

Relocating the Political Fiction and Historical Realities of French Revolution: Presentation of French Bourgeois Society in Charles Dickens and Victor Hugo's Literary Fiction

Hassan Bin Zubair^{1*} & Saira Tahir²

¹PhD Scholar (English Literature), Department of English, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad

²Producer Lock Studio, Punjab Institute of Language, Art & Culture (PILAC), Pakistan

Corresponding Author: Hassan Bin Zubair, E-mail: hbz77@yahoo.com

ARTICLE INFO

Received: July 17, 2019

Accepted: August 13, 2019

Published: September 30, 2019

Volume: 1

Issue: 5

KEYWORDS

International Politics, French Revolution, Society, Alienation, Devastation, Imagination, Reality

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the political and historical English literary fictions associated with French revolution. These fictions are based on real and imaginative literary narratives presented by two different writers. It expresses the social circumstance of the past with a blend of real historical events in the selected text. This research is delimited to Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* and Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. Theories presented by Karl Marx, Crossman and Tonner support this research as a major theoretical framework. These texts present both the fictional and real events of the past which reflects the real condition of the society of that time in which the elements are found of social injustice, poverty and class differences were very common. Furthermore, isolation, anarchy and devastation are the fundamental properties of a revolution. A revolution can be the source of bringing a positive change in the society if it is based on positive intentions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Revolutions have occurred through human history and every revolution is very distinct in nature and in terms of their methods, motivating ideology and duration. Every revolution brings a fundamental change in power or organizational structure of a society. In his book *Politics*, Aristotle talks about two types of political revolution; one which brings complete change from one constitution to another and the other one which is a modification of an existing constitution. A major change in culture, economy and sociopolitical institutions are the common outcomes of any revolution. As a result revolution brings abrupt significant changes in the social order. As this paper is concerned about The French Revolution of 1789, it is significant to discuss the outcomes of this revolution. The major effects of the French Revolution were the emergence of the Bourgeois and the land owning class in France, death of Feudalism, and moreover consolidation of social order by the Code of Napoleon. All this led to recurrent food shortage which created a good fortune to the grain stockers and this miserable hunger, forced poor people to burst out in anger and to revolt against this absolute oppression. Inefficiency of the French monarch Louis XVI rule and his desperate wish to strengthen absolute monarchy also caused fury among common people which led to the Revolution.

Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* is the story of ongoing changes in London and Paris and how the people of these two cities react to the French Revolution. This story helps the readers to understand the diverse class interests of the people belong to different classes and how it creates chaos and anarchy in the society which lead to a revolution. This paper will focus on how Dickens' characters such as Madame Defarge, shows the true attitude of the revolutionaries; though her motives shift from the actual revolution to personal vengeance. The existence of chaos, devastation and havoc during the Revolution will also be discussed throughout the paper. The way the major characters of Dickens, such as Doctor Manette, Madame Defarge and Sydney Carton portray the psychological effects of the French revolution, can be explored in this paper. Therefore, it can be said that *A Tale of Two Cities* is the novel which involves the stories of various people whose lives get interwoven with this particular historical event. According to John Quay:

“Revolution is the backdrop for much of *A Tale of Two Cities* and

functions as the context within which the prominent theme of the novel plays itself out: the possibility of resurrection and transformation” (Quay, 2004)

Consequently, the theme of transformation and change created by the revolution is very much visible in this novel. Though this novel talks about despair as the effect of the revolution, it also discusses hope as an outcome of the revolution with the sacrifice of Sydney Catron and his vision about a better future. Besides this, Hugo's *Les Misérables* is also a historical fiction which narrates the story of a desperate man Jean Valjean, who commits petty crimes, makes his escape from prison, then makes a deal with a bishop to be a good human being and transforms him into a noble man. According to Carrera, “he (Hugo) facilitates the exchange between the unconscious of history and its conscious” (Carrera, 1981). Therefore, consciously or unconsciously history has been incorporated into Hugo's novel. During Valjean's transformation, he is chased by a cop named Javert, rescues Cosette who is the daughter of a dying woman named Fantine and finally makes Javert aware of his noble thoughts. This paper will discuss the ruthless attitude of the Aristocrats presented by the characters such as Tholomyes and Mr. Gillenormand. Hugo's novel gives us the opportunity to observe the way the revolution brings significant change in the life of these characters and also how the revolution brings a resolution to a society.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To project the real picture and motifs behind the French Revolution.
- To present the Victor Hugo's point of view about Revolution in his literary text.
- To highlight the main events of French Revolution in the literary text of Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*.
- To present the elements which become the major cause for a revolution, under the light of the selected texts.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How do Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* and Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* portray the real and imaginative picture of the French Revolution?
2. How do the selected texts depict the actual condition of the society and elements before and after the French Revolution?

