

**How to Cite:**

Abedini, S. (2022). A comparative study: Great expectations and the Silas Marner: The evils and challenges of living conditions. *International Journal of Health Sciences*, 6(S2), 7066–7071. <https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v6nS2.6687>

# **A comparative study: Great expectations and the Silas Marner: The evils and challenges of living conditions**

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**Abstract**--This study attempts to compare two important literary books. One is Great Expectations by Charles Dickens and another is The Silas Marner by George Eliote. The main purpose of this study is to examine the environmental problems that two books dealt with different stories in the same period in the literary world. This is a qualitative study. In the Great Expectations book, the aim is to explain the shortage of livelihoods and the struggles and ambitions of people in these situations. In The Silas Marner, one commits betrayal under difficult living conditions and learns the challenges of life on his own. In other words, the research has many aspects of features. Two books on life, lack of livelihood and social problems in the books written by two important authors of the literary period were examined.

**Keywords**--life, lack livelihood, social problems, literature period.

## **Introduction**

It is very important to explore the world of literature, to investigate, analyze and examine the differences and similarities found about the authors themselves and their comparisons. This study examines the similarities of two best known writers on English Language Literature. It had a great influence on the literary World of the Victorian Era in English Literature during this period, we investigated the similarities of the two most popular British writers in their novels describing the evils and difficulties of living conditions. Charles Dickens and George Eliot were the two most influential writers of the Victorian Era. The similarities between these two popularities writers books Great Expectations and The Silas Marner in literary life during the same period are remarkable to be learned. According to the research, it is said that these writers expressions and criticisms about their living conditions are very good. Although both authors have made different interpretations on their books, the similarity of the issues they have tried to address and criticized can be noticed. During his writing, Charles Dickens

examined the evil of living conditions and the callous attitudes of the period of his novels. George Eliot, on the other hand, dealt with the difficulties and moments in people's lives, in her novels.

Although the novels of these two writers have different stories, their similarities are revealed by addressing the same subject. One of our writers' most famous novels Charles Dickens' "Great Expectations" novel and "The Silas Marner" novel by George Eliot were discussed in this research. It is also known that Charles Dickens' books have been heavily criticized by other authors, as he has experienced a difficult time. He used more critical and frank interpretations in writing his books. In this novel Great Expectations, Charles Dickens tells the story of Pip, who began a mysterious life after living in difficulties in the village where he lived as a child. George Eliot tells the story of Marner, who was slandered for theft years ago and lived through the rigors of life in his novel Silas Marner. These works were written by different authors, but the subject and period they wanted to be described are similar. These two famous novels with different stories, the characters and even the similarities in writing become reason enough to read. In this study, it has been noticed that the similarities between these two writers' books in their writing periods are worth investigating. Even though almost all the books of our authors have been praised, these two books seem to be suitable for investigating similarities. In this study try to examine the similarity and writing style of two of the most important authors' books in the literary life. In the following chapters, general information about the subject is given by continuing with the information obtained about the authors' book Great Expectations and The Silas Marner.

## **Literature Review**

### **Charles Dickens (Great Expectations)**

Charles John Huffam Dickens was born on February 7, 1812, at Portsea (later part of Portsmouth) on the southern coast of England, to John and Elizabeth Dickens. Charles was the second born of eight children. His father was a pay clerk in the navy office. Because of financial difficulties, the family moved about until they settled in Camden Town, a poor neighborhood in London, England. At the age of twelve Charles worked with working-class men and boys in a factory that handled "blacking," or shoe polish. While his father was in debtor's prison, the rest of the family moved to live near the prison, leaving Charles to live alone. Most literary scholars have expressed their opinions about Charles Dickens in a way that is almost identical. The poor Pip, who sought the love of the great, had his ambition to rise. He will be rich from his village, and despite his lack of love, hypocrisy and greed for money in a rapidly industrialized society, he will be a gentleman in London. Indeed, his great hopes and efforts have made him a Gentleman in London. But his "great hopes" were still in vain. "Charles Dickens is much loved for his great contribution to classic English literature. He was the quintessential Victorian author. His epic stories, vivid characters and exhaustive depiction of contemporary life are unforgettable". (John Reith, 2014) An orphan named Philip lives in the village with his sister. His most important friend is his brother-in-law Joe Gargery, who is his sister's wife. His mother and father died, and he raised his older sister and his good-hearted brother-in-law, the town

blacksmith. Pip goes to visit his parents' grave one night. As he walks through the woods, he meets a burly, imposing, ugly man. He tells Pip that he's been starving for days, that if he doesn't bring him food, he's going to kill him. It's obvious from the chains that bind this man's feet when he escaped from prison. As a matter of fact, he asked Pip to bring them to a bench to cut these chains. Pip comes from his sister's kitchen with a plate of meat dough and a toolbox.

