

## 摘要

狄更斯是 19 世纪英国最伟大的小说家之一。他的小说揭露了英国官僚机构的无能，贫民窟，童工制度，私立学校的黑暗等。他抱着一个崇高的道德理想：抗议社会的不公，推行改革，使处于水深火热中的贫民得到救助。正因为如此，狄更斯历来被学者们界定为英国文学史上批判现实主义的最伟大代表之一。然而，文学艺术是一种特殊的社会意识形态，是社会存在的反映，不仅具有思想认识功能，还具有审美功能。我们不能局限于对狄更斯创作思想性质的认识，还必须深入了解他独特的创作个性及艺术特色。

维多利亚小说常被冠以“现实主义”的标记，然而“现实”是有其历史局限性的。狄更斯的作品无法避免受其当时社会环境与自身思想的限制，但是他的创作想象力极为丰富，充满激情，除了对现实的尖锐刻画以外，还从卢梭，华兹华斯，布莱克等浪漫主义作家那里汲取了思想，创作的作品具有浓厚的浪漫主义特色。浪漫主义作为一种文学思潮，影响范围之大，意义深远。《远大前程》是狄更斯创作后期比较成熟的作品之一，集中反映了狄更斯吸取的通俗文化养分。本文首先结合《远大前程》论述了狄更斯对现实的批判及现实主义的局限性，与狄更斯的浪漫精神形成鲜明的对比。然后从浪漫主义的兴起及特点着手，阐释了浪漫主义强调自然，展示个性和充满激情的表现方式并结合作品《远大前程》进行了深刻的剖析。主要是从以下几个方面探讨作品中的浪漫主义特征：作品中人与自然的关系，包括狄更斯对自然及自然人的描写，主人公回归自然的历程；作品中儿童与自然的关系，涉及到小主人公浪漫的童年以及华兹华斯式的成长过程；小说中浪漫的爱情和圆满的结局以及怪诞风格在作品中的突出表现。接下来还探讨了狄更斯和萨克雷截然不同的艺术手法，前者是天生的浪漫主义者，而后者却成为了现实主义作家的标准。多个方面从不同的角度，印证突出本文的主题。最后，本文从创作特色上对作品中的浪漫主义进行了总结。狄更斯，一位具有浪漫主义气质的现实主义作家，他的作品给读者带来了一股浪漫主义的清新之风，大大缓解了作品中现实描写给读者带来的不适。这一创作特色是狄更斯所独有的，增进了我们对他的创作思想的了解，拓宽了对他小说艺术的研究。

关键词：远大前程；浪漫主义；自然；儿童；怪诞

## Abstract

Charles Dickens is one of the greatest British novelists in 19<sup>th</sup> century. His novels expose inefficiency of British bureaucracies, the life of the back slums, child labor system, the darkness of private schools and etc. He holds the lofty moral ideals: protesting unfairness of the society, calling on social reform and helping the people get rid of the extreme miseries. Therefore, Dickens is usually defined by scholars as the greatest representative of critical realist in British literary history for a long time. But literature is a special social ideology and reflects the social existence. It not only has the moral function, but also aesthetic function. Dickens' studies should not be limited on his exposing and criticizing the evil social reality, and it is necessary to understand his peculiar characteristics and artistic techniques.

Victorian novels generally are labeled as realistic works, but there are historical limitations in these novels. Dickens' novel is not an exception and he himself is limited by his class position and viewpoint. However, Dickens is an instinctive Romantic, full of imagination. He absorbs romantic thoughts from Rousseau, Wordsworth, Blake and other Romanticists; he creates works with romantic characteristics. Romanticism, as a literary movement, is most widespread in influence and of profound significance. Throughout the Victorian period the wild, passionate, erotic, even destructive aspects of Romanticism continue in all the arts evidently. *Great Expectations*, one of Dickens' last mature works, intensely reflects his assimilation and employment of the common culture. This essay firstly deals with Dickens' critical ideas of the novel, which is viewed as a foil to his Romantic sensibility. Then it tells the rise and features of Romanticism, focusing on the novel *Great Expectations* to deeply illustrate its Romantic legacy. It mainly examines following aspects: the relation of man to nature including the Rousseauesque Noble Savages---Joe and Bidley, the Wordsworthian nature descriptions and the journey of Pip's return to nature; the relation of children to nature such as Wordsworthian accounts of the childhood development and Pip's Romantic childhood; romantic love of Pip and Estella and their happy ending, the grotesqueness in *Great Expectations*. In addition, this thesis explores the different writing techniques between Charles

## Abstract

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Dickens' and William Makepeace Thackeray's. To a certain degree, Thackeray is an anti—Romantic novelist, yet Dickens is a Romantic. These parts from different points push forward the theme, reinforcing one upon the other. Lastly, as a conclusion, the essay discusses the importance of Dickens' Romantic sensibility and claims that such genius is exclusive to Charles Dickens. Dickens' works explore the dark side of the society; he himself is full of miseries and sympathetic with the poor people. However, he is endowed with romantic temperament and his works is imbued with romantic feelings to greatly alleviate the discomfort of the realistic descriptions which readers should bear. His novels allow a presentation of reality wide enough to include romantic values and fancies as part of the whole pictures. It deepens our understanding of Dickens' thoughts and widens the research on his artistic techniques.

**Key Words:** *Great Expectations*; Romanticism; nature; child; grotesque

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签字日期:2007年12月26日

## Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Huang Hongling, my supervisor, whose guidance and encouragement are invaluable to me in the writing of this thesis. I would also like to thank Professors Liu Tianlun, Ouyang Mehe, Yuan Xuesheng, Liu Dilin, Yao Qian, Liu Wen and Liao Hongzhong, who have demonstrated passion for their profession and taught me to value literature and inquiry both within and beyond scholarly pursuits.

I am also deeply indebted to all my friends who have provided me with valuable suggestions and support.

## Chapter I Introduction

Charles Dickens (1812—1870), the 19<sup>th</sup> century famous British novelist, is one of the great literary geniuses of all time. Throughout his life, he wrote 15 major novels, countless short stories and articles. During his lifetime his novels reached a circulation of a hundred thousand copies. Even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, his works are still widely read, continuously adapted for films and TV play series. Dickens himself is a Dickens' character, bursting with an extraordinary and fantastic vitality. His spirit world is identical with the world of his novels, which is brilliant in hue, spectacular in scene, violent in movement and filled with people and places all vividly alive. He found his own intimate as funny as Mr. Micawber and felt his joys and sorrows as deeply as his characters in his fictions. His fortune and misfortune were as painful as those of David Copperfield or Pip. But just as Edgar Johnson states "Dickens is important for more than the sheer intensity with which he reflects experience. He is not merely a great intuitive observer, a mindless sensorium; he is penetrating commentator on life and modern society" (vii--viii).

### 1.1 Review of Charles Dickens Criticism and *Great Expectations*

Criticism on Dickens' works has never ceased for a century and more after his death. Most of critics mainly concentrate on studying his profound thoughts in his novels. In Una Pope-Hennessy's *Charles Dickens* (1970), he explores the relation of Dickens' works to the political, moral, and social realities of the Victorian age. Edgar Johnson focuses on his novels' social message and exposition of guilt of the evil society. Other critics like Lauriat Lane asserts: "Dickens is a radical, even revolutionary writer. Directly and symbolically he expresses a pressure for social change and even upheaval, although at the same time fearing the unleashed violence"(1). Yet other scholars like Angus Calder think that Dickens is certainly not a revolutionist in the sense. He judges his characters by absolute standards of right and wrong rather than by the degree of their historical and class consciousness. There

are biographical studies, such as John Forster's *The Life of Charles Dickens* (1874) and Angus Wilson's *The World of Charles Dickens* (1970). These biographies have put our knowledge of facts about Dickens' life and their relation to his works on solid ground. The later scholars examine Dickens' letters and speeches, like *The Speeches of Charles Dickens* (1960) edited by K.J. Fielding. Meanwhile some critics lay weight on his writing arts: characterization, plot, humor, narrative techniques and language etc. Humor is one of Dickens basic features and is also the source of his ever-lasting attraction of his works, on which critics have always give high praises. John Forster, the good friend and biographer of Dickens, claims that Dickens is the greatest humorist that is known in English history. In his book *The Life of Charles Dickens*(1874), he wrote: "The character generally afford the same evidence...that Dickens's humor, not less than his creative power, was at its best in *Great Expectations*"(Forster, *The Life of Charles Dickens*). E.S Dallas in *The Times* in 1861 wrote: "*Great Expectations* is not, indeed, his best work, but it is to be ranked among his happiest. There is flowing humor in it which disarms criticism..." (qtd. in Flint vii ).

The new study attempts to give a complete account of Charles Dickens' concerned with the world of fairy tales and fantasy. It starts with George Cruikshank, who had rewritten fairy tales to examine Dickens' fairy-tale heritage and how it shaped his fabling mind. Dickens used fairy tales to awaken the wonder of his readers, or employed them as one of the elements in the common culture that he could use. It was part of the very way in which he recreated life in fiction, and wanted to make us share his consciousness and sensibility. Dickens' fairy-tale method successfully developed in his subsequent first-person novels. This is also one of the essential elements that Dickens' larger fictions share with the child's story, such as the growth, self-consciousness, and self-discovery of David and Pip.

Although over the past century, the research on Dickens' works has already developed academic criteria which are comparatively rigorous, and shown pluralistic trends; most of experts and scholars congruously define Charles Dickens as a critical realist. Throughout the Victorian period the wild, passionate, erotic, even destructive aspects of Romanticism continue in evidence in all the arts. The extent and variety of

the Romantic legacy to Dickens' novels have received a little attention; yet Dickens attains a sense of creative potential through the works and biographical examples of Rousseau, Blake and Wordsworth. Louis Cazamian thinks that Charles Dickens is an idealist and Romanticist. His idea enlightens later scholars on Dickens' further studies. The English novelist--- George Gissing describes Dickens' writing technique as "romantic realism" (27) in his monograph *the Immortal Dickens* (1925). G.K. Chesterton in his book *Charles Dickens* (1906) mentions "Dickens was a mythologist rather than a novelist; he was the last of the mythologists, and perhaps the greatest. He did not always manage to make his characters men, but he always managed, at the least, to make them gods." Therefore, Dickens' novel is called "a more fictitious kind of fiction" (Chesterton, *Charles Dickens*). T.S Eliot also thinks "the characters in Dickens' works as well as these of Shakespeare and Dante belong to poetic category" (qtd. in Luo 4).

*Great Expectations*, one of Dickens' last complete masterpieces, the richness of the Romantic sensibility can be detected, so it is a good example to be illustrated. In the 1850s Dickens was the editor of *Household World* and its successor *All the Year Round* (1859-70). In the summer of 1860 the sales of *All the Year Round* began to fall off badly. Dickens immediately decided that he must contribute to the paper and begin to write the novel in late September 1860. *Great Expectations* appeared weekly in his magazine in attempt to boost circulation. The successful reception is a big relief to Dickens. The story of Pip (Philip Pirrip), told as an autobiographical narrative, is noticeable as indicating, better than any of his previous stories even among Tolstoy's and Dostoyevsky's favorite novels. *Great Expectations* presents the growth and development of Pip. Pip, an orphan child is brought up by his fierce-tempered sister "by hand" (Dickens 8). "That hand is often heavy in blows and in soaping the youngster's face with rasping impatience and harrowing it with a harsh towel" (Johnson 983). Only Pip's brother-in-law, Joe Gargery, gentle, good-natured, sweet-tempered, could bring Pip some comfort. Wandering in the churchyard of a late afternoon, Pip meets an escaped convict named Abel Magwitch and helps him against his will. When Pip is taken to the home of Miss Havisham, he is tortured by the disdain of her pretty adopted child Estella. With the help of an anonymous benefactor,



Pip is properly educated in London, but he becomes a snob. Magwitch turns out to be the benefactor; he dies and Pip's "great expectations" are ruined. The change in fortunes transforms Pip into a mean snob. The novel *Great Expectations* is the story about how the outer circumstances shape Pip's character. In other words, it is a story on the idea that money can purchase a gentleman.

The studies on *Great Expectations* also show pluralistic trends. Elliot L. Gilbert's analysis of *Great Expectations* is an exercise in intellectual history, taking that novel as Dickens' closest examination of the social problems presented to Victorians by the Romantic celebration of self. Murray Baumgarten's "Calligraphy and Code: Writing in *Great Expectations*" responds to Dickens' fiction primarily as texts, constituting an order of reality by virtue of being texts, rather than from any referential relationship to external reality. In "The Complex Origins of Pip and Magwitch" Stanley Friedman stretches out his discovery that Henry James Byron's burletta "The Maid and the Magpie" (1858) may have provided for *Great Expectations* a disconnected set of names and relationships. In Hana Wirth Neshier's essay on "Great Expectations and Huckleberry Finn" (1885), she carries her idea into matters of point of view to make connections with American and British literature. Susan Schoenbauer Thurin has noticed that there are seven deaths and the number of deadly sins in *Great Expectations*. For example, Magwitch has to pass for Envy and Miss Havisham for Lust.

