

Department of English and American Studies

Philosophical Faculty

Palacký University Olomouc

The Skeletons in the Closet in George Eliot's Novels

Kostlivci ve skříni v románech George Eliot

Bachelor's thesis

Tereza Kalousková (English Philology – History)

Supervisor: Mgr. Ema Jelínková, PhD.

Olomouc 2013

Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně a uvedla v ní
předepsaným způsobem všechnu použitou literaturu.

V Olomouci dne 20. dubna 2013

I would like to thank to my supervisor Mgr. Ema Jelínková, PhD. for her kind help, advice and patience.

Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Victorian England	2
2.1. Queen Victoria and her age	3
2.2. George Eliot	4
2.3. Virtues and Values	7
2.3.1. Gender and Class	11
2.3.2. Economics and Politics.....	17
2.3.3. Religion	19
3. Victorian Novel.....	20
3.1. Middlemarch	21
3.1.1. Summary of the novel Middlemarch	22
3.1.2. Character of Nicolas Bulstrode.....	24
3. 2. Silas Marner	30
3.2.1. Summary of Silas Marner	31
3.2.2. Character of Godfrey Cass	33
3.3. The Mill on the Floss	35
3.3.1. Summary of the Novel.....	36
3.3.2. Character of Maggie Tulliver	38
4. Conclusion	40
5. Résumé.....	42
6. Annotation.....	45
7. Anotace	46
7. Bibliography	47

1. Introduction

In my bachelor's thesis I have decided to write about the work of one of the greatest Victorian authors, Mary Anne Evans, who is better known as George Eliot. Her novels and mostly her highly developed talent for describing the characters make her a mediator between our and Victorian inner world and mind.

Victorian age, besides other things, has been known for its firm structure of values and strict public behaviour. Ideal gentlemen were polite, decent and honest and women, these angels in the house, if I can help myself with the title of Coventry Patmore's poem, were really unearthly figures, kind and helpful creatures who were supposed to support their husband and make them the right home environment for their public success. These strict rules were hard to obey and George Eliot, as a mirror to the Victorian Age, describes with honesty all different kinds of human nature, not the perfect ones, but people, who make serious mistakes which can ruin them entirely.

Therefore the aim of my work is to draw closer the dark secrets of the human nature and to look under the façade of Victorian Age. The first part of my work is going to sum up the structure of values in Victorian England as well the life of George Eliot, whose fate clashes the Victorian attitude on many levels, and her opinion development, which reflects great philosophical movements of that time and which left its impact in the whole spectrum of the society. I would like to describe the rules and customs of the society which helped to shape its members – from faith, domestic values to the matter of finance and politics.

The target values I have picked up in the first, theoretical, part of the work were not chosen randomly, but in need of understanding of the second part of my bachelor's thesis, where I have chosen three main Eliot's novels, *The Mill on the Floss*, *Middlemarch* and *Silas Marner*, to closely examine. The microcosm of all these publications is rich in characters. There is no true villain and there is no true genuine good character as well. George Eliot was not a lenient author; her probe into the depths of her character's minds is very conscientious and therefore there is more than one candidate who would be a proper material for examination. Henceforth, I have chosen significant characters from each work, which embody Victorian morality and dark secrets: Nicolas Bulstrode from *Middlemarch*, Godfrey Cass from *Silas Marner* and

Maggie Tulliver from *The Mill on the Floss*. All these characters have one significant similarity in their stories and it is the moral origin of their “skeletons”.

My aim in this work is to examine the hidden secrets of George Eliot’s characters and describe the impact on their morality as well as the society behaviour after the secret is revealed. I would like to find the link or similarity between all these situations. Finally I would like to discover the inner world of Victorian Englishmen and the impact of their own personal skeletons in the closet on their everyday life.

2. Victorian England

Victorian England is, with no doubt, one of the most important and most mentioned era from the history of this insular nation. Around the period of Queen Victoria’s reign was the British nation on its top. British Empire was sprawled over many territories, from cold Ireland to hot and tropical India. The supreme set of values and lifestyle of the white Christian from the Island was considered as a superior and most civilized. In January 1986 Former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher talked about the Victorian values it in one of her TV interview for *London Weekend Television* with Brian Walden.

