

## **A Dickensian Supernatural: Spectres, Carols, and Realism**

خارق ديكنزي: شبح وكارول وواقعية

## **Un surnaturel de Dickens : Spectres, Chants de Noël et réalisme**

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### **Introduction**

Victorian Realism is associated with nineteenth-century fiction and industrialisation along with its outcomes as social-class division, child labour and social consciousness. Victorian realistic writers had an interest in portraying reality, depicting the Victorians' everyday struggles, and shedding light on serious social matters which were about to devour an entire English society. Many realists among Victorian writers agreed on making fiction a photograph of the Victorian reality, a moral and a social awakening for the people to become the makers of their own reality. Fortunately, Victorian realism does not imply the way of portraying reality which produced diversity and newness in the literary field.

Realism to Dickens was not merely about revealing the real, for what is the real anyway? Isn't it what one makes out of his or her life? Which makes the real take a subjective definition associated with the life people live, and if Realism is about the collective shared life or shared reality, doesn't that make its portrayal an impossible mission? For life is too complex to be understood that "no written account can possibly be adequate to the complexity of a real life" (Douglas-Fairhurst). While trying to make life-writing more life-like, and since the faithful portrayal is a myth in itself; Dickens chose the supernatural and properly used it to serve his almost faithful portrayal of Victorian reality in *A Christmas Carol*, as he exposed three different realities in three temporal dimensions using his Christmas ghosts.

Dickensian Realism revolves around being truthful in portraying the Victorian reality using an interesting mixture of novelistic features. With Dickens, Victorian realistic fiction was not a mere photograph of a monolithic social-class system, and a ruthless economic philosophy, for it captures the beliefs and obsessions of the Victorians. Dickens's timeless classic *A Christmas Carol*

embodies both the harsh living reality along with the strange and supernatural beliefs which conquered the Victorian mind state. The following sections aim to investigate the choice of the supernatural and its association with the Victorians by explaining and justifying its significance in what is supposed to be a photograph of reality rather than an imaginative tale. It also aims to inspect the possible reasons behind the Victorian obsession with the supernatural and how the use of phantasmagorical elements served the Dickensian realistic purpose and preserved meaning in a circadian novella of redemption.

## 1. Victorian specters

The Victorians from different social classes seemed to be fascinated by the supernatural which took different forms and shapes though they were witnessing scientific advancement. The reason as sceptics might believe lies in science. The scientific progress did not merely empower the country's economy, but has stimulated the Victorian imagination as well. Believers or non-believers, the Victorians sought explanations to supernatural manifestations that ranged from natural causes to unnatural ones.

The English have a very violent history which they tend to celebrate. According to Richard Jones; the author of *Walking Haunted London*, they believe that the ghosts of the murdered and tortured souls will eternally haunt the English reality. The London Tower under King Henry's VIII reign, Richard III, The Bartholomew Church, and the House of Detention, have all been associated with spooky incidents and inhuman acts which made the Victorians believe that they have become a refuge for the lost spirits to roam in. The supernatural is still part of the English reality that some even believe that Dickens's very own spirit roams the streets of London, and that his very own words can be heard when the city goes quite! A fearful hoax hardly believed but metaphorically plausible since Dickens's words still find their ways to people via different media platforms.

It is challenging to consider the Victorian ghost story as an embodiment of cultural and social values, not merely for its use of the supernatural, but rather its resistance to the realistic contextualization needed in the Victorian realistic fiction which is commonly considered a mirror that aims to reflect reality and promote rhetoric whereas other genres can be devoted to pure entertainment with a less socially-driven purpose. Emily Dorothy Scarborough argues that the ghost is "absolutely indestructible ... he appears [at all times and in all fictions]. He changes with the styles in fiction but he never goes out of fashion. He is the really permanent citizen of this earth, for mortals" (Scarborough 81). Apparitions are not limited by time or space but they can be agents to tell

history like that of England. The Dickensian apparitions in *A Christmas Carol* and the use of time travel seem like a feature that unravels historical data of the past in the present, and anticipate the future.