Q.D. Leavis' essay "How We Must Read *Great Expectations*" asserts that "it must have been very much easier to read *Great Expectations* adequately—that is, with a sympathetic and intelligent comprehension of the spirit in which it was written and of what it was actually about—in Dickens's own day, or in any time up to the present, then it evidently is now" (277). Leavis continues with the disagreement of her contemporary critics and general readers, who presumably "have no real knowledge of the constitution and actuality of Dickens's society" (277). Since Leavis published her essay, a host of scholars especially those whose work has been informed by Marxism, feminism, and psychoanalysis have given us new insights to texts. Much of this recent work challenges and asserts the openness of the text to new interpretations. Leavis' reading of *Great Expectations* illuminates many of its fine

qualities, particularly those which require psychological interpretation.

For the late twentieth-century reader, the richness of this novel may be enhanced. The scholars pay attention to the cultural dynamics at work during Dickens' time and emphasize on recent psycho-analytic, social, and literary narratives which offer us for understanding. Now *Great Expectations* has attracted and continues to attract a great variety of modern readings--Freudian, Marxist, Foucauldian, postcolonialist, feminist and so on, yet it is also greatly in force and subtlety when studying it from a romantic point of view. The following chapters will respectively deal with this aspect.

## **1.2 Thesis Statement**

There are five chapters in my thesis. The main body of the thesis, i.e., chapter II through chapter IV, runs in the following organizational framework:

Chapter II examines Dickens' critical ideas in *Great Expectations*. With the development of capitalism, the class contradictions and the relationship between the workers and the capitalists are becoming increasingly intense. The critical realism is the production of the foundation and development of the 19<sup>th</sup> century European capitalism. Charles Dickens is one of the greatest representatives of critical realism in English literature. *Great Expectations* is Charles Dickens' psychologically acute self--portrait and without a doubt one of Dickens' most fully realized literary creations. Facing the complicated life experiences, the main characters of the novel expose the human nature in different ways. Through these characters, Dickens explores the good and the bad human nature. The readers can feel his hatred to the greed capitalist society and the sincere wish for a charitable one. However, realism, as a product of ideological development, has its historical limitations. The realists could not break through these limitations, which must be reflected in their works. Dickens is not an exception. Here this part is to elaborate the assertion about the critical ideas of the works from the point of thoughts, more importantly further to explore the limitations of realistic criticism, which is viewed as a foil to Dickens Romantic sensibility.

Chapter III and Chapter IV are the very cores of this thesis, and they deeply

probe into the Dickens' Romantic legacy in *Great Expectations*. In approaching the Victorian novel, however, one should be guarded in the use of the term "Romanticism"—at least conscious of its slippery meaning. The chapter III studies the definition of Romanticism and its features. Romanticism is most widespread both in its origins and influence. For its origins search must be made deep into to the past, perhaps into the very nature of the human spirit. No other artistic movement has comparable variety, reach, and staying power since the end of the Middle Ages. The term Romanticism has been used in varying contexts and has come to mean different things to different people. To explain the features of Romanticism is helpful to deeply understand the term. Based on the interpretations of Romanticism, this thesis will explore the Romantic impulse in *Great Expectations* from several aspects: the relation of man to nature including the natural persons Joe and Biddy, the nature descriptions and the journey of Pip's return to nature; the relation of children to nature such as Wordsworthian accounts of the childhood development and Pip's romantic childhood; romantic love of Pip and Estella and their happy ending, the grotesqueness in *Great Expectations*.

This essay also discusses different writing techniques between Dickens' and Thackeray's. William Thackeray and Charles Dickens are the greatest representatives of Victorian fiction. Thackeray becomes the living standard of literary realism. To a certain degree, Thackeray is an anti—Romantic novelist, yet Dickens is a Romantic. The Romantic impulse releases the creative energies in Dickens' works.

The final chapter is a conclusion. Viewing techniques in romantic perspective, this thesis just studies Dickens work differentiating traditional points of view.

That is a rough outline of this thesis which tries to approach *Great Expectations* from a different perspective. This novel, more than most of Dickens' novels, has suffered critically because of its popularity as a school text with the general reading public. Choosing it as my thesis subject, I benefit a lot from mass reading about Romanticism and Realism which provides me with a strategy to deal with the novel from multi-perspectives. Moreover, the development of literary theories such as Russian Formalism, French Structuralism, and New Criticism and so on are widely used to illustrate literary works. In order to fulfil its proclaimed purpose, the thesis

will not stay at the level of formal analysis but reach beyond that to the historical settings and the social contexts of *Great Expectations*. It mentions the idea of language of post-structuralism linguistics. All these claim that we could have a try to study Dickens works from a new point and *Great Expectations* deserves academic reading like other Dickens' masterpieces.

## Chapter II Victorian Realism and Charles Dickens

### 2.1 Realism in England

In 19<sup>th</sup> century, realism, as a literary movement, is usually called critical realism, because it rises as a reaction against the social reality. Generally speaking, realists “insisted on accurate documentation, sociological insight, an accumulation of the details of material fact, an avoidance of poetic diction, idealization, exaggeration, melodrama, etc”( Drabble 841).

However, the practice of realism has a long history and can be traced back to ancient time. For instance, there are realistic scenes in *Odyssey*. Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales* represents a panorama of medieval period in Britain. The realistic novel, rooted in eighteenth –century writers such as Defoe and Fielding, achieves a high development in master-novelist of the nineteenth century.

The period of realism in English literature corresponds roughly to the latter half of the reign of Queen Victoria (1837---1900). “Victorian Period is an age of democracy, an age of popular education, an age of religious tolerance, an age of growing brotherhood, and an age of profound social unrest yet comparative peace and rapid progress in all the arts and sciences and in mechanical inventions”( Shen and Gong 286). The French Revolution in 1830 and the First Act Reform in 1832 marked the foundation of the capitalism in west Europe. On one hand, the bourgeoisie grew and flourished by taking advantage of the new industrial and mercantile conditions, and emerged into wealth and importance. On the other hand, the laboring poor suffered from miserable exploitation by their employers. In England, as in other capitalist countries, there was the existence of two nations and two cultures; i.e. the backward and reactionary moneyed classes and the progressive and revolutionary propertyless classes.

The Depression of 1837 allows protest organizations to finally have their chance to speak. The members of the organizations designed the People’s Charter, which basically wanted to change Great Britain’s government to a democratic one. The year

between 1832 and the early 50's saw an important series of events known as the Chartist Movement. In addition, Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871) shook the basis of the conventional religious faith. The Bible and the Evangelical Orthodoxy greatly influenced on Middle and Low classes. Utilitarianism held a special appeal to the middle class industrialists. The critical realists shouldered the historic responsibilities and took the faith and truth into consideration by exposing to the whole civilized world the filthy spiritual world of the bourgeoisie. Marx wrote in 1854:

The present brilliant school of novelists in England, whose graphic and eloquent descriptions have revealed more political and social truths to the world than all the politicians, publicists and moralists added together, has pictured all sections of the middle class, beginning with the "respectable" rentier and owner of government stocks who looks down on all kinds of "business" as being vulgar, and finishing with the small shopkeeper and lawyer's clerk. How have they been described by Dickens, Thackeray, Charlotte Bronte and Mrs. Gaskell? As full of self-conceit, prudishness, petty-tyranny and ignorance. And the civilized world has confirmed their verdict in a damning epigram which it has pinned on that class, that it is servile to its social superiors and despotic to its inferiors. (qtd. in Fan 174-175)

Charles Dickens' works attack on social evils, injustice, and hypocrisy. Therefore, in general, he is regarded as the British critical-realism novelist in Victorian period. Karl Marx ever called Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, Charlotte Bronte and Mrs. Gaskell a group of excellent Critical novelists in Britain.

## 2.2 Dickens' Critical Ideas in *Great Expectations*

Charles Dickens, as a famous novelist in Victorian period, witnessed the evils of bourgeoisie society, and he exposed and denounced them in a succession of novels: *Dombey and Son* (1846—48), *David Copperfield* (1849-50), *Bleak House* (1852-53), *Hard Times* (1854), *Great Expectations* (1860-61)... John O.Jordan argues that *Great Expectations* is "dark with a sense of social estrangement" (78). "From poor apprentice to true gentleman" is the core of the *Great Expectations*. At the beginning

of the novel, Pip introduces himself to the reader as an innocent and honest child, wandering in the graveyard where his parents are buried. It is Pip's meeting with Estella at "Satis House" that really awakens Pip's sense of becoming a gentleman. Although he knows that Estella despises him and that it would be better for him if he could get her out of his head, he falls in love with Estella desperately. To his pillow, Pip repeated a hundred times, "I love her, I love her, I love her! ...I thought those were high and great emotions. But I never thought there was anything low and small in my keeping away from Joe, because I knew she would be contemptuous of him. It was but a day gone, and Joe had brought the tears into my eyes; they had soon dried, God forgive me! soon dried" (Dickens 241).

It is the second stage in London that Pip comes to know the meaning of money and life. In other words, to be a true gentleman, one must have money. Money seems to be the immediate ladder for him to climb upward along the social scale. From then on, Pip becomes more materialistic, egoistic and snobbish. The knowledge of money's meaning and value is the beginning of Pip's degeneration. Pip dreams of becoming a gentleman living in decorative grandeur on money. But he has done nothing to earn, supported entirely by the labors of others. It is also the dream of nineteenth-century society, willing to base its hopes of comfort on the toil of the laboring classes.

In addition, *Great Expectations* is a harsh criticism on the British legal and penal system as well as on Victorian society. The prison system in England may have had a significant effect on the life and writing of Charles Dickens due to his father's imprisonment in a debtor's prison. Dickens, then nine years old, had to be apprenticed in a blacking warehouse, a humiliating experience to the sensitive boy. The lawyer Mr. Jaggers "specializes in representing accused criminals, whose unsavory cases he handles with the most unscrupulous and triumphant skill" (Johnson 990). With the departure of every visitor he goes to a closet and cleans his hands with scented soap, as if he were washing off the client. On one occasion, Pip remarks:

...he seemed to have been engaged on a case of a darker complexion than usual, for we found him with his head butted into this closet, not only washing his hands, but laving his face and gargling his throat. And even when he had done

all that, and had gone all round the jack-towel, he took out his penknife and scraped the case out of his nails before he put his coat on. (Dickens 208)

Dickens tackles bigger and bigger problems arising from the fundamental composition of bourgeois society and shows him more and more at odds with the society. He enjoys life, but he hates the social system into which he had been born. In "The Novel and the People", Ralph Fox remarks:

In Dickens they (the Victorians) had a genius who restored to the novel its full epic character, whose teeming mind created stories, poems and people which have forever entered into the life of the English-speaking world. Some of his characters have assumed an almost proverbial existence, they have become part of our modern folklore and that surely is the highest any author can achieve. He can only do it by genius, humanity and a feeling for the poetry of life. (qtd. in Fan 181)

### **2.3 Limitations of Realism and Dickens' Humanitarianism**

Briefly speaking, realism is the portrayal of life with fidelity. And the realist credo is a truthful, objective and impartial observation of the real world, based on the observation and detailed representation of the contemporary life. Literature, as a special kind of social ideology, is the necessity of reflecting social existence. However, we can not take all works which depict the real world as realistic works. Victorian novels usually are labeled the realistic novels. We have no doubt that those novels create a detailed, encyclopedic portrait of the whole range of Victorian period. But the realistic works are not equal to historical materials, which to some extent don't entirely reflect the truthful and objective society or reappear the historical conditions.

Firstly, the novel itself has obvious class consciousness, which limit its special points of view and value-orientation. The word "novel" appears in England in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> cent, when it is chiefly associated with romances. As a literary genre, the novel form developed slowly, through the memoir-novel and the epistolary novel of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century to the novel of the omniscient third-person narrator, which has dominated from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. In nineteenth century, the number of readers



has increased a thousandfold with the spread of popular education. It is an age of newspapers, magazines, and modern novels, the former two being about the world's daily life, and the last being the most pleasant form of literary entertainment, as well as the most successful method of presenting modern problems and modern ideals. Modern English novel, as a social product of the eighteenth century enlightenment and industrialization, really comes with the rising of the bourgeois class. The bourgeois class becomes the main force in social life and construction of England. At the same time, the rapid growth of a large middle-class reading public increases demand for reading materials and asks for the writings which should not only be interesting and instructive, but also easy enough to be followed and shared by most people. So Victorian novels break away from Scott's romance influence and first studies life as it is, and then points out what life may and ought to be. Those novels for the most part depict and emphasize the life of middle class, and the main readers as well as the author himself belong to the middle class. Dickens himself is a typical middle-class man. "He draws strength from his middle-class audience; he adores them, delights to please them, and accepts the validity of their judgment" (Zhang and Ma 267).

