A RHETORICAL NARRATOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE TREATMENT OF CRIME AND CRIMINALS IN *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*

"BÜYÜK UMUTLAR" ROMANINDA SUÇ VE SUÇLULARIN ELE ALINIŞ BİÇİMİNE RETORİĞE DAYALI ANLATIBİLİMSEL BİR YAKLAŞIM

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Abstract

This paper aims to present a rhetorical narratological analysis of Charles Dickens's Great Expectations (1861) with a specific focus on the issue of crime and the figure of the criminal. There are many studies pointing out that the novel provides the reader with an anatomy of crime and the criminal; yet, its differing treatment of the criminal characters and its possible effects over the reader have not received much narratological attention. Although Magwitch, Compeyson, and Molly can all be equally considered criminals in the eyes of the law, they are positioned differently in the text. The novel arouses genuine sympathy for Magwitch, whereas it incites implacable hatred towards Compeyson and utter indifference to Molly. The novel's sympathetic attitude to Magwitch, a socially-marginalized character, aims to invite the reader's attention to inequalities in the juridical system; however, it does not offer a subversive treatment of the issue of crime because it stays within the confines of bourgeois morality: first, as a Bildungsroman, it underlines the individual's education resulting in his/her integration into society; second, the implied author does not centralize another socially-disadvantaged character: Molly. As a lower-class woman, she remains voiceless in the margins of the text and her position as a criminal is not contested at all.

Öz

Bu çalışma, Charles Dickens'ın Büyük Umutlar (1861) romanında suç konusuna ve suçlu karakterlere odaklanarak romanın retorik-odaklı anlatıbilimsel bir incelemesini yapmayı amaçlar. Romanının okuyucu için bir suç ve suçlu anatomisi çizdiğine dikkat çeken birçok çalışma olmuştur, fakat romanın suçlu karakterlere farklı yaklaşımı ve bunun okuyucu üzerindeki olası etkileri pek fazla anlatıbilimsel bir dikkat çekmemiştir. Yasa önünde hepsi suçlu olarak nitelense de, Magwitch, Compeyson ve Molly karakterleri metinde farklı şekillerde konumlandırılmıştır. Eser, Magwitch karakterine yönelik okuyucuyu gerçek bir duygudaşlık hissine teşvik ederken, Compeyson'a karşı dinmeyen bir nefret duygusu, Molly'ye ise mutlak bir kayıtsızlık hissi uyandırır. Bu makalenin öne sürdüğü iddia, sosyal olarak kenara itilmiş bir karakter olan Magwitch'e yönelik sempatik tutumu ile yargı sistemindeki eşitsizliklere okurun dikkatini çekmeyi amaçlayan bu romanın yine de suç konusunda beklentileri ters yüz eden radikal bir yaklaşım öneremediği şeklindedir. Bunun nedenleri şöyle ifade edilebilir: ilk olarak, bir Oluşum romanı örneği olarak bu eser, bireyin topluma uyum sağlaması ile sonuçlanan ve eğitim sürecine vurgu yapan bir anlatı biçiminin sınırları içine sıkışmıştır. Ayrıca, "ima edilen yazar" sosyal anlamda kenara itilmiş diğer bir karakter olan Molly'yi merkeze koymak için hiçbir şey yapmaz. Alt sınıftan gelen bu kadın, metnin kenarlarında sessizleştirilmiş bir şekilde kalır ve "suçlu" olarak konumlandırılışı hiçbir biçimde tartışma konusu olmaz.

> *"[S]ince Cain the world has neither been intimidated nor ameliorated by punishment."* (Marx 496).

The nineteenth-century English novel was preoccupied with the issue of crime in that a sub-genre of Victorian fiction called "the Newgate novel" emerged (Thomas 172). In novels participating in this sub-genre, which takes its name from

the Newgate prison in London as well as *The Newgate Calendar*,[1] a criminal appears as a central character who is represented as "*the sympathetic victim of repressive legal system*" (Thomas 172). Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1861) is one of the widely-acclaimed examples of this sub-genre. The intense interest in the issue of crime in Victorian fiction seems to be partly related to the occupations of the novelists. Many Victorian novelists such as William M. Thackeray, Robert L. Stevenson, Charles Reade, Wilkie Collins had a similar occupational background as it is indicated in a study carried out by John Sutherland in 1995 (170). In his "*sample of 676 Victorian novelists, one in six was, at some time, a lawyer. Certainly, many of the most influential male novelists of the period had experience of law*" (Pettitt 72). In this regard, Charles Dickens is not an exception. Before his writing career fully began, Dickens worked for a time as a lawyer's clerk and then as a journalist who reported law cases (Hawes 44). This, however, does not seem to be the only reason behind crime as an appealing subject-matter. It can also be explained by the nature of the new age since, as a historical period, the Victorian Age falls upon the aftermath of, what Franco Moretti calls, the "*double revolution*" (5); namely, the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution. This was the time period when, Moretti argues, "*Europe plunges into modernity, but without possessing a culture of modernity*" (5). As a consequence, he adds, it is characterized by "*contradiction*": "*great expectations and lost illusions*," "*mobility and inner restlessness*," "*dynamism and instability*" (5). This era of drastic and abrupt social, political, and economic transformations entailed boom in crime, which was registered by the novelists of the age.[2]

This study aims to present a narratological analysis of Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* with a specific focus on the issue of crime and the figure of the criminal. There are many studies pointing out that the novel provides the reader with an anatomy of crime and the criminal; yet, its differing treatment of criminal characters and its possible effects over the reader have not received much narratological attention. This study focuses on three criminal figures in the novel:

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[1] Published from the late eighteenth-century onward until the 1820s, *The Newgate Calendar* "*consisted of 'interesting memoirs of notorious characters who have been convicted of offenses against the laws of England'*" (Thomas 174).

[2] Dickens' other novels such as *Oliver Twist* (1838), *A Christmas Carol* (1843), *Bleak House* (1853), and his uncompleted novel published posthumously *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (1870) are highly suggestive in terms of the issue of crime. In these novels, Dickens explores the world of crime in the Victorian society with their vivid descriptions, highlights the problems in the legal system of the time, and addresses the changing nature of modern disciplinary apparatuses.

