
George Eliot Wrote Silas Marner: The Weaver Of Raveloe

It is her third novel which was published in 1861. Silas Marner is a tale of a linen weaver, who was highly sought after as he was highly skilled in his trade. The tale's heavy emphasis was on morality and justice which were common themes in George Eliot's writings - perhaps attributed to her upbringing and how she was greatly concerned with the good and bad in social & human relationships. The book also touches on how consensus of justice in communities work - predominantly by how popular or powerful the character is being portrayed. And how she weaves the tale to end with how justice over rules the injustice inflicted upon Silas Marner.

Silas Marner is the linen weaver and the main character of the story... who settles in Raveloe from Lantern Yard after the betrayal of his best friend. He tries to hide the pain of his past by burying himself in his work and saves quite a lot of money/gold. When his money/gold was stolen, he was mortified and bitter. However, all his bitterness was replaced by love for the child whom he adopted. Being a person of high morals, the story ends with Silas wanting to seek the truth from his past when he visited his old village - Lantern Yard - to find his old villagers to tell them the truth of what happened. However, his old village was gone and although he could not find a closure - he still has a happy ending with his daughter by his side.

The author, George Eliot, was a woman born into an era whereby women were less respected. Thus she hid her real name - Mary Anne Evans. Her father, Robert, was a man of legendary physical strength, great practical ability and unimpeachable honesty. It is said that she was her father's favourite and most faithful companion. At a young age, her mother fell gravely ill and passed away not long after the birth of her twin brothers. The idea of being abandoned as a child is re-lived in her tale during the point where Eppie loses her mother to drug abuse. This background history would enable us to further understand the perspective from which the author was trying to portray. This historical background could be the factors that molded the tale of Silas Marner.

The author manages to weave interesting facts surrounding morality and ethical boundaries in the story, Silas Marner. With many efficient literary devices like imagery, symbolism, repetition, contrasts etc, George Eliot was successful in delivering a tale that relates to many of us - tugging at our heartstrings. Her story also dwells on delivering justice to those who had integrity issues. It also drew our attention to the fact that one's ambitions and greed could lead us astray and make us lose our values as a human being. As such, this would be the main focus of my investigation. Unlike most moral and justice criticisms, I would be focusing on the third person narrative - omniscient - and how it effectively brings the ideas of morality in the tale.

First aspect to explore:

Morality is a fragile standard molded and bent by the society we live in. In many cases, morality and justice come hand in hand as is the case in Silas Marner. Upon further exploration, after re-reading some chapters in Silas Marner, moral standards is a recurring theme that within its fairytale like formatting.

For a long time, Politicians, Philosophers, religious figures etc have been debating about

whether morals are something we are "born with" or whether we acquire it as we are growing up. So that brings us to the question on whether our moral standing is acquired through - "nature" or through "nurture". To answer this question - firstly we have to understand that different moral standards exist in different cultures and communities. Since moral standards are incorporated differently in each culture and community, this leads to each person having differing set of beliefs and their related actions. For example, in some communities, young children can do almost whatever they wish and get away with it - probably due to the fact that that society believes children are children and know not what they are doing. While in other stricter communities, children are treated like adults and punished in almost the same way - with the belief that they must learn at a young age.

In the adult world, adults often acquire their moral standards from a higher authority or acquire their own moral system based on what seems right to them or through their own learnings and teachings from their parents. However, a person's morals can be changed as they grow up example, a Where people's' morals come from and what the specific morals are can change independently. For example, if a pious person has grown up with a certain set of moral standards but joins a cult which teaches them to steal or beg on the streets or even to prostitute themselves to fund the church - they might adapt their morals to abide by their newly acquired beliefs. In the case of Silas Marner, the scene in chapter ____ where Molly, Eppie's drug addicted mother passes away in the snow near christmas time, Godfrey Cass the husband, abandoned both eppie and her mother, just to pursue his new lover, Nancy Cass.

Besides morality, some critics, speaks about how George Eliot's concern about sympathy changed her entire treatment of social and moral issues during a certain period in time. In her work, the sympathy there depended absolutely upon a 'division in the psyche a split in consciousness that permits two conflicting views to exist simultaneously'. This mental division is the material of conscience. By using the third person narrative, she - the narrator - is looking at this tale from an 'outsider' point of view. With such, it could also portray the dilemma one could face such as the idea of 'bad' and 'good' in our heads, the angel and devil in us. The usage of Authorial Intrusion can be of great aid to such portrayal due to it being a literary device wherein the author penning the story, poem or prose steps away from the text and speaks out to the reader. The Authorial Intrusion establishes a one to one relationship between the writer and the reader where the latter is no longer a secondary player or an indirect audience to the progress of the story but is the main subject of the author's attention.