Although sometimes aristocrats and squires appear in the works, they are no longer the protagonists. In addition, the physical labor class, even the vagrants are recognized by the writer to a certain degree, but the borderline between them and the main characters is manifest in the novels. For example, Charlotte Bronte's little Jane never wanted to be trapped by poor life.

Secondly, the realistic novel, characterized as the descriptions of realistic world, is compared with the romantic literature in nineteenth century. Shen points that "realism is a literary term so widely used as to be more or less meaningless except when used in contradistinction to some other movements, e.g. Naturalism, Romanticism, Surrealism" (289). The "Romanticism" and "Realism" must be two of the most controversial terms in literary history; the difference of each term is to a certain extent explored. Those novels describe the common life of common people and pay much attention to details in ordinary life, an avoidance of poetic diction, idealization, exaggeration, etc. It is different from romantic literature depicting

emotion matter in an imaginative form, especially fascination with the past and the myths and mysticism of the Middle Ages.

Lastly, modern literary critics get inspiration from post-structuralism linguistics and state that language is not a kind of pure and transparent medium, so it can not lead to so-called "truth" or "reality." That is to say, language is not an orderly system as the structuralists think. We are not entirely in control of the medium of language, so meanings cannot be planted in set places. Likewise, the meanings of words can never be guaranteed one hundred per cent pure. Deconstruction describes the text always in a state of change, furnishing only provisional meanings. All texts are open-ended constructs, and sign and signification are only arbitrary relationship. Meaning can only point to an indefinite number of other meanings. In effect, reality itself is textual. The "truth" and "objectivity" of realism not only deny the signifier--signified activities of language, but also imply the textuality and pure fictionality of fiction.

Charles Dickens, like other Victorian writers, could not break through the limitations of that period. He is a humanitarian and has a world of sympathy for the miseries of the poor laboring masses and cries out loud against social injustice. Limited by his class position and viewpoint, he wants to improve the life of the poor, but he is afraid of a real revolution and unable to find good solution to the social contradictions. At the same time Dickens' works ignore the proletariat. The central action of Dickens' stories almost invariably takes place in middle-class surroundings. His real subject--matter is the London commercial bourgeoisie and their lawyers, clerks, tradesmen, and servants. Among his vast range of various characters, he has almost no portrait of an agricultural worker. However, his world is fuller and richer than many other novelists', and he himself is a pure dream figure, much further from real life than, say, Micawber. Charles Dickens is one of Marx and Engle's favorite writers. We can easily find that Marx only stresses Dickens' critical ideas, let alone his artistic techniques. Literature, as a special social ideology, not only has moral function, but also aesthetic function. Dickens' studies should not be limited on his exposing and criticizing the evil social reality, and it is necessary understand his peculiar characteristics and artistic techniques. Throughout the Victorian period the

wild, passionate, erotic, even destructive aspects of Romanticism continue in evidence in all the arts. Dickens' works explore the dark side of the society; he himself is full of miseries and sympathetic with the poor people. However, he is endowed with romantic temperament and his works is imbued with romantic feelings to greatly alleviate the discomfort of the realistic descriptions which readers should bear. Charles Dickens absorbs thoughts from Romantic writers in 19<sup>th</sup> century. His unique characters, especial the child character portrayal, his admiration of nature, his imagination, his narrative art and so on, all these features apparently embody romantic characteristics.

## Chapter III On Romanticism

In approaching the Victorian novel, especially Dickens' works, however, one should be guarded in the use of the term "Romantic" or "Romanticism"----at least conscious of its slippery meaning. "Romanticism can be said to embody rebelliousness and reverence, a principle of dynamic growth and the spirit of conservation, Prometheism and Stoicism, the will to create and that fear of the will which paralyzes creativity" (Stone 10). If we examine the characteristics of the romantic literature, the three criteria could be particularly convincing: "imagination for the view of poetry, nature for the view of the world, and symbol and myth for poetic style" (Wellek 161). Following this thesis will further elaborate the term Romanticism and its features.

### 3.1 The Term: Romanticism

To give a proper definition of Romanism is a problem. Socrates insists on the importance of definition, especially in a chaotic era; "for nothing is more characteristic of such an era than its irresponsible use of general terms" (qtd. in Babbitt 1). According to the Socratic standard, "a definition must not be abstract and metaphysical, but experimental; it must not, that is, reflect our opinion of what a word should mean, but what it actually has meant" (qtd. in Babbitt 1). The name of romanticism derives from romance, and romance derives from the Medieval Latin word *romanice* in the Roman language. The word romance comes to be applied to the popular courtly stories written in the various vernaculars, especially in old French, which deal with three traditional subjects: the legends about Arthur; Charlemagne and his knights; and stories of classical heroes especially Alexander. English romance is found from the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In general, the adjective romantic is applied to books that we should still call romantic because of "the predominance in these books of the element of fiction over reality" (Babbitt 4). When we point that a thing is romantic because of its strangeness, uniqueness and unexpectedness. Gradually the term Romanticism comes to be applied to the "resurgence of instinct and emotion which

the prevalent rationalism of eighteenth century never wholly suppressed” (Baugh, Chew and Altick 1122). The term Romanticism has been used in varying contexts and has come to mean different things to different people. To define the general character or basic principle of Romantic Movement, the later historians has called Romanticism, though, is notoriously difficult, “partly because the romantic temperament itself resisted the very impulse of definition, favoring the indefinite and the boundless” (Drabble 872).

Romanticism is most widespread both in its origins and influence. No other artistic movement has comparable variety, reach, and staying power since the end of the Middle Ages. Beginning in Germany and England in the 1770s, by the 1820 it had swept through all the Europe. It profoundly and irreversibly transforms in artistic styles, in cultural attitudes, and in the relationship between artist and society. It is also deeply connected with the politics of the time, echoing people’s fears, hopes, and aspirations. Political and intellectual movements of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century encourage the assertion of individual and national rights, denying legitimacy of kings and courtiers. It is the voice of revolution at the beginning of the 19th century and the voice of the establishment at the end of it.

Romantic phenomena vary in different countries, and even within the same country no two writers are necessarily romantic in the same way or to the same degree, nor is a writer necessarily romantic in all his work or throughout his life. “Though often used of writers in rebellion against classical rules of composition, romanticism is not merely a matter of technique” (Baugh, Chew and Altick 1123).

## **3.2 The Features of Romanticism**

### **3.2.1 Exoticism**

“Exoticism of many kinds is part of the reaction against the eighteenth century and its self-complacency; the suppressed forces of the soul seek their analogies and models in prehistory, in the Orient, in the Middle Ages, and finally in India, as well as in the unconscious and in dreams”(Wellek 165-166). Romantics respond to the longing of people for a distant past, so they would like to provide images of distant

places. The distances need not be terribly great: Spain was a favorite “exotic” setting for French Romantics, for instance. North Africa and the Middle East provide images of “Asia” to Europeans. Generally these places are considered more relaxed, more colorful and more sensual. Scott is the most influential force in popularizing the romantic historical novels. Exoticism in his works was inspired more by Byron--especially his *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812-1818) than by any other single writer. The poem describes the travels and reflections of a gloomy, passionate young wanderer who escaped from the society he disliked and traveled around the continent, questing for freedom. He disillusioned with a life of pleasure and revelry and looked for distraction in foreign lands in a wider sense. It contains many vivid and exotic descriptive passages on mountains, rivers and seas. Romantic exoticism is not in tension with Romantic nationalism. French Romantic painting is full of themes relating to the tumultuous political events of the period and later Romantic music often draws its inspiration from national folk music. Romantic nationalism focuses on folk traditions which are in themselves exotic to the audiences newly exposed to them. For example, Goethe deliberately uses German folkloric themes and images in *Faust*.

### 3.2.2 Mysticism

The Romantics seek to escape from familiar experience and from the limitations of reality. They delight in the marvelous and abnormal. Their efforts are to live constantly in the world of the imagination and beyond the sensuous, phenomenal world. Lascelles Abercrombie states that “this is to believe wholly in one’s inmost self—to live with perfect security in one’s inmost experience” (107). This dominance of the intuitive and the irrational over sense experience become mysticism. Mysticism, a notable kind of Romanticism, “is the life which professes direct intuition of the pure truth of being, wholly independent of the faculties by which it takes hold of the illusory contamination of this present world” (Abercrombie 107). To the Romanticist not the thing perceived is important but the thing imagined. Blake seems to have lived almost continuously in this visionary ecstasy, and thinks that “vision or imagination is a representation of what actually exists, really and unchangeably” (Abercrombie 107).

However, the Romanticist becomes aware that it is impossible that the vision embraces the concept of perfection in the present life and tends to escape from actuality into the innermost of his own spirit. A sense of this contrast is expressed by P. B. Shelly in his poems in which there is a sudden fall from ecstasy into disillusionment.

### 3.2.3 Individualism

One of the most important developments of the period is the rise in the importance of individualism. Individualism usually refers to a belief in the importance of individual and personal independence or self—reliance. Before the 18th Century, few Europeans concerned themselves with discovering their own individual identities. As mercantilism and capitalism gradually transformed Europe, however, it shattered the old patterns. The new industrialists naturally liked to believe themselves for having capacity to build their large fortunes and rejected the right of society to regulate their enterprises. The changing economy not only made individualism attractive to the newly rich, it made possible a free market in the arts in which painters, composers, and writers could no longer be confined to the Church and aristocratic patrons. They could now afford to pursue their individual tastes in a way. Individualism has been playing a leading role among all the values in the western society since the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. The true and typical feature of individualism is advocating of individual rights and freedom. What's more, individualism pays special attention to democracy and equality as well as it values the others and their rights at the same time. It was in the Romantic period also the period of the industrial revolution that such concerned with individualism became much more widespread. Byron in literature and Beethoven in music are both examples of romantic individualism taken to extremes. Byron creates his "Byronic hero", who is a proud, mysterious rebel figure with immense passion and power. He would carry on his shoulders the burden of opposing all the wrongs in a corrupted society and any kind of tyrannical rules in government and religion. In Britain the Romantic writers tend to cast themselves as prophetic voices crying in the wilderness, dislocated from

the social hierarchy. The Romantic writers were “a sort of modern hermit or exile and usually granted a special moral value to similar outcast figures in his or her own writing: the peddlers and Vagrants in Wordsworth’s poems, Coleridge’s *Ancient Mariner*, Mary Shelley’s man-made monster, and the many tormented pariahs in the works of Byron and P. B. Shelley—who were themselves wandering outcasts from respectable English society” (Drabble 872).

### 3.2.4 Nature

The subject of the relationship of Romanticism to nature is a vast one. The attitudes toward common nature in the Western world emerge mostly during the Romantic period. In 18<sup>th</sup> century the Enlightenment had stressed on “natural law” as the source of truth, but such law was manifest in human society and related principally to civic behavior. Unlike the Chinese, before the 19<sup>th</sup> century Europeans had traditionally had little interest in natural landscapes for their own sake. Paintings and poems of rural settings were usually extremely idealized. The Romantics, just as they cultivate sensitivity to emotion generally, especially cultivated sensitivity to nature. Much of the nature writing of this period has a religious quality. The natural world comes to the forefront of the poetic imagination. Nature is not only the major source of poetic imagery, but also provides the dominant subject matter. Wordsworth is the “nature” writer. He thinks the natural world is the dominant influence in changing people’s sensibilities—nature is a source of mental cleanliness and spiritual understanding and the stepping stone between Man and God. It seems paradoxical that it was just at the moment when the industrial revolution was destroying large tracts of woods and fields and creating an unprecedented artificial environment in Europe. People gradually were aware of the stark contrast between their daily lives and the existence of the inhabitants. Faust, for instance, is powerfully drawn to the moonlit landscape outside at the beginning of Goethe’s play because he is so discontented with the artificial world of learning in which he has so far lived.



## Chapter IV Dickens' Romantic Spirit in *Great Expectations*

Generally speaking, Romanticism in Britain arrives from the appearance in 1798 of the *Lyrical Ballads*, a landmark in the history of English Romanticism. Several important tendencies in the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, such as graveyard poetry, the sentimental novel etc, encourage the deeper emotional movement in art and literature. Romantic Movement from Wordsworth through Victorian age to the modern time, never stops, and still continues. Of the major poets to emerge at the turn of last century, both W. B. Yeats and Thomas Hardy were far from rejecting out of hand the Romantic heritage of English poetry, though both were prepared to be critical of the emanation of Romanticism that had evolved during the nineteenth century. Scholars of English literature are prone to make much of the distinction between the Romantic and Victorian Ages, but for our purpose the latter is best viewed as merely a later stage of the former, because throughout the Victorian period the wild, passionate, erotic, even destructive aspects of Romanticism continue in all the arts evidently. Arnold asserts that "whether [Victorian novelists] accepted or reacted against the Romanticism of their early years, their attitudes toward those Romantic values enriched and intensified the individual and social dilemmas described in the novels" (qtd. in Stone 2). Although Dickens insisted that he was basically a realist, he himself came to realize that his art was a combination of realism and romanticism. "Dickens' Romanticism seems, in many ways, a simplified and sentimentalized version of the Wordsworthian—Coleridgean trust in the spontaneous, untutored imagination placed in opposition to the scientific—rationalist strain of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries" (Stone 250).

