



## **HUMANISM IN GEORGE ELIOT'S *SILAS MARNER* : A THEMATIC STUDY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The reason for this article is to concentrate on the humanistic perspectives in Silas Marner by the English writer, George Eliot. Truth be told, George Eliot, in this novel is persuaded of the extraordinary worth of the human generosity, friendship, and compassion. She features the standards of thoughtfulness and compassion through many characters. The subject of humanism is likewise seen through strict perspectives. All things considered, numerous texts are written to safeguard individual particularly ladies. The creator zeros in her work on the government assistance of individuals. She likewise adds to that worry the social climate in which the individuals from local area are connected together through customary qualities, which are introduced as an exceptional repository of values to maintain the agreeable advancement of society. MLA eighth edition has been used for literary documentation and citation.*

**Keywords:** *humanism, sympathy, kindness, betrayal, despair, love, compassion, etc.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Humanism is a philosophy that stresses the importance of human factors rather than looking at religious, divine, or spiritual matters. Humanism is rooted in the idea that people have an ethical responsibility to lead lives that are personally fulfilling while at the same time contributing to the greater good for all people.

Humanism stresses the importance of human values and dignity. It proposes that people can resolve problems through the use of science and reason. Rather than looking to religious traditions, humanism instead focuses on helping people live well, achieve personal growth, and make the world a better place. Humanistic psychology is a perspective that emphasizes looking at the whole individual and stresses concepts such as free will, self-efficacy, and self-

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actualization. Rather than concentrating on dysfunction, humanistic psychology strives to help people fulfill their potential and maximize their well-being. The philosophy focuses on each individual's potential and stresses the importance of growth and self-actualization. The fundamental belief of humanistic psychology is that people are innately good and that mental and social problems result from deviations from this natural tendency.

In George Eliot's British classic, *Silas Marner*, students follow the protagonist, Silas, through his life's journey of despair and enlightenment. Forsaken and feeling the deepest despair of his life, Silas is forced to suppress his past when he finds a mysterious gift on his hearth. Silas, an old miser full of hate and mistrust, is given the most precious gift, a new life.

### **Kindness and sympathy in *Silas Marner*:**

George Eliot is persuaded of the incredible worth of human graciousness, love and compassion. In the majority of her books particularly in *Silas Marner*, George Eliot gives ladies extraordinary creative generosity and compassion. She features this standards through many characters. The personality of Dolly Winthrop in the novel is an exceptionally kind lady. She is a lady of trustworthy inner voice. For instance when Silas Marner has an issue, Dolly support him in his misery and depression; Dolly gives him all fondness. Besides, when Silas Marner's trust in men is wounded by the treachery of his closest companion William Dane, Dolly Winthrop assists Silas with returning to Christian convictions. In the novel, Dolly, at a Christmas-Day, urges Silas with a convincing tone to come to chapel to supplicate God and to be honored. In the first place, Marner attempts to avoid Dolly's offer. Be that as it may, in the end he is persuaded by Dolly and says:

*God rest you, merry gentlemen, let nothing you dismay, for Jesus Christ our saviour was born on Christmas-Day. Dolly listened with a devout look, glancing at Marner in some confidence that this strain would help to allure him to church. (Eliot, Silas Marner 139)*

It is necessary to remind that Marner becomes a poor man as all his money was robbed. There too, Dolly from time to time tries to help Silas by giving him some presents:

*Dolly sighed gently as she held out the cakes to Silas, who thanked her kindly, and looked very close to them, absently, being accustomed to look so at everything he took into his hand-eyed all the while by the wondering bright orbs of the small Aaron, who had made an out-work of his mother's Chair, and was peeping round from behind it. (Eliot, Silas Marner 135)*

When Silas Marner finds a little girl in his cottage, he doesn't know how to react. We can understand his reaction as he is a man and he does not know anything about babies. Dolly takes care of the baby as if it is her own child. She comes frequently at Silas's house to feed the baby, to give it a bath, and to change its clothes.