Magwitch, Compeyson, and Molly. Magwitch is a thief who has to survive by "*tramping, begging, thieving, working sometimes*" (Dickens 352); yet, he is the one who makes Pip a gentleman. Compeyson, on the other hand, is portrayed as a ruthless criminal whose business is "*swindling, handwriting, forging, stolen bank-note passing, and such like*" (Dickens 353). Another criminal, Molly, who is Magwitch's ex-wife, is charged with killing a woman out of jealousy. Although they can all be equally considered criminals in the eyes of the law, Magwitch, Compeyson, and Molly are positioned differently in the text. The novel arouses genuine sympathy for Magwitch, whereas it incites implacable hatred towards Compeyson and utter indifference to Molly. This paper argues that despite the novel's sympathetic attitude to Magwitch, a socially-marginalized character, which aims to invite the reader's attention to inequalities in the juridical system, the novel fails to offer a subversive treatment of the issue of crime because, first, as a *Bildungsroman*, it stays within the confines of a narrative that underlines the individual's education resulting in his/her integration into society; second, the implied author does not centralize another socially-disadvantaged character: Molly. As a lower-class woman, she remains voiceless in the margins of the text and her position as a criminal is not contested at all.

In *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961), Wayne C. Booth writes that "*rhetorical dimension in literature is inescapable*" (105). "*Rhetorical approaches conceive of narrative as an art of communication*" (Phelan, *Rhetorical Approaches to Narrative* 500) "*in which somebody tries to accomplish some purpose(s) by telling somebody else that something happened*" (Phelan, *Rhetoric/Ethics* 209). Perhaps, the nineteenth-century realist fiction offers us some of the most explicit examples of narrative "as an art of communication." Speaking for the Victorian novel in general George Levine, in *How to Read the Victorian Novel* (2008), claims that

> The enterprise of introducing the nether world to middle-class readers and, as it were, teaching them not only *that* this nether world was there, but *how* one might best respond to it, was one of the great efforts of Victorian fiction. (30).

Following Levine, it can be held that Dickens in *Great Expectations* not only introduces the middle-class reader to the world of crime, but also teaches them how they should respond to it. In this regard, the rhetorical school of narratology offers very effective tools for making this inquiry of how *Great Expectations* participates in disciplining the middle-class reader.

In order to explore the ways in which *Great Expectations* communicates with the reader, it would be useful to start with the concept of "the implied author." Wayne C. Booth, the leading figure of the rhetorical school of narrative theory, introduces the concept of "the implied author" in his influential book, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. Marie-Laure Ryan, in her article, *"Meaning, Intent and the Implied Author"* (2011), nicely summarizes the current theoretical approaches to the concept. She lists three major functions which have so far been assigned to the implied author. According to Ryan, different critics "*endorse*" different functions or different combinations of these functions (34). It can be argued that Wayne C. Booth endorses all these functions of the implied author in his approach.

First, according to Booth, "*the implied author is a necessary parameter in the rhetoric of narrative*" (Ryan 34). As Phelan points out, depending on Booth's arguments, "*[t]he implied author may endorse the narrator's account and evaluation of the events or may establish distance from the narrator's account and evaluation. The endorsement yields reliable narration, and the establishment of distance yields unreliable narration*" (Phelan, *Rhetorical Approaches to Narrative* 502); or, in Booth's words, the narrator "*may be separated with him [the implied author] by large ironies*" (73). Therefore, the implied author constitutes an important role with regard to the question of the reliability of the narrator.

Second, "*the implied author is the source of the norms and values communicated by the text*" (Ryan 35). Since in Booth's conceptualization the implied author is the one who encodes the text, the norms and values cannot solely be attributed to the actual author, whose intentions nobody is able to know. "*The author may not live by, or even endorse, the norms and values defended in their works*" (Ryan 39) so there can be "*differences between how authors present themselves through their fictions and who they really are*" (Ryan 39). Yet, as is emphasized by Shen, since the implied author can also be seen as the author who writes in a certain manner (90), the implied author inevitably has a relationship with the so-called real author. Booth ardently argues that "the real author" should be distinguished from "the implied author." According to Booth, writers discover or create themselves by writing (70) and he calls this "*created 'second self'*" (73) "*the implied author*" (71). Shen, whose definition of the implied author is the closest to that of Booth among contemporary theorists of the concept, underlines that "*the implied author is the textual image of this writer for the reader to infer*" (81). For Shen, the implied author is the combination of both "*encoding*" and "*decoding*"

processes (82). S/he is "*both the creator of the text and the textual image for the reader*" (Shen 85).

If *Great Expectations* is read in the light of this approach, it can be claimed that the historical Charles Dickens is different from Charles Dickens who writes *Great Expectations* although there seems to be a close relationship between these figures. As a boy, Charles Dickens had to be familiar with the Marshalsea Prison in the Southwark area of London when his father was put into prison because of his debt in 1824 (Hawes 44). In his study on *Great Expectations*, Nicolas Tredell notes that it is as if "*Dickens, nearly forty years on, still sending a message to his father, whose 'hankerings' after money and social status were no less obsessive or 'disturbing' than Pip's*" (172). In addition to this, throughout his life, Dickens questioned the capital punishment and methods of imprisonment (Hawes 44). He not only visited prisons in England (Coldbath Fields and Newgate) and America in 1842, but also he was present in several public executions (Hawes 44). In Squires' words, "*Charles Dickens was the champion of the oppressed*" (171). Dicken's giving voice to a silenced group, the criminals, and his criticism of juridical system of his time in *Great Expectations* seem to be in line with the historical Dickens's norms; or, at least these aspects of *Great Expectations* do not contradict his actual struggle. Therefore, it can easily be claimed that the novel shows close affinity between the historical Charles Dickens, who questioned and rendered visible the corruption in the justice system of his time, and the implied author, Dickens, "who writes in this manner." However, it is still more appropriate to attribute the norms and values communicated by the text to the implied Dickens instead of the historical Charles Dickens regardless of the close affinity between the two.

The third function is that "*the implied author is a design principle, responsible for the narrative techniques and the plot of the text*" (Ryan 34). Perhaps, it is Chatman's definition of the implied author that illustrates the best the third approach to the implied author as "a design principle:"

> He [the implied author] is not the narrator, but rather the principle that invented the narrator, along with everything else in the narrative, that stacked the cards in this particular way, had these things happen to these characters, in these words or images. (Chatman 148).

