

English (sub) Part-2; Unit-1; Topic: A Tale of Two Cities:

A Critique of English Society. Lec-seri-37

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'A Tale of Two Cities': A Critique of English Society.

'The Tale of Two Cities', a stirring historical novel, based on Carlyle's 'The French Revolution', is written by the Victorian stalwart novelist Charles Dickens.

This novel describes the subtle view of French revolution. During the period, just before the revolution, the aristocracy of France was abusing their power and bringing suffering to the people of France particularly and the nation France generally.

In this novel, Dickens, through the narrator describes, how "on inanimate nature as well as men and women who cultivated it, a prevalent tendency... towards a dejected disposition to give up, and wither away".

Here, Dickens, tries to criticize the social injustice and suffering meted to people by the old system, at the same time he also focused on the horror perpetrated by the revolution.

In the description of the fall of Bastille, Dickens delineates a vivid picture of the "remorseless sea of turbulent swaying shapes, voices of vengeance and faces hardened in the

furnaces of suffering until the touch of pity could make no mark on them. Even if the Revolutionaries do have good reasons to try to change the system, but they became dehumanized in their violent struggle to do so.

By the time Dickens was writing, the events of the Revolution were over, but England was under the grip of its own problems such as social injustice and class drift.

'In a Tale of Two Cities', Dickens uses his critique of both the conditions leading up to the revolution and the revolution itself as a warning to his English audience. Here, Dickens connects the cold and selfish behaviour of the aristocracy to the revolutionaries' violent demand for justice.

Both on a political and personal level, the Evermonde family is punished for generations of exploiting others. This storyline serves as a cautionary warning to the English nobility not to become complacent or exploitative. At the same time, the negative representation of character like Madame Defarge cautions against means to achieve

Political gods.

Through characters like Sidney Carton, Jarvis Lorry and Miss Pross Dickens suggests that true change comes from individuals who act unselfish ways and prioritize loyalty to others.

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