

Tribhuvan University

Failure of Humanism in *Oliver Twist*

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, Tribhuvan University, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in English

By

Dhak Bahadur Tamang

T.U. Registration No: 6-3-40-2152-2006

June 2011

Tribhuvan University
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus

This thesis entitled “Failure of Humanism in *Oliver Twist*” submitted by Mr. Dhak Bahadur Tamang, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

.....
Hukum Thapa

(Supervisor)

.....
(External Examiner)

.....
Rudra Paudel

Head of Department, English

Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus

Kathmandu

Date:

Acknowledgements

I am highly indebted to my respected teacher Hukum Thapa, lecturer of English at Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, whose scholarly guidance and constructive suggestions helped to bring this thesis in the present shape. I would like to extend my deep gratitude to him for his inspiration and generosity.

I am also grateful to my respected teacher Rudra Paudel, Head, Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, Tribhuvan University, for his encouragement in this research work.

Similarly, I would like to thank my parents, Khadak Singh Tamang and Munsya Tamanag; wife Muneer Maya Tamang; brothers Bal Bahadur Tamang, Tanka Bahadur Tamang, Tara Lama Tamang, Lal Bahadur Tamang and Khusiram Tamang; sister Chirjom Tamang; and friends Arun Rai, Mohan Kadayat and Krishna Bahadur Tamang for their consistent support in carrying out this research work.

Lastly, my thank goes to brother Lukash Tamang for his help in typing this thesis work.

Dhak Bahadur Tamang
Ratna RajyaLaxmi Campus
Tribhuvan University, Nepal

Abstract

This research work analyzes failure of humanism in Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist* that set against the background of the Victorian English society, with churches and government institutions of that time failing to deliver on needs and expectations of working class people and poor children. To be human means to be entitled to getting humanly love, compassion, self-respect and treatment along with fulfillment of needs and humanly considerations, a poor orphan child like Oliver is continually subject to cruelty, deprivation and humiliation at the hands of authorities. This research tries to unveil the face of the corrupt social institutions and show material quest of the Industrial Age as the major contributing factor behind the miseries facing the lives of the working class people and decline in human values.

In the novel, orphan boy Oliver suffers a series of abuse and misfortunes and becomes in the underground world of London pickpockets and criminals, exposing the hardships of life faced by the working class largely owing to faulty social institution and values. The Poor Law provisioned that the poor could only receive government assistance if they moved into government workhouses. But money was taking place of humanly considerations; such workhouses became the place where the poor were systematically subject to all kinds of inhuman practices including utmost abuse, exploitation, starvation, humiliation and injustice. The tragic story of the orphan child shows the corrupt nature of government officials and destructiveness of the social institutions workhouses of that time that were supposed to ensure respectful survival of the poor and children.