Chatman sees the implied author to as "*a structural principle*" (149) which does not have a "*voice*" (148) and a "*direct means of communication*" (148). If we could change the word "the principle" to "the second self of the author" (as in Booth's words), it would still be a working definition of the implied author which will serve the aim of this paper. The implied author is the one who "invents" everything in a text including "*the narrator,*" "*style,*"[3] "*tone*,"[4] and "*techniques*"[5] (Booth 73-74).

In the light of these functions of the implied author as "a necessary parameter," "the source of the norms and values," and the one who "invents" everything in a text, the essay aims to unravel the norms and values in relation to the subject of crime and criminals in *Great Expectations* and specify the position of the implied author by looking at his textual choices. In order to do this, the paper will first investigate the distance between the narrator and the two criminals, Magwitch and Compeyson, employing the tools and the concepts designed by Gérard Genette in *Narrative Discourse* (1988) where he analyses narrative discourse under three basic categories, which are "tense,"[6] "voice,"[7] and "mood." Genette states that narrative representation "*regulates the information it delivers*," which he conceptualizes as "mood" (162). He presents two chief modalities that regulate the narrative information: "distance" and "focalization." Distance deals with the fact that "*one [narrator] can tell* more *or tell* less *what one tells*" (161). The narrative, as Genette contends, "*can furnish the reader with more or fewer details, and in a more or a less direct way, and can thus seem to keep at a greater or lesser distance from what it tells*" (162). Genette discusses "distance" under two headings: "*narrative of events*" (164) and "*narrative of words*" (169). The former refers to the way in which narrative information is regulated through the ratio between "*the quantity of information and the presence of the informer*" (Genette 166); and, the latter refers to

[3] "*Choice of character and episode and scene and idea*" (Booth 74).

[4] Tone refers to "*the implicit evaluation which the author manages to convey behind his explicit presentation*" (Booth 74). "*Some aspects of the implied author may be inferred through tonal variations, but his major qualities will depend also on the hard facts of action and character in the tale that is told*" (Booth 74).

[5] It refers to the "*entire range of choices made by the author*" (Booth 74).

[6] Under the title of Tense, Genette interrogates the relationship between "*the time of the story and the time of the discourse*" (Genette 29). He analyzes this relationship under three sub-categories: "order," "duration," and "frequency."

[7] By voice, Genette refers to "*a relation with the subject ... of the enunciating*" (31). Voice operates at the level of "*connections between both narrating and narrative and narrating and story*" (Genette 32).

the ways in which characters' speech is represented in a narrative text. In this paper, the focus will be on the second category because the paper aims to explore the distance between the narrator and the characters. Focalization, the second factor regulating narrative information, on the other hand, addresses the question of "*who is the character whose point of view orients the narrative perspective?*" or simply "*who sees*" (Genette 186). Genette emphasizes that by focalization he means primarily "*a restriction of field*" (189); in other words, focalization is a means of regulating the amount and type of narrative information the reader will receive. In the remaining of this paper, focalization, as is conceptualized by Genette, will be used as a tool to explore to what extent and to what possible ends the criminals in *Great Expectations* act as focal characters.

Genette distinguishes three types of speech representation, which indicates the position of the narrator towards the characters: "*narratized, or narrated speech,*" "*transposed speech, or indirect speech*" and "*reported speech, or direct speech*" (170). In narratized speech "*discourse is treated like one event among others and taken as such by the narrator himself*" (170). In this type of speech representation, the character's "*speech is the most distant and generally ... the most reduced*" (171). Transposed speech, on the other hand, is "*a little more mimetic than narrated speech ... [but] this form never gives the reader any guarantee – or above all any feeling – of literal fidelity to the words 'really' uttered*" (171) because "*the narrator's presence is still too perceptible in the very syntax of the sentence for the speech to impose itself with the autonomy of a quotation*" (171). Reported/direct speech is "*the most 'mimetic form'*" in which the narrator *"pretends literally to give the floor to his character*" (172). It is a kind of speech where, in Plato's words, "*the poet 'delivers a speech as if he were someone else'*" (qtd. in Genette 162). In this form, "*the traces of the narrating instance*" (Genette 166) are minimum.

In the opening chapter of *Great Expectations*, the first encounter between Pip the hero and the two criminals, Magwitch and Compeyson, reflects the mood that the novel has in general towards these characters. Pip the narrator represents the speech of the first convict, Magwitch, in the most mimetic form, i.e. reported speech: "*'Hold your noise!' cried a terrible voice ..."Keep still, you little devil or I'll cut your throat!'*" (Dickens 2). At that moment in the narrative there is minimum distance between Pip the narrator and Magwitch the speaker. In other words, through mimetic illusion "the traces of the narrating instance" are minimized. By contrast, in Pip's first meeting with Compeyson, the narrator represents

Compeyson's words in the form of narratized speech. On his way to Magwitch's hiding place on the following day, Pip suddenly runs into Compeyson in the marshes and is frightened by his unexpected presence.

> All this I saw in a moment, for I had only a moment to see it in: he swore an oath at me, made a hit at me… then he ran into the mist, stumbling twice as he went, and I lost him. (Dickens 16).

Contrary to his treatment of Magwitch, the narrator does not deliver Compeyson's words in reported or transposed speech; they are given instead in the least mimetic as well as "the most reduced form," i.e. narratized speech. The narrator merely tells us that Compeyson "swore an oath at" him but he does not represent what his actual words are. Compeyson's speech is "*mediated*" (Genette 163) by the narrator and given in a much more condensed way, which means that there is a greater distance between Compeyson the speaker and the narrator. It is, indeed, the narrator who is speaking instead of Compeyson.

In terms of speech representation, the narrator gradually comes closer to Magwitch. After seeing Compeyson in the marshes on the second day, Pip tells Magwitch that he has seen another convict and asks Magwitch whether or not he heard the cannon the previous night. The narrator presents Magwitch's response in the form of reported speech; yet this long uninterrupted speech can also be defined as "*reported inner speech*" (Genette 176).

