

# A Study of Verbs Related to Violence in *A Tale of Two Cities*

**Chen Cheng**

Foreign Language Department, University of Science and Technology of China, Hefei, China

**Email address:**

echocc@ustc.edu.cn

**To cite this article:**

Chen Cheng. A Study of Verbs Related to Violence in *A Tale of Two Cities*. *English Language, Literature & Culture*.

Vol. 5, No. 1, 2020, pp. 1-12. doi: 10.11648/j.ellc.20200501.11

**Received:** October 23, 2019; **Accepted:** December 12, 2019; **Published:** January 4, 2020

---

**Abstract:** Almost every Englishman is aware, however slightly, of the wonderful novels of Charles Dickens. *A Tale of Two Cities*, one of the historical fictions, set in the context of the French Revolution, begins with the miserable plight of the French people living under the exploitation of the aristocrats in the years leading up to the revolution and ends with the exceedingly blind and terrifying revolt and vengeance demonstrated by the revolutionaries. It has been vastly studied from different aspects, like the territory and disciplinary frontier-crossings, revelation of personal and national identity, uses of caricatures and ironies. We apply the quantitative method to the study of verbs related to violence so as to uncover Dicken's attitudes towards the French Revolution and investigate deeper into the double theme - violence, madness, terrorism and love, reason, forgiveness. "How does Dickens's approval of the capital punishment influence his writing of *A Tale*?" "As readers are drenched in the heart-rending sentiment and intoxicated by the sacrificial love at the end, why do hatred and violence, as claimed by many commentators, serve as the main theme of the novel? In fact, the answer is embedded in the use of verbs related to violence. We will first compare the political stands of Burke, Carlyle and Dickens, and then proceed to the two lists of words related to violence and a diagram displayed on AntConc, followed by the analysis of the three main characters in *A Tale* - Doctor Marnette, Madame Defarge and Sydney Carton.

**Keywords:** *A Tale of Two Cities*, Verbs, Violence, Quantitative Method, Charles Dickens's Attitude

---

## 1. Introduction

*A Tale of Two Cities* is considered as one of the most popular and innovative works written by Charles Dickens. By devising elaborately the plot that ignites the eventual brutal revolution, Dickens had pushed the creation of the realistic novels to the apex in Victorian times. From the sundry researches, we perceive, however, various paradoxical positions of Dickens himself and the opposite opinions held by the critics. Just as Colin Jones revealed in his *French Crossing I* that "Dickens's personal attitudes towards France and in particular Paris suggests a more ambiguous and complicated history." [1] Since Dickens is a reformist who advocates a less violent way to resolve social problems, why does he firmly approve of capital punishment instead of a total abolition? How do hatred and violence serve as the main theme of the novel? As the influence of Burke and Carlyle on Dickens are immense, we thus try to give a broad view to the two philosophers' political stance before tackling Dickens attitude towards the French Revolution. We apply the

quantitative method based on the data shown on AntConc. Two lists of words related to violence and a diagram will be presented at its very beginning, from which we hope to find out the answer to questions we've brought forward.

## 2. Reflections on the French Revolution

### 2.1. Burke Vs Carlyle

#### 2.1.1. "Great Burke's" Conservatism

In the *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Burke states that the so-called "liberty" can only be obtained and granted to the people when it is "combined with government, with public force, with peace and order..." [1]. It will not last long once this connection breaks down. Liberty is located beside the adjacent values as toleration and reform, but below the public order and the state authority. Burke emphasizes the intimate attachment between human beings and state to the extent that any violation against the state or the attempt to achieve a social reform, if the latter isn't elaborately and carefully calculated, would probably bring on a state-wide

disaster. His conservatism becomes more and more radical when he praises the Glorious Revolution of 1688 as "a small and a temporary deviation" instead of "a grave and overruling necessity" [2]. It's not surprising when reflecting upon the savage French revolutionaries, he argues that they had rebelled "against a mild and lawful monarch" [3] and disturbed a peaceful social order established by the just force of Lafayette and the unswerving national guard of the Crown. Since the French Revolution is a stream of violent revolt aiming at annihilating or overthrowing all the social orders and conventions, it is for Burke, no doubt, an action of "fraud and injustice" [3] that should have been immediately terminated and guided in accordance with the integrity of ancient regime which, according to Burke, had survived and stood the test of time.

On the contrary, he doesn't oppose the American Revolution. The American revolution in which the rioters struggled against the Crown's abuse of power and the absolutely arbitrary control bore in fact a large resemblance to the French Revolution. Burke encourages a reconciliation in favor of the American revolution, but such endorsement and appreciation are withheld in the case of France. That's why some of the famous writers denounce him as inconsistent in his political footing, to which Burke decisively retorts. In fact, Burke is not wrong, nor is his political opinion a paradoxical discord. If he had found out that the American Revolution was actually a bloody revolt with the purpose of breaking down the subordinative connection, of subverting the whole constitution and reclaiming their independence from England instead of a passive defence only to protect their rights or to enlarge their liberty, he would have surely adopted a different attitude towards the American cause.

Whatsoever Burke's depreciated opinions, the French Revolution had annihilated the tyranny and began indeed to grow green again under the control of Napoleon. Burke doesn't live long enough to witness the success of Napoleon, and even Carlyle satirically states: "the great Burke remains unanswerable." [3] Burke fails to perceive two elemental facts. One is that the group members of the court and the national force disagree among themselves. Echo can be found in Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* where the officers, seeing the flame from the chateau of Evremonde, "answered with shrugs and biting of lips, 'It must burn.'" [4] In late 1789, the national guard switched totally to the benefits of the common people. That's why Marie Antoinette sprang up, startled, and asked: "Nobody takes action? What? We are all alone?" [5] The other is Burke's ignorance of the suffering of the populace. How could he overlook the Reign of Terror exerted by the aristocrats during more than a century to punish the populace mercilessly, whosoever they were, whatsoever tiny mistake they had made, that served as a means to demonstrate the divine and inviolable power of the King? In an age where the lightest fault could bring a dismemberment, where the innocent was framed and led to decapitation, was it not enough for the populace, or rather for Burke himself, that this ever-enduring pain should come to

an end? France in the 18<sup>th</sup> century was, according to Dickens, a deserted, sordid, barren and ignorant land, accompanied by the surviving creatures with the same worn-out rags, the sallow visage and the scraggy skeleton-like body. Burke fails to get a whole grasp of the event, and thus draws an impertinent and unsatisfying picture for the French Revolution.