Many critics consider that Dickens' *Great Expectations* is the most completely unified work of art that Dickens ever produced. It combines folklore with popular art, such as melodrama, gothic romance etc. Moreover, *Great Expectations* is Dickens' most subtle, mature, and original treatment of nature, and in some ways his most romantic. In this novel the psychology of character, the nature of human relations, the relation of man to nature, the relation of children to nature and Dickens' ecological

explorations, profoundly and subtly are presented by Dickens. Therefore, it is valuable to study Dickens' Romantic spirit by taking *Great Expectations* for example.

Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1817) is surely the most popular and widely diffused of all Romantic writings. In Bloom's terms, "*Great Expectations* is both a completion of and antithesis to Shelley's work, since it retains its predecessor's terms but transforms their significance" (qtd. in Crawford 625). Dickens is well aware of the appeal of novel and attunes to popular culture which the novel possesses. And we know that he owns a copy of *Bentley's Standard Novels*, the series which includes the second edition of Mary Shelley's work. Crawford points that "allusions to her writing have also been discovered both in a letter Dickens wrote Forster during his Alpine sojourn of 1846 and in his *The Haunted Man* of 1848"(626). Years later, when Dickens came to write *Great Expectations*, it is apparent that he had not forgotten *Frankenstein*:

I had got on so fast of late, that I had even started a boy in boots—top boots—in bondage and slavery to whom I might have been said to pass my days. For, after I had made the monster( out of the refuse of my washerwoman's family) and had clothed him with a blue coat, canary waistcoat, white cravat, creamy breeches, and the boots already mentioned, I had to find him a little to do and a great deal to eat; and with both of those horrible requirements he haunted my existence. (Dickens 216)

Both novels quite clearly display a conscious reaction to the Romantic, specifically the Wordsworthian, concerned with the relationship between the child and the adult, but from different perspectives. Dickens' *Great Expectations*, as U.C.Knoepfmacher has shown, all his later works owe to *The Prelude* (1805) and its depiction of childhood. The novel treats of the relationship between the animal and the human, nature and civilization, the demonic and the divine.

#### 4.1 The Relation of Man to Nature

In nineteenth century the Romantics cultivated sensitivity to nature. Nature is the key word for Romantics which usually is connected with the rural and the spontaneous aspects of Romanticism. These aspects play a key part in the poetry of Wordsworth, for example. Nature, as an external power to man, is a personified force

and possesses of healing powers. The relation of man to nature is a significant perspective of Romantic literature.

#### 4.1.1 Joe Gargery and Biddy-----the Rousseauesque Noble Savages

Jean Jacques Rousseau is the father of Romanticism. Covering both literary and political life, Rousseau's writings peaked in the 1760's and 1770's, with the novel *Julie ou La Nouvelle Héloïse*, the radical and revolutionary treatise *Contract Social* and the pedagogical classic *Émile ou de l'éducation*. The cultural criticism, the tendency to introspection and the political radicalism of the Romantics definitely derives from his works. The romantic revolution wouldn't have emerged without Rousseau.

Rousseau is a moody, over-sensitive sort of fellow. He loves to go for long walks, climb mountains, and generally "commune with nature." At the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe becomes more civilized, safer, and its citizens felt freer to travel for the simple pleasure of it. Mountain passes and deep woods are no longer only perilous accidents to be traversed, but awesome views to be enjoyed and pondered. The violence of ocean storms comes to be appreciated as an esthetic object in number of paintings, musical tone poems, and written descriptions. The *Héloïse*, *Émile*, the *Confessions*, and the *Rêveries* all express Rousseau's longing for closeness with nature. His sensitive awareness apprehends the subtle influences of landscape, trees, water, birds, and other aspects of nature on the shifting state of the human soul.

As the father of Romantic sensibility, Rousseau is the first to give it full expression and advocate "return to nature." He thinks returning to natural environment is a human healthy survival necessity. In his last work *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, he expresses his ideal of the solitary human being finding incomparable solace and contentment through an emotional connection with nature. "Rousseau challenged the Christian doctrine of original Sin; he believed that man was by nature good, and that he had been corrupted by civilization; savages were uncorrupted" (Purkis 75). Men are born to be innocent and free, but corrupted by modern society. Nature is the refuge of human far away from modern society and absent of evils. So he advocates that human being should return to nature, especially

to the rural life. The view of superior country life is largely promoted. As to the rural person, Rousseau calls him "the Noble Savage." The cult of "the Noble Savage" has been closely associated with the 18<sup>th</sup> century, who "is conceived to be 'naturally' intelligent, moral, and possessed of high dignity in thought and deed---and the concurrent vogue of 'natural' poetry written by supposedly uneducated peasants or working folk, were both aspects of primitivism" (Abrams 244). Briefly speaking it refers to the people who live an essentially primitive lifestyle, and fuse their own beings with their natural surroundings. In other words, they are "primitive people." Abrams notes that they "are considered to live in a way more accordant to 'nature' because they are isolated from civilization – are preferable to the way of life, activities, and products of people living in a highly developed society, especially in cities" (244).

Joe Gargery and Bidley are the Rousseauesque Noble Savages in *Great Expectations*. Joe Gargery is Pip's brother-in-law, the village blacksmith. Although he is uneducated and unrefined, he consistently acts for the benefit of those he loves and suffers in silence. Joe, a fellow-sufferer like Pip, is not immune to Mrs. Joe's "Rampages" (Dickens 9). His wife regards him as an older version of Pip; and Pip "always treated him as a larger species of child, and as no more than [his] equal" (Dickens 9). Mrs. Joe's resentment of her husband stems partially from his station; "it's bad enough to be a blacksmith's wife" (Dickens 9). She has married beneath her. One can imagine that Joe has been the only man to court her and, with a little brother to bring up alone, Mrs. Joe probably accepted her suitor grudgingly.

Joe, throughout the book, is the symbol of good in the world of deceit and hate. He is even compassionate to the convict who stole his food, as well as to the memory of his alcoholic, abusive father. He recognizes Mrs. Joe's strengths, remembers her better times, and wants to protect her from the suffering that his mother endured with his father. Facing his wife's abusive behavior, Joe remains stoically silent and calm so as not to enrage her further. He is of tenderness and considers that

I see so much in my poor mother, of a woman drudging and slaving and breaking her honest hart and never getting on peace in her mortal days, that I'm

dead afeerd of going wrong in the way of not doing what's right by a woman, and I'd fur rather of the two go wrong the t'other way, an be a little ill-conwenienced myself. (Dickens 49)

He is a totally good character in the story. Hard working, honorable, loyal, and fair, he is equally comfortable showing both his raw, physical strength and his gentle, patient, emotional side. He has a basic sense of what is right and what will cause heartache. Even when treated poorly by Pip, he shows unconditional love and comes to Pip's aid when needed. "There have been larks. And, dear sir, what have been betwixt us-- have been" (Dickens 466). He told this to Pip when he came down sick. Pip was trying to apologize for the way he treated Joe when he came into his fortune. Pip had begged Joe to be cross or to treat him with something other than the total love that Joe was showing because Pip felt guilty about the way he was treating Joe. In the story he is to love Pip, be a father to him, and shows him the path to dignified manhood. In him, there is deep intuitive wisdom, inner peace, acceptance and dignity. But Dickens does not make him being a sickeningly sweet person by giving him the flaws of no education, no polish, and failing to better protect Pip from his sister when Pip was a child. No man is perfect. Joe is a typical natural person.

Biddy is another good character in the story. She is a simple, kindhearted country girl and also a very close friend of Pip's since they attended school together. After Mrs. Joe is attacked and becomes an invalid, Biddy moves into Pip's home to care for her. Throughout most of the novel, Biddy represents the opposite of Estella; she is plain, kind, moral, and of Pip's own social class. Pip and Biddy had had some good times, but when he was going to become a gentleman, Pip asked Biddy to assist Joe in his schooling and in his manners. Biddy was appalled. Pip twisted her opinion into something ugly and unjust and said: "You are envious, Biddy, and grudging. You are dissatisfied on account of my rise in fortune, and you can't help showing it ...it's a bad side of human nature" (Dickens 146-147). Although Pip didn't mean to be offensive, Biddy sensed that he meant something different from what he said. Poor Biddy returned, "Whether you scold me or approve of me... you may equally depend upon my trying to do all that lies in my power, here, at all times. And whatever opinion you take away of me shall make no difference in my remembrance of you.

Yet a gentleman should not be unjust neither" (Dickens 147). Despite such ill-treatment, Biddy still remains honest and loyal.

To our joy, Joe and Biddy got married at last and happily lived together. We have no doubt to believe they are really a perfect match.

#### 4.1.2 Wordsworthian Nature Descriptions in *Great Expectations*

In Britain, William Wordsworth is to give poetic expression to Rousseau's ideals. Wordsworth is often described as a "nature" writer. About the meaning of "nature," Stallnecht explains:

The word "Nature" applies to both experiences. "Nature" signifies the unity of the poet's environment which encompasses and includes his own living and his own thinking; and again the word signifies the source of the poet's inspiration. In both cases Nature is thought to be like the God of higher religions, more similar to mind than to matter. This is true even though Nature is recognized as the all-inclusive unity of the world. (43)

Wordsworth penetrates the heart of things and gives the reader the very life of nature. To Wordsworth, nature embodies human beings in their diverse circumstances. It is nature that gives him strength, knowledge and peace. In *Romanticism*, Lascelles Abercrombie argues that Wordsworth's nature is "experience perfectly combining sense and spirit, perfect equipoise of self against the manifestly more than self" (132). As a great poet of nature, he is the first to find words for the most elementary sensations of man face to face with natural phenomena. These sensations are universal and old, but once expressed in his poetry, become charmingly beautiful and new.

"I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" is perhaps the most anthologized poem in English literature. It takes us to the core of Wordsworth's poetic beliefs. Wordsworth wrote this beautiful poem of nature after he came across a long belt of gold daffodils tossing, reeling and dancing along the waterside. There is a vivid picture of the daffodils here mixed with the poet's philosophical and somewhat mystical thoughts. In the beginning, the narrator tells us that one day when wandering through a landscape, he is struck by the sight of a field of daffodils. The first line "I wondered

lonely as a cloud” immediately establishes the speaker’s loneliness. And in sharp contrast with the poet’s loneliness, the daffodils are happy and bristling with life: they are “dancing”, and “tossing” their heads. In addition, the daffodils are in large numbers: “Continuous as the stars that shine/ And twinkle on the Milky Way” (lines 6—7). Actually, the emphasis on the happiness of the daffodils and their large number serves to foil the isolation and depressed of the speaker. But this contrast between the speaker and the landscape soon becomes integrated in the subsequent stanza, where the relationship between the poet and the landscape is an intimate union, suggesting an identity of mood between subject and object: “A poet could but be gay, /In such a jocund company” (lines 15-16). And later, in moments of solitude, loneliness once again seizes the poet as he lies on his couch. Though physically he is far from nature, he somehow feels sort of connection with it through the power of imagination. The summer landscape is recaptured in the poet’s mind. Meanwhile, the emotional mood attached to that scene is revived.

Wordsworth enjoys simple rustic life and appreciates the simplicity, honesty and kindness of rural people, even shows deep concern for the poor, the displaced and the beggars. This is an apparent nostalgic touch in his description of the simple and beautiful though primitive rural life. In his *Preface to Lyrical Ballads* (1800), Wordsworth argues:

Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because, in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint...because in that condition of life our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity... because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings... are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature....The language, too, of these men has been adopted...because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived...being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. (Wordsworth, *Preface to Lyrical Ballads*)

Obviously, the dignified simplicity of rural life is more generally invoked in condemnation of urban civilization. In "The Old Cumberland Beggar," Wordsworth speaks of the benevolent and sympathetic attitude that rural people have towards an old beggar in the countryside. Stephen Gill claims that "Dickens's wise fools and outcasts are prefigured in Wordsworth's vagrants and old beggars" (115).

Wordsworth plays a significant role in shaping how the novelist thought about nature. His love of nature and its connection with the imagination strongly influence Dickens' career. In *Great Expectations* Charles Dickens deals with the relationship of human to nature. He admires the beautiful scene in countryside and the simplicity country life and unsophisticated rural people.