The ghost story succeeded to survive and develop. It is a universal genre, appreciated by those whose minds are always sensitive to its weirdness and terror. The Victorians seemed to be under the spell of their daily routine, unwilling to accept the unreal to become usual. The American author Howard Philips Lovecraft argued “The appeal of the spectrally macabre is generally narrow because it demands from the reader a certain degree of imagination and a capacity for detachment from every-day life” (Lovecraft 1041).

The Victorian ghost story continued to refract the spirit of social reformation that shaped modern England. The supernatural and Realism formed an effective alliance; an alliance which Dickens used well to help his Christmas books, mainly *A Christmas Carol*, to be well transmitted in the strangest, most exceptional manner that proved to be effective. Moreover, it helped the morality to transcend the times and spaces known to mankind just like the spectres did through the history of time. The novelistic choices Charles Dickens has made; as that of the supernatural, helped the development of the Victorian novel, for he did not merely extend the novel as a literary form by the use of the ghost story, but developed the circadian novel as well in which the narrative unfolds within twenty four hours. The supernatural served the narrative form for it to be more plausible and acceptable.

The task of Realism is to speak the truth and avoid falsehood. However, defining the ghost story remains challenging and difficult. Critic and writer Julia Briggs defines it as “a tricky genre ... denotes not only stories about ghosts, but ... spirits other than those of the dead” (Smajić 12), yet she believes that it fits any literary genre, and since the realistic novel is even more nebulous than the ghost story, Dickens chose to use the supernatural in what is as equally undefinable as his realistic novella *A Christmas Carol* which seems to be working against the official, more formal realistic, novelistic demands. The concept of the supernatural along with the *Carol*, as a format, helped loosening up the stiffness of the random realistic fiction by creating fantastical, yet believable ghostly rides displayed by the apparitions in the novella.

## 1. The Supernatural and the Ghost Story

H.P Lovecraft argued that “the eldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown”, the weird

and the ghostly tales tend to stand against the moral didactic literature which seems to promote a ‘smirking optimism’ (Lovecraft 1041). Dickens stood for the morality which can be established through fictional literary works, and due to his fascination with the ‘unnatural’ and recognition of the appeal of the ghost story, he succeeded to meld the supernatural in his realistic novella *A Christmas Carol* while preserving its moralistic abilities.

Fear is more familiar to mankind than any other feeling; and the supernatural both reveals it and breeds it. Moreover, it helps having a provocation for the imagination. Lovecraft argued that “children will always been afraid of the dark; and men with minds sensitive to hereditary impulse will always tremble at the thought of the hidden and fathomless worlds of strange life which may ... press hideously upon our own globe in unholy dimensions which only the dead and the moonstruck can glimpse” (Lovecraft 1043). Dickens’s admiration for fancy never ceased, for he believed that it fuels creativity and stimulates curiosity. As a kid, Dickens showed great interest in fairy tales like most children but he made sure to keep that fire for the genre kindled even as a grown up and as a writer.

The supernatural breeds feelings that the human being struggles to comprehend; for they are but “sensations of awe and fear as would be hit upon by a race having few and simple ideas and limited experience” (Lovecraft 1042) it is no wonder then to associate the supernatural with ignorance due to their sameness, for what is unknown always drags ignorance along with it. The unknown is unpredictable, hence a source of great fear provoked by a world that man either ignores or knows very little about, H.P Lovecraft perceived:

because we remember pain and menace of death more vividly than pleasure, and because our feelings toward the beneficent aspects of the unknown have from the first been captured and formalised by conventional religious rituals, it has fallen to the lot of the darker and more maleficent side of cosmic mystery to figure chiefly in our popular supernatural folklore. (Lovecraft 1042)

The ghost story is an oral form of tradition. Christmas has always been associated with the ghostly apparitions, a connection that survived through the Victorian times and it was revived in Charles Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol*. Ghost stories were popular due to the changes brought by the Industrial Revolution that pushed people to leave their humble houses and inhabit immense ones where their imagination ran wild. Andrew Smith, the author of *The Ghost Story 1840-1920* describes it as “a progressive internalization of horror, the idea that the monsters are not out there, but to be found within.... With the ghost story

there's a sense that instead of being able to lock yourself away in your home, to leave the monster outside, the monster lives with you, and has a kind of intimacy" (Cochrane).