> 'Why, see now!' said he. 'When a man's alone on these flats, with a light head and a light stomach, perishing of cold and want, he hears nothin' all night, but guns firing, and voices calling. Hears? He sees the soldiers, with their red coats lighted up by the torches carried afore, closing in round him. Hears his number called, hears himself challenged, hears the rattle of the muskets, hears the orders 'Make ready! Present! Cover him steady, men!' and is laid hands on—and there's nothin'! Why, if I see one pursuing party last night—coming up in order, Damn 'em, with their tramp, tramp—I see a hundred. And as to firing! Why, I see the mist shake with the cannon, arter it was broad day.—But this man;" *he had said all the rest, as if he had forgotten my being there*; "did you notice anything in him?' (Dickens 18-19; emphasis added).

In his long response, Magwitch unburdens himself by referring to his existing desperate situation. He does not seem to address Pip. As the narrator indicates, it is "as if he had forgotten" Pip's being there. Magwitch's speech resembles "'*interior*

monologue'" or what Genette calls "*immediate speech*" (173), where the reader is directly provided with a character's thoughts and perceptions and where the narrator is obliterated and the character substitutes for him (173). However, this passage is definitely not a perfect example of immediate speech or reported inner speech because Magwitch's response is given in quotation marks, which makes the presence of Pip the narrator visible. The fact that Magwitch's speech can neither be categorized as immediate nor reported speech is understandable since it is a first-person narration in which the narrator is not able to enter other characters' minds. However, the way in which Magwitch's speech is represented in the passage above can be interpreted as the narrator's effort to push "the mimesis of speech" to its limits.

This tendency where Pip the narrator pushes the formal limits set on him as a first-person narrator to its extreme can be observed in other instances in the novel. As Genette defines, "*thought is indeed speech*" (178). The narrator goes even further to represent Magwitch's thoughts and feelings rather than his "*uttered speech*" (Genette 171) in certain circumstances, sounding as if he is a third-person omniscient narrator. For instance, when Compeyson and Magwitch are caught in the marshes by the police, Magwitch looks at his surroundings thoughtfully and the narrator makes a guess about what Magwitch has in his mind.

> My convict never looked at me, except that once. While we stood in the hut, he stood before the fire looking thoughtfully at it, or putting up his feet by turns upon the hob, and looking thoughtfully at them *as if he pitied them* for their recent adventures. (Dickens 38; emphasis added).

It is apparent that the narrator clearly identifies himself with Magwitch by using the first-person singular possessive pronoun, "my convict," to refer to him. Apart from that, while they are sitting in the hut, Pip deduces from Magwitch's behaviour what he may be thinking at that particular moment, which is indicated by one of "*modalizing locutions*" (Genette 203) such as "as if." What the narrator conjectures, that is he (Magwitch) pitied them, is an instance of narratized speech. In this respect, the narrator tries to represent Magwitch's "*inner speech*" (Genette 171) in the form of narratized speech. It is another instance where the narrator represents Magwitch's thoughts and feelings as closely as possible from within the confines of first-person narration.

Throughout the novel the narrator consistently attempts to present a closer view of Magwitch's inner world. In one remarkable instance, he again represents Magwitch's inner speech but now it is rather in the form of indirect style in which the narrator is closer to the character's speech than he is in the case of narratized speech. Being extremely frightened by Magwitch in their first encounter on the marshes, Pip feels obliged to bring some food to him as Magwitch orders. Deprived of food for a long time, Magwitch gobbles the food up and Pip likens his way of eating to that of a large dog's.

> He swallowed, or rather snapped up, every mouthful, too soon and too fast; and he looked sideways here and there while he ate, as if he thought there was danger in every direction, of somebody's coming to take the pie away. (Dickens 18).

The narrator again predicts Magwitch's thoughts by using "as if." This suggests that the narrator wants to get as close as possible to what the character can possibly say. As opposed to what happens in narratized speech, here in this instance, the character's speech is not given in a reduced or condensed form. It is because the statement that the narrator makes describing Magwitch can well be assigned to Magwitch himself. This impression is also substantiated by the background information: "*He [Magwitch] swallowed, or rather snapped up, every mouthful, too soon and too fast; and he looked sideways here and there*" (Dickens 18). As a first-person narrator, this is the maximum proximity Pip can maintain between himself and Magwitch. There is a keen interest on the part of Pip to record Magwitch's state of mind, which seems to be stemming from the narrator's willingness to understand Magwitch and his dramatic condition.

However, the kind of sympathetic narratorial attitude shown to Magwitch is not offered to Compeyson, which creates the effect that the narrator stands far more distant from this criminal. There are very few instances where his speech is represented in the form of reported speech, which is the most mimetic form. Throughout the novel, there are only two instances in which Compeyson's own words are directly reported by the narrator. The first occurs in the marshes when Magwitch delivers Compeyson to the sergeant. "*'Take notice, guard – he [Magwitch] tried to murder me,' were his first words*" (Dickens 35). His second direct speech is represented towards the end of the novel when Pip the hero helps Magwitch escape from England in order not to be caught by the police. Compeyson, the only character who can inform against Magwitch, identifies him and tells the police on

the boat: "'*That's the man, wrapped in the cloak. His name is Abel Magwitch, otherwise Provis*'" (Dickens 454).

According to Genette, the second modality which regulates the information in the story and thereby sets the narrative mood is "*focalization*," which refers to "*the capacities of knowledge of one or another participant in the story*" (162). Genette mentions three types of focalization: "*zero focalization (or nonfocalized narrative)*," "*internal focalization*," and "*external focalization*" (189). In nonfocalized narrative, "*the narrator knows more than the characters*" (189). In narrative with internal focalization, "*the narrator says only what a given character knows*" (189). Genette distinguishes three types of internal focalization: "*fixed*," "*variable*", and "*multiple*" (189-190). In fixed internal focalization we see the storyworld from the perspective of a single character throughout the narrative (Genette 189). In variable internal focalization there are more than one focal characters. In multiple internal focalization "*the same event may be evoked several times according to the point of view of several ... characters*" (190). In external focalization "*the narrator says less than the character knows*" and there is no entry into characters' mind (189). However, Genette argues that focalization is not necessarily steady over the whole length of a narrative; rather, it is dependent on "*a definite narrative section*" (191). Therefore, there can be alterations in focalization "*without contesting the tonality of the whole*" in a narrative text (Genette 195).

