

As in many pieces of literature, an entourage of minor characters accompanies can...

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## **As in many pieces of literature, an entourage of minor characters accompanies Candide and assists and/or hampers his journey**

Religion and Theology, Essay Topic: As in many pieces of literature, an entourage of minor characters accompanies Candide and assists and/or hampers his journey

Love between individuals of unequal status mostly leads to problems. Since Ages, this issue has resulted in serious consequences. Candide is an unfortunate victim who had to counter such a challenge. Destiny plays its part and Cunegonde and the Candide fall in love, much to the annoyance of the Baron. Many unfortunate developments take place; Cunegonde is abducted by a sergeant in the invading Bulgarian army but their love remains intact. They draw great strength and inspiration from Dr. Pangloss's philosophy, and stand the test of the rigors of their lives. Voltaire writes, "The tutor Pangloss was the oracle of the household, and young Candide listened to his teachings with all the good faith of his age and character." (15) True love has only the beginning but no end; it undergoes severe tests, transcends all barriers, and whether fructifies or not, it lives eternally. Though a minor character, Dr. Pangloss impacts the lives of a number of major characters in the story. Voltaire writes, " Optimist philosophy was personified in Pangloss." (7) Voltaire did not love his Age. He dealt with it with his witty criticisms and irony. Philosophy was not a dry subject for him. He admired the strength of human spirit to challenge the destiny and withstand any types of assaults on it. Even the worst things that happen in this world happen for good—that was the perspective of the intelligentsia, the religious

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leaders, kings and statesmen. Voltaire in the book *Candide*, translated by Francois-Marie Arouet reveals the goings-on in his inner world through the character of Dr. Pangloss and he asserts, “.... that of hearing Master Pangloss, the greatest philosopher of the whole province, and consequently of the whole world”(2) is a great experience.

Find self-justification for all the unfortunate events and calamities that befall on humanity from time to time. This is the optimistic philosophy taught by Dr. Pangloss who invariably preaches *Candide* and the rest, that the glass is half full and not half-empty. *Candide* almost throws himself at his feet and opines, “ Dr. Pangloss was right when he told me that all is for the best in the world.”(22) The dynamism infused by Dr. Pangloss is the strongest protective shield for *Candide* and others who came into his contact.

Voltaire airs his philosophy and approach to philosophical truths of life, moral lessons and ethical teachings through a preacher(character) of the caliber of Dr. Pangloss. His approach is quite scientific. Voltaire writes, “ Master Pangloss taught the metaphysico-theologo-cosmolonigology.” (15)He propounds the cause and effect theory to its perfection, though the manner in which he applies it to the Baron’s castle is sarcastic. Voltaire describes the dismissal of *Candide* from the castle thus, “ Baron Thunderten-tronckh happened to pass by the screen; seeing this cause and effect, he drove *Candide* from the castle with vigorous kicks in the backside. Cunegonde fainted. The baroness slapped her as soon as she revived; the consternation reigned in the most beautiful and agreeable of all possible castles.”(17) This is Pangloss’s teaching in action.

As *Candide*’s mentor and a philosopher, Pangloss is responsible for the

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novel's most famous idea: that all is for the best in this "best of all possible worlds." (15) This optimistic sentiment is the main target of Voltaire's satire. Thus Pangloss acts as a spokesman for Voltaire's complaints/observations on French politics, society and culture in the early 18th century.

#### Works Cited

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