
PEDAGOGICAL HUMANISM IN CHARLES DICKENS' "OLIVER TWIST"

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Abstract

This article studies the concept of pedagogical humanism in the novels of the XIX century English literature. Humanism is studied as the main point in one of the bestsellers of the period, in "Oliver Twist" by Charles Dickens. It shows the society and its upbringing features in the work.

Keywords: literature, concept, novel, pedagogy, pedagogical humanism, education, critics.

Introduction

The humanistic orientation is the most striking and dominant feature of the pedagogical heritage of the outstanding English thinker, teacher, political and public figure, social reformer Charles Dickens (1812-1870), known in our country only as an outstanding English writer.

The philosophy of the English thinker is a deep, specific humanism based on a wide range of social teachings of that time. Thus, Dickens' socio-political and social views can be characterized as idealism, social utopianism and moralizing. Proceeding from this, in the legacy of the English thinker, a kind of "utopian social ideal" was described. An integral product of this Dickensian utopianism was the very specific social skepticism of the English thinker, disbelief in the evolution of capitalist relations, the omnipotence of technical and moral progress, and in the moral strength of the democratic institutions of contemporary society. With the general support of the labor and trade union movement, expressing the ideas of protecting the interests of the working class, Dickens at the same time rejected the methods of revolutionary struggle and radical Chartism (especially the party of "physical strength"). Social process was comprehended by C. Dickens from the standpoint of the eternal confrontation of "good against evil", provided that moral laws are eternal, and social progress is achievable only with moral improvement - a kind of "moral progress" of society. Dickens's Christian beliefs are an attempt to rationally comprehend religion, the desire to determine its spiritual and moral content and significance in human life.

C. Dickens, rightly considered one of the founders of humanistic pedagogy in the 19th century, is the largest theoretician of pedagogy of his time, the significance of whose scientific and pedagogical works is highly appreciated by Western experts (along with the concepts of J-J Rousseau, I G Pestalozzi, I F Herbert, etc.) He owns the original pedagogical concept of "New education", comprehensively focused on the high ideals of Christian humanism. Pedagogical research by Charles Dickens covers a wide range of problems (goals, tasks, forms, methods and means of education and training), and

therefore their study seems to be more and more in demand for modern Russian pedagogy. The pedagogical concept of Charles Dickens, called by the author himself "The concept of new education", has all the essential characteristics of the ultimate conceptual completeness of an integral complex of consistent views and ideas on the problems of the state and development of the modern education system. Thus, the pedagogical teaching of Dickens, based on the maximum of socio-political, socio-economic, worldview, philosophical, spiritual, moral and religious ideas of the English thinker, has the full attributes of an independent scientific and pedagogical theory.

"The concept of new education" by Ch. Dickens covers a wide range of problems of theoretical pedagogy and the field of education of its modern era – the problems of substantiating the goals, principles, content of education and upbringing, the development of more human methods of education and upbringing, special degree of literature, history and religion, women's education, children's hygiene and nutrition, legal protection of childhood, child and motherhood, the relationship between religious and secular education, the development of school aesthetics, the pedagogical content of children's games and entertainment, the training of teachers, the creation of more advanced preschool educational institutions and various forms of adult education. At the same time, Dickens' pedagogical heritage is also relevant for the modern era.

Dickens put a lot of social content into the plot scheme, traditional for the English novel - the story of the hero's life. Depicting the life of one hero, he tried to emphasize in it what is typical for the destinies of "millions of the destitute."

Discussion and Analysis

Narrating the adventures of Oliver Twist, C. Dickens unfolds a wide panorama of the bottom of society. Cold gray London night streets where you can't find shelter; dirty and smelly lairs - the abode of all vices. This atmosphere also educates. And not everyone has the courage to resist the dirt that dominates around. Hunger and humiliation often force little people to cheat, lie and betray. The cruelty of the world breeds the cruelty of the child. This is what worries the writer, who deliberately exposes the most terrible places of the English bottom, wanting to draw the attention of society to them. The writer idealizes his hero, endowing him with innate virtue, which cannot be shaken by any vices and dirt of the surrounding world. In difficult moments of life, kind people come to the aid of the lonely, useless Oliver, who bring up humanity in him: Mr. Brownlow, Mrs. Maylie and her named daughter Rose, Dr. Losberne, Mrs. Bedwin. These heroes are sweet, pleasant people who know how to sympathize and respond to someone else's pain.

Oliver Twist was born in a workhouse and, as the author points out, was destined by fate itself to a life full of hopeless grief and suffering.