The people's growing interest in the spiritual world was considered to be the result of scientific discoveries. The new possibilities offered by the Industrial Revolution have somehow made everything possible including fantasy which started to be part of the people's reality. The supernatural haunted the Victorian reality; therefore, it was unwise not to reflect it in realistic fiction which intends to faithfully portray the people's reality and experiences in the first place.

### 3. Dickens and the *Carol's* ghosts

The supernatural has occupied a significant place in Dickens's repertoire. With his writing skills, Dickens succeeded to cover the Victorian reality, tackle universal human themes, and tell ghostly tales through his stupendous prosaic form. Dickens was a ghost 'seer' and a ghost creator. He believed that ghosts are summoned from past experiences, memories, and the tales people have read or heard as kids. Dickens's spectres and haunting spirits have forged the writer he became. Using science to justify the surreal, Dickens always relied on logic and rationality. In an article entitled *My Ghosts* written by John Robertson and published for Dickens's *Households Words*, the writer shares his personal experience with the supernatural and provides what seems to be a logical explanation and a cure to the timeless phenomenon and writes "the mother who broke my bones was succeeded by a mother who fractured my mind ... there is something wrong in my head" (Robertson). Robertson refers to the supernatural as a product of one's own mind and imagination, and shows the fragility of the human mind and its ability to fall into the world of insanity. Dickens was haunted by the ghosts of his past, but if being haunted can be cured as Robertson claimed, then Dickens must have fixed himself by creating his own haunting spectres.

The mechanical Victorian reality conjured up its own spectres. Dickens made the readers both accept the supernatural and understand the rational physiological reasons that can explain it, while they could still feel the old, classical terror that ghost stories have always delivered. During the Victorian era, the idea of the future was terrifying, mainly to the working class; the ghosts were but an old traditional means to make readers re-experience the terror of the Victorian times, and prepare them for an even more horrific end. Therefore, the supernatural was skilfully used by Dickens for his novella to be read, appreciated, and enjoyed by the Victorians. Regardless of the supernatural elements, Dickens

is still remembered for his happy-ending in the classic *A Christmas Carol*. Many of his less known works show great interest in the dark side as well. He was an avid reader of horror tales after all. His choice was not peculiar for a Victorian writer. Dickens made sure his ghosts would conjure something interesting and original for the story to be impactful, mainly since the ghost story was worn out by then, for it was a genre that people have known for decades before, and will know for decades to come. It was the wise, informative, moral significance and the teaching ability he gave to the spectres in *A Christmas Carol* that helped the novella to be more morally instructive in the most bizarre manner.

Dickens used the macabre to provide an escape rather than a threat. He focused on different themes and communicated them through different captivating ways, so he made use of the supernatural. He succeeded to combine his creative writing skills along with his experiences with supernatural investigations and mesmerism to forge his spectral characters. The supernatural was not a mere horrific idea for Dickens, especially since he did not only attribute a moral, and a noble role to the spirits, but he added a comic tone to them as well, mocking by that what has always been a source of pure horror. He even went further in mocking them as he did in his articles *The Spirit Business* and *Well-Authenticated Rappings* describing ghosts as being messengers of the most insane messages and questioning the supernatural manifestations and séances and the hoax associated with them. In *A Christmas Carol*, Dickens preserved the possible interpretations of the supernatural for different readers to appreciate and gave the spirits meaning, and the ability to provide meaning as well, not merely to the story or its characters, but to the readers as well. In other words, Dickens made his Christmas spirits deeply allegorical.

Dickens haunts the reader's imagination with his skilful repertoire. In *A Christmas Carol*, readers get to know a little more about Dickens's experience with the supernatural; an experience which influenced his most memorable work. The novella displays a hankering for a ghostly Christmas adventure. Dickens has probably derived his motivation for writing this book from his early life, his experiences, and his haunting fears. In *The Uncommercial Traveller*, Dickens uses a narrative persona to describe how a nanny; ironically named Mercy, introduced the unknown eerie aspects of the supernatural to a very young, unbroken child, he wrote "I was hardly strong enough and old enough to hear the story again just yet. But, she never spared me one word of it ... Her name was Mercy, though she had none on me" (Dickens 152-153). Just like nanny Mercy, Dickens introduced unforgettable, pleasant Christmas apparitions to the Victorian realm through *A Christmas Carol*.