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Selected fictions for this research are based on real and imaginative literary narratives presented by two different writers. It expresses the social circumstance of the past with a blend of real historical events in the selected text. This research is delimited to Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* and Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. Theories presented by Karl Marx, Crossman and Tonner support this research as a major theoretical framework. These texts present both the fictional and real events of the past which reflects the real condition of the society of that time in which the elements are found of social injustice, poverty and class differences were very common.

5. ANALYSIS

Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*

In *A Tale of Two Cities* Charles Dickens successfully spreads out the significance of the French Revolution while blending it with a story of love, sacrifice, hatred and devotion. According to history, there were some major causes of the French Revolution such as: the failure of the King Louis XVI as a ruler, and the conflict between all three states (clergy, nobles and commoners) but in this novel Dickens has shown how poverty, hunger, inequality and class conflict also led to the French Revolution. In his novel Dickens gives direct reference to the historical French Revolution and while writing this novel, this revolution is the most prominent issue in writer's mind. According to J. F. Hamilton:

“Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* opens in an extended series of antithetical attributions describing the novel's historical ambience ‘the best of times / the worst of times,’ [SIC] ‘the age of wisdom / The age of foolishness’ and so on. The linking of opposites as coexistent truths constitutes a powerful paradox that reaches beyond reason to explain the contradictions of the human condition.” (Hamilton, 1995)

Consequently, the very beginning of the novel confirms the readers that this novel has a historical characteristic and it talks about the time period where we see the “opposites as coexistent truth”. Besides this, it is also mandatory to mention that by using “a powerful paradox” Dickens explains the “contradictions of the human nature” in this novel. In addition, he shows how human beings are driven by both good and evil forces; and when evil forces become stronger than the good forces it brings destruction and chaos in a society. On one hand, he supports the revolutionary cause and on the other hand he points out the evils of the revolution. Initially, in *A Tale of Two Cities* poverty and hunger have become the working forces which make people revolt with aggression. As food is the most basic need of human beings, when this need is not fulfilled then hunger transforms human beings into beasts. Dickens has succeeded to show the contrast among the poor and aristocrats living in the same city. While one group has seen the abundance of money and food, the other group is dying out of poverty and hunger. It also gives hints to the reader about the upcoming bloodshed during the revolution. As written in the novel:

“The wine was red wine, and had stained the ground of the narrow street in the suburb of Saint Antoine, in Paris, where it was spilled. It had stained many hands, too, and many faces, and many naked feet, and many wooden shoes. The hands of the man who sawed the wood, left red marks on the billets; and the forehead of the woman who nursed her baby, was stained with the stain of the old rag she wound about her head again. Those who had been greedy with the staves of the cask, had acquired a tigerish smear about the mouth[SIC]; and one tall joker so besmirched, his head more out of a long squalid bag of a night-cap than in it, scrawled upon a wall with his finger dipped in muddy wine-less — BLOOD.” (Dickens 30)

These poor peasants hunger know no bound and so they scramble to lick up the spilling wine. The moment the mother tries to nurse her baby with these drops of wine, her heart and mind is wounded with rag. Dickens has used the word “greedy” sarcastically to express the mindset of the aristocrats to whom these poor peasants are gluttonous and voracious. These poor peasants are so awfully hungry that they do not mind licking the wine that has fallen on the ground. Throughout the novel Dickens explains the importance of color red which signifies anger, passion and aggression of the mob. The last word of the quote is “BLOOD” which is capitalized to demonstrate its importance in the novel and also in the revolution. After experiencing a terrible oppression, these poor peasants have become desperate to take blood of the aristocrats. The barrel of wine could also be the symbol of aristocrats’ blood that would be sucked up by these hungry peasants. Yet again, the wine that stained on the street also hints that very soon this street would be colored with the red blood of the aristocrats. Additionally, Like Dickens, Karl Marx also talks about the relationship of different classes in a society and how the different conditions of these class groups lead to class conflict.