Dickens deliberately does not indicate where this workhouse is located, when exactly Oliver was born, who his mother is, as if emphasizing the commonness and prevalence of what happened. It is not for nothing that the doctor who has accepted the child immediately guesses from the dirty, worn-out shoes, from the absence of a wedding ring,

the story of a dying young mother - the story of a deceived woman. Skillfully selecting and expressively shading the details, Dickens helps the reader to see a typical phenomenon in this episode.

Dickens shows this by the example of the sad fate of his hero, who had the "happiness" to be born in a workhouse and survive, despite the very unfavorable conditions of existence. From the workhouse, Oliver is apprenticed to an undertaker. The author shows how the boy gets acquainted with reality. The gloomy profession of the undertaker opens before him the whole abyss of human grief, and the cruelty of the owners encourages him to run wherever his eyes look. A new, London stage of Oliver's life begins. He falls into the hands of a gang of professional thieves. Among the inhabitants of the dark world, robbers and scammers that young Oliver encounters, there are not only such as Fagin, as the owner of a den of thieves and a buyer of stolen goods, or as a hardened villain Sykes. There are also people here who are forced to practice their criminal trade because all other paths are closed to them. Such is the prostitute Nancy, who dreams of an honest life; such is the pickpocket Bates, a reckless merry fellow who finally realizes that it is better to live honestly.

Dickens proves that such fundamentally healthy and honest natures as Oliver, Nancy, Bates and the like are just unsettled victims of the ugly social order of bourgeois England. Dickens is not always faithful to the truth of life when depicting typical circumstances. This primarily applies to the denouement of his novels. For all their exclusivity, it is conceivable to admit the possibility of such plot moves as the intervention of the good Mr. Brownlow, and then the Maylie family, in the fate of Oliver, and the help they generously rendered to the boy. But the ending - with the obligatory reward of the hero and all good characters and well-deserved retribution for all "evil" ones - weakens the realistic authenticity of the novel. Here Dickens the realist, as it were, enters into an argument with Dickens the moralist, who does not want to put up with the existing course of things and, firmly believing in the educational power of example, persistently offers his ideal solution to conflicts.

A noble origin in itself determines the positivity of the hero: Oliver Twist is a nobleman by birth, and therefore the vices of the inhabitants of the den of thieves cannot corrupt him. It is only in his later writings that Dickens refrains from deliberately emphasizing the noble origin of his hero. Pip from "Great Expectations" is an ordinary village boy. However, his image reflects the experiences of the young Dickens, who was painfully ashamed of the fact that his father was imprisoned in the Marshalsea debtor's prison. In the same way, Pip is ashamed of his house, his rough shoes, his rough hands, his ignorance, the fact that his best friend Joe is just a simple blacksmith. But none of Pip's hopes come true - in his pursuit of the world of "gentlemen" he does not become richer or better. His "great hopes" are, perhaps, the hopes of Dickens in his youth, the failure of which he proves in his mature work.

Little Oliver is born, and the harsh life, with all the ruthlessness, makes its demands on him: "... he was marked and numbered and at once took his place - a child in the care of the parish, an orphan from a workhouse, a humble, half-starved unfortunate, doomed

to endure shocks, making his way in the light, unfortunate, whom everyone despised and no one spared" [9], Oliver's childhood is spent in an environment of unfortunate orphans like himself, "not burdened with either excess food or excess clothing" [9], as Warden Bumble and Mrs. Stocks of food and clothing, which supply the parish orphans. Children here die of hunger and beatings, or turn into miserable, downtrodden, frightened creatures. But Oliver is touching not because he is a broken victim who does not dare to say a word, does not expect anything and does not hope for anything. Oliver is touching because he is an optimist. His timid request for an extra portion of porridge: "Be so kind, sir, I want more" [9] that is why it is regarded as a dangerous rebellion, because he dares, knowing that there is a lie, still believe in the truth. The whole tragedy of this scene is that Oliver expects good and believes in justice; With this childish belief, Oliver denounces injustice, not because it is bad from an economic or social point of view, but simply because it is bad. With the same naive faith in goodness and hope for sympathy, he turns to Mr. Bumble: "Everyone hates me. Oh sir, please, don't be angry with me!" [9] Mr. Bumble is surprised, and it cannot be otherwise - after all, he has long lost that childlike spontaneity that we see in Oliver and which Dickens tries to awaken in his readers [3].