*A Christmas Carol* excites the readers' imagination to summon fear and lights up the darkest corners of man's mind through detailed characterization, from Marley's Ghost, Ignorance and Want, to the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come. In *The Uncommercial Traveller* Dickens argued that "if we all knew our own minds ... I suspect we should find [them] responsible for most of the dark corners" (Dickens 150), hence he used the supernatural to haunt Scrooge's mind to conjure up the ghosts to release hidden fears. Whether it was a result of guilt or a case of indigestion, Dickens has always provided a logical explanation for eeriness. However, Dickens knew that creating a significant ghost is scarier than the aimlessly roaming ones. Thus, Dickens chose to let the spirits represent the 'real' through an unrealistic representation.

Dickens seeks scientific, plausible and rational explanation to the supernatural; an idea he promoted through the spectral journey of his most infamous characters Ebenezer Scrooge who tries to connect his irrational ghostly experience with rather rational justifications such as digestive reactions and dreams. Dreaming is a concept that excites the supernatural, H.P Lovecraft argued "the phenomenon of dreaming likewise helped to build up the notion of an unreal or spiritual world; and in general, all the conditions of savage dawn-life so strongly conduced toward a feeling of the supernatural" (Lovecraft 1042). Charles Dickens has always shown supernatural speculation. Therefore, he believed that the supernatural can be logically explained through dreams and disorders of nerves or manipulation of the senses; an idea which he implied in a scene from *A Christmas Carol* where Ebenezer Scrooge meets the ghost of his long dead partner Jacob Marley:

'You don't believe in me', observed the Ghost.

'I don't,' said Scrooge.

'Why do you doubt your senses?'

'Because,' said Scrooge, 'a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheats. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are!' (Dickens 21)

This passage shows how much Dickens made sure that the supernatural elements are always associated with the reasonable explanations he had much respect for, still Dickens's curiosity was never limited. Allegedly joining the London Ghost Club, Dickens sought explanations to probably prove falseness of what is perceived as paranormal.

Charles Dickens used the supernatural as a vehicle to convey the realism he devoted his fiction to, while preserving the element of excitement, for it was a concept used by realists for entertainment instead of the typical, machinelike literature used as a reminder of the Victorians' crude reality. It is no wonder that *A Christmas Carol* is a treasure of valuable and moral findings. Christmas should neither be predictable nor rational, for just like children expect Santa Claus to surprise them carrying Christmas presents; Christmas should be an open door for all possibilities including the unbelievable ones. Therefore, Dickens links Christmas festivity with its imaginative ability to alter Scrooge's life, thus his afterlife. One should understand that at the time of publication of *A Christmas Carol*, Christmas was not the most cheerful, celebrated holiday as it is known in modern times. The Victorians were unsure about bringing lavish or simply happy celebrations into their busy industrial life. It was the spirits within the Dickensian Christmas *Carol* that helped them acknowledge *how* and *why* they should keep it alive, celebrated, and cherished.

The strange mix of the real and the unreal, places London in a different dimension where both worlds collide "he looked out ... the air was filled with phantoms, wandering hither and thither in restless haze" (Dickens 26). The apparitions enabled Dickens to explore the Victorian prime social and moral issues, such as class system and its outcomes; it was after all one of reasons Dickens wrote fiction. Creating fiction has always been related to some type of internal overhearing which can be crucial for a productive and creative writing process. Peter Garratt wrote for *The Guardian* "to write means having one's voice disrupted, taken over, rendered by another" (Garratt). Inspiration and creativity might be dragged out from the mysterious voices one's might be blessed enough to hear. The famous painting of Dickens by the Robert William Buss's *Dickens's Dream* shows the writer asleep in his chair, surrounded by the spectres of his characters. In his childhood, Dickens was an avid reader of literature that sparked his imagination which became both haunting and haunted. He often thought of dreams as a form of haunting by both the living and the dead. Dickens wrote to John Forster "when I sit down to my book, some beneficent power shows it all to me, and tempts me to be interested, and I don't invent it- really do not-but see it, and write it down" (Hartley 90) Peter Garratt argues that it is difficult to comprehend what was meant by Dickens, but one must not forget that he was a writer, and writers' words do not usually mean what they seem to mean.