As an observer of conflicts, Marx blames society as the main reason for all the conflicts. Others Marxists such as Ashley Crossman believe that “conflict and struggle are inevitable in capitalist societies because the interests of workers and capitalists are fundamentally at odds with each other” (Crossman, 2013). In the novel, Dickens discusses this complex relationship among people, representing different social classes. The aristocrats, the revolutionaries and the commoners are beautifully juxtaposed in this novel; from a French aristocrat (Charles Darnay) to a revolutionary (Madame Defarge) and also to an odd-job man (Jerry Cruncher) all are put together in this novel. As there is lots of tension among the people of different classes it leads to class conflict. Each class is conscious about their own interest without considering the interest of the other class. Moreover, the aristocrats have oppressed the common poor people in such a way that people feel craving for food and that affected the psyche of these poor peasants which force them to revolt for justice.

Here, Dickens’ “Anaphoric”— the deliberate repetitive use of “time,” “epoch,” “season” and “period” reflect the significance of this time period in the novel. This paragraph not only talks about the revolution but also shows the way revolution goes on and its effect on the lives of the people. The author constantly reminds his readers that it was the “best of times” as people were getting aware of their rights and started to fight for their rights and it was also the “worst of times” as the commoners were turned into revolutionaries and they have to shed blood for getting their proper rights. The feelings of the revolutionaries is also expressed in this paragraph that as they are sacrificing their life for a good cause it might take them directly to “Heaven” but as they are killing people for regaining their rights, it would also take them “other way”. To be brief, the author confers that the period was a combination of “good” and

“evil”, as the paragraph ends with “the superlative degree of comparison”. In this way, it reflects the true nature of the revolution. According to Priti Joshi:

“Mutiny or rebellion in one form or another, however, appears early and often in *A Tale of Two Cities*: in the opening pages, the “mutinous” horses on the Dover mail refuse to carry the passengers uphill. But animals are not the only ones to resist: from the humorous to the increasingly treacherous, the novel gives us the Jerry Cruncher, the grave-robber, who rebels against the respectability of Tellson’s; Roger Cly, Darnay’s servant, who turns state’s evidence against his master after rummaging through his drawers; Barsad, who double-crosses his nation by serving first Britain and then France as spy; and Defarge, who repeatedly turns against his former master, most traitorously when he brings Madame to knit Lucie into her design.” (Joshi, 2007)

Here, Priti proves how this novel is about the mutiny and the Revolution. She argues how this novel presents not only the human characters such as Madame Defarge, Jerry Cruncher, and Barsad as the Revolutionaries but she also succeeds to show the way animal “the ‘mutinous’ horses on Dover mail” revolt against the aristocrats. This proves the desperateness of every living being to dream of a revolution.

Victor Hugo’s *Les Misérables*

Victor Hugo writes *Les Misérables* with an idea of a political revolution in his mind and it is considered as a great compassionate work that encourages humanity and hope during the instances of social injustice and hardship. In this novel, Hugo couples his story of deliverance with a detailed documentation of the injustices of France’s recent past of 1789. Driven by his pledge to reform and progress, he has written *Les Misérables* with a hope that it would encourage a more progressive and democratic future. Primarily, Hugo begins his novel with the chapter named “M. Myriel” which discusses the transformation of a careless, spoiled aristocrat child into a compassionate bishop. Though he is a member of clergy, he leads a very simple life unlike other clergymen. Once he compares the younger brother of an ordinary boy named Cartouche with the grandson of Louis XV because both of these children were killed in a similar way. When one old conventionist asks the bishop about his view on the equality, he replies him that in his view children from all classes are the same to him. Through the voice of Myriel, Hugo has presented his sympathy and affection toward the working class. Myriel defends the need of the poor while arguing that most of the criminals steal not because they are inherently malicious but for the sake of their survival. This example proves Hugo’s philosophy that poverty, hunger and social injustice make people to revolt. Besides, these clergymen Hugo also discusses about the working class poor and how they are neglected by the aristocrats. He also talks about class struggle which is very prominent in the French society during the time of his writing. By introducing the character Jean Valjean who resembles the working class poor, Hugo has shown how hunger and injustice provoke people for criminal activity. Hugo presents the pathetic past of Valjean by stating that he was once imprisoned because he was accused of stealing a loaf of bread. The law fails to understand that when people crave for a little amount of food while watching others people floating on foods, their inner anger kill their humanity and provoke them to be violent to others. To show the unjust law system Hugo mentions how Jean Valjean has passed 19 years of his life in prison for stealing a loaf of bread and also for subsequent attempts to escape from prison.