“... Those were the values when our country became great, but not only did our country become great internationally, also so much advance was made in this country. Colossal advance, as people prospered themselves so they gave great voluntary things to the State. So many of the schools we replace now were voluntary schools, so many of the hospitals we replace were hospitals given by this great benefaction feeling that we have in Britain, even some of the prisons, the Town Halls. As our people prospered, so they used their independence and initiative to prosper others, not compulsion by the State.”¹

Thatcher’s aim was to restore the values which made Great Britain “Great”. I believe that Victorian England is even these days very popular. British people and especially TV audience love BBC period dramas and TV adaptations which mostly take place in the second half on the 19th century. The Victorian Period was also very rich on

¹ Thatcher Margaret, interview by Walden Brian, *Weekend World*, LWT, January 16, 1983.

great drama or lyric writers, who are considered as one of the biggest and greatest novelist in British literature history. Books became hugely available and most of the writers wrote about the settings they knew. Thanks to their characters and talent, there exists great evidence about their era.

2.1. Queen Victoria and her age

Queen Victoria was indeed one of the greatest monarchs in the British history. But we cannot say that Victorian era and their values became a visible phenomenon in the first day of her rule or the coronation day. People did not wake up with a strange feeling in their body and mind on 20th June 1837, with the sound of the church bells announcing the death of their beloved king and having a new young monarch, that new age is coming. Of course as well as we are full of hopes with the new selected government even they have been filled up with hope while having a new queen. But they life wasn't affected. If we could understand Victorian mind and for our own use make Victorian England as a packet of values and opinions, we cannot say that it was delivered and applied with the arrival of the new sovereign.

Many historians and literature critics have a different approach in parting the history². I believe that England was walking on the path to great achievements for a very long time. Science, physics, literature, philosophy and any other innovations in many fields, which creates the culture of the nation, could not start or exist without proper backgrounds. These roots started to grow with industrial revolution which hit Great Britain in the second half of the 18th century. Union with Ireland, war with France, periodically returning commercial booms, end of East India Company's monopoly, Catholic emancipation and Great Reform Bill, which gave power to the new industrious cities which empowered their place in the voting system, happened before Victoria's succeeding on the throne. With no doubt, even The Great French revolution left its impact on the English society. The abolition of the slavery, a big step in human history also happened during the reign of William IV, predecessor of Victoria.³ The Queen became the longest ruling British monarch (1837 – 1901)⁴ in a very exciting

² Barbara Caine, "When Did the Victorian Period End? Questions of Gender and Generation." *Journal Of Victorian Culture* 11 (September 2006): 317-325. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed March 15, 2013).

³ Paul Langford and Christopher Harvie, *The Oxford History of Britain: The Eighteenth Century and the Age of Industry* (Oxford University Press, 1992), 238.

⁴ Neil Jones, "Grandmother of Europe." *Britain* 79 (January 2012): 40-47. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed March 15, 2013).

period of human history and therefore it is more than acceptable to name the period after her.

2.2. George Eliot

George Eliot lived through the tumultuous era. George Willis Cooke wrote about her, that *she is a product of her time, as Lessing, Goethe, Wordsworth and Byron were of theirs; a voice to utter its purpose and meaning, as well as a trumpet-call to lead it on.*⁵ She is considered by many literary historians and critics as one of the greatest novelists with a precise description quality. Her life was almost as tempting and interesting as her novels. Since I will mention and closely examine some of her life turning points even later in a chapter concerning the Victorian virtues and in a chapter about *The Mill on the Floss*, I would like draw closely her life in bases.