### 2.1.2. Carlyle - the Loss of Faith

Carlyle agrees with Burke on the aspect that people should be governed by the King, since he is the humble and loyal servant of God and represents the supreme order of the state. Similar echo can be found in Carlyle's worship of heroism, under which the King is honored as "the summary for us of all the various figures of Heroism; Priest, Teacher, whatsoever of earthly or of spiritual dignity we can fancy to reside in man." [6] On the other hand, they both adopt a positive assessment and give a high value to the function of religion. The idea that a country whose foundation is not based on religious belief would finally collapse is readily embraced by the two authors. Burke states in terms of religious establishment: "the majority of the people of England hardly think it lawful to be without one... They do not consider their church as convenient, but as essential to their state. They consider it as the foundation of their whole constitution, with which, and with every part of which, it holds an indissoluble union." [7]. However, opinion diverges with regard to the measure that should be taken when the corruption of the court went hand in hand with the corruption of morals. Carlyle firmly believes in the necessity to put down a state in due course through a riot or a revolution, even a sanguinary and insane one, to rebuild new orders of society once the King fails to stick to divine justice. The King governs the populace, but at the same time he must know that if he doesn't strive to satisfy the needs or further abuse his power, then God would designate another one better fitted for the mission. Carlyle's positive attitude towards the French Revolution becomes more distinct when he argues: "Hollowness, insincerity has to cease, sincerity of some sort has to begin. Cost what it may, reigns of terror, horrors of French Revolution or what else, we have to return to truth." [8]

When dealing with the cause of the French Revolution, he believes that faith or religion, a binding force of society was lost both in the court and people. We can find such proof in his novel for the loss of faith of the former: "the spiritual guidance of the world... too is lost, or has glided into the same miscellaneous hands. Who is it the King now guides?" [11] For the populace, he states: "in this world, rises no Era of Hope; for their faith too is failing... A dumb generation; their voice only an inarticulate cry." [4] The people lost their belief too, because Louis XVI, the incarnation of faith, had mutated the petitions of the misery (*cahiers de doléances*) into the formation of a gallows, transformed masses of noble servants of his crown into a dumb, apathetic creature, gathering around their long dead hearth to share a thin diet. An integrated society thus created a wide gap of two

extremes, in which the rich were to enjoy the extravagant and dissipated short-run term of pleasures, whereas the poor were to be exploited, extracted, extorted to the last breath. The French Revolution, in the eyes of Carlyle, is an "open Rebellion", a way to release people's suffering from the already exhausted authority: "Anarchy breaks prison, busts up from the infinite Deep, and rages uncontrollable, enveloping a world... Till the frenzy burning itself out... The uncontrollable be got, if not reimprisoned, yet harnessed, and its mad forces made to work towards their object as sane regulated one." [4] The "infinite Deep" where the lower class endured every minute in their life, and in which every piece of body was wrung, had repressed their potentially indignant and rebellious voice, decreased their respect for the superiority of the upper class and raised their desire in search of vengeance - the indifference, close to scorn, as Louis XVI himself deeply felt when he passed before the people. The French revolutionaries, rather than an unlettered *cabal* revolting against a "fine" social order, were the active protagonists who, like a phoenix, burned itself in the roaring flame and extinguished to ashes, waiting to be recalled to life again.

## 2.2. Carlyle and Dickens

### 2.2.1. The Motivation in Composing *A Tale*

In order to answer the above questions, we will firstly take a look at the background set in mid-19th century England.

England had experienced a significant change from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century after the emergence of the Industrial Revolution. A vast number of industries were set up and spun a wonderfully ludicrous fortune for the rich. However, as machines replaced the labour force more and more, and everything was prone to be mechanized, the vulgar fear of the unemployment and the hollow in faith haunted the uncertain future of England. By pointing to the loss of faith of France and the dumbness of the populace, Carlyle actually targets money-worship-based England. He was afraid that the inarticulate uproar of the working class, tortured outside by hard work, afflicted inside in pain by the anguish and indignation, unable to make their voices heard, might one day burst up from the "infinite Deep" and reproduce the French tragedy in his own land.

If Carlyle writes *the French Revolution* out of the desire of awakening the inanimate and dumb social consciousness of England and of the urgent need of a restoration for the loss of faith, Charles Dickens probably composes *A Tale* as a compliment to English Heroism. *A Tale* was written in 1859, two years after the Sepay War in India. The war traced its cause back to the colonization and defeat of India as well as the long-term oppression from British control. The Indian uprising was one of the examples among many that aimed at putting down the excessive exploitation and gaining the human rights by releasing themselves physically and spiritually from the shackles of the dictators. However, Dickens characterized the Indian riots as a deed which was absolutely coward and treacherous, who deserved a retaliation from the British military force. He wrote in a letter

in 1857: "I wish I were command in Chief in India... I should do my utmost to exterminate the Race upon whom the stain of the late cruelties rested... to blot it out of mankind and race it off the Face of the Earth." [4] This sharp reproach with an appalling outrage to the Indian insurrection will surely disappoint the readers who firmly believe Dickens is a sympathetic and benign reformist. It is likely that Dickens is a racist whose patriotism and self-boasting superiority of the English people surpass the limit and thus prevents him from drawing an accurate evaluation of a justified cause, such as the Indian War. Under his pen, the British soldiers were the incarnation of Heroism. By defending the British government and combating this wide national revolt, they fought for the consolidation of the country's identity rather than the recapture of the Indian colony.

The discussion I make in the above paragraph seems to have little connection with the reason why Dickens composes *A Tale of Two Cities*. However, Dickens's debt to the event of the Indian War was not less than to Carlyle's *the French Revolution*. In *a Tale*, themes of treachery appear frequently. For example, the horse of the Dover mail "had three times already come to a stop... with the mutinous intent of taking it back to the Blackheath"; [10] Roger Cly, once Darnay's "sincere" servant, testified against his master in London's court after offering the evidence concealed in Darnay's room; Barsad, Mrs. Pross's brother, sold himself to France and Britain as a double spy; Madame Defarge, who refused to listen to her husband and engaged in a deadly pursuit of Manette, died in a deserted place, while the Heroism that was considered as a shiny quality of British people consisted of benevolence, constancy, forbearance and even self-sacrifice. Sydney Carton, once an indulgent and dissipated drunkard, has gradually discovered his lost identity by falling in love with a British woman and achieving self-sacrifice for her; Miss Pross, a British loyal housekeeper, fought against Madame Defarge on behalf of her national identity. "I am a Briton." [5] said Miss Pross before the combat with Defarge. As a result, *A Tale of Two Cities* could be regarded, if we dare say, as a work that demonstrates British Heroism rather than a simple exposure of frivolous violence on the part of the French Revolution. What's interesting is that both of the authors, while writing their novels, laid their real intentions elsewhere.

### 2.2.2. Carlyle's Influence on Dickens

Dickens's method in creating *A Tale* differentiates from Carlyle's basically in its colourful animation bestowed on each individual. In *the French Revolution*, the voices of the miserable wretched were "inarticulate... low-whimpering of infinite moan." [4] Since they were dumb, no individual voice of story was given to them. They acted or cried as the gathered masses. However, in *A Tale*, every class of people has been imparted by one or several characters. These lively units have made their modest contributions to the construction of the whole "Tale".

Dickens apparently doesn't share his point of view with Carlyle as regards the factors which induced the French

Revolution. A stunning and savage scene thus reveals in Chapter 5 of *A Tale* where the crowd dashed around a broken cask of wine, jostling, wriggling, trying to sip the pools of it. The neglected feeble agriculture, their faint living conditions and physical sufferings of "bare arms, matted locks and cadaverous faces" [5] were the crucial reasons of the revolution. Furthermore, in the very opening scene, Dickens ironically depicts a terrifying murder scene of a youth who didn't "kneel down to do honour to a dirty possession of monks..., at a distance of some fifty or sixty yards." [5] Conclusion can be drawn that France in its late 18<sup>th</sup> century was a chaotic inferno where the King ignored the order of the society and even himself was the chief criminal, responsible for such a result.