In 1817, the Dickens moved to and remained in Chatham until 1821. Although in Chatham only four years, Dickens is deeply affected by his time there. He and his father took long walks in Chatham, and through the surrounding countryside. Angus Wilson argues that "it was with his father that he first knew the English countryside, which was to remain in a curious, Cockney sort of way a symbol to him of English happiness, of hospitality and good old customs, of innocent cheer---indeed it was through Dingley Dell and Muggleton, the very centres of Pickwickian innocence, that he and his father walked" (43). Chatham is a bustling shipbuilding town animated by soldiers, mock-battles, parades, and ships which scattered along the horizon. John Forster, describes Chatham as "the birthplace of his fancy" (Forster, *The Life of Charles Dickens*). Chatham for Dickens is also the "Kentish woods and fields, Cobham park and hall, Rochester cathedral and castle" (Forster, *The Life of Charles Dickens*).

In *Great Expectations* Dickens' admiration for nature and rustic life is thoroughly represented. Dickens depicts the serenity of the beautiful countryside, "where the rich summer growth was already on the trees and on the grass, and sweet summer scents filled all the air...how the little wild flowers had been forming, and the voices of the birds had been strengthening, by day and by night, under the sun and under the stars" (Dickens 461—462). However, Pip firstly arrived in London and came into Simithfield---"the shameful place, being all asmeared with filth and fat and blood and foam...the road covered with straw to deaden the noise of passing



vehicles...the quantity of people standing about, smelling strongly of spirits and beer”(Dickens 163---164). The scene was horrible and gave Pip “a sickening idea of London” (Dickens 164). When Pip experienced the terrible life in London and decided to return to countryside, the nature was also so charming. “The June weather was delicious. The sky was blue, the larks were soaring high over the green corn, I thought all that country-side more beautiful and peaceful by far than I had ever known it to be yet”(Dickens 471). More importantly the pleasant pictures can change Pip’s character, and it is Pip’s spiritual solace and guider while Pip lost himself in the city. Just like Pip, Oliver suffers the injustices and the coarse life in the great city of London. When the Maylies takes Oliver to the countryside, he discovers a new life. In *Oliver Twist*, Dickens asserts the serenity of country life. Moreover, country scenes can erase some vices that develop in the city. Hence, the poor people in the country live a life that is free of noises of the city and the squalor that torments the urban people. Oliver and his new family settle in a small village at the end of the novel, which seems to be a happy ending. Dickens’ portrait another picture of rural life is approving. This comparison between the landscapes of countryside and city is a typical characteristic of romanticism, and at the same time it reflects the writer longs for isolating the madding crowd.

Edwin P. Whipple argues that “the poetical element of the writer’s genius, his modification of the forms, hues, and sounds of Nature by viewing them through the medium of an imagined mind, is especially prominent through the descriptions with which the work abounds. Nature is not only described, but individualized and humanized” (qtd. in Collins 430). If Dickens’ endeavors at painting Romantic nature just like green fields, in *Great Expectations* his most significant treatment of the natural world is a little bit different. Dickens shows another side of nature. The Kent marshes and the Thames are not natural geographies but psychic and social beyond their forms. Existing beyond the margin of civilization, these regions objectify and externalize the inner depths and darkness of human consciousness. It is on the marshes and the river that Pip confronts his creator Magwitch, the destroyer Compeyson, and there Orlick exposes his own blackest emotions at the moments of high crisis. Magwitch, too, twice struggles there with his adversary Compeyson: first,

at the beginning of the novel, they fight like “two wild beasts” (Dickens 35) in the marsh ooze; then, much later, they finally resolve their conflicts in a fight to the death beneath the waters of the Thames. On this second occasion, Magwitch, though at the cost of his life, at last succeeds in triumphing over the man who has been both his maker and his torturer. Pip's part in all of these miry conflicts with which he is involved is almost intensely passive: he can do nothing but watch on helplessly during that fist fight on the marshes; and on the second time he also can only watch and wait as Magwitch and Compeyson wrestle beneath the river. The Kent marshes and the Thames witness the black nature of human beings.

#### **4.1.3 Pip's Experiences: the Journey of Return to Nature**

Traditionally, the novel can be regarded as a study of growth of human nature from the social point of view, tracing the personal development of Pip from a naturally honest and sympathetic boy to a contaminated and experienced grown-up. Generally speaking, Pip's progress in *Great Expectations* has been interpreted in two ways. Some critics have focused on Pip's personal moral failure from an innocent child to a snobbish man, so the novel becomes a myth of error and salvation. Pip's increasing tendency to self-blame is seen as the vehicle by which Dickens uses to prove his moral recovery from the sins of pride, snobbery, vanity and fantasy. Fortunately, Pip's sense of guilt is awareness of his own sin, and moves him to reformation. Other critics have stressed on society's moral failure, whereupon the novel becomes a myth of original sin and atonement. Pip's guilt within himself is taken as awareness of society's universal error. In the society there are good people and bad people, such as victims and oppressors, people of gentility and low-class people. Pip's guilt grows until he is frustrated and has a deep insight into the society to realize the inevitable sin and crime of human beings. In both interpretations Pip's guilt is a vehicle to growth and self-awareness; the myth of *Great Expectations* is a remedy.

However, from the romantic point of view, the main character Pip's experience is the journey of “return to nature.” Pip is low-born, fatherless and motherless, and during his cheerless degradation childhood, Joe is the only person who loves for him.

For a long time, Pip only wanted to be a blacksmith just like Joe when he grew up. Until he met Estella and was tortured by her disdain, Pip had a new idea to change his fate and enter into the upper society. Indeed, the mysterious fortunes made him into a gentleman, yet the fortunes and the city life transformed him into a mean snob. One day, when Pip received Bidley's letter and knew Joe would come to London, he was extremely uncomfortable and very aware of their differences in status and thought "if I could have kept him away by paying money, I certainly would have paid money"(Dickens 215—216). And Pip "felt impatient of him and out of temper with him; in which condition he heaped coals of fire on [his] head" (Dickens 220). Paradoxically as soon as the consciousness of money, status set a barrier between them, Pip felt ashamed of Joe. Because of corruptive forces as money and status, he stays away from his good nature temporarily and becomes selfish and indifferent. After Pip experienced ups and downs in London, he realized the city of London was not an ideal place and he had to return to countryside and look for human nature again. Pip experiences exactly prove Rousseau and Wordsworth's idea of return to nature. Before Pip came to London, he was innocent. In other words, it is a kind of form of primitivism. Primitivism "proposes a belief in man's natural goodness" (Drabble 816). However, since Pip had entered into the city life so called the "civilization society," he was far away from nature, and inevitably was corrupted by the modern society. Therefore, he lost himself and even the nature of human beings.

Just like Pip eventually returns to the place of his childhood, the full of characters who move around in circles. Magwitch's returning revealed himself as both the convict of childhood and the benefactor of adulthood. Miss Havisham, pushed by Pip, endlessly was circling around her bizarre feast table. Estella finally appeared at the Satis house and walked together with Pip.

Dickens allows the reader to see through Pip that the countryside --the land of fairy is a delightful place to visit or to dream about, it is also a place that one can visit, for trying to live in such a world as well as in the actual world can only lead to heartache.

#### 4.2 The Relation of Children to Nature

The literature of the eighteenth century reveals a growing interest in the child, which is apparent in works as Blake's *Song of Innocence* (1809) and *Song of Experience* (1794) and Wordsworth's works. Blake emphasizes of innocence of the childhood state. The use of the child as a symbol of innocence condemned the industrial and materialistic society. His view of childhood as a period of perfect innocence, which provides a contrast to the corrupt society of man, reveals the central cultural ideas and interests in the works of Romantic philosophers and writers.

Romanticism promotes country life, connecting the countryside with physical and moral purity, as well as a means of escapism. Therefore, The Romantics believe that a natural or rural childhood is of paramount importance. Similarly, the typical Romantic childhood embodies such values, where children are allowed to roam free in the countryside and to feel with nature and the natural elements.

In Blake's *Songs of Innocence*, "Laughing Song" could be taken as a poem that directly explores the idea of the Romantic childhood. Blake brings nature and children together to enjoy an idyllic scene of rural happiness and tranquility. This notion of childhood innocence is a significant Romantic value, and is again a viewpoint that Rousseau advocates: "Nature wants children to be children before being men. If we want to pervert this order we shall produce precocious fruits which will be immature and insipid and will not be long in rotting" (90). That is to say, children should be kept as children, rather than be molded into mini-adults. A child's innocence should be preserved for as long as possible, because when innocence is lost it would be replaced by a view of experience. Blake is highlighting the purity of innocence in "Laughing Song," which conforms entirely to Rousseau's Romantic childhood idealism. The elevation of the rural, the freedom of the children in their surroundings and the purity and innocence of the children are typically Romantic. Rather than merely portraying this conventional Romantic view of childhood in his writing, Blake describes a completely opposite childhood experience in "The Chimney Sweeper" from *Songs of Experience*. "The Chimney Sweeper" is concerned with the eighteenth century idea of working-class children laboring as chimney

sweeps. Children are used as chimney sweeps because they are slim and could climb up the narrow chimneys. It is a harsh life. The children are trapped in the nightmare of the city, and their only chance of escape is in their dreams. Instead, like an adult, the child is a worker. Blake is critiquing this convention of society.

Blake does emphasize the benefits of country living, and it is only in a horribly poignant contrast to city life, where children struggle to survive in an immoral reality. In his *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, Blake presents two extreme representations of the Romantic nature of childhood. Therefore, Blake's Romantic notion of childhood only serves to contrast and emphasize the difficult life in which these children struggle to survive in actual world.

It is Rousseau who creates an atmosphere in which the child is valued for his own sake as an individual experiencing a unique stage of life. He thinks that childhood should have its special place in the process of human life. Wordsworth is obvious debt to Rousseau because of his general acceptance and realization of the worth and value of childhood. Throughout his poetry Wordsworth stresses the importance of childhood as the critical period during which man's character is shaped. In his autobiographical *The Prelude* (1805), he promotes the Romantic ideology when he describes his own childhood:

Much favor'd in my birth-place, and no less  
In that beloved Vale to which erelong,  
We were transplanted—there were we let loose  
For sports of wider range. Ere I had told  
Ten birthdays, when among the mountain slopes  
Frost, and breath of frosty wind, had snapped

The last autumnal crocus, 'twas my joy (Wordsworth, Book I, lines 303-309)

Here the elevation of the rural is demonstrated as Wordsworth recalls his "beloved Vale" and his "joy" of exploring his surroundings. The seemingly unimportant detail, such as the winter wind that had "snapp'd/The last autumnal crocus", has specific poetic purposes. It makes the poem much more vivid and resonant while conforming to the Romantic ideal of nature.

In "My Heart Leaps up When I Behold" Wordsworth stresses the importance of

childhood as the state determining the development and nature of man. In "Ode. Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood," "The Child is father of the Man," is the key sentence of the poem, which precisely embodies the core thought of Wordsworth about children. He believes that the child is the one most blessed on earth, enjoying the glory and splendor of heaven in their infancy and knowing all the truths that the adult spends all his lifetime trying to find.

#### 4.2.1 Echoes of Wordsworthian Accounts of Childhood Development

Wordsworth or Dickens himself seems to suggest that a child's sensibility is truly the happiest of states. Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* echoes Wordsworthian accounts of childhood development. Traces of Wordsworth's "Ode" can be felt throughout of the opening pages of Dickens' novel. "Ode" describes the passage from carefree childhood to the workaday cares and diminished consciousness of adulthood. It describes this transformation in a way that properly describes Pip's dilemma: "Shades of the prison-house begin to close / Upon the growing Boy" (lines 68-9). Pip's experience is a literal manifestation of Wordsworth's lines: Magwitch, the escaped convict from the "prison-house," arising from behind the tombstones, is very much like a "shade", though in the sense of a ghost, not a shadow. The appearing of Estella makes Pip have a new ideal; and Magwitch becomes his god father and his money help Pip realize his ambition. Pip enters the adult world from the innocent world of his childhood. Soon Pip transforms himself from an innocent child into a selfish and indifferent adult. In the story, Mrs. Joe functions as a parody of the kind-hearted "homely Nurse." She hastens Pip's development into the critical adulthood, though she brings Pip up as the function of a mother.

And, even with something of a Mother's mind,

And no unworthy aim,

The homely Nurse doth all she can

To make her foster-child, her Inmate Man, (lines 80-3)

Mrs. Joe shapes Pip's feelings of guilt over his association with Magwitch. He becomes her "Inmate Man" in so far as he is made to feel implicated in her judgment of Magwitch's criminality. The Pip's story shares with the "Ode" a vision of the child

as one who experiences the world in a direct and personal way.

In the poem "We Are Seven" Wordsworth is deeply touched by the naivety of a little cottage girl of eight who, with no idea of what death means, keeps telling the poet that her dead brother and sister are still with her. The child is unable to follow the rational thinking of the adult because she views mortality in a different manner than the mature mind. She does not see death as evil—"Till God released her of her pain; / And then she went away" (lines 51—52 <http://www.bartleby.com/41/394.html>). And she does not differentiate between those who are dead and those who are alive because all are still present in her mind: "And there upon the ground I sit, / And sing a song to them" (lines 43—44 <http://www.bartleby.com/41/394.html>). Here Wordsworth emphasizes the fact that certain values and ways of viewing experience are acquired rather than innate. The young girl accepts deaths with such ease and views mortality in the negative terms imposed by the adult. This poem says that Wordsworth is no longer experiencing nature in the same ecstatic way that he experienced it as a child. However, we well know that the happy and innocent of children is not free from the misery and misfortune in human life.