The supernatural seems to be a necessity for someone like Scrooge to fully see the falsehood in his actions and the lived-by philosophies, and eventually redeem himself. The supernatural can be justified as a tool to cause plausible change



mainly since the “no longer” promising reality failed to awaken the Victorian utilitarian middle class members who have been hypnotized by fortune making, and haunted by the fear of poverty as Scrooge; a fear that impelled him to literally become what his name stands for.

Dickens's kinship with the grotesque can be illustrated starting with the door knocker that transformed into Marley's face in stave one. Moreover, in the scene where Marley's ghost is introduced to the readers, Dickens adds a comical touch in what is supposed to be a recipe for pure horror in, he wrote “Scrooge had often heard it said that Marley had no bowls, but he had never believed it until now ... There's more of gravy than of grave about you [Ghost], whatever you are! [says Scrooge]” (Dickens 19-21) as an attempt to distract himself in the same way Dickens tries to distract his readers. Such elements soften the eerie atmosphere of the ghosts to create mixed effects and evoke different emotions. Scrooge compliments Marley on being “a good man of business” (Dickens 23), failing to understand that humanity should have been his foremost business. The comical tone for him was the only compensation for death; just like in psychology where ‘fun’ can be a defence mechanism against the undesirables.

Scrooge's journey, being a possible result of some freakish product by the workings of his very own mind, is probably invalid. Dickens was careful not to explicitly resort to indigestion, or some other body reactions. The source of the ghosts remains ambiguous. It is interesting how the ‘friendly’ supernatural entities in *A Christmas Carol* contribute to Scrooge's change of heart, which again emphasises the fact that it was not about the unreal, but the function and the tasks attributed to them by Dickens which stimulated Scrooge's redemption. After all, Scrooge was not humbled by spectres, but by the pathos of his own doings.

*A Christmas Carol* melds the phantasmagoria with Victorian Realism. The Victorian reality is harmonized with the supernatural. The allegorical figures were used by Dickens for his seasonal classic to remain relevant and truthful to the Victorian reality. In *A Christmas Carol* the supernatural is but a natural extension of the real world. The Dickensian characters in *A Christmas Carol* display an intriguing variety, for characters thought to be dead come back to life, while those who are alive can become un-dead yet soulless. Dickens makes use of every aspect in his story to capture the reader as he animates his objects from doorknockers to candle flames in order to enhance his characterization, to manipulate his characters and communicate paranormal activity.

*A Christmas Carol* is an impressively symbolic piece of writing. The ghosts are an embodiment of qualities of bizarre forms and utmost excitement. Dickens introduces his protagonist Ebenezer Scrooge as a caricature with ghostly features. His detailed description enables readers to fully visualize the miser “the cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him” (Dickens 10).

#### 4. Marley’s Ghost

Dickens used the supernatural to write his nail-biting scenes. The famous macabre scene where Marley’s mandible drops reveals a horrific vivid image among many others that the supernatural can offer. Marley’s ghost eerie appearance is captivating, not merely because it excites the human mind through, but because ghosts tend to get a gripping imagery as well.

As a realist, Dickens created splendid metaphors about how greed devours the human soul through Marley’s ghost and the chain he drags “made of cash-boxes, keys, padlock, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses wrought in steel” (Dickens 19) and the ghostly packed sky, all of which stand as symbols of hell where the “guilty governments” are punished for their evil deeds, Marley elaborates “I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link, and yard by yard” (Dickens 22). While the previous scenes serve as a social commentary on the utilitarian ideologies and legislative body of the Victorian era, Marley’s ghost comes with a single task which is to prove that death is a bridge rather than an end and that the quality of that afterlife is determined by man’s choices and chosen purposes on earth. According to Marley’s ghost the purpose one can attribute to his life is not about the professional pursuits one’s devotes himself to in life, but those of goodwill revolving around social welfare.

