickleby*; while Ralph Nickleby is so *mean, cruel* and rude, it is assumed that his brother or Nicholas’s father is probably a true gentleman as nothing bad about him is mentioned in the novel. So, we could argue that ‘nature’ itself in the sense of physical and moral inheritance could not be the single explanation of their gentlemanly manners. Not only these two cases in Dickens’s novels, but also examples from real life, even today, the brothers and sisters who are ‘nurtured’ by the same family and even in the same schools could be different from one another. Why? Because everybody is born with certain qualities such as ‘pure heart’, ‘pure mind’, ‘will power’, ‘physical inheritance’. Yet, it is the person himself who decides to learn or acquire bad or evil deeds. Whatever the surroundings they live in, it is each person’s ‘free will’ of what to do, what to learn, how to live, and how to behave in life. The education given in the family and at school, and the moral values one gets in his culture; they all have some effects on people. But people’s own ‘truths’ or their own ‘choices’ of what to do and how to behave shape each person’s character.

Dickens, who exposed the harsh reality of the Industrial Revolution, has direct and indirect contributions in the discussion of the gentlemanly behavior with the Victorian readers. He sympathized with the plight of the underprivileged, mainly the poor, children and women, and he sought to raise awareness in the Victorian society. The injustice and unbearable living conditions experienced by the people probably touched his heart so that he used these facts and reflected them in his works. He was not only an author, but also a social activist who used to raise awareness through his works, social charities and public speeches to bring social reforms in his time. While describing the wretched conditions of the lower class, he aimed to provoke the *good, gentle* and *merciful* side of those who read his novels so that they become volunteers to get involved in different charities. Many examples of child abuse have been mentioned as well as the cruel and insensible behaviors of the ‘fat gentlemen’ and the ‘white waistcoat gentleman’ towards miserable children. To our surprise we have noticed that Dickens used the term *gentleman* in *quotation marks in this work, as he actually implied the reverse*. This small detail

has also led us to write a separate chapter on the ‘wicked, devious gentleman’. However, the positive attitudes of the old lady who gave Oliver some food, besides Mr. Brownlow, Rose and even Nancy, have implanted gentle manners in his character. Alfred Adler’s psychotherapeutic ideas have been added regarding the formation of a child’s manners who had self-shaped his ‘inner life’ while living in the confusing ‘outside world’.

Two important points have been mentioned about one’s gentlemanly qualities. Sometimes it seems impossible for the people, whose environment occupied by evil people and evil deeds, to be away from evil deeds or crimes, but a person’s ‘inner life’, ‘heart’ and her own ‘decisions’ in certain situations one the one hand and their ‘religious beliefs’ on the other hand play important roles in the formation of their own identity. Any negative instrument, situation, behavior or environment might function positively as long as the person who has witnessed all these negative circumstances, be patient, does not lead them demoralize him/her, tries to think positively, gets positive messages from them and behaves positively. And these are the important issues emphasized by Dickens to show the essential characteristics of a gentleman. Oliver, portrayed as a pure-hearted child who possesses these essential qualities, will most probably turn into a true gentleman like Mr. Brownlow later in his life.

In ‘Chapter Four’, we have pointed out the fact that, instead of being a Member of the Parliament, Dickens preferred to write novels to influence the people in lower, middle and upper classes. Being aware that touching words play important roles in the people’s minds and hearts, he aimed at increasing the public awareness to the social problems, such as the poverty of the lower class, the unjust system in the workhouses, the life-threatening crimes in the society. Dickens also lays a special emphasis on the morality of the gentleman which forms an ideal society with mutual ‘love’, ‘affection’, ‘kindness’, ‘respect’, ‘gentleness’, ‘goodness’ and ‘honesty’. Even though Dickens was not a religious person, in this particular work we have seen that strong belief – such as a sincere prayer – has also great influence on positive changes in human souls and in the society. Another point that has been mentioned is that sometimes it seems impossible for the people whose environment is occupied by evil characters and evil deeds to be detached from crime. However, a person’s ‘inner life’, ‘heart’ as well as his own ‘decisions’ in certain situations play important roles in his attitudes. Any negative instrument, situation, behavior or environment might function positively as long as the person who has witnessed all these negative circumstances is patient, tries to think optimistically, gets positive

messages and behaves positively. And these are the important issues emphasized by Dickens to show the essential characteristics of a gentleman. Oliver, portrayed as a pure-hearted child who possesses this essential quality, will most probably turn into a true gentleman like Mr. Brownlow later in his life.