After serving these long instance of imprisonment Jean Valjean does not return to the town as a thief but his yellow passport brands him as an undesirable character. He wants a place on rent to spend a night but his yellow passport does not allow other people to show minimal mercy on him. He moves to one rest house to another but none accept his acquaintance. Once he wanted to have a space in the stable but the host disappointed him by saying that he could not get him any space “Because the horses take all the room”(Hugo 43). Here, Hugo shows the misery of this exconvict that his life is even worse than animals and cattle. When he gets sympathy and affection from the bishop it transforms him and he gets inspired by Myriel to lead a life of an honest man. Here, Hugo demonstrates that it is class conflict which put some people in privileged group and others in the group of disadvantaged and the reaction of every human being depend on the way they are treated. For example, when Valjean’s humble request of showing minimal humanity to him by serving him some food is rejected he states that ““Ah, bah! But I am dying with hunger. I have walked since sunrise; I have travelled twelve leagues. I will pay, and I want something to eat’ and then again the host of the rest house rejected his request by saying that ‘Go away!’” (Hugo 43). He is treated in such an inhuman way that when he is countered by Myriel’s sympathy, it distorted his psyche; Valjean could not accept it

and so he stole Myriel's silver. Later Myriel's nobility transforms him into a good human being. Thus, human beings react according to the way they are treated. Vialjean has experienced the injustice and inhumanity of the aristocrats, which makes him to support the July Revolution. Additionally, Hugo mentions about the misery of the character Fantine to show how poor women are treated in viciously. While talking about Jean Valjean Hugo shows how the working class suffered physically and emotionally, specially focusing on men but when he starts talking about Fantine he shows how poor women are abused by the spoiled broods of the aristocrats. Hugo gives a brief introduction about Fantine by saying that:

“She received a name as she received the water from the clouds on her head when it rained. She was called little Fantine... she had gold and pearls for her dowry; but the gold was on her head and the pearls in her mouth. She worked to live; then also to live, for the heart too has its hunger, she loved. She loved Tholomyés.” (Dickens 84)

Here, Hugo mentions that people called her “little Fantine,” not because she is the youngest one in her friend circle but for her being the poorest, innocent, immature and the illiterate one. As mentioned in this quote, her name is attached with Tholomyés to describe the importance of him in her life. In reference with Tholomyés–Fantine relationship Hugo shows the ‘Master-Slave’ dichotomy in this part of the novel. At this stage, Fantine becomes the slave who is deprived of food, education, work and everything else and obeys her master's (Tholomyés's) each and every command most obediently. This description of Fantine is very important to discuss here because very soon she lost all her charm as she is deceived by his lover, who not only abandons her but also gives her the burden of a child. In the later part of the novel Hugo discusses how Fantine turns into a prostitute to take care of her daughter Cosette. At this point, Hugo shows the irony that even though Cosette is the offspring of an aristocrat, she is called an illegitimate child by the aristocrats. The crisis of money causes Fantine's death. Though Fantine's death has no direct connection with the July Revolution, her death demonstrates the ruthless attitude and oppression of the aristocrats which make common people to revolt against this absolute monarchy. Furthermore, like Dickens, Victor Hugo has also showed how social injustice, poverty and hunger increased people's anger and provoked them to go for violence. He also demonstrates how poor people were enslaved by the law imposed by the so-called state. In the later chapters of this novel, Hugo has discussed how these social injustices aroused fury and rage among the students and how this led to the July Revolution. According to Angelo Metzidakis:

“The bulk of Hugo's commentary centers on two dates: 1814, the year of Napoleon's first abdication and of the first Bourbon Restoration and, 1830, the year of the July Revolution and of the rise to power of Louis Philippe. Both of these dates represent stages of political transition during which the powers of the throne were diminished in favor of the bourgeoisie. which [SIC], in each case, prolonged the monarchy for the sake of national stability.” (Metzidakis, 1993)

Through these lines, Hugo tries to describe that in spite of having more artillery than Wellington, the British commander; the French army got defeated by the foul weather. At this point, Hugo confers about the “Mysterious disintegration” of the French army because previously they were in the position of winning the battle but all of a sudden, the foul weather turned the table and finally the British army attained victory over them! By using the words, such as bends, snaps, floats, falls, crashes, hurries, plunges; Hugo not only discusses the physical dissolution of the French army but these words also help the readers to understand the mental breakdown of the French army.

6. DISCUSSION

In addition, it is important to understand the psyche of the revolutionaries. As excerpted from the novel, “Defarge cries out, ‘Work, comrades all, work! Work, Jacques One, Jacques Two, Jacques One Thousand, Jacques Two Thousand, Jacques Five-and-Twenty Thousand . . . work!’”(Dickens 228). Here, Madame Defarge refers all the revolutionaries as “Jacques”. Here, it shows that she considers these revolutionaries not as human beings but as war machines. Her approach toward these revolutionaries also reflects her aggression and hatred towards the aristocrats. While discussing the nature of Madame Defarge it is also important to talk about her knitting process as it reminds the readers about the “Sisters of Fate”. Moreover, Dickens gives a brief description about the storming of Bastille in his novel. In the novel Dickens discusses the havoc of the storming of Bastille through the scene of the execution of Mr. Foulon. As quoted from the novel:

“The men were terrible, in the bloody-minded anger with which they looked from windows, caught up what arms they had, and came pouring down into the streets; but the women were a sight to chill the boldest. From such household occupations as their bare poverty yielded, from their children, from their aged and their stick crouching on the bare ground famished and naked, they ran out with streaming hair, urging one another, and themselves, to madness with the wildest cries and actions.” (Dickens 237)

Here, Dickens shows how these poor people were desperate to get justice in terms of any circumstances. These people have been exploited in such extent that now they become so fierce and violent that they were “streaming hair”, “urging one another” and crying into “madness”. At this point, he shows how the revolution gets a blood thirsty nature because of the continual heinous approach of the aristocrats. In this scene, these people were keen to execute Foulon in any circumstances. As excerpted from the novel:

“O mother of God, this Foulon, O Heaven, our suffering. Hear me, my dead baby and my withered father: I swear on my knees, on these stones, to avenge you on Foulon! . . . Give us the blood of Foulon...head.. heart.. body.. soul of Foulon, Rend Foulon into pieces, and dig him into the ground, that grass may grow on him.” (Dickens 237)

Here, the furious attitude of the mob is reflected through their vengeful approach towards Foulon. To describe the desperateness of their desire to kill Foulon, here Dickens shows how the mob wanted “head”, “heart”, “body” and “soul”- each and every entity of Foulon. Hence, the entire mob became anxious to avenge their sufferings and oppressions by taking Foulon’s life. Additionally, Dickens hints to his readers about the more violent and chaotic phase of the revolution through the echoes heard by his characters, especially by Lucy. The echoes reverberate ‘from a distance’ and make a sound “as of a great storm in France with a dreadful sea rising” (Dickens 239). Here, the echo not only hints about the upcoming chaos in French Revolution but also the upcoming threat in Lucy and Darney’s life. Besides this, in this novel Dickens not only talks about the physical effects of the revolution but also the psychological effects of the revolution. Doctor Manette, went through a physical torture during his secret imprisonment in the Bastille prison. This physical torture has a drastic effect of his mental health that he lost his memory and sanity when he finally released from the prison. Though Doctor Manette regains his memory after getting proper care and affection from his daughter Lucy but it does not prevent him from being hysteric; very often he is found making shoes which proves his distorted psyche. During the Revolution he becomes a heroic figure for the revolutionaries but when he tries to take benefit of his popularity, the mob want him to sacrifice the life of his son-in-law in order to get justice. As a result, he again suffers from hysteria because of his vulnerable position in the revolution.