Scrooge might meet Marley’s demise unless he seizes his opportunity of redemption properly. After all, the soul might be saved if the choices usually made are altered. Jacob Marley’ ghost seems more like a Victorian version of Jacob from the Old Testament who provides a ladder to his partner and help him escape an eternal spiritual prison. For Dickens, the apparitions were ideas and recollected images of the mind. In *A Christmas Carol* the ghosts are embodiments of Scrooge’s identity, personality, psychology, and memory, all of which supply the ideas in his mind, the dreams and the nightmares from which the ghosts take their forms.

Books that are saturated with the uncanny tend to render the unfamiliar event into the most familiar and disturbing one. Dickens encourages his readers to comprehend the business of creating fictional characters as a matter of conjuring up spirits. Marley's ghost does not come to simply disturb the readers, but to drag Scrooge to witness the poverty and exploitation of the working class which suffers due to the philosophy he chose to adopt like many other middle class members. Marley was "as dead as a door-nail" (Dickens 9) a dark instance of Dickensian humour. Marley's face was not frightening, but still conveys startling horror. Scrooge disbelieves the irrational and the supernatural, being a businessman with no interest in anything unrelated to business, Scrooge blockades himself from other possible realms, choosing the realm he knows as Marley did in life.

The apparitions made the storyline more tenable, for Scrooge is always ready to expect a spectral visit. However, Scrooge seems to be less knowledgeable than the reader, mainly in the fourth Stave where the dead man is anonymous to Scrooge, but knowable to the readers. However, the ghosts surprise both the readers and the protagonist with their presence which does not correspond Marley's warning. This contraction is due to the time travel and the chronology of events which seems to make more sense for those who read the novella, but not much for Scrooge whose chance for redemption seemed to be uncertain with each spectral encounter.

No matter the origin, only what is perceived as supernatural can guarantee a solid explanation for Scrooge's unreasonable transformation in a realistic novella. The instant change of Scrooge after his spectral experience can be seen as a dramatic impact. There is a slim chance that Scrooge would have redeemed himself if it was not for the time travel, the horror, and the magical experience that was made possible due to the spectres in the story. To merely recall memories from the past, or have a moral lesson without spectral elements would make the readers question and doubt Scrooge's circadian change of heart. There are genres that allow the unbelievable to become believable for the story to make sense; the supernatural elements provide that authenticity for the Dickensian realistic novella *A Christmas Carol*.

In *A Christmas Carol*, Dickens demonstrates how society was fuelled by the overworked, poor labourers, and how society owed them a descent share of the economic triumph. The real secret of the *Carol* however, is deeper and more complex. Scrooge's miraculous change of heart is unbelievably odd. In his review of Dickens's exhibition at the British Library in 2011, Thomas Marks

wrote for *The Telegraph* “The Christmas ghost stories: the range of editions... testifies to their lasting popularity. You get a strong sense of how much Dickens did to domesticate the genre, shifting its setting from old Gothic piles to the very Victorian firesides where it would also be read” (Marks). It was a curious combination of the realistic and the non-realistic aspects; however, refined madness is needed in arts. Dickens conjured up and brought the ghosts to the city through his urban ghostly book, while his genius piece of writing guaranteed their survival.

Dickens's reality made him a street savvy, and inspired him to write about the poor, child labour, utilitarian misers, and ghosts. His very Victorian, industrial ghosts were summoned, creating by that an interest to write about ghosts that fascinated the Victorians, that they were believed to haunt their properties. *A Christmas Carol* uses the supernatural to reflect certain popular beliefs of the Victorians, but to transcend its topicality as well. ‘Ignorance’ and ‘Want’ personified by two poor, wolfish children were inspired by Dickens's visits to the ragged schools of England where poor children were sent to get education but meet an ambiguous future. Dickens believed that poverty and ignorance are destructive forces that threaten the English society's future; hence he used an equally threatening element of the ghost story to convey his idea.