Oliver remains direct and naive - remains a child! - throughout the story: when he becomes an apprentice to an undertaker, finds himself in a gang of thieves, becomes a victim of the villain Sykes and the owner of the den of thieves Fagin, having seen the darkest sides of life, he retains his inherent purity and childish naivety - among a gang of thieves and in the house of a kind gentleman Mr. Brownlow, he speaks and behaves with unflinching nobility - his character is formed outside the influence of surrounding circumstances. This leads some critics to say that this positive image is essentially just empty space [7]. Dickens, in their opinion, introduces the image of Oliver into the novel as a symbol of the human soul under the influence of external forces; the writer needs it in order to awaken in the reader a sense of compassion (because before him is a small, lonely, offended child) and hatred for a ruthless system that turns poverty, ignorance and faith in goodness to its advantage, in order to cause fear and disgust in front of a gang of thieves, debunk the false halo of romance around the image of the underworld. However, the images of Fagin, Sykes, the Artful Dodger, Noah Claypole are much more convincing than "a whole army of kind, noble, but colorless and cloyingly sensitive characters who become friends with the kid and in the end, by some miracle, turn out to be his relatives" [7].

Rose Maylie and Mr. Brownlow are also goodies, but the former is too angelic and flawless, and the latter is too good-natured and well-disposed to be lively and convincing, in any way believable. Just like in a fairy tale, these kind and merciful people unexpectedly and accidentally come to the aid of Oliver in all the difficult moments of his life. This is not very close to the truth, but in the preface to "Oliver Twist" Dickens emphasizes that one of the goals of his book is "to show the harsh truth" [9]. But we must not forget that Dickens also considers the tasks of the artist from the point of view of the moral impact on the reader - and in this case Dickens the moralist contradicts

Dickens the artist. He cares about justice and tries to convince his reader that "without deep love, kindness of the heart and gratitude to the one whose law is mercy ... without this happiness is unattainable"[9], And let Rose Maylie be just one of his disembodied female images, just an echo of the blow inflicted on the author by the death of Mary Hogarth; although Mr. Brownlow is just a good-natured old gentleman, much less flamboyant than the same Noah Claypole - these goodies make the reader, like little Oliver Twist, childishly believe in the existence of mercy, kindness and justice in relation to the oppressed and disadvantaged.

The underworld must be disgusting - Dickens proves this idea through Oliver's rejection of the demands of Fagin's gang; what he is entrusted with, the boy performs mechanically, crying out for help to God, begging him "it is better to send down death right now ... save him from such deeds"[9]. The book on crimes that Fagin gives him, Oliver throws away in horror - this natural horror of a child before the ugly, vile, miserable life of a criminal gang Dickens recognizes as the only true attitude. Although Oliver, according to critics, is a weak-willed hero, a puppet - but this puppet is driven by the best motives and convictions of the author. If the happy ending of the novel, Oliver's unexpected acquisition of a family and property, and his remaining moral purity and faith in goodness show us things not as they really are, then they simply must be so. Perhaps Dickens was sentimental in telling the story of Oliver Twist - but it would be more true to say that he was wise, childishly wise: he looks at evil with beautiful surprise, through the eyes of his hero - Oliver Twist, attacking the workhouse with the simplicity of a boy, met the cannibal [8]. Finishing the novel, albeit implausibly, but safely for Oliver and his friends - all his goodies - Dickens ardently demands truth and justice, as the boy from the orphanage demanded porridge.

The children of the early works of Dickens, including Oliver Twist, are not far from their predecessors in the literature of the 18th century - they are extremely disembodied, passive beings guided by someone else's will.

Conclusion

The source of many images in the writer's work was the facts from his own biography. It is known that Charles Dickens was an observant and painfully impressionable child, sensitive to any injustice - such is little Oliver Twist with his unshakable faith in goodness and justice, such is Paul Dombey, intensely thinking about how the world works. - Dickens with amazing accuracy reproduces the child's attitude to the surrounding reality, his system of judgments and evaluations, his idea of what our life should be like.

Thus, Dickens created in his works a wonderful gallery of images of goodies, among which children's images occupy an important place; Dickens' child is the bearer of the best human qualities: faith in truth and justice, selfless kindness and selfless love. In an effort to prove the inevitability of the victory of good over evil, Dickens often contradicted the main principle of realism - "show the harsh truth", but he did this, trying to instill hope in people's hearts. The writer's humanism, his passionate

denunciation of social injustice, love and sympathy for man make Dickens' books close to the widest circle of readers in England and far beyond its borders.

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