In ‘Chapter Five’ we have focused on ‘The Wicked and Devious Gentleman’ in two novels by Dickens, namely *David Copperfield* and *Hard Times*. Mr. Murdstone’s obvious wickedness and James Steerforth’s and Uriah Heep’s disguised manners in *David Copperfield*, Mr. Gradgrind’s and Mr Bounderby’s educational, economical and ecologically harmful systems in *Hard Times* have been investigated in detail revealing many incidents described in these novels. Earlier, it has been highlighted that Dickens had first *indicated* and *pointed out* this type of gentleman in *Oliver Twist* with the term gentleman in quotations marks loading an opposite meaning to it. The ‘honorable’ gentlemen – a reference to law makers who are unable to see and comprehend social injustice in *Hard Times* and the ‘humble’ gentleman – a reference to Heep – in *David Copperfield* are especially emphasized with their negative attitudes and imagery. Mr. Gradgrind’s and Mr. Bounderby’s behaviors have also been investigated as the result of the destruction they cause both in the society and in the environment. Particularly, Dickens’s attacks both on the education system named ‘Utilitarian Ideology’, which neglected the children’s imagination, in their learning process, and on ‘Industrialism’, which neglected the workers’ social needs in the portrayal of these two devious gentlemen have also been projected.

In the first part of ‘Chapter Five’ three significant wicked and devious gentlemen belonging to different classes have been analyzed: Mr. Murdstone, a representative of the middle class, Steerforth, the upper class, and Heep, representing the lower class. Mr. Murdstone, whose name is associated with ‘murder’ or ‘murderer and ‘stone’, has been portrayed as a wicked gentleman who was obsessed with his firm authority, treated David cruelly and aggressively with verbal and physical attacks, ‘murdered’ his wife through the *wounds* he opened in her *heart*, with his cruel manners and with the materialistic benefits he planned to get from her and other innocent female victims after their death. In the novel, Mr. Murdstone beats David during his studies with his mother at home, then he disconnects him from his mother, by giving him harsh punishment and, at last, he aims to get rid of him by sending him to a boarding school where the children are treated very badly. Moreover, after the mother’s death, he sends David to a blacking factory where the working conditions are very hard for a little boy of his age. David,

unfortunately, observes Mr. Murdstone's *wickedness*, his cruel and aggressive attitudes and feels that he disturbs the Murdestones with his presence. To be much clearer, Mr. Murdstone has the qualities of the *wicked gentleman* as he lacks moral behavior and he feels evil pleasure with his verbal and physical attacks not only at a little boy, but also at the young women he seduced in the novel. He 'murders' his wife with the *wounds* he made in her *heart*, *His cruel* manners, his *seducing* other women and the *materialistic* benefits he planned to get from the properties they own after their deaths. Mr. Murdstone was a wicked man, apparently having a gentlemanly behavior.

As to the other wicked, devious gentlemen in disguise, Steerforth and Heep, they have played important roles in David's life. First, David idolized Steerforth at the boarding school, but his later wicked attitude, such as his humiliating the lower class people's lifestyle, his running away with David's first childhood love, Emily, and his leaving her without any support, causing her becoming a 'fallen woman' made David realise Steerforth's true nature. So, an 'ideal' gentleman for David like Steerforth who impressed him with his handsome look, charismatic gentility, refined manners, had a wrong perception of class, from the perspective of middle and lower class people, led David to drunkenness with lavish meals and, more importantly wickedly ruined little Emily's life, a person very dear to David, allegedly, his friend. We have also mentioned that he might have behaved in this way as an effect to his hidden homosexual attraction to David, one can deduce from his nicknaming David as "Daisy" and from his considering David his property.