Mary Ann Evans, which is her christening name, was born 22nd November 1819 in Warwickshire. Her father, Robert Evans, started as a master carpenter and ended up as a land agent. Mary was very influenced by her father and according to critics, we could say, that traces to her father could be find in many characters of her novels, such as Caleb Garth in *Middlemarch*. Mather of Mary Evans was Robert's second wife, since his previous one died and left him alone with two small children, a boy and a girl. The second married bared three children. Christiana, Isaac and Mary Ann. Mary was very keen on her brother, which is very visible in her master piece *Mill on the Floss*. She was a bright child and excellent student. She was sent to a free village school with her brother. Later on, when she was seven, she went to a girl's school, as any Victorian girl of her ranks. She was well taught in English, with drawing, music, and some little French.⁶ After that, at the age of 12, she was sent to a boarding school in Coventry, which she finished at the age of fifteen. Very interesting is also her appearance. The physical appearance is not really important feature of the novelist, but since it could be also important for them; it should be mentioned even here. George Willis in his book about George Eliot mentions various Eliot's acquaintance who described her as a masculine not very good looking person. *She was keenly susceptible to what she thought her lack of personal beauty, frequently saying that she was not pleased with a single feature of her face or figure.*⁷ Many of her temporary admires did not know how

⁵ George Willis Cooke, *George Eliot: A Critical Study of Her Life, Writings and Philosophy* (Boston: J.R. Osgood and Company, 1883), 4.

⁶ Cooke, *George Eliot*, 7.

⁷ Ibid.

to manage her appearance, so we can find many very complimentary portraits. I believe that the appearance of your favourite writer completes the picture. We can see it, for example, in the hunt for a true portrait of William Shakespeare or Jane Austen.⁸ The use of her known portraits and photographs are even nowadays considered disputable by critics such as the author of the review of Kathryn Hughes' *Life of George Eliot*, Gene Downs. While criticizing the cover of the book, he says that *the problem is that Eliot was as famously ugly as she was famously clever, and who wants to buy a book whose cover shows a hook-nosed, heavy-browed, big-jawed matron?*⁹ Later he adds citation by Hughes that *the question of George Eliot's ugliness has always embarrassed her biographers who at the times seem almost unable to bear the truth.*¹⁰ All these can bring us the character of Mary Evans closer and it can help us to understand her better.

Mary Evans was also because of that very keen to study and work on her character and knowledge, therefore when she ended the school at Coventry, she continued her studies back home. A year later, after her mother's passing and her siblings' wedding, she ended up living alone with her father being his housekeeper for many years. After her father left his position and business to his son, they moved to Foleshill. There she began to learn Latin, Greek, German and Italian, studied classic literatures and music in great detail.

Victorian England was very connected with a church and the faith and Christianity had a very strong position in the society. It was also very important in life of Mary Evans. But as I will discuss it more deeply in a chapter concerning faith in Victorian England, we should know for now, that her break up with the church and believing in God made her living with her father very uneasy which escalated in her alienation from father and moving out. But regarding her knowledge and intellect, it was very helpful and this particular change helped her to "spread her wings". Her friendship with the family of Charles Bray opens her new horizons of vast knowledge and also circle of friends who would understand her. George Willis Cooke in his book says that *the intellectual surroundings of Marian Evans at this time gave shape to her whole after-life. There were now laid the foundations of her mode of thinking, and her*

⁸ *Jane Austen: The Unseen Portrait?* First broadcast 26 December 2011 by BBC. Directed by Neil Crombie.

⁹ Gene Downs, "A Clear-eyed Look at the Life of George Eliot," *Savannah Morning News* (1999) 12 september 1999

¹⁰ Downs, Gene: *A Clear-eyed Look at the Life of George Eliot*. *Savannah Morning News* 12 September (1999): 4E.

*philosophic theories began to be formed. It was in the home of one of her friends she learned to think for herself, and it was there her positivist doctrines first appeared.*¹¹

Her father's worsening health made her to come back and taking care of him lasted for two years, after which he died. Mary was devastated by that and even a continental trip with her friends did not ease her mind. She stayed in Geneva for one year where she studied various subjects. After her return, she realised that her knowledge and philosophy does not meet the views and opinions of her brother, with whom she lived, which resulted in the invitation by Brays to live with them. She started to translate many works and in 1851 she was invited to London by John Chapman to help with the radical journal *The Westminster Review*, which was a magazine which brought many book reviews and information about literature. Mary became a part of John Chapman family.