Through the character of Doctor Manette, Dickens shows the trauma of the revolution in his novel. Through this image and sounds Dickens provides his reader the chaotic and violence nature of the revolution. Thus in Dickens’ novel *A Tale of Two Cities* the readers encounter with the riots in both city and countryside; and moreover with the chaos and aggression regarding the revolution.

Additionally, the Revolutions or battles are not only about the chaos and violence, or victory and defeat but also about those heroes whose name engraved in the history because of their valiant deeds. According to the narrator of the novel, “The man who won the battle of Waterloo is not Napoleon put to rout; nor Wellington giving way at four o’clock, desperate at five; not Blucher, who did not fight; the man who won the battle of Waterloo was Cambronne.” (Hugo 233). Though Hugo describes the Battle of Waterloo radiantly, he reminds his readers about the presence of the old blights of the society in this battle such as the grave robbers. Hugo mentions about the incident of stealing gold and jewelry from the dead soldiers by the intruders. At that moment Georges Pontmercy suddenly revived and thought that the thief had rescued him. For this reason, he promised to remember Thenardier’s name all through his life. Here, Hugo confers about the irony of the battle of Waterloo that the soldiers who sacrificed their life for getting victory, gained the honor of being robbed by the prowlers. In this way, it evokes the question in the readers mind that what these soldiers got while sacrificing their lives. Though Hugo talks about the fake heroes such as Thenardier, he also believes in the existence of the real heroes. Thus he mentions about a great hero named

Cambronne. The idea of real and fake hero forces the readers to consider Thenardier as a foil character of Jean Valjean. Thus, he shows how the unfair outcomes leave the common people thirsty and hungry for justice and expecting the unrest situations. As excerpted from the novel:

“Towards the end of the April everything was worse. The fermentation become a boiling, since 1830[SIC] ... Something terrible was brooding. Glimpses were caught of the lineaments, still indistinct and scarcely visible, of a possible revolution. France looked to Paris; Paris looked to the Faubourg of Saint-Antoine.” (Hugo 577)

Here, the author mentions about the upcoming tensions regarding the imminent Revolution which will begin from the streets of “Saint-Antoine”. Then a mob led by the Friends of the ABC (a secret political society) marches through the streets and built a barricade from the everyday items, around the Corinth wine-shop and they are in high spirit as night fell on. Mabeuf shot dead and it makes the mob more furious. Thus the mob becomes blood thirsty and demands to kill Javert, the man who is spying on the revolutionaries for the sake of the army.

7. FINDINGS

Since the writers of Historical Fictions are interested in the way characters react to these historical events rather than on the actual historical events, this paper intended to explore the involvement of these characters not only during the pre-revolutionary period but also all through the revolution and after the revolution. While discussing the critical benefit of historical fiction Freeman and Levstik said,

“Through historical fiction, students learn that people in all times have faced change and crisis, that people in all times have basic needs in common, and that these needs remain in our time. Students can discover some of the myriad ways in which humans depend on each other. They will also discover the consequences of human failure in relationships, both personal and historical.” (Freeman and Levstik, 1988)

Here, Freeman and Levstik discuss how historical fiction help its readers to understand the “change and crisis” faced by the earlier people of the society. They also argue how historical fiction makes its readers aware of the “consequences of human failure,” so that they can connect them with the past and take precaution to avoid such incidents which will create obstacles in their mundane life. Thus, the writers like Dickens, Hugo and Baudelaire use this genre of literature, to show the way human beings react to oppression and fight for their survival, through their depiction of historical personage as fictional characters. By referring to the scene of broken “Red” wine cask, the circumstance of class struggle is discussed in this paper (Dickens 30). One group (aristocrats) is at the peak of enjoying their privilege when the other group (poor working class) is suffering from extreme deprivation. With the theory of Karl Marx’s “Class Conflict” the gap between these classes are discussed in this section and it is demonstrated the way poverty, hunger and social inequality made the working class poor (such as Mr. and Madame Defarge, the peasants) to revolt against the aristocrats (such as Marquis Evremonde, Foulon, Gordon) in Dickens’ novel. The social injustice which made people to revolt in Hugo’s *Les Misérables*.