The dominant type of focalization in *Great Expectations* is internal focalization because the narrator only represents what a given character knows. Besides, it is fixed internal focalization since the storyworld is seen mainly through the hero's perspective. In *Great Expectations* it is predominantly Pip the hero who is the focal character since it is his perspective that governs the narrative. The information, therefore, concerning the criminals is focalized through the hero. As Genette nicely puts it, the narrator is the one "*who speaks*" whereas the focal character is the one "*who sees*" (186). Therefore, to put this in Genette's terms in *Great Expectations*, the narrator can be called Pip the narrator, whereas the focal character can be called Pip the hero.

Although the dominant type of focalization is fixed internal focalization in which Pip the hero is the major focal character, there are also other focal characters in the novel such as Pip the elder whose focal position does not contest the dominant mode. At some point in the novel, Magwitch also emerges as a focal character, a privilege peculiar only to Magwitch of all the criminal characters. By

focalization through Magwitch, the reader is presented with the details of his own story as well as the story of Compeyson in the way Magwitch sees them. Chapter 42 opens directly with Magwitch's reported speech in which he tells his story from his childhood onwards. The narrative information that he provides is restricted to his perspective. He gives an account of how he met Compeyson, what they did together, why he was put into prison, and what he did in the New World.

> 'Dear boy and Pip's comrade. I am not a-going fur to tell you my life, like a song or a story-book. But to give it you short and handy, I'll put it at once into a mouthful of English. In jail and out of jail, in jail and out of jail, in jail and out of jail. There, you got it. That's my life pretty much, down to such times as I got shipped off, arter Pip stood my friend ...' (Dickens 351).

Magwitch's story, as is seen from his own perspective and told in his own words, is what the reader is to be content with. Moreover, since the chapter opens directly with Magwitch's speech, he sounds as if he himself was the narrator. Although what Magwitch narrates is given in quotation marks and the previous chapter informs the reader of the narrator's presence, in this chapter, the narrator (i.e. the elder Pip) does not interfere in Magwitch's narration, which occupies a large textual space. This, in turn, creates the effect that in this chapter the narrator is Magwitch himself. This exclusive privilege is not granted to any other character, which foregrounds that Magwitch's life story and his narration about other criminals do matter. By denying other criminals internal focalization, the narrative leaves their perspectives in shadow.

Magwitch provides both Pip and Herbert, a close friend of the hero who lectures him on gentlemanliness, with an account of his relationship with Compeyson, saying: "*He set up fur a gentleman, this Compeyson, and he'd been a [sic] to a public boarding-school and had learning*" (Dickens 352). There is an apparent class difference between Magwitch and Compeyson. The latter is a member of the upper class who has received good education. Due to his privileged social status, Compeyson is able to put the blame on Magwitch and seems to have received less punishment. While he gets seven years' imprisonment, Magwitch receives fourteen years (Dickens 356).

> 'Not to go into the things that Compeyson planned, and I done— which 'ud take a week— [...] that the man got me into such nets as made me his black slave. I was always in debt to him, always under his thumb, always a working, always a getting into danger. He was

> younger than me, but he'd got craft, and he'd got learning, and he overmatched me five hundred times told and no mercy.' (Dickens 355).

Magwitch's narrative suggests that he is used as a scapegoat by Compeyson so that the latter can make himself clear off the charges. It seems that Compeyson is the one who plans everything and forces Magwitch to commit crimes. However, Compeyson never appears as a focal character in the novel. Therefore, the reader does not learn the story from his perspective, which could have contested the reliability of Magwitch's account. In other words, the narrative restricts the information about Compeyson only to Magwitch's point of view, which plays a significant role in encouraging the reader to develop a hostile attitude towards Compeyson.

So far it has been argued that when viewed in the light of Gennette's conceptualization of distance, the narrator is much closer to Magwitch compared to Compeyson in terms of the representations of their speech. It has also been stated that the narrative information related to Magwitch is regulated by the narrator's own perspective while the criminal history of Compeyson is overwhelmingly dominated by focalization through Magwitch and other characters. Both the presentation of a criminal like Magwitch as a central character in the novel and the narrator's minimum distance from and sympathetic attitude to Magwitch function to evoke the reader's sympathy for him, which may invite the reader to have a critical attitude towards possible inequalities in the juridical system. In addition to all these formal aspects of the novel pointed out so far, there are some other "design principles," as well, that play a role in shaping the reader's response positively to a socially-marginal character like Magwitch.

The attribution of contrasting character traits to Magwitch and Compeyson is another design element in *Great Expectations* which clarifies the position of the implied author. The two are portrayed as criminals who come from different social classes. The implied author depicts Magwitch as an orphan who has to commit crime while representing Compeyson as an educated man who is, as Squires calls it, "*a criminal by fell choice and ambition*" (172). This sharp contrast between Magwitch and Compeyson plays a significant role in shaping the reader's attitude towards these characters. The implied author makes it clear that Magwitch is a victim of the cruel social conditions of his time rather than of his own natural predisposition to crime. This is also strengthened by Magwitch's first name, which

is Abel. The allusion to the biblical story of Abel and Cain contributes to Magwitch's portrayal as a wronged character. As Jeremy Tambling points out, "t*he novel make[s] him [Magwitch] the original innocent hunted down figure*" (17). Admittedly, "*Dickens does not raise Magwitch to the ranks of sainthood ... He does not hesitate to paint him in all his externally repellent characteristics*" (Squires 180). Yet, "*he justifies his fierceness*" and Compeyson is portrayed as "*being an unredeemable villain*" who is "*innately cussed, hopelessly unregenerate*" (Squires 172). Therefore, the opposing character traits of Magwitch and Compeyson strengthen the mood aimed at in the narrative, also suggesting significant parallels between the norms and values of the narrator and those of the implied author. It should also be added that the novel's representation of criminals coming from different social classes is indicative of the novel's contestation of the stereotype of the lower classes as criminals, which, as indicated earlier, is a characteristic of the Newgate novel in general. Undoubtedly, this draws attention to the inequality between social classes in terms of punishment, which can be read as Dickens's critique of the English jurisprudence at the time.

The ending of *Great Expectations* is another significant design element which concretizes the norms that the implied author reinforces towards Magwitch and Compeyson. Although Magwitch is represented as a criminal who is a victim of cruel social conditions, he is at the same time depicted as someone who has accepted his crime since he tells Pip that "*what I done is worked out and paid for!*" (Dickens 335). So, Magwitch develops a self-condemning attitude in the ensuing years, accepting that he has committed crimes; yet, he has become "*a good man*" (Brown 674) in the end. Although Magwitch seems to have internalized the dominant discourse either by being transported to Australia or imprisonment or perhaps through inner development, Compeyson does not seem to be disciplined. It is highly probable that this leads to a sense of condemnation towards Compeyson on the part of the reader. Towards the end of the novel, Compeyson still attempts to give harm to Magwitch while the latter tries to flee from London with the help of Pip and Herbert.