Whatever their differences, we admit the indisputable influence of Carlyle's *the French Revolution* on Charles Dickens, the latter being "a fervent admirer of the French Revolution." [5]. On the one hand, both authors have their evolution of the story arranged in the chronology of the French Revolution. Carlyle begins his book with the Death of Louis XV, while Dickens starts with the portrait of the pre-revolutionary period in France. On the other hand, Dickens's depiction of the masses and the usage of the weapons in the French Revolution bear great resemblance to Carlyle's. In the chapter of "the storming of the Bastille", Carlyle likens the people to a devouring tide of sea that "flows on, welling through every street... the crowd seems shoreless." [4] Similarly, Dickens compares the uprising of the people to "the sea of black and threatening waters, and of destructive upheaving of wave against wave, whose depths were yet unfathomed and whose forces were yet unknown." [5] The distributed "muskets, cannons, powder, pikes, axes" [5] mentioned by the two authors are in coherence with the historical reality. In addition, they both devote several chapters to the representation of women's role in the French Revolution. Carlyle paints: "Rouse, ye, O women; the laggard men will not act; they say, we ourselves may act." [4] Madame Defarge is a distinct example of these women contrived by Dickens. When she recognized that her husband renounced the plot of pursuing annihilation of Manette's family, she said: "I must act for myself." [25] Finally, some of the characters in *A Tale* are probably taken from Carlyle's. For example, the sewing women in *the French Revolution* are incarnated as Madame Defarge; "Cholat the wine-merchant - an impromptu cannoner" [4] is embodied as Madame Defarge's husband as well as his wine shop; "the livelihood of thy good Father earns, by making shoes" [4] can be equaled as Doctor Manette's monotonous vocation: making a lady's shoe. Dickens's description of the murder of Foulon by the angry mob is a traceable illustration from Carlyle's *the French Revolution*. In the Lanterne, Foulon was hanged and "dragged through the streets, his head goes aloft on a pike, the mouth filled with grass." [4]. In *A Tale*, Dickens meticulously arranges the process of his arrest and death. "Villain Foulon taken... Old Foulon taken. Foulon who told my old father that he might eat grass." [5] By relying on *the French Revolution* and picking up some of the historical

personalities so as to be as close as possible to reality, Dickens managed to represent his background of the French Revolution more or less accurately in *A Tale*.

### 2.3. *Dickens's Attitude Towards the French Revolution*

Since our paper focuses on the research of Dickens's attitude to the French Revolution, we'd like to show an elaborate investigation tending to bring forward a thought-provoking and imposing hypothesis.

Three crucial elements make it difficult for us to draw an accurate and pertinent conclusion on Dickens's attitude towards the revolutionaries and aristocrats. The first one lies in Dickens's personal opinion towards the death penalty, the second being the contradiction and vicissitude of his sympathetic feeling towards the populace and upper class. The last one resides in *A Tale* itself. We would like to analyse these factors one by one.

In chapter 5 of *Dickens, Violence and the Modern State*, Jeremy Tambling represents Dickens's viewpoint about the abolition of the death penalty in Britain. Instead of approving of the complete abolition of capital punishment, Dickens constantly demands the execution of the criminals within the prison walls. This idea turns out to be another surprise for most of our readers. Dickens firmly believes that everyone has their own secret and it is their secrets and mysteries that help them build up their identity. Echoes can be found in *A Tale* when Dickens ponders: "A solemn consideration... that every one of those darkly clustered houses encloses its own secret, that every beating heart in the hundreds of thousands of breasts there, is,... a secret to the heart nearest it!" [5] In consequence, his support for the death penalty within walls has put him into a criticized position and even John Bright ventures to say that Dickens wants nothing more than "a secret assassination, motivated by his mere longing to put someone to death." [12] If Dickens approves of the death penalty, the decapitation of Louis XVI and of other aristocrats would seem, to a certain extent, to be a just and appropriate deed from the revolutionaries. However, he only approves of capital punishment being exerted in a secret place and not as a flagrant public scene witnessed by a sea of spectators or to be read as a subject for the masses in the newspapers or journals. From this aspect, the decapitation under the guillotine is not at all favored by Dickens. These two contradictory deductions create a thick veil that renders my research rather difficult to penetrate through.

Secondly, Dickens's subtle sentiment towards the aristocrats and populace are not very clear and even confusing. He certainly knows that the subsequent regicide was due to the previous patricide and filicide from the aristocrats, but at the end of *A Tale*, he tries to mold a petrifying and frenzied mob carried away by their vengeance and hatred and he even showed his sympathy to the upper class. The scene of the sharpening of the Grindstone distorted the image of the people, who, before the French Revolution, were the miserable or the poor, and in the capture of the Bastille, were considered as soldiers. At the same time, since *A Tale* is "bloodier, crueller and more violent than other

novels composed by him," [13] and "it has demonstrated the energy and tenacity of hate so much more forcefully than it has exposed the power of love." [14] Madame Defarge was surely this "energy and tenacity of hate." Nevertheless, Dickens deliberately contrives a chapter for her past life in which her piteous sister was raped and died, and her father and brother were both murdered by the Marquis. So let us try to reflect upon this: if Madame Defarge was really the demon in the novel, why does Dickens reveal the tragic past of her family? In *Dickens and French Wickedness*, Collins stresses that in spite of Dickens's affectionate and sympathetic feeling for France, he agrees that France was suitable to wear the social motto - "Long live the Devil." [15] Nevertheless, the author doesn't make an effort to further answer this question: Who was this "Devil"? The aristocrats, the revolutionaries, or Madame Defarge in *A Tale of Two Cities*?

Finally, the problem lies in the "Tale" itself. Although *Barnaby Rudge* and *A Tale* are the only two historical novels ever written by Dickens, one on the Gordon riots in England, the other the revolt in France, *A Tale* was not based strictly on real history because of his usage of the novelistic technique to approach allegory, the invention of some

exaggerated personalities and his infusion of imagination. When we compare Dickens's original draft for the description of Madame Defarge, he changed her from "a little woman, little bright eyes and little lifted eyebrows" into "a stout woman, a watchful eye... a large hand heavily ringed, a steady face... Strong features and great composure of manner." [16] These changes are striking, Madame Defarge has been totally transformed into a manlike figure, more hostile and frightening, who transformed a knitted work into a dominant power of Terror. This arrangement further blurs Dickens's attitude towards the populace in whom we can perceive both his sympathy and indignation.

In so much as the above research findings and conclusions are more or less incomplete, we'll try to resort to another approach - the investigation of the vocabulary of violence - in the following part to dig out the hidden message in *A Tale of Two Cities*

### 3. The Study of Verbs Related to Violence

*A list of words related to violence has been taken out of the Thesaurus.*

**Table 1.** The Classification of verbs related to Violence.

Verbs of Attack	strike, assail, invade, strike at, slap, shoot at, rob bombard, whip, besiege, beat down, slay, smite, kill behead, fire at, thrust at, attack, assault
Verbs of Violence	bear down, burst, dislode, blow up, irritate, rampage rage, fume, wreak, explode, detonate, inflame, burn
Verbs of Amorphism	deface, blemish, disfigure, deform, destroy deteriorate, degenerate, break, crack, decay, totter
Verbs of Deterioration	shake, crumble, hang, weaken, poison, degrade, impair demoralize, brutalize, scotch, despoil, mangle, blight exterminate
Verbs of Destruction	tumble, break up, demolish, tear up, break down, dispel cut short, blot out, dissipate, dissolve, smash, crash shatter, strike at, batter to pieces, tear to pieces
Verbs of Badness	crush to pieces, wipe out, chop into pieces, eradicate harm, oppress, persecute, damnify, endamage, hurt trample upon, tread upon, maltreat, stab, ill-treat

We insert *A Tale* into Antconc and tap into it the verbs categorized as have shown above. We then extract the required data according to the two types of people - the Marquis and his noblemen and the Populace, and select among the results given on the screen. Nevertheless, it is such complicated work which commands meticulously manual operation and involves an infusion of a wonderful deal of time.

