

THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE “OLIVER TWIST” BY CHARLES DICKENS

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Abstract: This piece of art will give information about social justice and social realism, it brings some fact on famous novel “Charles Dickens”, analyze the idea of social justice in the one of the famous works of Charles Dickens. It will discuss about the difficulties which the orphan boy Oliver faced during his challenging life.

Key words: social justice, social realism, orphan, starvation, workhouse, robbers, human rights, Oliver Twist, undertaker, coffins, bookseller, handkerchief, working class, poverty.

Social justice refers to the fair and just allocation of resources, opportunities, and rights among all people in a society. It guarantees that all individuals possess equal political, economic, and social rights, access to human rights, and the opportunity to succeed, irrespective of traits such as race, gender, sexual orientation, or financial standing. This involves tackling systemic disparities by means of equitable institutions and regulations. However, in the famous novel of Charles Dickens “Oliver Twist” it is impossible to face social justice. The creative movement known as "Social Realism," which first appeared in the middle of the nineteenth century and rose to popularity in the twentieth, is distinguished by its emphasis on the problems and daily lives of the working class. Social Realism, which sought to depict social and political reality without romantic embellishment, was a reaction to the dominant bourgeois forms of the day and had its roots in older realist traditions from France and Russia. Important social movements, technological developments, and philosophical theories—most notably those of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels—that highlighted the worth and predicament of laborers served as inspiration. Oliver Twist is considered as a second novel by famous author Charles Dickens. It was published as a book in 1838. It was published in England in English language. It illustrates the life of orphan children in England in 19th century. In fact, Charles Dickens himself raised in workhouse, probably he described his own life in this novel. In an early example of social novel, Dickens satirizes child labor, domestic violence, the recruitment of children as criminals, and the presence of street children. Perhaps the novel was written in the inspiration of Robert Blincoe-an orphan boy story. The novel was the first of the writer’s works to realistically depict the impoverished London underworld and to illustrate his belief that poverty leads to crime. The Oliver Twist was very popular when it was first published, public enjoyed it. The novel made people who live in poverty in England in Victorian era to find hope to have better future. The novel turned into film many times and gained Oscar-winning in 1968.

It is said that, only two people were present at the birth of Oliver, one was an old woman, who was drunk, and the second busy local doctor who had not any interest whether the boy will survive or not. The death of mother or child was usual occasion in the workhouse where poor and homeless people live. It became obvious that poor people in society had no right of having healthcare because of not being rich. Later Oliver was sent to “baby farm” where the orphan children were kept. The woman who looked after children always stole the money which was for the food of orphan children. It means that nobody could control the system at the baby farms. After getting his ninth age, Oliver was sent again to the workhouse, where poor people made a living and suffer from starvation every day. Normally, the main dish was soup in the workhouse. The meal that was served there was not enough for people that made them always unsatisfied.

So that they all always were hungry. They did not have any right to ask any more food. Oliver was seized and shouted because of asking some more meal from the board member, who was very fat and cruel. The boy was punished with staying in the dark room as a prisoner for one week. Everyday he was beaten in front of other children in the hall warning them too. Later Oliver was sent to local undertaker who behaved badly to the boy and forced him to eat meat pieces which were left after dog and sleep among coffins.

Little boy became real assistant of undertaker who was the reason of successful business of coffins. During these hard days, Oliver became a little bit brave after witnessing the death of rich people and how people forget about murdered one, after few days and continuing their life as nothing happened. In the undertaker's house Oliver had so many enemies too even if he was innocent poor boy. He faced violence and kicked everyday by household of undertaker man. Eventually, the Oliver ran away from this cruel people and dark life to the "London" where he once heard that it was a good place to live for brave boys. In the way the boy wanted to beg many to have a piece of bread. But he was punished by all people in the street. However, he spent his early years in London with robbers and thieves. But they were only people who behaved Oliver kindly and provide him with food. At first, he did not know where he was actually, because they always play handkerchief that Oliver did not the reason of playing this game. Oliver was prisoned even he was truly innocent. He was executed to stole the money of rich person. Hopefully, kind and generous bookseller proved that the boy is innocent and took him into his house and took care of him. That was happy days of Oliver in bookseller's house. But his old friends a gang of robbers found him again. During his life Oliver faced so many challenges because of not being social justice in the country. It became obvious, that Oliver was not an only person who had those difficulties. He was only one from thousands or millions. It was not only one person's story, it was whole poor families' story in England at that period of time.

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