Her arrival and London staying is connected with her love interest as well. According to Jennifer Uglow's *George Eliot*, she quickly fell in love with three men: John Chapman, Herbert Spencer and most importantly George Henry Lewes, who all came from a newly emerging class of intellectuals, journalists and writers whose achievement and ambitions cut them off from a sense of solidarity with their past.¹² The stay in London was accompanied by many changes of accommodation and new acquaintances. Through her close, very often called romantic, friendship with famous philosopher Herbert Spencer, she met her future life companion George Henry Lewis. This truly un-Victorian relationship will be discussed later in a chapter concerning Victorian class and gender. George Henry Lewis was a very equal opposite to George Eliot and they were equal in knowledge and capability. They travelled a lot around Europe, during their living together; she published all her famous novels *Adam Bede* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), *Silas Marner* (1861), *Romola* (1863), *Felix Holt*, *The Radical* (1866), *The Spanish Gypsy* (1868), *Middlemarch* (1871) and *Daniel Deronda* (1876). The year of 1878 was a sad year for George Eliot because George Henry Lewis died in November when he succumbed to cancer.¹³ After the death of her greatest friend and lover, a year later, George Eliot marries John Walter Cross. This one year long marriage brought back her before alienated brother into her life, but the

¹¹ Cooke, *George Eliot*, 11.

¹² Jennifer S. Uglow, *George Eliot* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987), 45.

¹³ Rosemary Ashton, *George Eliot: A Life* (New York: The Penguin Press, 1996), 337.

happiness does not last long because after George and her husband return from Italian honeymoon, she falls ill and dies on 22nd December 1880.¹⁴

2.3. Virtues and Values

The sociologist Gertrude Himmelfarb in *The De-moralization of Society, From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values*, writes about the idea of the “Victorian values”. She says that this term has its own limitations, that it is time-bounded and place-bounded and according to critics she mentions also gender-bounded, race-bounded, class bounded and culture bounded.¹⁵ The values originate from several aspects. Every culture has its own unique set of values. The British Empire was far-reaching empire and with that we can expect that Victorians had many occasions to observe, see or to read about different cultures. Many of them, since the white Victorian was on a pedestal as an idol, were very shocked by for them truly savage-like customs. This with no doubt chauvinistic behaviour can be seen for example in *The Passage to India* by E. M. Foster. And we could say that Victorian explorers, from David Livingstone¹⁶ to more shocking Richard Francis Burton, brought to their homeland many exciting and sometimes very interesting information. Therefore a good hunter who is able to kill and skin off a very large animal and ensure a whole African village with food and then makes a bloody sacrifice for their gods could be hardly praised by Victorian audience as successful and virtuous but they would be judged as a primate savage.

The values are, in my opinion, made by a historical progress and also geographical location. The religion, if the nation is devout, is also very important. The Christian Ten Commandments is, with no doubt, a backbone of European culture and ethics, which is closely linked with virtues. And of course even the British ones. Lifestyle of the people and their experiences passed on the descendants who merge into a common set of values. We could ask ourselves, if the etiquette or morality was “invented” before the virtues. In my opinion, it is highly logical, that the virtues were first. The communal society finds its benefit in large numbers. But there is always a leader with greater skills in particular field than others, which makes him superior in this particular aspect. Since the human nature is probably same, we could say, that they

¹⁴ Joan Bennett, *George Eliot: Her Mind and Her Art* (Cambridge: University Press, 1962), 68.

¹⁵ Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The De-moralization of Society: From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1995), 24.

¹⁶ Tim Youngs, "Victorian Britain and 'Primitive' Africa: Figures and Tools of Imperialism." *Africa* 1 (March 1991): 118-127. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed March 29, 2013).

would like to copy the behaviour of a better for example player. By the skill we mean values, or virtues, which became stable. After that, some of the values switch to morals and etiquette. When something new disrupts the way of living, the vivid organism, such as society, has to change. And Victorians were people, who closely seen through their grandparents' and parents 'recollections, who knew that they are living in changing times.