*Two tables of words of violence are shown as follows:*

**Table 2.** Words related to Violence (the Marquis and his noblemen).

Book the First	
strike 5	kill 1
rob 4	hang 1
dreadful 4	beat 1
tear 3	fight 1
shot 3	revenge 1
plunder 2	hatred 1
burn 2	bloody-minded 1
sword-thrust 1	cruel 1
cut off 1	frightful 1

pillage 1	revengeful 1
	outrage 1
Book the Second	
put to death 7	torture 1
kill 4	wring 1
fierce 3	tread on 1
exterminate 1	plunder-wrecked 1
maim 1	cruelly 1
suffocate 1	fiercely 1
hang 1	fire-charred 1
Book the Third	
0	

**Table 3.** Words related to Violence (the Populace).

Book the First	
tear	1
violently	1
Book the Second	
strike 7	avenge 1
tear 6	despoil 1

<i>hang</i> 6	<i>pluck to pieces</i> 1
<i>rage</i> 5	<i>kill</i> 1
<i>burn</i> 4	<i>strangle</i> 1
fierce 4	<i>throttle</i> 1
<i>execute</i> 3	<i>revenge</i> 1
cruel 3	<i>blow</i> 1
vengeance 2	<i>stab</i> 1
<i>murder</i> 2	<i>hew off</i> 1
<i>destroy</i> 2	<i>condemn to death</i> 1
<i>slice</i> 1	<i>rend to pieces</i> 1
<i>chop off</i> 1	<i>beat</i> 1
<i>behead</i> 1	<i>bruise</i> 1
<i>knock out</i> 1	<i>fire</i> 1
<i>quarter</i> 1	<i>crush</i> 1
<i>mangle</i> 1	mutilation 1
<i>maltrait</i> 1	
Book the Third	
<i>strike</i> 7	<i>shear off</i> 1
<i>tear</i> 5	<i>behead</i> 1
<i>cruel</i> 3	<i>kill</i> 1
<i>murder</i> 3	<i>cut to pieces</i> 1
<i>massacre</i> 2	wrath 1
<i>cut</i> 2	animosity 1
hideous 2	cruelst 1
<i>condemn to death</i> 2	revengeful 1
<i>disfigure</i> 1	dreadfully 1
<i>annihilate</i> 1	murderous 1
<i>execute</i> 1	horror 1
<i>exterminate</i> 1	ruthless 1
<i>put to death</i> 1	ferocity 1
<i>assassinate</i> 1	frightful 1
<i>slay</i> 1	hatred 1

For the data above, the final number includes several tenses of one verb. For example, *strike* has appeared 19 times in which forms like *struck*, *striking* or *stricken* are all counted.

### 3.1. Lexical Analysis of the Verbs

#### 3.1.1. The Comparison Between Table 2 and Table 3

Three exiguous but stunning differences can be perceived through the comparison of the two tables.

First of all, we discover that the words of violence for the populace are almost twice as many as the words for the aristocrats. This could be entirely contrary to what readers originally thought, since the Marquis and his nobles had suppressed their subjects by exerting the absolute power for almost half a century under the control of Louis XVI. The Marquis's ignorance and cruelty had rendered him excessively ruthless towards the death of a child trodden over by his carriage. As *A Tale of Two Cities* is set in such a background, and it begins similarly with the contrast between the brutality of the higher class and the misery of the common people, the novel should have involved even more, or at least no smaller number of violent words for the aristocrats than for the latter. However, the above lists show us a different version.

In the second place, instead of a proportional ratio of different morphology of words of violence, such as adverbs, nouns or adjectives, we notice that both of the tables contain an overwhelming majority of verbs (in italics). This finding

reveals that the use of verbs may, at least to Dickens himself, be a more efficient and impressive fashion in manifesting the violent actions of protagonists or perhaps in conveying the degrees of vengeance and hatred.

The third discovery concerns the alternation of word occurrence as the story goes along. The violence of the aristocrats is gradually receding, whereas this tendency is reversed by a soaring growth of the violence perpetrated by the populace. At the same time, we realize that the verb *strike* appears three times in the leading place, followed by *rob*, *tear*, *kill*, *hang*, *burn*, etc, all falling into the categories of *verbs of attack, violence, destruction and deterioration*. *Strike* has been used 19 times, and it means, according to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's English-Chinese Dictionary*, "to attack suddenly and violently". It gives us the impression that Charles Dickens's preference goes to this verb which involves vigorous energy.

Tambling states previously that "patricide" was one of the most distinctive and elemental violence and could be considered as the "subtext" of *A Tale of Two Cities*. However, what has to be complemented is that "regicide" or "patricide" is reciprocally connected with filicide or sororicide, and one could never exist without the emergence of another. It was the "father" who began to slaughter his "son", and the "son" in return took vengeance on his "father". The fight between "father" and "son" are visualized and verified by the lists of verbs where *rob*, *tear*, *burn*, *kill*, *hang*, *beat*, *revenge* in table 2 reappear in table 3. It literally transmits to us the message of mutual-annihilation between the aristocrats and the common people. Thus we can arrive at the conclusion that *A Tale* is a story with actually two important subtexts: patricide and filicide.

#### 3.1.2. Diagram Analysis

Tables 2 and 3 have been made into one diagram from which we hope to extract a more specific and authentic conclusion.

The violence of the populace or the revolutionaries reaches its peak in the second part of *A Tale*, and this upsurge persists until the end of the story, whereas the violence performed by the Marquis and his family is completely extinguished to zero. This explains: firstly, that only through the expansion of the destructive power of the populace could the violence of the aristocrats be constrained and forced to reduce; secondly, that only by the continuing maintenance of the violence of the populace could the ferocious despotism totally die out. The second finding is evidenced in Book the Second after the taking of the Bastille where some noble Monseigneur stayed together in Defarge's wine shop, pretending boastfully to avenge themselves on the masses and reestablish his regime in the near future. Without the maintenance of violence by the common people, the aristocrats were still on the watch for the restoration of their monarch. So it is relatively clear that Dickens's attitude towards the aristocrats is negative all along. He firmly believes that century after century's despotism and dictatorship must come to an end by some sort of exterior forces.

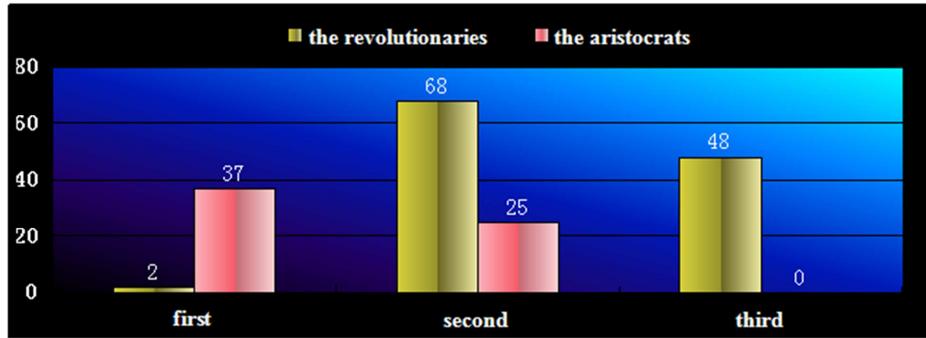


Figure 1. Words related to Violence (the Aristocrats and the Populace).