The striking contrast between the representations of the death of Magwitch and that of Compeyson contributes further to the norms of the text. While Compeyson faces a bitter death, Magwitch dies peacefully. Towards the end of the novel, while Magwitch attempts to escape from London, Compeyson collaborates with the police force in order to catch Magwitch on the Thames. This action brings

Compeyson's end and he dies "*tumbling on the tides*" (Dickens 458). As Squires rightly puts it, "*Compeyson plays the Devil to the bitter end, and meets a death in keeping with dramatic justice*" (181). The implied author provides the reader with a sense of justice by having Compeyson die violently at the end. This is a way of punishment: an inveterate criminal such as Compeyson pays for what he has done by drowning in the fictional world. His fight with Magwitch under the water results in his death, but it is not clear whether or not Magwitch kills him intentionally. Squires interprets this situation as follows: "*Magwitch did not, according to all the evidence, intend to kill Compeyson when he leaned over towards the latter's boat to pull the cloak from the informer's shoulders and assure himself of the man's identity*" (181). He seems right because Magwitch's intention is to make things right at least for himself, if not in the eyes of the jury. Besides, he could have killed him while they were fighting in the marshes as he claimed at the very beginning of the novel. So it is obvious that the implied author does not want Magwitch to commit the murder directly; consequently, it is left ambiguous. What rather matters is that Compeyson dies. Compared to Compeyson's death, the way in which Magwitch dies appears to be a rather dignified one. He, by contrast, is rewarded by the implied author by being allowed a peaceful death. On his death bed in prison, Magwitch passes away peacefully, learning that his daughter, Estella, "*who is the star and jewel of Pip's great expectations*" (van Ghent 257), is living like a lady. "*With a last faint effort … he raised my hands to his lips. Then he gently let it sink upon his breast again, with his own hands lying on it. … his head dropped quietly on his breast*" (Dickens 471). Therefore, the plot structure of the novel serves to produce a very clear and consistent distance between Magwitch and Compeyson, which inevitably contributes to the norms and values of the implied author.

In the light of all this discussion so far, it is possible to argue that in *Great Expectations* there is a strong consensus among the norms of the narrator and those of the implied author concerning the criminals. Speech representation and focalization work in keeping with the norms of the text reinforced by other elements in story and narration as well as plot structure. By giving voice to a criminal who is punished in an unjust way because of being a member of a lower-class and presenting him in a sympathetic way, *Great Expectations* invites the reader's attention to the problems in the justice system, attempts to change the reader's perspective on the issue of crime and criminals, and to give her/him a more critical perspective by restoring the order on a fictional platform. It provides another system of regulation on punishment, in which the criminals in the novel are thought to be

punished in a more just way. It goes without saying that punishment is a form of disciplining not only the criminals but also those who witness the punishment. Therefore, any claims of dispensing justice in a more just way in a novel, as in *Great Expectations*, become a means for disciplining the reader from an ideological stance and *Great Expectations* achieves this effect through formal elements working in coordination with each other.

Yet, one should not hasten to give an affirmative answer to the question as to whether Dickens in *Great Expectations* is indeed able to offer a perspective to the actual reader which may lead to a dramatic change in society by providing the reader with a fictional form of punishment and discipline in *Great Expectations*. In fact, the novel does not offer a subversive treatment of the issue of crime because it is not able to free itself from "bourgeois morality" which manifests itself in the novel's participation in the sub-genre of *Bildungsroman* and the representation of another criminal figure, Molly. The plot structure of the novel seems to be the most effective design element in establishing textual norms and values towards the criminals in *Great Expectations*. Because the novel is an example of the sub-genre of *Bildungsroman*, it will be useful to discuss the plot structure of *Great Expectations* in relation to the Victorian realist *Bildungsroman* genre.

According to Edward Said, the novel as a genre "*is fundamentally tied to bourgeois society*" (70). Said claims that "*The novelistic hero and heroine exhibit the restlessness and energy characteristic of the enterprising bourgeoisie*," and he adds, "*they are permitted adventures in which their experiences reveal to them the limits of what they can aspire to, where they can go, what they can become*" (71). In a similar vein, in her essay "The Fictions of Bourgeois Morality and the Paradox of Individualism" (2006) Nancy Armstrong discusses that the novel is "*the most effecting means of disseminating* [*bourgeois morality*]" (350) which "*appears to emanate from the very core of an individual*" (349). She contends that there is a "*paradoxical situation*" in which, on the one hand, "*in order to be good members of society, those protagonists must fit in*;" while on the other "*[they] must give expression to asocial desires*" (350). The novel, according to Armstrong, creates fictional situations in which these paradoxical situations are resolved on the basis of "social contract" because "*bourgeois morality comes from and attaches itself to the logic of the social contract as the individual resists other bases for social relations*" (362). Thus, it can be held that *Bildungsroman*, which, to put it briefly, traces moral, spiritual, psychological growth of an individual from childhood to adulthood,

encourages the idea that an individual should display transgressed acts so that it can impose social norms as limits. *Bildungsroman*, as Julia Prewitt Brown suggests, "*aim[s], at least in part, to teach people how to live in the world*" (663). To this pedagogical end, *Bildungsroman* includes "*dynamism and limits, restlessness and the 'sense of an ending'*" together (Moretti 6); therefore, it has a disciplinary, or what Moretti calls, "*a normative function*" through "*teleological rhetoric*" where "*the meaning of events lies in their finality*" (7). Or, to put it in Said's terms, there emerges the "*consolidation of authority*" in the novel (71), for the protagonist is provided with stability in the end. It is by no coincidence that in Victorian fiction the prominent sub-genre is *Bildungsroman* because it seems to be the most suitable and effective tool for representing and consolidating bourgeois morality with its focus on a nonconformist individual's gradual development through time until s/he is socially integrated or s/he reconciles with the bourgeois ideology.