With the depiction of the character Jean Valjean, Hugo shows how poor working class are incited by hunger and social injustice, and also ends up with doing violent activities. With the reference of the character Fantine, the vicious condition of poor working class women is discussed in this paper; as these women are deprived from food, work, education and from everything. Additionally, while discussing Fantine and her relationship with Tholomyes, the master-slave dichotomy is also explored in this part of the paper. Moreover, the way poor people are enslaved by the partial social law which kill their inner humanity and make them to revolt is also argued in this section. Dickens starts his novel with a description of a chaotic time period which creates the mood of the novel, as it said “for good or evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only” (Dickens 1). Hugo’s novel focuses on the youth centered Revolution in *Les Misérables*. An extensive description of the Battle of Waterloo and the event of the July Revolution are given in this section to prove that how the actions of the participants of a revolution play a vital role in a revolution. The participation of the young students (such as Gavorche, Mabeuf, Enjolras and Marius) makes the encounter at barricade more dramatic and intense. The failure of battle at the barricade demonstrated that the participation of a group of people cannot bring a drastic change in a society and to make a revolution or battle successful the participation of people from each and every stratum is very important. Unlike Dickens, Hugo talks about the most positive outcomes of revolutions in his novel *Les Misérables*. Although Hugo shows everlasting

uncertainty imposed by political events, he illustrated how the revolution brought hope in the life of each and every character of this novel. Initially, the epiphany of Javert is shown as a positive outcome of the revolution as he realized the noble attitude of Jean Valjean during the battle of barricade, when Valjean saved him from the execution. Besides, this the way revolution played a significant role in changing the mindset of the aristocrats is illustrated with the example of Cosette's (an orphan's) marriage with Marius (an aristocrat). The revolution brought resolution to a number of people's life. Valjean's life took a right direction after the revolution, as he succeeded to fulfill all his responsibilities and had a happy death. Lastly, Cosette's life is briefly discussed in this section as she becomes the universal symbol of hope of the revolution. Here, multiple hopeful deaths have been mentioned which showed Hugo's optimism towards the revolution.

8. CONCLUSION

It becomes difficult to comment on the emergence of a revolution as we see in the paper that the effects of a revolution are both beneficial and detrimental. Dickens and Hugo adapt the reality of the society where poverty, hunger, class struggle, oppression and social injustice becomes the causes of a revolution and all these kill the humanity of people and force them to involve into violent activities. These writers also succeed to show the blood thirsty and fruitless nature of revolution. However, it can be stated that there is both good and bad side of everything and it's up to us which side to take. According to Napoleon Bonaparte "A revolution can be neither made nor stopped. The only thing that can be done is for one of several of its children to give it a direction by dint of victories" (Davies 1).

REFERENCES

- [1] Carrera, R. D. (1981). "History's Unconscious in Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*." *JSTOR: The Johns Hopkins University Press* 96.4: 839-855.
- [2] Crossman, A. (2013). "Class Conflict and Struggle" *About.com*. About.com.
- [3] Davies, K. M. (2009). "Napoleon Bonaparte -Reformer or Tyrant?." PDF file.
- [4] Dickens, Charles. (2012). *A Tale of Two Cities*. Dhaka: Friends' Book Corner, Print.
- [5] Hamilton, J.F. (1995). "Dickens's A Tale of Two Cities." *The Explicator* 53.4: 204-208.
- [6] Hugo, Victor. (1962). *Les Misérables Volume One*. Trans. Charles E. Wilbour. London: Wordsworth Editions, Print.
- [7] Joshi, P. (2007). "Mutiny Echoes: India, Britons, and Charles Dickens's A Tale of Two Cities." *JSTOR: University of California Press* 62.1: 48-87.
- [8] Metzidakis, A. (1993). "On Rereading French History in Hugo's *Les Misérables*." *JSTOR: American Association of Teachers of French* 67.2:187-195.
- [9] Quay, J. (2013). "Knowing how and knowing that : a tale of two ontologies." PDF.
- [10] Tonner, P. (2008). "Action and Hamartia in Aristotle's Poetics." *Electronics Journal ForPhilosophy* 1.1 (2008):1-23.