“OLIVER WANTS SOME MORE” ANALYSIS – C. DICKENS

The extract is taken from “Oliver Twist” chapter II by Charles Dickens written in 1837-1839.

The text reveals Dickens’s awareness of the social problems of his time and also the situation of the population in the workhouses.

Regarding the structure of the extract there are two different parts: the first one is a narration characterized by a description where the narrator privilages the use of “telling” and the second one is a dialogue where Dickens privilages the technique of “showing”.

In the first sequence, that represents the introduction, there is a description of Oliver and his friends’ conditions that had to “suffered the tortuous of slow starvation for three months”.

In the second part which consist in the “fact”, there is the description of the dinner, each character and his role, and then describes the Oliver’s felling. Indeed with the sentence “Child as he was, he was desperate with hunger, and reckless, and misery”, the narrator wnats to underline not only the children’s conditions but also he wnats to underline the social conditions of the poor classes.

In the last part, which consist in the “reaction”, there is the description of the master’s reaction and in a secondary moment Mr. Limbkins‘ reaction, after whose Oliver Twist was hung and for 5 pounds offered to anyone to “ any trade, business or calling”.

The reader notes that Dickens uses the external narrator, according to the role of commenting the events. In addition, the common reader may understand this extract like comical one at a first reading. Indeed the narrator’s aim is to make the reader reflect on how children’s life was and how society was in the Victorian Age through the use of rhetorical language. Dickens uses irony to make a criticism to the Victorian society and the ways in whic poor classes are treated.