Unsurprisingly, in *Great Expectations* the implied author constructs a narrator like Pip, who initially transgresses the law, yet learns to internalize the dominant discourse in the end. It is also worth recalling here that the norms of the narrator are in keeping with those of the implied author in *Great Expectations*. So the question as to who Pip really is turns into a significant question in this discussion – Pip is a criminal who has been self-disciplined.[8] Because crime is an act of transgression of the norms of society, it is quite possible to claim that there seems to be a transgressive aspect in the disposition of the child Pip. He, for instance, is alone in the churchyard in the opening of the novel and his parental guardians, his sister and her husband Joe, do not know where he is. He transgresses the law at the moment when he decides to take a file to a criminal he has just met. It is clear that he is aware of what he is doing: although he does not seem to have any knowledge about the identity of the man on the marshes at the very beginning, his questioning of Joe about the firing suggests that he is able to establish the connection between the firing and the man before he takes the file to the convict. In other words, he helps the convict, knowing that he is a convict. The dialogue between the convict and Pip about the second convict is also indicative of

[8] The fact that the narrator is a criminal does not mean that there is a distance between the narrator and the implied author. Instead, the norms of the narrator and those of the implied author are parallel in *Great Expectations*. This is also one of the reasons that makes *Great Expectations* a reformist work, for it not only puts a criminal at the centre but the criminal also emerges as the dominant focal character.

this. Pip describes the second convict and establishes the link between the firing and the criminal.

> 'Dressed like you, you know, only with a hat,' I explained, trembling; 'and – and' - I was very anxious to put this delicately – 'and with - the same reason for wanting to borrow a file. Didn't you hear the cannon last night?' (Dickens 18).

In her essay, "On *Great Expectations*" (1953), Dorothy van Ghent argues that what brings Pip and Magwitch together is not just a "*coincidence*" or simply "*the convict's hunger; Pip carries the convict inside him, as the negative potential of his 'great expectations' – Magwitch is the concretion of his [Pip's] potential guilt*" (258). She adds that "*Pip, having adopted 'great expectations,' will live by making people into Magwitches, into means for his ends*" (259).

This is not the only crime Pip commits in the novel for he also helps Magwitch attempt to escape from England towards the end of the novel after he has learned that his mysterious benefactor is no one else but Magwitch himself. Although Pip knows that he is committing a crime by helping a criminal, the clear distance he establishes between himself and Magwitch at the beginning of the conversation soon begins to dissolve. As Pip delves deeper into the details of Magwitch's story, he learns that he has risked his life in order to see Pip as a gentleman; as a consequence, his feelings of dread and abhorrence gradually turn into sympathy (Dickens 329). As Cheadle contends, "*The ultimate bourgeois consolidation of right feeling as its 'cultural capital' comes through the accommodation of manners to morals in the disciplining of Pip to that 'gentleness of heart'*" (81). Possessing a tender and gentle heart, Pip decides to help Magwitch flee from London but their attempt fails and Magwitch falls sick. Visiting him daily, holding his hand, Pip, in his narratorial commentary, states the following:

> My repugnance to him had melted away … I only saw a man who had meant to be my benefactor, and who had felt affectionately, gratefully, and generously, towards me with great constancy through serious of years. I saw in him a much better man than I had been to Joe. (Dickens 456).

As evident in this quotation, Pip the narrator severely criticizes himself because of displaying a distant and ungrateful attitude towards his former best friend, Joe, when he visits him in London (Dickens 215). After going through a remarkable degree of transformation, Pip, as a mature man, begins to see things in a different

light.[9] He is no longer a corrupt gentleman as he used to be when Joe visited him. He now sees the human side in Magwitch as his lens altered in time. He even comes to the point of elevating Magwitch, the criminal, to a morally higher status than himself. It is by virtue of such sublimation that the moral distance not only between Magwitch and Pip the narrator but also between Magwitch and the reader is minimized.

However, this new insight into celebrating the "right feeling" that Pip the narrator acquires is indicative of Pip's emergence as one of the agents of the bourgeoisie who has eventually found a place for himself in society. As Tambling puts it, the language Pip the narrator uses "*belongs to Victorian dominant discourse*" because his language is a part of a "*brought-up London gentleman*" (17). "*Lord be merciful to him, a sinner*" (Dickens 471) Pip prays when Magwitch dies in prison. His words concerning Magwitch are indicative of his attitude that illustrates how Pip is one of the bearers of the dominant ideology of its time. On the one hand, he acknowledges that Magwitch is a sinner, for he is a criminal; on the other hand, he prays for mercy for the criminal. The juxtaposition of these two seemingly clashing remarks lies at the core of bourgeois morality as Nancy Armstrong claims (350), for they echo both a challenge to the norms, and at the same time, a vindicative approach. Moreover, since it is a first-person retrospective narration, it naturally bears the traits of a confession. The fact that it is like a "*confession*" (Tambling 18) is another quality of the novel which shows that the narrator has already internalized the dominant ideology. As a member of the middle-class, Pip writes his past account from where he currently stands. He is not only spiritually and morally mature but also he joins Herbert's trade company in Cairo, living a comfortable life.

An effect of this bourgeois morality over the issue of crime is apparent in the way the relationship between the narrator and Magwitch is constructed. Magwitch works as "*a sheep-farmer, stock-breeder other trades besides*" in the colonial territory (Dickens 324), and he makes money to make a gentleman out of an orphan, a blacksmith's boy. "*Yes, Pip, dear boy, I've made a gentleman on you! It's me wot has done it!*" (Dickens 326). Like a self-sacrificing father, by working hard

[9] It is not only the narrator who has been disciplined towards the end but also Magwitch himself, which can be one of the reasons why the narrator stands close to Magwitch, thereby functioning as a means of closing the moral distance between the two. Another reason could be that, like Pip, Magwitch is an orphan. Both of them are exposed to harsh treatment in their childhoods by their surroundings, "*though the 'parents' in the one case were private persons, and in the other, society itself*" (van Ghent 259).

and saving money he actualizes his ideals on Pip by making him a gentleman. "*If I ain't a gentleman, nor yet ain't got no learning, I'm the owner of such. All on you owns stock and land; which on you owns a brought-up London gentleman? This way I kep myself a going*" (Dickens 329). The fact that he knows that he brings up a gentleman is his only source of consolidation in his adverse condition in a foreign land. His desire for raising a gentleman, an ideal that he himself could not achieve in his life, can best be explained by Magwitch's resolution of wreaking revenge from society that put him in such a desperate position. However, neither Magwitch nor the implied author seems to be aware that the project of making "a gentleman" may entail the risk of producing other Magwitches. Although the crimes committed by Magwitch can primarily be related to the inequalities stemming from hierarchies between social classes, the solution provided by the novel turns it into a personal vendetta story. This, as a consequence, bears a propensity to conceal the true cause of injustice, i.e. class inequalities.