However, in spite of the fact that the national revolt of the revolutionaries did in fact overthrow the dictators, can we simply substitute this exterior force by such bloody riots of the former? Or in other words, does Dickens really approve of the overthrow of despotism by means of the French Revolution? What was his hidden attitude towards the revolutionaries since he "alternated between sympathy and horror"? [17]

### 3.2. Dickens's Attitude Towards the Revolutionaries

We notice from the diagram that the rapid increase of the violence of the revolutionaries began to subvert the heavy exploitation from the Crown. The revolutionaries in the seizure of the Bastille embraced even more words of violence than in the final French Revolution of 1792, and in Table 2, a considerably larger number of verbs of destruction have been granted to the revolutionaries than in the third part of the book where close to half of the words consisted of a combination of adjectives and adverbs. This anatomy of the word occurrence and their composition reveal that a wider and still fiercer violence was involved in Book the Second than in Book the Third. But what does this conclusion signify?

#### 3.2.1. Book the Second

When Bastille was burned by the bloodily distributed force of the revolutionaries, Dickens depicts with a sarcastic tone the scene of the desperation and trepidation of Monsieur Gabelle who cried nearly in ecstasy for help. Soon after, Dickens describes: "the mender of the roads, and two hundred and fifty particular friends... looking at the pillar of fire in the sky: 'It must be forty feet high.'" [5] As we know, the Guillotine had been invented ten years before the French Revolution and served as a tool for the guarantee of the Reign of the King. The pillar of fire was actually the embodiment of the forty-foot high Guillotine. Obviously, Dickens recognized the riots of the revolutionaries as a just counterattack and a severe punishment of the evil: the aristocrats should suffer what their subjects had suffered long ago and be executed the same way as their subjects. Dickens's attitude towards the revolutionaries becomes even much clearer and more vivid when he expresses his sympathy to the living conditions of the people right after the fall of the Bastille: "far and wide lay a ruined country, yielding nothing but desolation. Every green leaf... was as

shriveled and poor as the miserable people," [5] and grants a justified and righteous cause to the actions taken on the part of the revolutionaries: "Monseigneur as a class had, somehow or other, brought things to this." [5] Furthermore, in Book the Second, Madame Defarge, leader of the storming of the Bastille, as well as her assembled followers, were bestowed the glorious titles of "patriots" and "soldiers." They avenged their dead loved ones and in consequence brought a deadly blow to the feudal regime teetering already on the edge of disappearance. This dimension of our research inevitably commands our attention to the significant role played by women. Women's movements in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century were too impressive to be ignored. Dickens captures this historical point and brings further into his novel a stroke of realistic colour. After Foulon was taken, he describes: "The men were terrible... but the women were a sight to chill the boldest." [5] The capture of Foulon let loose an uncontrolled frenzy, utterly senseless. The "frenzy" can be interpreted as a kind of deformed joy or a saturated hatred bursting out from the exertion of vengeance by haggard women. The lower-class women published a large volume of petitions and grievances, to the extent that the alleged "republican motherhood" [41] or the binding force of "sisterhood" had mutated into a flurry of disordered upheaval. "The men took the Bastille, but the women took the King." [42] As Jules Michelet commented, literally meant that it was women who controlled and led the battle and men were the subordinates, ready to be dispatched by the order of their masters. This thoroughly concise but penetrating conclusion, with a slightly ironic mood of Michelet, highlighted the profound influence of women during the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The double-layer investigation above (the analysis of the diagram and the details in Book the Second) shows us: above all, despite the power embraced by the revolutionaries in the storming of the Bastille (Book the Second) being more violent and destructive than in the French Revolution (Book the Third), Dickens still adopts an affirmative and compassionate attitude to the rioters; secondly, we notice that Carlyle's ideology resonates with Dickens's method of resolution: Dickens vaguely agrees that the long-refrained lower class has to topple over the corrupted court when the latter deviated from its mission and ignored the hardship of the people. However, Dickens goes even farther in believing

that the overthrow of Louis XVI must be realized as decisively and inexorably by the revolutionaries as the aristocrats had previously acted - a like for like retaliation. Lastly, as to the movement of women, Dickens is relatively neutral. No distinct emotional depictions or negative words are given to them. To sum up, our study shows that Dickens, up to now, is in favor of a revolutionary way to achieve a liberal and equal society.

### 3.2.2. Book the Third

In this part, a mild decrease of twenty verbs of violence is perceived. Nevertheless, since the increase of the adjectives, nouns and adverbs predicates a descending involvement of actions but an ascending aggravation of the environment and emotion, the scene of horror and violence is not at all retreating, but instead all the more staggering.

On the literary level, what we see in Book the Second was the righteous vengeance and counterattack of the revolutionaries aiming at the complete annihilation of the aristocrats, whereas in the very opening chapter of Book the Third, as we follow the trace of Darnay's carriage, what is presented before our eyes startles, shocks, and renders the revolutionaries unbelievable and unacceptable for us readers. Darnay caught a sight of a distant village where "the people, in a ghostly manner in the dead of the night, circled hand in hand round a shriveled tree of Liberty." [5] The image shown before us was a distorted and deformed longing for Liberty. The symbol of liberty was a dried-up tree, namely, death. The populace was in a state between "sleeping and waking, drunkenness and sobriety" [5] who gave the impression of devil or ghost. Dickens further spoils the scene by depicting: "... two men, whose faces... were more horrible and cruel than the visages of the wildest savages in their most barbarous disguise." [5]

If we find it still much early to draw a precise conclusion of Dickens's attitude towards the common people, we'd like to focus on one person - Madame Defarge who is of great importance to our research.

In Book the Third, Madame Defarge who reorganized the people to exterminate the aristocrats once again acted as the leader or commandant of the battle. She has succeeded in recapturing Darnay to prison, but failed to kill Miss Manette and him. Her well-contrived intrigue was frustrated by the sacrifice of the innocent Carton and she even got herself assassinated by a British maid. On the other hand, since *A Tale* is a novel pivoting on the characters "who have been buried alive and so must be 'recalled to life' as well as by a 'resurrection man's' horrifying habit of grave-robbing." [46] Madame Defarge, quite obviously, died, without being buried, and thus could not be "recalled to life." From the justified actions to the exertion of the "Reign of Terror," she transformed herself through the process of the French Revolution and bore progressively different personalities as "a revolutionary," [47] "a heroine," [48] "a terrorist," [49] and at last a victim of her own swelling desire of vengeance. Her inexpressible composure and calmness were even more appalling and dreadful than someone's towering rage. We can

perceive her remorselessness and a frozen heart when she sent a letter from Doctor Manette to her daughter. Miss Manette "kissed one of the hands that knitted. It was a passionate, loving, thankful, womanly action." [5] While this removing action received no response from Madame Defarge whose hands "dropped cold and heavy, and took to its knitting again." [5] Furthermore, her constant knitting has already become a contagious disease that spread to an increasing mass of women who "were seated at a long table, reading and writing, knitting, sewing and embroidering." [5] If we consider Madame Defarge as a real leader of the revolutionaries in *A Tale*, then her death indicated Dickens's ideology that the revolution led by the common people could ultimately achieve no aim or success. Because for one thing, she has elaborated on her intrigue to kill Darnay and his wife, but failed in both of her plans. These failures deeply signify that the mind of the common people is too restricted and benighted to assume the role of leader. For another, the revolutionaries dominated by Madame Defarge were actually a throng of uncivilized mob whose fickleness has both saved Darnay and pushed him towards the edge of death. The mob had no wisdom and thus didn't know how to judge the truth and falsehood or distinguish right from wrong. Such kind of people could bring nothing but a nation-wide disaster.