Dolly Winthrop is tactful; she provides things to Eppie to play with, she gets her way over the christening of Eppie, and prescribes the coal-hole punishment which fails but which conditions Eppie's after-treatment. When Silas's money was robbed, all the inhabitants of Raveloe were incited to pity; they bring Silas their love. Under the influence of the love of Raveloe, Dolly Winthrop and Eppie, Marner's life has changed. George Eliot, like most of her characters, is a humanist woman, she is also humane. Tackling the theme of Humanism, it is necessary to glance at the religious aspects. In the Bible, there are many passages which recommend us to help our brothers, our sisters, and our neighbours in general. Among those passages, there are the Ten Commandments. According to the Ten Commandments, we must be good towards our fellowmen and we must love them. All these recommendations also exist in the Islam books such as the Koran and in the Buddhism. As far as Law is concerned, many statutes are „" written in order to protect men and women. For instance, the eighth clause of the Beninese constitution qualifies Human as sacred and inviolable.

*.....and the same day, Dolly brought her bundle. And displayed to Marner one by one, the Tiny garments in their due order of succession Most of them patched and darned, but clean and neat as fresh sprung herbs. This was the Introduction to a great ceremony with soap and Water, from which baby came out in new beauty, and sat on Dolly's knee, handling her toes and Chuckling and patting her palms together with an air of having made several discoveries about herself,...( Eliot, Silas Marner 179)*

George Eliot isn't the one in particular who have managed the guideline of Humanism. Many writers have likewise fostered the topic of Humanism either in fiction, papers or books. Since eighteenth hundred years, a few scholars and, surprisingly, a few African authors featured the subject in their books. As far compassionate is concerned, it is underlined by George Eliot's explanation of her principal theme, the healing impacts, and regular human relations.

It is of course seen functionally in Silas's reaction to Eppie, but again it is underlined by Dolly Winthrop and her influences on Silas and therefore on Eppie's upbringing. What Godfrey does by marrying Molly secretly and the rejection of the marriage and the child is unnatural. By concealing the marriage, he suffers from what George refers to as a mild form of Nemesis. But just as the motto to the novel shows that a child brings forwards looking, so the revelations in Godfrey's own bring a new awareness to him. The worth of Nancy's remedial influence of the past is further extended by her generosity of spirit, which can at

least heal the effect of the revelations in the present day. Nancy's theme, that nothing is worth doing wrong for, is supplemented by humanity and kindness which pass over, in deed ignore the sense that she herself has been wronged. She even stresses in order to steer Godfrey towards what she feels is just compunction, the likeness that Eppie bears to him, her real father.

There is a conscious putting down of self before the interests of another or others, even Silas turned in upon self by his rejection, has to be feelingly educated again into humanity, devoting himself to his child and suffering for her misdeeds. This theme of the need for man's humanity to man is sub-served by a love of nature, seen in Silas's early and innocent collecting of herbs, and in Eppie's last wish for a flower garden. It is given symbolic weight by her moving the bush where Molly died, thus bringing the past she hardly knew into the orbit of the present by this simple act of simple love.

If one of the major themes of *Silas Marner* is love, one must add that it registers the triumph of good over evil. Despite the realism of most of the action, it is curious that George Eliot thought that verse might be appropriate to the psychological presentation of Silas, the fairy tale theme referred to above must be looked at in terms of treatment. William Dane and Dunsey both represent evil, but William Dane is seen in the outline rather than the flesh. He is the one dimensional stereotype of the fairy tale, just as Eppie for the most is too, with Aaron as a rustic fairy prince who marries her. Thus, William Dane's corruption not only injures Silas, but himself. He is putting himself beyond the „remedial influences, while Eppie's innocence helps other to the new life or realization. It is certainly important to note the corruptive influences of gold, which by analogy, means money, and the remedial influence of natural gold, the colour of Eppie's hair. The theme of the novel is expressed through realism and fable or fairy tale, but the balance as in Eliot's work, lies within the sphere of her realism. Simple symbolic dimensions cannot convey thematic power in the same sense that positively human ones can. However, they can give a universality to what we have seen in particular.