Dickens mixes the surreal with the mundane. The choices made by Dickens and the unusual blend of these two paradoxical concepts along with the carolling instances which create some kind of reminiscence, have paved the way for many changes; not merely in the people's hearts, but in the customs as well, such as Christmas celebration. More importantly, the *Carol* aimed to awaken the Victorians' inner child and preserve its innocence even if it was for one day, a day in every year, ever since its publication “For it is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas” (Dickens 58).

Charles Dickens's great-great-granddaughter; the English historian Lucinda Dickens Hawksley, constantly argues in her books that the essence of the novella is redemption, but the vital thing about it is not Scrooge's but everyone's redemption. Lucinda Hawksley explains how Dickens used an emotive language; through humour and pathos, to let his readers know that they all share a part of Scrooge within themselves, and that they can eventually have a similar self-conversion, for “the ordinary people continue to experience Scrooge's impossible transformation in one form or another” (Les Standiford 224).

## Conclusion

The secret to the infinite popularity of Dickens's Victorian classic *A Christmas Carol* that can still transcend its Victorian topical, cultural and religious context while maintaining its relevance in modern times might lie in four main features; the a-cultural universal message, the narrative form, celebrated Christmas holiday, and the supernatural which excited the human mind from the ancient times, and will continue to do so in those yet to come.

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## Abstract

The Victorian novel helped the development of the novelistic narrative form. Writers like Charles Dickens made a contribution to both literature and society. Dickens offered a diversity of style, forms, and aims which introduced a novelistic literary newness. *A Christmas Carol* sets an excellent example of a Dickensian conjuring of realistic and unrealistic supernatural aspects to provide readers with a portrait of the Victorian society and reality. In an attempt to provide a new insight into the way Dickensian Realism is viewed and *A Christmas Carol* is read; this article examines the supernatural as a tool used in the Dickensian realistic *Carol* to provide a plausible portrayal of reality while preserving meaning in Dickens's circadian ghostly little book.

## Keywords

Charles Dickens, Victorian literature, Realism, Supernatural, A Christmas Carol.

## Résumé

Le roman victorien a aidé au développement de la forme narrative. Des écrivains comme Charles Dickens ont contribué à la littérature et à la société. Dickens a offert une diversité de styles, de formes et d'objectifs qui ont introduit une nouveauté littéraire romanesque. *Un chant de Noël* est un bon exemple d'une conjonction dickensienne d'aspects réalistes et irréalistes pour fournir aux lecteurs un portrait de la société et la réalité victoriennes. Dans une tentative de donner un nouvel aperçu du Réalisme Dickensien et du roman *Un chant de Noël*; cet article examine

le surnaturel comme un outil utilisé dans le roman réaliste de Dickens pour fournir une représentation plausible de la réalité tout en préservant le sens dans le petit livre fantomatique circadien de Dickens.

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## Mots-clés

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Charles Dickens, littérature victorienne, réalisme, surnaturel, un chant de Noël.

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مستخلص

أعدت الرواية الفيكتورية في تطوير الرواية وجعلها نوعا قائما بحد ذاته. قام العديد من الكتاب ، من بينهم تشارلز ديكنز ، بإثراء كل من الأدب والمجتمع. قدم ديكنز توليفة مميزة من ناحية الأسلوب والشكل والأهداف مما أدى إلى تجديد الأدب الروائي. تُعد ترنيمة عيد الميلاد خير مثال للأسلوب الديكنزي المدمج لجوانب واقعية وغير واقعية وهذا لتزويد القراء بصورة عن المجتمع والواقع الفيكتوري. في محاولة لتقديم رؤية جديدة حول الطريقة التي يتم بها عرض واقعية ديكنز وقراءة ترنيمة عيد الميلاد ؛ يتناول هذا المقال مفهوم الظاهرة الخارقة للطبيعة كوسيلة أدبية في ترنيمة ديكنز الواقعية وهذا لتقديم صورة معقولة للواقع مع المحافظة على معنى القصة اليوماوية الخيالية لديكنز

كلمات مفتاحية

تشارلز ديكنز ، الأدب الفيكتوري ، الواقعية الأدبية ، الظاهرة الخارقة للطبيعة ، ترنيمة عيد الميلاد.