While Steerforth used to be David's closest friend who approached him like a devious *snake*, Heep had always been his enemy who had wicked plans to climb the social ladder illegally, hidden behind his 'umble' origin and the language he used when addressing his 'masters'. Heep's constant use of his 'humbleness' and 'umble' origin irritates David – as it does Dickens – so much that he is considered as a person likened to various animals from 'ape' to 'baboon', from 'vulture' to 'bat', from 'snail' to 'eel' and 'fox' by Dickens. Tara Macdonald's suggestion has also been pointed out that "what unnerves David is not only that Uriah desires to be Wickfield's partner and Agnes's husband, but that Uriah parades his humbleness to excess." (Macdonald, 55) Dickens, who also had a humble origin, cannot tolerate Heep's apparent, yet aggressive *gentlemanly* status obtained in crooked ways through his 'humility' under the form of

a ‘hypocritical mask’ that helped him find a disguise. Obviously, Heep receives his severe punishment at the end of the novel when he is imprisoned.

In the second part of ‘Chapter Five’, following our own considerations, the most important messages by Dickens are concerned with the ‘distinguished’ wicked and devious gentlemen, Mr. Gadgrind and Mr. Bounderby in *Hard Times*. In this short novel, in which one may find consisting deep implications of the idea of the gentleman, Dickens’s criticism of, and ‘satirical’ language at, the educational philosophy of the Utilitarian educational system which ignored ‘fancy’ and the creative ‘imagination’ of children as well as their ‘wisdom of heart’ have been portrayed in detail.

To Mr. Gradgrind – or ‘grand grinder’ – who sees the human being as ‘a reasoning animal’, the ‘facts’ must be planted in the mind of the children to harvest practicality and materialism when they grow up. He believes that this is the best education style or the best way of bringing up young brains. What is wrong in his type of education is the fact that human beings are not ‘reasoning animals’, but in fact they are the ones who need psychological, emotional and pedagogical support beside the natural facts, laws, formulae, and the ‘truth’ derived from social and physical sciences.

The titles that Dickens chooses for the episodes – ‘sowing’, ‘reaping’ and ‘garnering’ – and especially the second chapter’s title – ‘Murdering the Innocents’ – are really remarkable if connected to the kind of education given to the children in Mr. Gradgrind’s school. The name of the teacher – Mr. M’Choakumchild – at this school, a real *factory* of twisting minds, also implies that he *choke*s all the *children* with the immense and unnecessary information provided which the children will not use at all in their daily life. Dickens criticizes not only the education system in the Victorian age but also the mentality of the schoolmasters who aim at teaching the ‘facts’ only and neglect the children’s feelings, imagination and their ‘*wisdom of the heart*’. With the word ‘all’, Dickens also gives a special emphasis on how hard it would be for children to learn all the things their teachers intend to put in their minds. Their abilities in art, music or writing related to their ‘*wonderful*’ imagination are completely ignored. Although many years have passed since the publication of the novel, Dickens’s criticism of the system of education is still fresh.

Dickens serializes this novel, *Hard Times*, in *Household Words* to give a special emphasis on ‘fancy’ in a child’s education. He satirizes the people like Mr. Gradgrind, who

neglect the education of their children's outstanding imagination, fantastic wondering, excellent questioning and critical minds. In his analysis of *Household Words*, Paul Davis quotes Dickens's introduction of the major aim of the periodical, to encourage the "light of Fancy", in its first issue:

"No realities, will give a harsh tone to our *Household Words*... We would tenderly cherish that light of Fancy which is inherent in the human breast; which, according to its nurture, burns with an inspiring flame, or sinks into a sullen glare, but which (or woe betide that day!) can never be extinguished." (Davis, 152)