The most concrete result of this bourgeois tendency in the novel shows itself in the way the implied author treats another criminal figure who is pushed into the margins and silenced: Molly. She appears as a peripheral character in the text, which points to impasses of meaning with regard to the novel's approach to the issue of crime. Molly destabilizes the binarism established between the high and the low, Compeyson and Magwitch, in terms of the issue of crime because Molly does not receive any serious and sympathetic narratorial attention as the other socially-disadvantaged criminal, Magwitch, does. Molly is Magwitch's ex-wife. However, she is not treated in the way Magwitch is treated. By contrast, she is treated like Compeyson in terms of speech representation and focalization. Quite similar to the way in which Compeyson's speech is represented, there is only one remarkable instance where Molly is directly heard. She is accused of having murdered a woman out of jealousy in a barn (Dickens 401). Thanks to the lawyer Jaggers's professional expertise, Molly becomes cleared off the charges. Indebted to Jaggers, who wants to make a reputation for defending Molly at her trial, she begins working as a housekeeper at the lawyer's house. She appears for the first and last time in a dinner scene in his house. Possibly to entertain his guests, Mr. Jaggers wants Molly to show her strong wrists to his guests.

> 'I'll show you a wrist,' repeated Mr. Jaggers, with an immovable determination to show it. 'Molly, let them see your wrist.' 'Master,' she again *murmured*. 'Please!' 'Molly,' said Mr. Jaggers, not looking at her, but

> obstinately looking at the opposite side of the room, 'let them see *both* your wrists.' (Dickens 218; emphasis added).

Although Molly objects to Mr. Jaggers' request, she is forced to show her wrists to the guests. This is the first as well as the last scene where the reader is provided with Molly's direct "murmur." Throughout the novel, Molly's speech is never reported directly by the narrator. Furthermore, the narrator never attempts to give a glimpse of her inner speech or thought. Although Magwitch's speech is frequently reported and his thoughts and feelings are guessed at by the narrator, these opportunities are not given to Molly. Thus, it can be stated that, compared to Magwitch, Molly is far more distant from the narrator in terms of speech representation.

Quite similar to Compeyson's case, the narrative information about Molly is not transmitted by herself, but through Wemmick, Mr. Jaggers's clerk, who is familiar with Molly's case. Since the novel is a first-person narrative and it is predominantly focalized through Pip, he is devoid of omniscience; therefore, he relies on other characters to test the validity of Magwitch's story. For instance, Pip interrogates Wemmick about Molly's case and he replies that "*a score or so of years ago, that woman was tried at the Old Bailey for murder, and was acquitted. She was a very handsome young woman, and I believe had some gipsy blood in her*" (Dickens 401). He adds that "*it was a case of jealousy*" in which Mr. Jaggers defended Molly (401). Wemmick's words are in parallel with Magwitch's account and it indirectly verifies Magwitch's view. Moreover, Herbert converses with Magwitch when Pip is not present, and after listening to Magwitch's account of Molly, he communicates it to Pip, saying "'*it seems that the woman was a young woman, and a jealous woman, and a revengeful woman; revengeful ... to the last degree*'" (Dickens 413). While Molly is portrayed entirely from the perspectives of Wemmick, Herbert and Magwitch, she herself never emerges as a focal character; therefore, the reader is not able to learn what Molly actually thinks or feels.

Molly, too, seems to be a disciplined character but her case does not receive much attention from the implied author. It is aforementioned that her first appearance in the narrative is at Mr. Jaggers's home where he wants her to show her wrists to entertain his guests. Although Molly is never punished by the law, her submission to the lawyer Jaggers's order symbolically suggests that she is taken under the control of the law. In Wemmick's words, she is "*a wild beast tamed*" (Dickens 205). As is pointed out earlier, in terms of speech representation and

focalization, it is obvious that Molly remains very distant from the narrator. This aspect of the relationship between the two is also strengthened by the plot structure and the narration. Since this is a first-person realist narrative, the narrator is strictly limited to his notion of how the story actually occurred, which, as a consequence, leads to withholding of narrative information. When Molly appears first during the dinner in Jaggers's house, Pip the hero does not know who Molly actually is. It is only after Magwitch's story that Pip discovers Molly is Estella's mother. Although, at the end, Magwitch learns that Estella is his daughter, Pip does not relate this information to Molly, which further marginalizes her as a character whose positioning as a criminal is not problematized. Sympathy and a critical attitude the text attempts to evoke in the reader for Magwitch's position as a criminal is non-existent with regard to Molly although she is, like Magwitch, a socially-disadvantaged character.

In conclusion, *Great Expectations* treats the issue of crime from within bourgeois morality despite its explicit concern with social inequalities informing the juridical system of its time. Although the narrator seriously attempts to minimize the distance between himself and Magwitch, the sympathetic victim of repressive legal system, through speech representation and focalization, the novel is not able to go beyond its limitations, first, caused by being an example of *Bildungsroman* and, second, by the narrator's enormous distance from another socially-disadvantaged criminal, Molly. In other words, primarily occupied with a nonconformist individual's development and integration into society, *Great Expectations* fails to distance itself from the logic of bourgeois individualism. This novel is another instance of what Eagleton calls "*insatiable curiosity about the individual self*," one of the typical characteristics of "*realism*" which is in a perfect dialogue with the middle-class (11). As a natural consequence of this reductionist individualistic approach and the implied author's complicity in disseminating bourgeois morality as well as his disregarding attitude towards Molly, *Great Expectations* does not offer a radical perspective on the issue of crime. Therefore, the novel is not able to provide a sufficient bulwark against the existing conflicts in society because it fails to identify what constitutes crime and criminals. In that regard, Dickens's novel proves true Marx's mid-nineteenth-century observation that "*since Cain the world has neither been intimidated nor ameliorated by punishment*" (496).

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