When we talk about manners of those times, we have to consider and understand that something else is of course etiquette of a working class and something else is etiquette of the middle class or *crème de la crème* of the society, the aristocracy. Since Victorian England and its preceding industrious era brought along also a hope for a climb on a social ladder, many people tried to make their own *Pygmalion*¹⁷ and became part of "the upper ten thousand". Rich common owners sent their offspring on very prestigious schools, in pursuit of a respectable occupation, which were not considered as a dirty, therefore these which lacked contact with actual money, cash in hand.¹⁸ Proper schooling was of course accompanied by a proper behaviour of a gentleman. The whole process was finished with retiring on the country and purchase of a country house. We talk about so-called gentrification of the Victorian middle class.¹⁹ Martin J. Wiener says that during the early years of Victoria's reign were widely thought at the time to be bringing about the triumph of the middle classes. Author is also asking if the death knell tolling for the English aristocracy.²⁰ The answer for this question is quite understandable. Of course not yet, the aristocracy tried to save themselves because they saw the changing society and their tried to keep their status. They changed their believes and tried to adapt to a new situation by directed education of their children. Arranged or self-imposed marriage between the rich bourgeois children and aristocratic children, who secured good name and proper "pedigree", was a very welcomed barter. Preceding aristocratic disdain towards the working rich middle class was receding.

¹⁷ Pygmalion is a Greek mythical king and sculptor who fell in love with a statue of Aphrodité, the goddess of love, because he made her perfect. The goddess asked his prayers and made from her a living woman. The story was very famous during the Victorian era, with the connection from its perfect behaviour and form to the Victorian set of values. Most popular adaptation of this mythological story is a drama *Pygmalion* (1912) by George Bernard Shaw.

¹⁸ Paul Langford and Christopher Harvie, *The Oxford history of Britain: The eighteenth century and the age of industry* (Oxford University Press, 1992), 25.

¹⁹ Martin J. Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 11.

²⁰ Martin J. Wiener, *English Culture*, 12.

With the beginning of the communal society and emerging culture habits, there is a need of a watcher, who would keep the society safe and also who would deal with people, who violates and breaks the law. There are two levels how to process with the misdemeanour towards the law or etiquette. One is on a level of a jurisdiction and the second one is by the society or a social circle, where the delinquent lives in. And by delinquent I mean not just someone who breaks law on a serious matter, but also someone, who breaks moral non-written laws. It can be a thief as well as a young woman with a lover. Society had a strict set of rules, and they could punish the culprit more harshly than a law. They had a power to destroy the person by ostracism, by giving a scarlet letter on the bosom of the wrongdoers. The ruling power tried to regulate the norms even in the field of morals. One of the most powerful watchers was of course nobody else than God. Evangelical clergymen were the most powerful *domini canis*²¹, and they were asking for a change of a moral climate in the country, which they of course found as a very low and rotting under the influence of the Devil. They set their watching eyes mostly upon the working middle class, but they were asking for a moral revolution, which would affect all British classes, aristocracy included. Their impulse resulted into the publication of the George III's *Proclamation for the Encouragement of Piety and Virtue, and for the Preventing and Punishing of Vice, Profaneness, and Immorality* in the year of 1787.²² It was also including the suppression of all '*loose and licentious Prints, Books, and Publications, dispersing Poison to the minds of the Young and Unwary and to Punish the Publishers and Vendors thereof*'.²³ Now, we could say, that the background for a Victorian pursuit after respectability in all possible ways was prepared.

In the literature of the nineteenth century can be find also contemporary critique of the Victorian morals and reality such as s poem by Arthur Hugh Clough called *The Latest Decalogue* (1862):

*Thou shalt have one God only; who
Would tax himself to worship two?
God's image nowhere shalt thou see,*

²¹ Dogs of the Lord, used as a name of the monastic order called Dominicans. Dominicans are named after Saint Dominic of Osma. Since the order was linked with inquisition on the Iberian Peninsula, they were also pejoratively called *domini canis*, therefore God's hounds.