### **Betrayal:**

In Lantern Yard, a village where Silas Marner spent his youth as a linen-weaver, he lived with an old friend of William Dane in the spirit of assurance of salvation. He was too engaged to Sarah, a young servant woman whom he laid all his hope in as a partner in his future nuclear family. Before he took a refuge at Raveloe, he was bitterly hurt by his colleague who built up a plot. Silas Marner saw him coming with the church members to arrests him for having stolen the church money. Despite his innocence, the minister convinced totally by the proof advanced by a conscious eye –witness, suspected too.

Nevertheless, according to the principles of the church, in such cases, other measures were put into practice to find out the truth. They resolved on praying and drawing lots. Marner could do nothing but lay his naïve faith and innocence into the providence. To his great astonishment

*...the lots declared that Silas Marner was guilty. (Eliot, Silas Marner 12)*

Consequently, he was not only suspended from the church membership, but also called upon to render up the stolen money. Therefore, the minister only offered to shrive him. The verdict sentenced him guilty and God was on their side. This prevailing situation gave rise to a rejection of God and men for both have plotted against him. There was only one human being who would defend him for they were linked together by indissoluble bonds, not hidden from the neighbors but rather known to the church and could not offer accordingly. It was on the contrary who turned down her engagement and managed to cope with William Dane, the betrayer whom she got married with in a lapse of time. Sorrow and loneliness show Silas Marner's deprivation, his need for love and human contact. His trust in man and God had been cruelly bruised. As far as Silas Marner's isolation is concerned, we can notice that the man is full of experience. More often, it is the lessons drawn from one's background that improve the present livelihood and undoubtedly, assure the prospects for the future. Yet, it does no exception for Silas, who makes up his mind to retire from Lantern-yard and settle southward at Raveloe. Regarded as an alien who invaded the rustic villagers, he was compelled to live in loneliness.

Apart from his neighbors, aloof from communal beliefs and faith, passive to any other family life share. He set up his loom and contended himself in collecting gold coins in an absorbing passion. Isn't it worth for him replacing William Dane's friendship and Sarah's love by the bright faces of the gold coins? Indeed, the known trusting young Weaver of Lantern-yard becomes the man withdrawn into solidarity. Silas Marner has to face another misfortune: his cherished gold is stolen. Who could imagine that an unknown person with no relation to any other human being, could be stolen in his cottage? This situation dragged him in a more complete isolation. Many passages in the novel show Silas's betrayal by William Dane and his isolation. Marner listened in silence. At least, when everyone rose to depart, he went towards William Dane and said in a voice shaken by agitation:

*...The last time I remember using my knife, was when I look it out to cut a strap for you. I don't remember putting it in my pocket again. You stole the money, and you have woven a plot to lay that sin at my door. But you may prosper for all that; there is no just God that governs the earth righteously, but a God of lies, that bears witness against the innocent... (Eliot, Silas Marner 61)*

Silas's fervent strict nature is supplanted by dismissal of God and man, for both have dismissed him. William Dane's kinship and Sarah's love are supplanted by what we call the 'brilliant countenances' of the gold coins he acquires from his unremitting work at the loom. The trusting, susceptible and weak youthful weaver of Lantern yard is supplanted by the man pull out.

Today, English society has obviously grasped the intricacy of the idea of men. It is the justification for why present day and new procedures have been created to demonstrate the liable or not of person. For sure, individuals from the remainder of Europe, America, and particularly Africa are totally worried about this subject. So the human instincts depicted in the novel are normal to all people.

### CONCLUSION:

Along these lines, George Eliot, in this novel, welcomes individuals on the planet, the English nation specifically to be individuals from the religion of humankind as she personally has been. Then, at that point, the individual who needs to like God ought to at first like people in light of the fact that the adoration for God is appeared in the affection for masculinity. To adore humanity is to cherish God.

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