On the whole, from the exquisite and multiple analysis above, we see that Dickens has gradually changed his attitude towards the revolutionaries. He firmly believes that the faltering court should be destroyed by the revolutionary force, but at the same time, that the nation guided only by the revolutionaries could attain no fruitful end, all the more disastrous when they were possessed by a frenzied and deformed hatred of vengeance and acted blindly and bloodily.

## 4. Characters

Did *A Tale of Two Cities* really demonstrate the destructive power of hate so much more forcefully than it has shown the strength of love? Can we simply consider Madame Defarge as the Devil who exerted Terror in *A Tale of Two Cities*?

### 4.1. Doctor Manette and His Nobility

The repression inflicted by the Marquis and the noblemen on Doctor Manette and on the revolutionaries had two contrary effects. As for the former, 18 years of confinement both physically and mentally sealed off Doctor Manette who had reluctantly witnessed the miserable deaths of a young lady, her father, brother and her husband and who has been an innocent victim himself because of the Marquis's fear of the potential divulgence of their crimes. However, Manette, through a long period of self-struggle, tortured by the constant relapses of his residual memories, was now a man who, "with the kindled eyes, the resolute face, the calm strong look, [5] walked with a steady head" [5] and was "confident in his power." [5] As for the revolutionaries, conversely, the suppression stimulated the breeding of the ghost-like masses who nurtured their vengeance and the destructive wrath in the exploitation and who were also as

"steady" and "resolute" as Doctor Manette. So what's the dominating factor that propelled such a tremendous difference between them?

Instead of losing the basic needs for living, Doctor Manette lost his identity. He underwent a disgrace of his identity from a renowned doctor to an obscure cobbler and to a simple number in the prison's register: "One hundred and five, North Tower." [5] He was put into La Force without committing neither the slightest misdemeanour nor the famous "parricide." As the inanimate prison served as a means to the exertion of despotism, liberty and justice were forever shut off from its thick wall. Faced with 18 years of unbearable agony, Doctor Manette did not, however, expose any hostile complaint towards the society. He accepted his fate just as the young dying brother who waited for his death and refused to receive Manette's aid. Long seclusion and imprisonment has gradually encroached upon his strength and dragged him deeper and deeper into a faint state of spirit. He has suffered no less than the common people, because his mind was constantly disturbed by the recurrence of the image of the engaging dying lady and her brother, preoccupied by the necessity of bringing to light the heinous crimes perpetrated by the younger brother of the Marquis, and agonized by the separation from his loving wife.

It was Miss Manette who released him for the first time from the capture of his madness. She was at the same time the embodiment of a daughter, a mother and a wife to Doctor Manette. The unspeakable emotion of Miss Manette to her father was perceived by Charles Darnay who expressed his admiration in the occasion of engaging Miss Manette: "... that between you and Miss Manette there is an affection so unusual, so touching, so belonging to the circumstances in which it has been nurtured, and it can have few parallels..." [5] and admitted that: "I could retain no place in it against her love for her father." [5] When Doctor Manette knew Charles Darnay was the son of the younger brother of the Marquis who not only raped and killed, but also cruelly brought misery to him and his family, he returned to the preceding state of madness once again. But during this time, without the help of his daughter, he regained by his own effort after only a temporary resumption of his old pursuit of work. He tried to explain this intricate running of his mind and attempted to describe the revival of the train of thought which, as he said musingly, was "such an old companion." [5] We notice that Manette chose to face and recognize it rather than escape or switch the subject. The second relapse from which he quickly recovered began to mold up his firm and convinced character. Before marrying his daughter to Charles Darnay, he admitted that her daughter "would have been unhappy without Charles" [5] and confessed for the first time something referring to the period of his suffering: "Or, if it had been no other, I should have been the cause, and then the dark part of my life would have cast its shadow beyond myself, and would have fallen on you." [5] It was strange to Lucie, but all the more mysterious and satisfactory to himself, because the recovered love and the great bliss of the reunion of his daughter have already helped him to surmount the long

mental affliction and complement the vacancies of his past life.

That was not enough. After the arrest of Charles Darnay, he has transformed from the object of being protected to a stream of power of protection. "As my beloved child was helpful in restoring me to myself, I will be helpful now in restoring the dearest part of herself to her." [5] At this moment, his tenacity of love alone indeed forced back the gathering shadows of the collective violences of the revolutionaries.

The failure of Manette's efforts in getting Darnay out of the prison is another story, since the younger Marquis's crime was too lumbering to be expiated by his son, Darnay. However, the inexpressible love between father and daughter shines as one of the most touching elements hiding under the superficial veil of hate and vengeance.

#### 4.2. *Madame Defarge - A Complex of Devil and Angel*

Her tigress's characteristic and the overwhelming composure of her knitting gave almost all the readers the first impression of darkness and horror. This abhorrent role further deteriorates when we compare it to Miss Manette - a daughter, a mother, and a wife - who was all things to all generations. The reason not only lies in the fact that Madame Defarge was the director of the revolution, but also traces its essence back to Dickens's prejudice towards the French women. No matter how bad impression has been left upon Dickens's mind, we can still perceive the great love embraced by Madame Defarge throughout the story.

In order to dissect her, my research is subdivided into three dimensions: her role as a wife, a revolutionary, and a terrorist.

Madame Defarge was a perfect wife who bore the assumed passivity of Victorian women. She kept an amicable relationship with her husband. When Madame Defarge was knotting up a bowl of money, her husband, "with his pipe in his mouth, walked up and down, complacently admiring, but never interfering." [5]

Apart from their harmonious family life, the intimacy between this couple was also reflected from their ability to communicate without words. "... Madame Defarge said nothing when her lord came in, but coughed just one grain of cough. This, in combination with the lifting of her darkly defined eyebrows over her toothpick by the breadth of a line, suggested to her husband that he would do well to look round the shop among the customers..." [5] The portrait suggests that by one grain of cough, Madame Defarge has succeeded in sending out a message and it was successfully received by her husband. Instead of using words in the routine life, their long conjugal nexus has bestowed on them the ability to decipher messages through tacit communication which surpassed the level of words. "Madame Defarge being sensitive to cold, was wrapped in fur, and had a quantity of bright shawl twined about her head, though not to the concealment of her large earrings." [5] Was it Monsieur Defarge who gave her these fineries? Was it Madame Defarge's attractive and subordinative nature as a wife or her delicate consideration in their daily life that gained herself

these ornaments out of her husband's admiration? Unlike the couple of Darnay and Manette, who demonstrated their love expressively, the love between the Defarges seems more innermost and profound, hard to be discovered and comprehended by the readers.