However, Sissy, or Cecilia Jupe, whose personality is improved by her parents and whose imagination is evoked by the people working in the circus, is chosen by Dickens to be a true model for free life. Sissy is also his model fictitious child in the novel who innocently attacks Gradgrind's mentality and his utilitarianism. Mr. Gradgrind's 'productions', Louisa and Tom, are revealed to be a great failure to him in fact, because, on the one hand, Louisa could not choose her 'future' husband due to his father's negative influence on her feelings and ended in the insensible marriage with Mr. Bounderby and, on the other hand, Tom became a 'snob' getting addicted to drinking and gambling, robbing Mr. Bounderby's bank and laying the blame on an innocent worker. The 'gentlemen' who had designed the system of education and economy are satirized by Dickens as follows:

... and made him [Mr. Gradgrind] Member of Parliament for Coketown: one of the respected members for ounce weights and measures, one of the representatives of the multiplication table, one of the **deaf** honourable gentlemen, **dumb** honourable gentlemen, **blind** honourable gentlemen, **lame** honourable gentlemen, **dead** honourable gentlemen, to every other consideration. (HT, 83) (Bold mine)

We have explained that these 'honorable' gentlemen – Dickens might also have sent a hidden reference to some politicians – have been labeled by Dickens as *deaf* and *blind* because they never listen to, or see the problems of, the people they represent, *dumb* because they cannot understand the problems of the people and *dead* because their ideas are too feeble to solve the

social problems and their impact on the society is insufficient. We have laid a special emphasis on the ‘self-made’ gentleman (like Mr. Bounderby), who usually prefers working with the ‘honorable’ gentleman in the Parliament (like Mr. Gradgrind), raising their money in unknown ways, damaging incredibly the society with their educational and governmental systems which they themselves had set up.

As to Mr. Bounderby, who denies his past, never gets ashamed to tell lies and always brags, he becomes rich most probably in illegal ways –Dickens implies *collusion* and *nepotism* in close relationship with the *honorable gentlemen* in the Parliament–, and destroys the ecological system of the town with the smoke and sewage from his factories as well as the workers’ lives with hard work, small wages and monotonous lifestyle, compared by Dickens with the machines used in the factory. Mr Bounderby may thus be the twin brother of the (most) devious and harmful gentleman in the novel, Mr. Gradgrind. Mr. Bounderby and Mr. Gradgrind work collaboratively in the ruining of the lively creatures in the world; while Bounderby destroys the ecological system of the town, the workers’ lives and the economy of the country, Mr Gradgrind ruins the society by bringing up *self-interested* human beings whose hearts and imagination are ignored systematically with an *unrealistic* education system which is passed in the parliament by Gradgrind-like *honorable gentlemen*. While Louisa and Tom are the *artistic productions* of Mr. Gradgrind, Coketown is the *masterpiece* of Mr. Bounderby. Thus, in ‘Chapter Five’ with *David Copperfield* and *Hard Times*, we have seen how Dickens portrayed innocent lives that had been destroyed in a sullen system set up by wicked and devious gentlemen.

In ‘Chapter Six’, we have analyzed in detail how Dickens has portrayed a young man, Pip, who turns from a ‘common’ person to a ‘snob’, from a snob to a gentleman and from a gentleman to a true gentle ‘Christian’ man through his adventures with the people he had come across. We have been surprised at how Dickens used the combination of time, place, people and especially their behavior and manners in various psychological circumstances. The people, namely ‘Joe’, his brother in law, ‘Magwitch’, the ‘convict’, ‘Miss. Havisham’, the ‘witch’ who planned to make him suffer of love, ‘Estella’, the insensitive ‘lover’ and ‘Herbert’, the young pale gentleman who taught him gentlemanly manners as well as the meaning of true gentility had a tremendous influence on the formation and growth of his character. After his meeting with his future benefactors, the ‘convict’ and Miss Havisham, Pip started to seek for his future and to accomplish his desire to become a gentleman so that he would satisfy his inner ‘natural’