But when he comes back, he sees that man fighting with someone else. The other guy disappears after a fight. Pip, who went to visit Miss Havisham, did not make sense of her strange behavior. Ms. Havisham asked Pip to come home often and spend time with her stepdaughter Estella. Pip meets this request and often begins to come to this house. But his cold and arrogant attitude bothers him. Estella annoys Pip, but Miss Havisham allows her to even piss off Pip. Pip is under the influence of Estella because she is the most beautiful girl she has ever seen. So Pip falls in love with Estella, Miss Havisham's adopted child. Pip is a very ambitious and hardworking person. Through his hard work and ambition, he intends to escape poverty and become a gentleman in London. All hope is to get rid of the village where these poor miners live and become a rich person. He dreams and works hard. But even if he knows that he cannot achieve such a life simply by working and ambition, a voice tells him that he will attain such a life. One day, a cocky lawyer named Mr. Jaggers comes to Pip. A mysterious legacy left Pip with a mystery. The lawyer advises him to come to London and become a gentleman. The legacy inherited to Pip is also quite high. At first, Pip thinks that her legacy is given by Mrs. Havisham and wants her to grow up as a desirable husband for Estella. Pip arrives in London with an elegant teenager named Pocket, a distant relative of Miss Havisham. She moved into a room and lived in the same room as Herber Pocket. One day Pip tries to find out who his lawyer is from Lawyer Jaggers.

### **George Eliot (The Silas Marner)**

Mary Anne Evans, who wrote under the pseudonym George Eliot, was born on November 22, 1819, at South Farm, Arbury Hall in Warwickshire. She was the youngest of five children. Mary Anne was afforded the privileges of a private education. She enjoyed books and learning from a young age; she was introspective and quiet, much like her character Dorothea in Middlemarch, so she was a bit of an anomaly among young women of the time. Unfortunately, Mary Anne was forced to leave school at the age of 16, when her mother died in early 1836. Her father continued to indulge her love of learning, purchasing books for her and helping her to learn German and Italian. George Eliot, the author of *Silas Marner*, is actually a British woman writer and translator Mary Anne Evans. Within the framework of this character he created, we gain important information about the teachings of the church and the social life of Europe. The story of Marner, who had been slandered for theft years ago, and the worst events that followed, was as follows: Silas Marner lived in a village called Lantern Yard. Because of his interest in religion, he became a highly respected figure by his close circle.

He had a very close friend, William Dane. Their friendship with him had been going on for over a decade, and the food they drank would not go apart. Though

their thoughts sometimes clashed, the two always understood each other. And Marner had an affair with a girl named Sarah. Soon they would get engaged and then get married. There was only one problem: the crises Marner had. These crises, which were very occasional and isolated him from life for ten minutes, were seen by many as a religious quality. His best friend, William, said he thought the devil had gone into these crisis moments and made him do bad things. Although Sarah wasn't a problem for now, it wasn't good for her. Although Sarah wasn't a problem for now, it wasn't good for her. One day, a peasant whom they knew very closely became ill. Silas and his friends were standing guard. "A female writer with a male conviction: George Eliot one of the 19th-century English literature women who wrote under the male pseudonym, One of Victoria's most important writers, who bravely demonstrated the first example of bisexual feminism" (Yeliz Kızılarlan, 2008) Worst of all, his best friend William threw this slander. Soon everyone made him look guilty, Sarah told him to break the engagement. Within a week, William and Sarah got married. Silas immediately left this village. He settled in a town called Raveloe. He started to weaving, which was all he knew. He didn't talk to anybody here, salute him. But soon everyone noticed his talent, giving him all the linen weaves. Marner lived in a small quarry and spent his time just doing his job. The peasants gave him so much work that Silas was amazed at his sudden increase in money. Since then, the only purpose was to accumulate more gold. Dunstan and his older brother Godfrey could not share their father's money. Godfrey had a marriage unaware of his family. She also had a baby. But she was having an affair with Nancy, the most beautiful girl in town. Dunstan was the only one who knew about this, and he was always blackmailing him. Godfrey was giving all his money to his brother.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude in this study, there is some similarities information about these two books. First of all, one of the most important similarities to know is that these two books deal with the challenges of life. Let's start with *Silas Marner*, a book by George Eliot. The book is the story of Marner, who was slandered for theft years ago and who spread bad things happened to him. Silas is someone who's been through different crises and lives his life. He and his best friend, William, were standing guard over a sick man. But all of a sudden, a lot of people come into the house and ask if a knife belongs to him. At that moment, his best friend William tells him that he saw the knife next to the gold and that it belonged to Silas and slandered him for stealing. Silas is stunned by his fits, and his fiancée leaves Silas and marries his best friend William. Marner leaves the village completely in the face of what he's going through. After all, he learns to live alone against the rigors of life and makes his own way happy at the end of the book. In this book, George Eliot discusses the challenges of life and despair. Charles Dickens' book *Great Expectations* describes the challenges of life, just as in *The Silas Marner*. Although different stories or narrative formats have been used, it is hard not to realize that there are similarities in both books that are being investigated. It is also interesting for both authors to address these similar topics in literature under the same subjects in the same periods. In the book *Of Great expectations*, he discusses the challenging life story of 19th-century mining apprentices.