The role of Madame Defarge as a revolutionary pioneer bears the historical weight. The Victorian doctrine advocated the passivity and the submission of women to men. Any violation of that rule would result in acrid rebukes or banishment from the society. But centuries of humiliations and tortures had kindled the smouldering fire of wrath burning under the dregs of silence that until the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, women's had movement finally reached its full swing. Before and during the revolution, Madame Defarge acted not only as the leader of the people, but still as a saviour for women. "They knitted worthless things; but, the mechanical work was a mechanical substitute for eating and drinking; the hands moved for the jaws and the digestive apparatus: if the bony fingers had been still, the stomachs would have been more famine-pinched." [5] This depiction suggests that Madame Defarge has introduced a kind of manual work - knitting - as a way of living. The mechanical handwork has substituted the digestive apparatus - a necessity created by Madame Defarge to alienate the mind from the preoccupation of the continuous famine. She thus transformed the domestic task into a national one. Their needle works were specially appreciated by Carlyle who wrote in *the French Revolution*: "Citoyennes who bring their seam with them, or their knitting needles; shriek or knit as the case needs; famed Tricoteuses, patriot knitter!" [4] The highly recognized appraisal granted to the tricoteuses has broken the original appalling image of knitting. The needle work was, so to speak, more a stream of positive force, full of vigour, than a symbol of Terror. It was further admired by Monsieur Defarge who looked at her, murmuring: "A great woman, a strong woman, a grand woman, a frightfully grand woman." [5]

Her role as a feminine terrorist was on the whole negative, for it was her madness and excessive desire of vengeance that finally devoured her. However, she was not to blame, nor was Vengeance, nor was any other woman who searched to avenge on the aristocrats. On the one hand, it was the Marquis and his brother who began primarily the whole tragic story and thus led to the death of Defarge's sister, the imprisonment of Manette, the retaliation of the revolutionaries, the recapture of Darnay and finally the sacrifice of Carton. Since the cardinal sin left by the Marquis was too heavy to be expiated even through Darnay's abandonment of the noble title and through his virtuous job in England, it is therefore not surprising to perceive the degree of hate and pain possessed by Madame Defarge and her compatriots. We could even say that the revenge she took before the final pursuit of Manette's family should be looked upon as a righteous vengeance or a justifiable deed. On the other hand, we notice that after the fight between Miss Pross and Madame Defarge, the former even suffered from an eternal deafness. She continually let Mr. Cruncher repeat his words: "I don't hear you. What do you say?... I don't hear it."

[5] Despite the fact that Miss Pross "manifested the vigorous tenacity of love, always so much stronger than hate," [5] the assassination of Madame Defarge yet deafened her as a perpetual punishment. Rather than an impassive and cold woman, Madame Defarge was a great person who imposed respect. The love she embraced for her sister and her family was unfathomable, for it has helped her to surmount the hardship of the famine and the agony of the loss of her dearest relatives, and transformed her into an imperturbable leader. The only fault she had was perhaps her overly senseless pursuit of those who had never been implicated in the whole process of the revolution. This explains the heart-wrenching reality that in the late period of the French Revolution, the French compatriots killed the innocents and fought with each other who was once the comrade in arms. Her ignorance of her husband's recollection of the compassionate wife of the Marquis further suggests her deviation of judgement, as she said: "Tell the Wind and the Fire where to stop, not me!" [5]

At last, let's answer the preceding question: what's the dominating factor that propelled such a huge distinction between Doctor Manette and the populace? To Doctor Manette, in fact, we can perceive that his vengeance and hate towards the aristocrats were sometimes as intense and immense as the revolutionaries'. In his conversation with his daughter, he admitted: "There was a time in my imprisonment, when my desire for vengeance was unbearable." [5] Later in his manuscripts, he wrote: "Alexandre Manette... denounce to the times when all these things shall be answered for... I denounce them to Heaven and to earth." [5] Apart from these proofs, if we catch a glimpse of Richard Maxwell's reflection on Manette's repeatedly mechanical shoemaking, Manette's indignation and fury became much more obvious: "Manette's shoemaking is not just the obsessive hobby of a man who has temporarily lost his mind; it also serves as a masked but powerfully cumulative expression of anger, the same anger spelled out in the doctor's hidden memoirs." [18] Apparently, his shoemaking is considered as an expression of protest or a form of resistance. So it seems rather clear that the occurrence of Miss Manette has, to a vast extent, counter-balanced what's been lost in his past life and helped to appease his long refrained fury.

Let's form a hypothesis. Rather than preparing a reunion of Manette and her daughter, we write the story in another way in which Miss Manette was born dead and Doctor Manette has been kept in the prison until the French Revolution. In this case, can we say that Doctor Manette would still hide in his dark chamber and wouldn't participate in the French Revolution? Can we still pretend that Doctor Manette would one day transform himself into a vigorous person, "waking with a steady head," [5] full of determination and confidence? Manette was lucky, for he has been saved by his daughter. But who would come to save thousands of dead family members of the populace? Who would counter-balance the enduring and anguished suffering of the common people? Dear readers, when you consider that Madame Defarge,

driven by the excessive addiction to vengeance, has justly paid for her villainy, or ironically died by her own hand, you have to interrogate your judgement by bearing in mind her full story. You can't pierce through the positive role played by Madame Defarge unless you realize that it was her and thousands of other revolutionaries who pioneered the righteous revolt of liberty. Dear readers, you have to know that only through the struggle of an insane and blind one could they transform themselves from victims to soldiers, from slaves to executioners. Carton's sacrifice would never have been meaningful and worthy without the precondition of the violent overthrow of the monarch by the revolutionaries.

In a word, from the above analysis we find it how imprudent to refer to Madame Defarge simply as the negative role who represented hate, death and terror, and how improper to regard her as the Devil of *A Tale*. When the director of the people was such a mysterious woman who, with her constant belief and conviction, could be the incarnation of the unswerving love, can we still believe with Alter that the tenacity of hate was much stronger than the tenacity of love?

#### 4.3. Sydney Carton and His Christ-like Innocence

He was the soothsayer who foretold the end and foresaw the future. His great love molded him from an idle vagabond to a Christ-like hero who resolved once and for all the permanent conflicts between father and son that continued from generation to generation. In this hero, we find the toleration, the generosity, the forbearance, the solitude and prowess all gathering into one.

Carton was not a person without value. He had "good abilities and good emotions," [5] but he was incapable of demonstrating them in such an epoch; he was longing to succeed, but the success was only "a mirage of honourable ambition"; [5] "he was once famous among his earliest competitors as a youth of great promise, but he had followed his father to the grave." [5] Carton found another self in the modest attainment of Darnay who replaced him to achieve a dignified success in the society. While on the contrary, Carton accomplished what Darnay feared about and was incapable of. The remarkable physical resemblance, if not a spiritual one, between Carton and Darnay not only afflicted him, but paradoxically enabled him to be a Saviour. For most of the readers, it seems a little weird and implausible that the endlessly unsolved strives between the aristocrats and the people could be relieved unexpectedly by a profligate and debauched character who went through a crashing change in his personality. However, Dickens has his own reason, and his arrangement of Carton's Christ-like transformation well corresponds with his ideology.