tendency to join the upper class society and live up to their expectations. We have analyzed the excerpts in which Estella provoked his ‘manly’ and ‘social’ desires by humiliating his ‘coarse hands’, ‘thick boots’ and his ‘education’ he got at home. Being a ‘gentleman’ becomes an obsession to Pip to prove his ‘potential’ and to experience the civilized world which Estella apparently belonged to. At first, he is convinced that Estella is not worth ‘migrating’ to the upper world just for her sake. However, Pip’s ambition to see and show off his own potential in both worlds as well as his curiosity to experience the civilized world have dragged him to accept the ‘fortune’ he received from his unknown benefactor at the beginning of the novel. After experiencing the ‘new’ world, he shows off ‘snobbish’ attitudes that shock Joe a lot. Pip’s ‘new’ behavior makes Joe feel so strange and awkward in his company. Meanwhile, Pip lives great changes in his manners after he decides to be ‘helpful’ to the people around him like a true-gentle-Christian man and he also decides to show his gratitude to Joe, who had ‘forgiven’ him and ‘cured’ him with his ‘sincere’ care when Pip had been awfully ill. Pip first shows his ‘kindness’ and his ‘generosity’ to Herbert supporting him financially, then he tries to help Magwitch to run away, forgives Miss Havisham and Estalla, even though she decided to marry his number-one-enemy Drummle and, most importantly, he prefers living in his ‘humble’ world without any shame or regret.

Dickens, as an important Victorian writer who experienced both ‘worlds’, shaped his protagonist, Pip, as a gentleman who makes peace with his ‘inner’ world through his integration of the two ‘worlds’: his old ‘humble’ world with Joe and Biddy and his new ‘aristocratic’ world with Herbert and Estella. We have clearly seen the *metamorphic* changes in Pip’s psychological world. Estella and her world attracted Pip and provoked his ‘desires’ and ‘ambition’ to become a ‘gentleman’. However, Pip first shows ‘snobbish’ attitudes. With Herbert’s guidance, he realizes what makes a man a ‘true gentleman’ and, of course, Joe’s overall ‘natural’ love and ‘sincere’ care rooted in his Christian values transformed him into a true gentle Christian man.

In ‘Part Two’, we have thus analyzed various types of the gentleman from various backgrounds with different qualities. While Mr. Pickwick has been portrayed possessing ‘comic’ traits, Oliver’s naïveté and pure-heartedness and Pip’s true gentility as Christian values have been brought forward. Not only the positive but also the negative image of the gentleman has also been highlighted. From all these varied types we cannot create a stereotypical figure as a specific ‘Dickensian gentleman’. According to our classifications (the gentleman of birth, the

gentleman of wealth, the gentleman of manners, the true gentleman, the wicked, devious gentleman), it becomes almost impossible to portray a ‘specific Dickensian stereotype’. But, in general, some of the common characteristics of Dickens’s ‘protagonists’ who are mainly ‘gentlemen’ might be pointed out. Looking at some of Dickens’s characters (as, for instance, Mr. Pickwick, Oliver, Nicholas, David and Pip), we could see that they all struggle to become true gentlemen and true gentlemen mean ‘Gentlemen of Manners’ for Dickens. Although Dickens used the ‘noble birth’ issue with Oliver Twist and reflected his hidden concerns and pleasure about it, most of his characters belonged to the mid-lower class. Thus, this kind of generalization might be helpful to understand Dickens’s characters in terms of their *class* and *type*, but, creating a ‘label’ like a ‘Dickensian gentleman’ is rather vague and elusive. Nevertheless, the label ‘Victorian Gentleman’ – as we have shown in detail – refers to the gentleman who had the qualities of the ‘Gentleman of Manners’ rather than those of the ‘Gentleman of Birth or Wealth’. But we have to confess that all kinds of generalizations might be questioned or criticized when ‘exceptions’ are revealed.

If all the points of views on the ‘Victorian Gentleman’ from his historical and sociological background to his moral connotations were considered, we would imagine a ‘stereotype’ having one foot in his ‘noble birth’ and ‘wealth’ in the past and another foot in ‘morality’, fashioned especially in Victorian England. But, according to our own views, we can only discuss the gentlemanly attitudes of Dickens’s ‘specific’ characters rather than a typical ‘Dickensian gentleman’.

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