"We Are Seven" is another poem from which Dickens values greatly. At the beginning of Dickens' novel—*Great Expectations*, we are presented with a highly Wordsworthian image of Pip contemplating the graves of his entire family—his father, mother and five little brothers. Like the same reminiscent manner of the little maid in "We Are Seven," he is quite unable to comprehend the tombstones. And he is incapable of the distinction between life and death that is represented by the place itself. In his narrative Pip will be far from either the fact or sense of death.

Just like the child in this poem, the angle-like Nell in *The Old Curiosity* (1840—1841) is oblivious to the fact of death and lives in a fairy-tale world. The realistic, horrible life is beyond the grave. Nell and her grandfather flee the city not because of the evil dwarf, but because she doesn't want her grandfather will not be corrupted further by the temptations of city life. Nell places her faith in the Wordsworthian nature and is especially drawn to the country graveyards which children like her or Pip consider as a so-called bright and happy place.

In *The Prelude*, Wordsworth states:

Nature herself was at this unripe time,  
But secondary to my own pursuits  
And animal activities, and all  
Their trivial pleasures; and long afterwards  
When those had died away, and Nature did  
For her own sake becomes my joy ... (Book VIII, lines 476—481)

He seems to associate his childhood with sport and physical activities in which nature is present. Childhood likes to involve “animal” movements and activities. The word “animal” seems to suggest physical activity. The animal acts instinctively, responding to that which stimulates has physical sense. The child has a special feeling for animals which is greatly different with adults. His world is full of animal fancies. Similarly, he bases his experience and knowledge on what he perceives and derives from the use of his senses. His experience is basic in that he does not employ the sophisticated faculty of reason, but responds as his body directs him. Therefore, the feeling of child is natural no matter for persons or any thing else without any prejudices.

In *Great Expectations*, there are many interesting animal images which are used to depict the characters. Convicts, according to Pip, are condemned to lowness; their removal from the rest of humanity suggests a disgusting animality. The two convicts have a “coarse, mangy, ungainly outer surface, as if they were lower animals,....and the way in which all present looked at them and kept from them; made them (as Herbert had said) a most disagreeable and degraded spectacle” (Dickens 225). They are even pervaded by a convict smell, “that curious flavour of bread-poutice, baize, rope-yarn, and hearthstone which attends the convict presence” (Dickens 225). A “flavour,” as though Pip can taste their dirt. Pip’s childhood is filled with references to his own animality; his sister, Mr. Pumblechook, Mr. and Mrs. Hubble, Wopsle, Estella and Magwitch think of him as a “young dog”(Dickens 4), a “squeaker” or pig (Dickens 26), “a dog in disgrace”(Dickens 61). Magwitch describes himself as a “warmint” (Dickens 326), having a “savage air that no dress could tame” (Dickens 333), a “hungry old dog” with “strongest fangs” (Dickens 327). Bentley Drummle is imaged as both a “spider” (Dickens 210) and an “uncomfortable amphibious



creature" (Dickens 201), while Orlick considers Mrs. Joe to be "a bullock" (Dickens 423) and Pip a "wolf" (Dickens 420). It is interesting that Orlick persists in seeing Pip as the degenerate animal, calling him a "wolf" seven times during the attack. Conversely, Pip describes Orlick as a "tiger" (Dickens 420), while Molly is a "wild beast" (Dickens 199). These animal images make the characters more vividly.

#### 4.2.2 Pip's Romantic Childhood

Paul Schlicke observes that Dickens' writings on the subject of childhood not only with deep and passionate conviction, but also with nostalgia. Charles Dickens came of a family of the lower middle-class. His father, an ineffectual person was taken to the prison for debt when he was young. Young Charles had to work at a shoe—blacking factory, a humiliating experience to the sensitive boy. Those lonely, hungry days had left an ineradicable bitter remembrance in the remainder of his life. Shades of his childhood are repeatedly manifested throughout *Great Expectations*. Such experiences ended Dickens' innocent childhood, and also was evidently traced the intense sympathy with the oppressed poor, helpless children. Therefore, the experiences of childhood not only shape Dickens' character and emotion, but also provide the materials and theme for his novels. Some of characters like Oliver Twist, David Copperfield, and little Pip... become famous figures throughout the world. In the very heart and soul, they are pure, virtuous and gentle-hearted. David, for example, is innocent, trusting and even though he suffers abuse. Oliver, though he is raised in corrupt surroundings and treated with cruelty for most of his life, he is a pious and innocent child. Another important child character in *Oliver Twist* is Nancy. As a child of the streets, Nancy has been a thief and drinks to excess. She is immersed in the vices condemned by her society. She is a major concern of the novel whether a bad environment can inevitably poison one's character and soul. Despite her criminal lifestyle, she is among the noblest characters. She sacrifices her own life in order to protect Oliver. But some of them are inevitably contaminated by the corrupted society and become the victims of evil force. In *Great Expectations* the personalities of Pip and Estella are distorted by the society. Pip forgets Joe's tender comradeship in past times and becomes an idle, ungrateful and mean snob. Estella is the tool of Miss

Havisham, who wants to revenge the man in the world. She is hardhearted and extravagant. Fortunately, both of them awake from their horrible experiences and really become matured.

Although the childhood trauma deeply influenced on his life, "Dickens was an instinctive Romantic" (Stone 250). His life is charged with wonder and fantasy that owes a good deal to his youthful absorption in fairy tales and the *Arabian Nights*. Popular melodrama and Gothic horror stories are combined in the form of the sensation novels. His celebration of the imagination as a means of personal and social salvation and his identification with the child's point of view are his unique characteristics that derive from his life rather than his readings. The creation of children has a close relationship with Dickens' personal background especially his childhood experience. *Great Expectations*, on one hand is as an outlet for Dickens' childhood frustration and disappointments. On the other hand, Dickens gives the hero Pip a Romantic childhood and conveys his envy of innocent childhood.

The opening of *Great Expectations* presents in miniature a pattern common to several of Dickens' novels. The first pages of the novel recount a violent transition from Pip's "first fancies" regarding his surroundings to a stark, unpleasantly "vivid and broad impression of the identity of things" (Dickens 3). His first fancies involve his reading of his family's tombstones:

My first fancies regarding what they were like, were unreasonably derived from their tombstones. The shape of the letters on my father's, gave me an odd idea that he was a square, stout, dark man, with curly black hair. From the character and turn of the inscription, "*Also Georgiana Wife of the Above,*" I drew a childish conclusion that my mother was freckled and sickly. To five little stone lozenges, each about a foot and a half long which were arranged in a neat row beside their grave, and were sacred to the memory of five little brothers of mine -- who gave up trying to get a living, exceedingly early in that universal struggle -- I am indebted for a belief I religiously entertained that they had all been born on their backs with their hands in their trousers- pockets, and had never taken them out in this state of existence. (Dickens 3)

Generally speaking, an individual bearing witness to his family's burial plot initially

suggests an affirmation of origins and kinship. However, Pip's account of his family tends to express his instinct for self-inventions more than providing solid information about his family or ancestors. Pip's inability to pronounce the first and last name given to him by his family results in a self-naming that serves to replace both. "...my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So, I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip" (Dickens 3). Similarly, Pip's imaginative reconstruction of his parents' identities, based on the details of their tombstones, obscures any information about what they were really like. In the first two paragraphs of the novel Pip is the centre of a world of his own imagination. Though he is without the support of a living family, Pip seems able to create a rich, and coherent, though fanciful, sense of himself and his surroundings. A growing awareness of the bleak realities of his life intrudes into this world of childhood fancy. Even before Magwitch's appearance, Pip experiences an unpleasant "vivid and broad impressions of the identity of things" (Dickens 3). The early part of Pip's story represents a Romantic lament for the loss of the innocence and independence of a child's imaginary world.

In this novel, Joe illustrates a clear child-like perspective and has the sympathy with another's predicament. When Magwitch confesses to having stolen the pork pie, Joe responds, "we don't know what you have done, but we wouldn't have you starved to death for it, poor miserable fellow—creature. Would us, Pip?"(Dickens 39). Joe's reaction is in marked contrast to Magwitch cruelty behaviors. Pip also illustrates this sympathy early in his dealings with Magwitch. When Magwitch suddenly appears and threatens him, the little boy's active mind creates a confusing impression of the man. Although Pip begins by thinking the convict as a menacing assailant, he also recognizes the man himself is a victim of misfortune because he notices he is "a man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briars; who limped, and shivered, and glared and growled...(Dickens 4). In Pip's mind Magwitch is a confusing mix character of aggressor or victim. Later in the story, Pip's moral progress reaches its height and finally he learns to share Joe's compassionate view of Magwitch. Dickens

tries to devote his artistic attention to his romantic children as little Pip and David Copperfield away from the illusions. But David like Pip never completely frees from his childhood vision of a world of threatening monsters.

Charles Dickens' child novels such as *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations* not only draw attention to historical and social realities by satirizing, allegorizing, and parodying contemporary social welfare systems which is rarely practical and helpful to save children from the dreadful laboring circumstances of the times, but also trace the growth of a man from childhood to youth from a social critical point of view. "Dickens planned his fictionalized autobiography in the form of a pilgrim's progress from Romantic self-preoccupation to Victorian expression of sympathy" (Stone 261).

Like *Great Expectations*, *David Copperfield* is an earlier autobiography novel and also told in the same fairy-tale form. Both of them are reminiscent the years of Dickens' own childhood and youth. "Dickens was quite aware of this; for he wrote to Foster that he had been re-reading the earlier novel to make sure there was no repetition" (Wilson 270). Superficially, *Great Expectations* seems to fit well into the Cinderella pattern. The hero, Pip crying in front of his parents' graves, received unexpected help and suddenly changed his fate from the god-father or mother. Finally the hero united with his lover— the princess. However, the pattern is shattered by the gradual revelation of the naked truth. The happy tone of the fairy-tale has gone here and the hero's dream just a disillusion. The self in *Great Expectations* came from a much deeper, more bitter of Dickens' review of his own life.

In the mid-eighteenth century writers began to deal with the theme of childhood. This interest increased with the rise of the middle class, which considered children as heirs. In *Jane Eyre* (1847), little Jane struggles herself towards self-fulfillment. In *Wuthering Heights*, childhood plays a large part and pervades the novel with its presence. When the novel was published in 1847, childhood was still associated with inexperience, intellectual unawareness, and moral purity—the heritage of the Romantic Movement. Few novelists like Dickens have ever captured more poignantly the feeling of childhood, the brightness and magic and terror of the world as seen as through the eyes of a child and colored by his emotions. Dickens is best at child

character portrayal.

### 4.3 Pip and Estella's Romantic Love and the Happy Ending

Dr. Johnson utters that "the very truth about either the medieval or modern forms of romantic love---love which is on the secular level and at the same time sets itself above the law of measure" (qtd. in Babbitt 223 ). In *Great Expectations*, Pip and Estella, though experiencing many twists and turns, walked together at last.

When the boy Pip first met Estella with her coldness and said "I looked at the stars and considered how awful it would be for man to turn his face up to them as he froze to death, and see no help or pity in all the glittering multitude" (Dickens 49), we are led on inevitably to think upon the spiritual death which mankind creates for itself by preventing or suppressing true love and feeling. Estella is generally contemptuous of Pip and makes him dissatisfied with himself and the prospect of a future blacksmith's apprenticeship with Joe. She is also the main reason Pip so welcomes his sudden fortune. And then here is an opportunity to improve himself and increase his chances of winning her love.

Pip whom Magwich has tried to create into a gentleman as Miss Havisham has tried to mould Estella, painfully consumed his passion for Estella, but Estella, just the shape of a love object, cannot respond with her coldness of heart. Romantic love is seen as the tool to the social snobbery, and "the sentimental by-product of money-centered society" (Wilson 270). Estella, as Dickens' first convincing female character, is a supremely ironic creation. Raised from the age of three by Miss Havisham to torment men and "break their hearts" (Dickens 93), Estella wins Pip's deepest love by practicing deliberate cruelty. Unlike the warm, winsome, kind heroine of a traditional love story, Estella is cold, cynical, and manipulative. Ironically, though she represents Pip's first longed-for ideal of life among the upper classes, Estella is actually even lower-born than Pip; she is the daughter of Magwitch, the coarse convict, as Pip learns near the end of the novel. And rather than marrying the kindhearted commoner Pip, Estella marries the cruel nobleman Drummle, who treats her harshly and makes her life miserable for many years.