We begin to pay attention to Carton when we find that he was quite sensitive other than impassible or careless: "climbing to a high chamber in a well of houses, he threw himself down in his clothes on a neglected bed, and its pillow was wet with wasted tears. [5]. He was a man full of intelligence and ambition but found perhaps it useless to

demonstrate them. To a certain extent, Carton bore some resemblance to Doctor Manette, as the former also suffered from the burial of his abilities and the suppression of his love towards Miss Manette. However, what's more alike is that Carton, like Manette, accepted notwithstanding his fate without complaint. We notice that in *A Tale*, the characters who tried to acclimatize themselves to the society and who received ungrudgingly their roles as a victim or a martyr generally seem to be much cleverer than others.

Carton's achievement of such a cardinal transformation of his personality is due to two factors: his refrained love for Miss Manette and the lost and found of his father's identity in Mr. Lorry. Carton acted as a soothsayer of love because of his precise perception of the tragic love with Manette: "if it had been possible, Miss Manette, that you could have returned the love of the man you see before you... he could bring you to misery, bring you to sorrow and repentance, blight you, disgrace you, pull you down with him." [5] His negative outlook, so to speak, conversely strengthened his spiritual and internal force. Instead of being driven mad, he well manipulated his love towards Lucie and in return, the refrained love kindled and inspired the ashes of his hope and dream. His love for Lucie was too complicated to be penetrated through when he said: "will you let me believe... that the last confidence of my life was reposed in your pure and innocent breast, and that it lies there alone, and will be shared by no one?" [5] He required Miss Manette's intimacy and full confidence that situated even above the reciprocal love between lovers. The most satisfying way to prove the value of his existence was, perhaps, the self-sacrifice for the sake of Miss Manette and for any dear to her. "The time will come, the time will not be long in coming... that there is a man who would give his life, to keep a life you love beside you." [5] At this moment, we notice that his intense attachment to Manette not only revealed the true side of Carton's morality and his personal value, but also sharpened his insight to the prediction of the future.

Carton was touched for the first time when Mr. Lorry was "overborne with anxiety of late," [5] with his weakened eyes fixing on the fire. He thus referred Lorry as his father and set himself in the position of a wistful closeness to him. As for Mr. Lorry, "he had never seen the better side of Carton and was wholly unprepared for." [5] Throughout *A Tale*, Sydney Carton continually commended his friends' attention and gradually made them see, often with astonishment, his other self that had been buried a long time ago. The process of the recognition of Carton's changes was discerned by different characters in the story, but it seems indeed that it was the readers who witnessed his changes. Sydney Carton isn't the leading characters and appears only in a few chapters. However almost every time he appears with certain transformation in his personality. The full revelation of Carton's Christ-like action demands the healing of these fragmental divisions. Carton's recollection of the words written on his father's tomb further affirmed his role as a Saviour: "I'm the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;

whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." [85] It seems that the Lord was demanding his son Jesus Christ to deliberate the human beings from worldly sins. Likewise, Carton was sent by his father in order to make an end to those perpetually worldly conflicts and fights.

Carton achieved his last transformation from the "son" of Mr Lorry to Jesus, a common father of all his people. We find several proofs of his change. Firstly, the divine sound of the resurrection resonated once again when he carried over a little child across through a muddy road. Secondly, faced with Carton's salvation, Darnay became "like a young child in (Carton's) hands." [5] Moreover, Dickens deliberately alters "a little child" to "a little girl" so as to tell the readers that she was actually "the double of the unnamed seamstress." Since the seamstress was considered as his child, Carton helped once more his child cross to another world. Carton's role as a father shows his ignorance towards the worldly fights between the people. His sacrifice for the benefit of his children well demonstrated the conquest of love over hate. According to the Bible, the endless sins of human persist, but it is through the sacrifice of Jesus who had been inspired by his loyal love for the humans that the realization of the paradise on earth becomes possible. Identically, the longing for a better land in the future would one day come true through Carton's willing sacrifice and that's why the novel ends with the rebirth of Carton and with a prospective glimpse of vision of a harmonious land.

## 5. Conclusion

The disclosure of love requires readers' ability to break through the intriguing veil of hate. If we think that the exceeding hate far surpasses the minute love, then we still stay on the initial stage of the comprehension of *A Tale*. If we pretend Madame Defarge to be the Devil, then we have already forgotten her role in the preceding story as a victim, as a woman of the inferior status in the society and as an exploited underdog in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Whether it presents as the affection between child and relatives, between couples, lovers, master and servant or even between the unfamiliar, or whether it appears in an expressive way or beyond words, love is an invisible engine that pushes the story to its ultimate end of peace, liberty and happiness.

---

## References

- [1] Colin Jones. "French Crossings: I. A Tale of Two Cities" *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*. 12 (2010) 20: 1-26.
- [2] Boyd, Richard. "'The Unsteady and Precarious Contribution of Individuals': Edmund Burke's Defense of Civil Society." *The Review of Politics* 61.3 (1999): 465-91.
- [3] Gottschalk, Louis and Edmund Burke. "Reflections on Burke's 'Reflections on the French Revolution'". *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 100. 5 (1956): 417-29.
- [4] Carlyle, Thomas. *The French Revolution* ED. A. H. R. Ball. New York: Dover Publications, 2005.
- [5] Dickens, Charles. *A Tale of Two Cities*. New York: Dover Publications, 1999.
- [6] Gallo, Max. *Révolution Française: Le Peuple et le Roi*. Saint-Amand-Montrond: XO editions, 2008: 288.
- [7] Marylu, Hill. *Thomas Carlyle Resartus; Reappraising Carlyle's Contribution to the Philosophy of History, Political Theory, and Cultural Criticism*. Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2010: 88.
- [8] [8Boyd, Richard. "'The Unsteady and Precarious Contribution of Individuals': Edmund Burke's Defense of Civil Society." *The Review of Politics* 61.3 (1999): 472.
- [9] Marylu, Hill. *Thomas Carlyle Resartus; Reappraising Carlyle's Contribution to the Philosophy of History, Political Theory, and Cultural Criticism*. Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2010: 94.
- [10] Joshi, Priti. "Mutiny Echoes: India, Britons, and Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*". *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 62.1 (2007): 49.
- [11] Jones, Gareth Stedman, "The redemptive power of violence?: Carlyle, Marx and Dickens", *History Workshop Journal* 65 (2008): 20.
- [12] Tambling, Jeremy. *Dickens, Violence and Modern State: Dreams of the Scaffold*. New York: St Martin's Press, 1995.
- [13] Sanders, Andrew. "Dickens's French Historical Novel." *Charles Dickens et la France*. Ed. Sylvère Monod. Lille: Presses Universitaires de Lille, 1978. 61-68.
- [14] Alter, Robert. "The Demons of History in Dickens' 'Tale'." *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 2.2 (1969): 135-42.
- [15] Collins, Philip. "Dickens and French Wickedness." *Charles Dickens et la France*. Ed. Sylvère Monod. Lille: Presses Universitaires de Lille, 1978. 35-46.
- [16] Hutter, Albert D. "Nation and Generation in *A Tale of Two Cities*". *PMLA* 93. 3 (1978): 448-62.
- [17] Monod, Sylvère. "Dickens's Attitudes in *A Tale of Two Cities*." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 24.4 (1970): 488-505.
- [18] Vega-Ritter, Max. "Histoire et Folie dans *A Tale of Two Cities*". *Cahiers Victoriens et Edouardiens*, 52 (2002): 81-100.