This novel has also influenced writers such as Jack London and Richard Llewellyn. He was also a pioneer of novels and novelists who enjoyed describing the gaps between the village and the urbanite in world literature. One of the books describes the difficulties of life within oneself, while the other describes the difficulties between people and village and city lives. Although their stories are different, these books convey to people similar problems and challenges. Both books were written in almost identical periods and were appreciated and appreciated by certain other importance writers. Another important similarity to note is that books have left people with very good influences and inspirations. The Silas Marner's book was particularly well-influenced by students and other people with their good reviews. In fact, a positive conclusion was reached with these surveys conducted with students. Students interpret the book as follows: In Silas Marner, George Eliot's English classic, students watch the hero Silas through the journey of desperation and enlightenment of his life. Feeling the deepest desperation of his life, Silas is forced to suppress his past when he finds a mysterious gift in his quarry. The most precious gift to an old distraught Silas full of hatred and distrust is the fact that he has been given a new life that affects students and all people. Similarly, in his book *Great Expectations*, he also had some pretty good side effects for people. As in the other book, the book of *Great Expectations* was highly praised and was adapted by the BBC as a film and television series on 26 April 2013, and it was even more influential to people. The main characters of *Great Expectations* are Pip and Joe Gargery. Like Silas, the character of The Silas Marner in *Pip*, he struggles with the challenges of his own life.

He wants to come out of the village life with his own efforts and ambition slots and become a city gentleman, but as the book's title says, his 'great expectations' are in vain. A noticeable similarity between the stories, like the damage Silas suffered from his best friend, was very mean to his brother-in-law Joe, who was Pip's best friend, and always despised him. Although he got the life he wanted, he saw the difficulties of life and regretted his desperation, and apologized to his brother-in-law Joe. But Pip is very ill now, and for some things it's too late. The similarity of the other book to the character Silas is that he sees the difficulties of life and has a great deal of desperation, but for Pip, the end of the story is not as happy and hopeful as Silas. One story speaks of the good aspects of bearing the challenges of life, while another discusses the similar subject in two different books, telling the story of both good and bad living conditions caused by human ambition. In fact, the biggest similarity point is that according to research and criticism, they have been able to influence both other period writers and people in a positive way, albeit with different stories in both of their books. *Great Expectations* is a different account of how helpless people's feelings and life challenges feel, like the other book, even though the book of *Great Expectations* is about the negative aspects. In fact, they both aim for the same thing. One of these similarities is that it was written during the same periods mentioned in the research. It's nice that two important Victorian writers, one woman and one male, are targeting the same problems, the same audiences. The Book of *Great Expectations* was written by Charles Dickens in 1860, while *The Silas Marner* was written by George Eliot in 1861.

Written in two books one year apart and reached with great praise to this day, it has been gifted to people in various directions and continues to reach. It has been among the great works of these two books. But there is important information to know. The book is written by Marry Ann Evans, author of *The Silas Marner*, under the male identity of George Eliot. The reason he's doing this is because he wants to be taken seriously because women writers of the Victorian era wrote almost all their novels and works in the romantic category. As mentioned in these two books, there are multiple striking similarities. But one of the good parts to mention is the characters in the books. The main characters of the books have been found to have very similar and common allocations, but there are two other characters that can be seen as the other main characters. The Silas Marner is a friend of Silas' William and Pip's brother-in-law Joe, one of the characters of *Great Expectations*. One of the remarkable things between the two is that our main characters have close similarities to their personalities, while these two side characters are different. William disparaged and slandered his best friend Silas, while in the other story, Joe helps Pip and tries to warn him. Here's another similar detail. In a recent similarity to the story, the differences in stories actually convey edit the same message as personality differences. Although some of the characters have personality differences, the connections in the story and the purpose they want to tell are the same. This concluded the similarities between *The Silas Marner* and *Great Expectations*, written by two valuable authors Charles Dickens and George Eliot (Marry Ann Evans). Surprising and unexpected similarities emerged during the research.. The most important features mentioned and researched were primarily the subject, purpose, similarities between the main characters, periodic common points, writing stages and types of the two books in common. In this conclusion, the details of the research are examined and written in detail.

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