Despite her cold behavior and the damaging influences in her life, Estella is a

sympathetic character served as a bitter criticism against the class system in which she is mired. Estella does not seem able to stop herself from hurting Pip, but she also seems not to want to hurt him; she repeatedly warns him that she has “no heart” (Dickens 235). And Pip’s love for Estella is full of with a paradoxical consciousness of its dubiety: “once for all; I knew to my sorrow, often and often, if not always, that I loved her against reason, against promise, against all discouragement that could be. Once for all; I loved her none the less because I knew it, and it had no more influence in restraining me than if I had devoutly believed her to be human perfection”(Dickens 229). He asked himself that “whether I did not surely know that if Estella were beside me at that moment...she would make me miserable? I was obliged to admit that I did know it for a certainty, and I said to myself, ‘Pip, what a fool you are!’”(Dickens 128).

In the fifth paragraph of the last chapter, Biddy insists to Pip: “You must marry” (Dickens 475). Despite his disagreement, Pip discovers “a very pretty eloquence” (Dickens 476) in the “light pressure of Biddy’s wedding-ring” (Dickens 476) whenever her “matronly hand” (Dickens 476) brushes him. Given Biddy’s question and the magic in her ring, so Pip’s subsequent actions are no surprise. Even Pip tells Biddy that he has “quite forgotten” Estella, but he “secretly” intends “to revisit” Satis House “for Estella’s sake” (Dickens 476) that is; he behaves like a man on a mission. Scene, hour, and atmosphere not only seem “right” in the revised ending, but are also inherently promising and romantic rather than terminal.

In addition, it is inevitable that we associate Pip’s helpless enslavement to Estella with Dickens’ desperate passion for Ellen Lawless Ternan. The eighteen-year-old young Irish actress forms the centre of Dickens life in his last years. According to E.D.H. Johnson, Dickens’ affair with Ellen Ternan, which lasted until his death, had several influences on his works. For instance, the girl’s name certainly influences the naming of the heroine of *Great Expectations*. The name “Estella” consists of the syllables and initials of Ellen’s name. Dickens conceived the unfortunately unplatonic passion, so “the tone of Dickens’s unhappy letters to Collins and Forster during all the time between the last night of *The Frozen Deep* and the time of the separation discloses and entirely new intensity of personal misery far

exceeding the restlessness of years before”(Johnson 991).

Dickens changes his ending at the suggestion of a friend, the novelist Edward Bulwer Lytton. He, at least in part, seems to have the desire to please his reading public with a happy ending. To a certain degree, Dickens has satisfied his longing for romantic love. The ending of *Great Expectations* is more controversial. Some critics have felt that the original ending of it is more true to the tone of the novel. Pip's later experiences and redemption would make his continued love for Estella impossible. Others have felt that the original ending is too harsh and their common past has destined Pip and Estella for one another. The main story of the novel is their mutual development toward the conditions in which their love can be realized. I agree with the latter one.

J.Hillis Miller argues that the second ending is the better of the two because it reveals that Pip and Estella have grown through suffering. And they become richer, more humane characters who capable of love: “Rather than possessing the impossible reconciliation of freedom and security [Pip] had sought in Estella and in gentility, he now loves and is loved by another fallible and imperfect being like himself” (Miller 278). Miller's optimistic interpretation rests on the argument that Pip has already developed the capacity to love by renouncing his selfishness in attendance on Magwitch through the convict's trial, conviction, until his death.

Various details in the second ending also seem to confirm Forster's belief that it implies the protagonists' marriage. In the last chapter on sitting down with Estella, Pip thinks of his last words to Magwitch, a farewell expressing love for the convict's daughter. Moreover, Estella discloses that she has “often thought” (Dickens 478) and then makes an admission even more gratifying to him: “There was a long hard time when I kept far from me, the remembrance of what I had thrown away when I was quite ignorant of its worth. But, since my duty has not been incompatible with the admission of that remembrance, I have given it a place in my heart” (Dickens 478). Pip has finally gained an answer to the question that he had asked many years before: “When should I awaken the heart within her that was mute and sleeping now?”(Dickens 241). As he has never believed her cold words: “I have no heart” (Dickens 235), and she openly discloses her heart where she is devoted to the

remembrance of Pip's love in this reunion.

Moreover, Edgar Johnson notices that "the echo, of the closing lines in *Paradise Lost*, in which a reconciled Adam and Eve go forth together, united, to face the world, suggests a basically positive outcome" (993-994). As Pip and Estella, with linked hands, leave that mist and ruined garden of their childhood, but not utterly without hope from another Garden. The "evening mists" also rise as the "morning mists" rose "long ago" (Dickens 479) at the end of first stage. The Miltonic echo from the last sentence of chapter 19, which reminded Adam and Eve facing a lifetime of effort in a brand new world, for Dickens suggests that Pip and Estella are beginning the world a second time and are doing so promisingly.

#### 4.4 Dickens' Grotesqueness in *Great Expectations*

The grotesque is a quite central feature of Charles Dickens' art. The focus upon the grotesque in Dickens will emphasize some relative aspects of his art and its relationship to other European writing in the nineteenth century and beyond.

The meaning of the term "grotesque" should be taken into consideration firstly. One does not need to read very far into the subject to discover the prominent contemporary importance and influence of two books--- Wolfgang Kaiser's *The Grotesque in Arts and Literature* in 1957, and Mikhail Bakhtin's *Rebelais and his World* in 1968. Wolfgang Kaiser's first definition of the grotesque is "as an expression of a peculiarly modern and alienation" (Hollington 2). Later, he gives the final interpretation of the grotesque as "an attempt to invoke and subdue the demonic aspects of the world" (Hollington 3). Although both definitions are challenged by Bakhtin and other critics to construct an alternative tradition of the grotesque, the gloomy, terrifying tone of the grotesque still strikes us.

In 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the rise of Romanticism, the Romantics, especially the German Romantics focus on the idealising, transcendentalising power of the imagination upon the everyday reality. "The Romantics discovered the aesthetics of ugliness---how beauty could be constructed, paradoxically, from the most intractable materials, including, most importantly, the unpleasant but fantastic realities of a new urban and incipiently industrial society" (Hollington 18). The German Romantic



interest in the grotesque is connected with philosophical idealism, whereupon German romanticism is the original source of the modern revaluation of the grotesque.

In the meantime, the grotesque to a degree has often been regarded as an aspect of the Romantic reaction against Neoclassicism, an attempt to stimulate the demonic and Dionysian aspects of the world by using the horrific and supernatural into the well-structured world of Augustan limitations. Therefore the grotesque can be viewed as a foil to the sublime, a comic employment of the satirical as a counter to the tragic vision. Like Shakespearean comic plays which have perfected the trilogies of classical Greek theater, the grotesque presents an upside-down, distorted version of what has been represented in more elevated terms.

Michael Hollington asserts that “the taste for the grotesque and the taste for the Gothic were very much intertwined in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries” (23). Dickens has relationship with German romanticism and Gothic fiction, both areas where popular elements play an important role in his works. Arnold Kettle’s important essay, “Dickens and the Popular Tradition” could be seen as a briefly account of Dickens essential relation to the grotesque tradition. Kettle recognises that “Dickens capacity to fuse heterogenous elements of popular tradition—fairytales, chapbook romance, popular gothic, etc. into an integrated representation of the industrial society he was faced with” (qtd. in Hollington 7). Moreover, it should be noticed that Dickens himself regarded his artistic mission as partly a “holding of popular literature through a kind of popular dark age” (Forster, *The Life of Charles Dickens*) and that this task would make the art of grotesque heightened. Following firstly let’s enjoy the grotesque characters in Dickens’ *Great Expectations*.

In this novel, Miss Havisham is the best-known example. The mad, vengeful Miss Havisham is not exactly a believable character, but she is certainly one of the most memorable creations in the book and the most powerful grotesque images of *Great Expectations* presented. The theatrical lighting is an important aspect of the effects created; everything takes place “in a pretty large room, well lighted with wax candles. No glimpse of daylight was to be seen in it” (Dickens 56). The central figure is dressed in white, “faded and yellow” (Dickens 57). She associated with the wax of

the candles. Even though Pip is not the first time to see these things, he still strongly impresses:

Once, I had been taken to see some ghastly waxwork at the Fair, representing I know not what impossible personage lying in state. Once, I had been taken to one of our old marsh churches to see a skeleton in the ashes of a rich dress that had been dug out of a vault under the church pavement. Now, waxwork and skeleton seemed to have dark eyes that moved and looked at me. I should have cried out, if I could. (Dickens 57)

Miss Havisham's life is a single tragic event: her jilting by Compeyson on what was to have been their wedding day. From that moment on, Miss Havisham is determined never to move beyond her heartbreak. She stops all the clocks in Satis House at twenty minutes to nine, the moment when she first learned that Compeyson was gone. She wears only one shoe, because when she learned of his betrayal, she had not yet put on the other shoe. The most horrible thing which is worth mentioning here is her wedding cake:

...the most prominent object was a long table with a tablecloth spread on it, as if a feast had been in preparation when the house and the clocks all stopped together. An epergne or centre-piece of some kind was in the middle of this cloth; it was so heavily overhung with cobwebs that its form was quite undistinguishable; and, as I looked along the yellow expanse out of which I remember its seeming to grow, like a black fungus, I saw speckled-legged spiders with blotchy bodies running home to it, and running out from it, as if some circumstance of the greatest public importance had just transpired in the spider community... the mice too, rattling behind the panels, as if the same occurrence were important to their interests. But, the black-beetles took no notice of the agitation, and groped about the hearth in a ponderous elderly way, as if they were short-sighted and hare of hearing, and not on terms with one another. (Dickens 82-83)

The society is diseased and rotten just like Miss Havisham's wedding cake. With a kind of psychic, obsessive cruelty, Miss Havisham adopts Estella and raises her as a weapon to achieve her own revenge on men. She is a good example of single-minded

vengeance pursued destructively: both Miss Havisham and the people in her life suffer greatly because of her quest for revenge. Miss Havisham could not control herself and has no idea that her actions are hurtful to Pip and Estella. Finally, she is redeemed at the end of the novel when she realizes that she has caused Pip's heart to be broken in the same manner as her own; rather than achieving any kind of personal revenge, she has only caused more pain. Miss Havisham begs Pip for his forgiveness and tortures to death because of burns. No matter what Miss Havisham has done, we have no idea to hate her as a victim of the corrupted society.

Another one who like Miss Havisham makes an appearance before Pip in the surreal colours of Satis House is Miss Sarah Pocket: "a little dry brown corrugated old woman, with a small face that might have been made of walnut shells, and a large mouth like a cat's without the whiskers" (Dickens 85). She undergoes a greatly metamorphosis when she sees Pip in his London gentleman's outfit: "her walnut-shell countenance likewise turned from brown to green and yellow" (Dickens 154).

Wemmick is one of the strangest characters in *Great Expectations*. At work, he is hard, cynical, sarcastic, and obsessed with "portable property" (Dickens 199); at home in Walworth, he is jovial and a tender caretaker of his "Aged Parent" (Dickens 205). He dwells in a little wooden villa with a narrow moat, a plank drawbridge, a miniature cannon which he fires at night, and a small Gothic entrance door. Pip thinks "it was the smallest house [he] ever saw; with the queerest gothic windows (by far the greater part of them sham), and a gothic door, almost too small to get in at" (Dickens 204). Just to Wemmick all his feelings and imagination he keeps for his home; in the office he becomes an absolutely different person. He thinks that "the office is one thing, and private life is another" (Dickens 206).

Critics have discussed the role of Wemmick as a character who dramatizes how his public and private lives might be psychically divided. It is a sickly state, but even so Wemmick provides an instructive example for Pip. Pip will need to bring into coherence of his own drives, desires, and moral principles if he does not want to live in a constant state of repression in his city life.

Mr. Jaggers is the powerful lawyer hired by Magwitch to supervise Pip's elevation to the upper class. As one of the most important criminal lawyers in London,

Jaggers specializes in representing accused criminals. He accompanies with vicious criminals, and even they are terrified of him. For example, Molly, a violent murderer, is tamed by Jaggers when he employs her as a maid. Molly is mentally abused by being forced into the role of Jaggers' servant. Though he is a highly successful and respected professional man, with the departure of every visitor he goes to a closet and cleans his hands with scented soap. He washes his hands obsessively as a psychological mechanism to prevent the criminal taint from corrupting him. Edgar Johnson argues that "both for Wemmick and for Mr. Jaggers, then, their office in Little Britain is a kind of prison in which they lock up their better selves and subdue them to the world of venality" (991).

Herbert Pocket plays a significant part in Pip's transformation from apprentice blacksmith into young London gentleman. Herbert provides Pip with an intimate essentiality to his emotional health. His friendship with Herbert allows him the opportunity to express himself during the city life and thus, to a degree, come to terms with his feelings. Moreover, Herbert himself has a range of qualities that perfectly match Pip's needs in his struggle to adjust his nature and behavior with the requirements of social world for which he is being shaped. Herbert's charm, capability and full of sympathy are all of considerable appeal to the raw, yet warm and ardent country boy who is eager to learn. Among these things that Herbert can teach Pip perhaps the social refinement is most important. With the help of Herbert, soon Pip becomes a gentleman in upper class.

