

AN EXPLANATION OF THE TERM "MARKET" IN CHARLES DICKENS'S NOVELS

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Abstract: *This article analyzes the importance of the term “market” in the novels of Charles Dickens. His two books such as “A Tale of Two cities” and “The Old Curiosity shop” were used as models.*

Key words: *agiotoponym, desperation, scene, curiosity shop*

Place names that invoke political or ideological movements, known as agiotonyms, are frequently employed in English novels to highlight the symbolic or revolutionary significance of particular localities. Using agiotonyms or similar tactics, Charles Dickens reinforced his social, political, or cultural statements in his two novels “A Tale of Two Cities” and “The Old Curiosity Shop.”

Before and during the French Revolution, Charles Dickens’ historical fiction book “A Tale of Two Cities” takes place in Paris and London. Social injustice, sacrifice, resurrection, and the turbulent results of revolutionary enthusiasm are all explored in this 1859 novel. In A Tale of Two Cities, Charles Dickens provides vivid descriptions of various aspects of life in Paris, including scenes in the market and public spaces that illustrate the poverty, desperation, and tension building among the French people as they head towards revolution. In “A Tale of Two Cities”, Charles Dickens provides vivid descriptions of various aspects of life in Paris, including scenes in the market and public spaces that illustrate the poverty, desperation, and tension building among the French people as they head towards revolution. One of the most famous scenes in the novel involves a cask of wine breaking in the streets near a wine shop in the Saint Antoine district of Paris. Desperate and impoverished people rush to drink the wine from the street, scooping it with their hands or cups, while others dip rags in the wine to take home. This chaotic scene, with people scrambling for every drop, captures the extreme poverty and hunger that plague the common people. Dickens describes this moment in rich, sensory detail, highlighting the grime and hunger in the streets. The symbol of the red wine staining people’s hands and faces is often interpreted as foreshadowing the blood that will soon flow during the revolution. It shows the deprivation of the lower classes, who are willing to drink from the street to quench their thirst.

Dickens also describes the market area in the Saint Antoine district as a crowded, bustling hub of activity where the locals gather. This neighborhood is depicted as run-down and densely populated, with signs of poverty everywhere, and it serves as a center for revolutionary sentiment. The market is a place where people gossip, spread news, and air their grievances, creating a sense of community among the oppressed people.



The market in Saint Antoine is portrayed as dark and oppressive, mirroring the bleak lives of the people. The description emphasizes the struggle of the working class, who must endure long hours of hard labor only to scrape by with the bare minimum.

Dickens contrasts the bustling, crowded market scenes of Paris with the luxurious, serene settings enjoyed by the French aristocracy. While the poor scramble in the dirty streets for spilled wine, the aristocrats enjoy extravagant feasts and luxurious estates. This contrast underscores the vast inequalities of the time and foreshadows the violent uprising that would soon arise from these deep social divides.

Through these descriptions, Dickens uses the market and public spaces in Paris not only to highlight the everyday life of the working class but also to foreshadow the brewing revolution. The grim, desperate imagery paints a picture of a society on the edge, where even the simple act of drinking wine from the street symbolizes the extreme inequality and injustice that define life in pre-revolutionary France.

The market sights and the shop's descriptions are important in establishing the mood and ambiance of Charles Dickens' *The Old Curiosity Shop*. The main characters of the book are Nell Trent and her grandfather, who own a little, dusty store that is full of odd and intriguing objects that evoke a sense of mystery and sorrow. In *The Old Curiosity Shop* by Charles Dickens, the market scenes and descriptions of the shop itself play a significant role in setting the tone and atmosphere of the story. The novel centers on the lives of Nell Trent and her grandfather, who run a small, dusty shop filled with strange and fascinating items, evoking a sense of mystery and melancholy.

The curiosity shop is a small, dimly lit space filled with an eclectic mix of oddities and antiques, giving it an eerie, almost otherworldly quality. Dickens describes the shop as cramped and cluttered with old, peculiar items, such as strange statues, old-fashioned furniture, and objects from forgotten times. This setting reflects the personalities of Nell and her grandfather, with the shop representing the old man's obsession with the past and his inability to let go of his gambling habits.

The shop has a gloomy, musty atmosphere that Dickens enhances with his rich descriptions of the various curiosities stacked in every corner. The collection of strange, seemingly forgotten items creates a sense of decay and nostalgia, symbolizing the crumbling state of Nell's grandfather's life.

Dickens frequently describes the bustling street markets of London, where the poor and working-class characters gather. The streets are depicted as vibrant but chaotic, filled with peddlers, street vendors, and a constant flow of people. These markets contrast sharply with the curiosity shop, serving as places of noise, life, and movement, compared to the stillness and isolation of the shop.

The people in the markets and streets often represent a rough, vibrant side of London life. Many of the characters Nell encounters, such as the shopkeepers and street peddlers, embody the grit and resilience of the urban poor.

Dickens contrasts the cramped, rundown markets and curiosity shop with the wealthier parts of London. In one scene, Nell and her grandfather encounter a large



marketplace filled with food and goods, symbolizing the prosperity that is just out of reach for them. This contrast highlights the class divisions in Victorian society and underscores Nell's sense of entrapment and isolation.

The objects in the curiosity shop symbolize the themes of memory and loss. Each item seems to carry a story of its own, reminding the reader of the lives and histories that the characters, particularly Nell and her grandfather, are tied to. The curiosities represent a bygone era, reflecting the grandfather's inability to move forward and Nell's quiet resilience.

Dickens often describes the harsh conditions of the street markets and shops where people like Nell and her grandfather struggle to make a living. The crowding, noise, and roughness of these places mirror the hardships that Nell faces and emphasize the difficult life of those on the fringes of society.

Dickens uses the Victorian London markets and the curiosity shop as metaphors for greater themes in addition to painting a realistic picture of them through these descriptions. In particular, Nell's existence is reflected in the curiosity shop, which is both beautiful and weighed down by melancholy and neglect. Dickens' depiction of market life in **The Old Curiosity Shop** gives readers a sense of the struggles and tenacity of the lower classes in London during the 19th century.

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