The concept of the gentleman, which provides an invaluable point in the rapidly shifting class structure of nineteenth century in Britain, is clearly essential to Pip's entire progress. It is also important to the novel's treatment of nature. In 19<sup>th</sup> century the society is safer and more civilized. For Pip, as for the Victorians in general, it is the code of gentlemanliness which tames the beast and acts as a civilizing force that enables a blacksmith's boy to climb up out of the marshes into a civilized world. The world is more sophisticated and cultivated, even though it exists problematically.

The word "grotesque" seems to refer to the relationship between Magwitch and Pip, which is characterized from the start by mixed emotions and the most significant indicator of Pip's development. Magwitch terrifies Pip in the first scene with his

threats to have his "heart and liver out" (Dickens 5), but he is also a comic monster, and his bullying only threatens the little child like Pip. As a child, Pip responds to Magwitch with a mixture of sympathy and fear, and even is linked to Romantic notions of imagination. It appears transparently fictitious to an adult reader. When Magwitch appears again from abroad and unmask himself as Pip's benefactor, it comes to the transformation scene. The roles are dramatically reversed, and the feelings similarly are complicated. Magwitch speaks "with a smile that was like a frown, and a frown that was like a smile" (Dickens 314); and Pip reacts to his repeated apologies for his lowness with nervous giggling, even feels "an insurmountable aversion" (Dickens 327) because Magwitch "ate in a ravenous way that was very disagreeable, and all his actions were uncouth, noisy, and greedy" (Dickens 327). Now as a young gentleman, Pip reacts to him with snobbish repugnance. With Magwitch's appearance, essentially Pip's "great expectations had all dissolved, like our own marsh mists before the sun" (Dickens 464).

Pip always fantasies that he is destined to marry Estella as Miss Havisham's heir, which is revealed as the equivalent of the "castle in the air." Everything unfolds: Pip and Estella are the "gentleman" and "gentlewoman" whom Magwitch and Miss Havisham have attempted to create. Both of them, as revenges for the wrongs they have suffered, are regarded as the products their possessions: "all on you owns stocks and land: which on you owns a brought-up London gentleman?" (Dickens 317). Ironically, the contrast between the "low" Magwitch and the "high" Miss Havisham collapses and they have equally disastrous consequences. At the same time, paradoxically, though Pip has lost all his expectations, he really experiences his change and personal development and becomes matured through the acceptance his despised benefactor and shouldering the responsibility for "a man who had meant to be my benefactor, and who had felt affectionately, gratefully, and generously, towards me with great constancy through a series of years" (Dickens 441). By the end of the novel, Pip overcomes his feeling of violent disgust toward Magwitch and discovers the fellowship with him to some extent.

In this novel, the "grotesque" paradoxically is also preferred to the landscape of the marsh in countryside. At the same time the landscape reflects Pip's feelings in the

course of his development. In the beginning, Pip is terrified by the escaped convict, Magwitch, who fiercely demands Pip secretly bring him a file and food. "The marshes were just a long black horizontal line then, as [Pip] stopped to look after him; and the river was just another horizontal line, not nearly so broad, nor yet so black; and the sky was just a row of long angry red lines and dense black lines intermixed" (Dickens 7). When the first time Pip comes back from Miss Havisham's, he feels ashamed of his home, in other words his humble origin. Pip gloomily constructs the prospect of the course of his dull life: "I remember that at a later period of my 'time,' I used to stand about the churchyard on Sunday evenings, when night was falling, comparing my own perspective with the windy marsh view, and making out some likeness between them by thinking how flat and low both were, and how on both there came an unknown way and a dark mist and then the sea" (Dickens 105).

For a long time, Pip always fantasies his promising life with Estella and Miss Havisham. Therefore later the scene is converted and Estella and Miss Havisham are interwoven with what is presented to his sight: "When we had passed the village and the church and the churchyard, and were out on the marshes and began to see the sails of the ships as they sailed on, I began to combine Miss Havisham and Estella with the prospect, in my usual way" (Dickens 125). He even enchantingly softens the sordid mysteries of Satis House. When he returns to his home town at Miss Havisham's invitation and avoids the forge, he dreams that "the country on Miss Havisham's side of town—which was not Joe's side; I could go there tomorrow—thinking about my patroness, and painting brilliant pictures of her plans for me" (Dickens 229).

Highlighting the mists on the marsh landscape in this novel is a truer mode of representation of grotesque. Going out to meet Magwitch in the early morning, Pip encounters all manner of ghosts and illusions in the mist:

...the marsh-mist was so thick, that the wooden finger on the post directing people to our village—a direction which they never accepted, for they never came there—was invisible to me until I was quite close under it. Then, as I looked at it, while it dripped, it seemed to my oppressed conscience like a phantom devoting me to the Hulks. The mist was heavier yet when I got out

upon the marshes, so that instead of my running at everything, everything seemed to run at me. (Dickens 16)

The passage suggests, not only the illusions of “prospects” and “expectations”, nothing reveals itself in the marsh-world. The mysterious strange and fantastical shapes are constructed by an intense imagination. The mists accompany Pip indoors, especially to Satis House, where “the reluctant smoke which hung in the room seemed colder than the clearer air—like our own marsh mist” (Dickens 82). At the end of the first stage, Pip goes to London and his destiny has completely changed, so “the mist had all solemnly risen now, and the world lay spread before [him]” (Dickens 157). There is another big turn for Pip at the end of the novel. Through the many ups and downs, Pip and Estella come across and walk together out of the ruined place, “as the morning mists has risen long ago when [Pip] left the forge, so, the evening mists were rising now, and in all the broad expanse of tranquil light” (Dickens 479).

Dickens' early identification of the grotesque with the amusingly bizarre in *Nicholas Nickleby* is conventionally comic, just as his tendency to use the grotesque with the strange in *The Old Curiosity Shop* is romantic. By the time of *Great Expectations*, however, he has expanded his notion of the grotesque as a stock property of comic convention, to a “grotesque tragic-comic conception” (qtd. in Hollington 216) that inspired the novel. Significantly, Dickens applies the grotesque not to oddity of character or scene but to a conception of something inherently contradictory in the human situation. It is best brought out by the deliberate mixing of genres and types appropriate to the tragic-comic.

For Dickens, the grotesque, like other aspects of their style, is the organic manifestation of a profound inner vision. It is the formal literary means both of giving expression to a perception of the world and of unifying contrarities such as ordinary and extraordinary, ludicrous and sublime, and it is also through the conception of the tragicomic and the use of grotesque contrasts.

Here we encounter a very important intersection of Dickens' works, where the romantic, the gothic comes into collision with the “real” world to produce paradoxical and contradictory art of the grotesque.

#### 4.5 The Different Writing Techniques of Dickens and Thackeray

In Britain, William Thackeray divides the empire of the Victorian fiction with Charles Dickens. Though they both are noted for the realistic description of life and people, they are different in the way of writing. As we read *Vanity Fair* (1847—48), we are impressed with the actuality of the persons and incidents. Everything happens as in real life. He is concerned with the commonplaces in the life of people. Though written in 1847-48, William Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* is peopled by types who remain familiar today. None of the novel's characters is more memorable than Becky Sharp. She is not content to live out the life she was born into—that of a governess. Lacking money and family, she uses the only tools at her disposal, sex and cunning, to seek advancement in the world. Thackeray like an on-looker speaks in an ironical, sarcastic and cynical tone. In *Great Expectations* there are interesting, larger-than-life characters. The external observations are finer and deeper than these of Thackeray. Dickens, using his creative faculties and his observations as materials, does not record but invent his characters. Edwin P. Whipple thinks that "he shapes, disposes, penetrates, colors, and contrives everything, and the whole action is a series of events which could have occurred in his own brain, and which it is difficult to conceive of as actually happening" (qtd. in Collins 429). Therefore, we are fascinated by Dickens' works, which are artistic creations. Taking Uncle Pumblechook for example, he is a merchant obsessed with money and it is he who is responsible for arranging Pip's first meeting with Miss Havisham. Therefore, later even though he has nothing to do, he shamelessly takes credit for Pip in social status. In real life, we would be disgusted with such arrogant and pretentious person. But Dickens can take advantage of humor and exaggeration and change the ugly side in life into artistic beauty in his works. So the character of Uncle Pumblechook becomes vividly and the source of joy when reading. We are interested in the creatures of Dickens' imagination because they are unlike anyone we have ever known, our interest in Thackeray's is due to their resemblance to people within the experience of most of us. Therefore, Thackeray becomes, to his Victorian contemporaries, the living standard



of literary realism. To a certain degree, Thackeray is an anti—Romantic novelist, yet Dickens is a Romantic.

In fact, different writers have different writing methods, which are connected with their personalities and characters. Thackeray declares himself oppose to all forms of cheat and cant; and he endeavors to show in his writings that life consists of limitations and frustrations rather than of opportunities and potentiality. Dickens is endowed with romantic temperament. His imagination is rich, full of poetical emotion and he always breaks through the objective portray of life. In his childhood, his sense of wonder which comes from his beloved *Arabian Nights* and the nursery stories remains with him for his whole life. Little Dickens is a dreamy child. For him ever afterwards these streets are mortally romantic; they are dipped in the purple dyes of youth and rich with irrevocable sunsets. When he was sitting in the coffee-shops, that in the door there was an oval glass plate with "COFFEE ROOM" painted on it and addressed towards the street, Dickens read it backwards on the wrong side "MOOR EEEFOC". The wild words "MOOR EEEFOC" reflect the effective realism. The most fantastic thing of all is often the precise fact. This is one of examples for Dickens changing the objective thing by using his subjective thought. His world is alive with inanimate objects. Angus Wilson argues that "the strangeness of his world is largely that Dickens's reality had a greater intermixture of the wondrous and the grotesque than most men's" (27). There is no wonder that G.K. Chesterton calls him a mythologist rather than a novelist. Dickens himself realized that "his art was a combination of realism and romanticism, of observation filtered through the spectacles of romance" (Stone 253). Some critics praise Dickens' peculiar style as "the author half-creating and half-perceiving in a Romantic manner: To read one of his romances is to see everything through the author's eyes; the most familiar objects take an air of strangeness when surveyed through such a medium" (qtd. in Stone 253).

## Chapter V Conclusion

Charles Dickens is to Victorian England what Shakespeare is to Renaissance England: he typifies the period. In Dickens we see a writer who by the age of twenty had experienced the dire poverty and of child labor under the most squalid and repressive conditions. He had ever worked in a legal office and familiarized himself with the mysteries of litigation. Moreover, he had spent hours in the House of Commons as a reporter. Dickens' own experiences gave him an overview of English life and he brought to his survey of the world with his keen sense of moral uprightness. His power streamed from the intensity with which he demanded the sympathies of his readers for the emotions and sufferings of actual people. *Great Expectations* exposes human nature in different aspects. However, *Great Expectations*, as one of Dickens' masterpieces, not only depends on its content but also its unique writing techniques.

Donald Stone states: "For the great Victorian novelists, the literary past was a blessing rather than a burden, and Romanticism was the part of that past that perhaps affected them most strongly" (2). Dickens, Charlotte Bronte, Charles Kingsley and others allude to Wordsworth, use the figure of Wordsworth for local purposes, and even acknowledge largely his significance. Wordsworth's fascination with sentiment makes him a pervasive presence among the Victorians. Especially his ideas of children and nature play a significant role in Victorian literature and art. Dickens and Wordsworth are close in spirit on many aspects. Evidence of Wordsworth's contribution to this blessing is not difficult to find. Dickens, for example, recognizes in Wordsworth's spirit on topics such as the factory system, the new poor law and education. Dickens is an instinctive Romantic. He emerges in his novels as a typical Victorian, devoted to the work ethic, at the same time he echoes Rousseau and Wordsworth's romantic ideas.

In this thesis, I have analyzed Romantic spirit of Dickens in *Great Expectations*. Dickens features Romanticism to give *Great Expectations* a uniqueness that is an essential part of its greatness. From these aspects, we have no difficulty to find that

Charles Dickens, as a realist in Victorian period, has a close relationship to Romanticism whether his own temperament or his writing techniques in his works. When this thesis is finally coming to an end, it still owes a few words here to the overall purpose of it. Charles Dickens, as one of the most outstanding Victorian writers, does well no matter in characterization or in technique. His novels allow a presentation of reality wide enough to include romantic values and fancies as part of the whole pictures. This thesis illustrates the Dickens Romantic legacy by taking *Great Expectations* for example. *Great Expectations* might be the most perfect and the most beautiful of all Dickens' novels. Dickens' romantic spirit makes this novel a marvel and no match can be found.

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## 攻读学位期间的研究成果

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