²² Richard D. Altick, *Victorian People and Ideas: A Companion for the Modern Reader of Victorian Literature*, (New York: Norton, 1973), 182.

²³ "Censorship", National Library of Scotland. <http://www.nls.uk/learning-zone/politics-and-society/themes-in-focus/censorship/activity-7> (accessed April 1, 2013).

*Save haply in the currency:
 Swear not at all; since for thy curse
 Thine enemy is not the worse:
 At church on Sunday to attend
 Will help to keep the world thy friend:
 Honor thy parents; that is, all
 From whom promotion may befall:
 Thou shalt not kill; but needst not strive
 Officiously to keep alive:

 Adultery it is not fit
 Or safe, for women, to commit:
 Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat,
 When 'tis so lucrative to cheat:
 False witness not to bear be strict;
 And cautious, ere you contradict.
 Thou shalt not covet; but tradition
 Sanctions the keenest competition.²⁴*

As Gertrude Himmelfarb writes in her article *Manners into Morals, What the Victorians Knew* about the Victorian hypocrisy, which is also one of the main themes of A. H. Clough's poem. She says, that Trollope or before Thackeray protested that manners were taking precedence over morals, that "the way we live now" encouraged the cultivation of manners at the expense of morals. She also mentions that the Victorians thought it no small virtue to maintain the appearance, of good conduct even while violating some basic precept of morality.²⁵ Another thing she also mentions both, in her article *Manners into Morals What the Victorians Knew* as well as in her book upon the changing of the values, *De-moralization of Society. From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values* is that those Victorians caught up in an irregular situation of this (not normal) kind (of relationship) tried, as far as was humanly possible, to „regularize“ it, to contain it within conventional forms, to domesticate and normalize it.²⁶ She mentions,

²⁴ Arthur Hugh Clough, *Poems, with a Memoir* (Cambridge: Macmillan, 1862), 243.

²⁵ Himmelfarb, Gertrude Himelfarb, "Manners into Morals What the Victorians Knew." *American Scholar* 57 (Spring 1988): 223. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed April 4, 2013).

²⁶ Ibid.

for example Ruskin and his unconsumed marriage, homosexual or extra-marital relationships. This information is very interesting and we will work with it even later.

2.3.1. Gender and Class

Victorian England is a society which is constituted by classes. Every class is specific and within every class, we can find many differences. E. P. Thomson in *Class Struggle without Class?* says that according to his understanding, class is a historical category derived from the observation of the social progress over time. Members of the classes repeatedly show behaviour in pattern which is significant for the given class. The class has its own culture, politics and opinions.²⁷ If we would look closer into this Victorian scheme, we would find that the classes are quite different from the well-known medieval class division of the ones who fight – noblemen and royal family, the ones who pray- clergy and the ones who work – serfs. The society of 19th century England kept its class division system – just the members of the rank slightly changed as well as the imperviousness of the barrier between them. Sean Purchase in his *Key Concepts in Victorian Literature* says, that with industrialization, a new Britain emerged, which divided Victorian society into roughly three sections which comprised an upper class (the old aristocracy and gentry), a middle class (industrialists, manufacturers, professionals such as lawyers, bankers and doctors), and a working class, where was around 1850's over a half of the population.²⁸ The Victorian concept of a class system is mostly same as we understand it nowadays. The difference between the old, medieval social rank and the new one is visible in the shift of the professions and others. The medieval peasant, for example a blacksmith, did not have a chance to climb on the ladder and there was almost zero percentage possibility of becoming a rich university educated businessman, not even for his children. But in the nineteenth century, the class position ended up being hereditary. We could say the same about a way down on a social ladder.

Since George Eliot was mostly interested in the middle class characters, clearly because she was a member of the middle class, I will mostly examine this section. I will also mention the other classes as well, clearly because I would like to draw closer the relationship between them and the middle class.

²⁷ E. P. Thomson, "Eighteen-Century English Society: Class Struggle without Class?," *Social History* 3, no.2 (1978): 146-163.

²⁸ Sean Purchase, *Key Concepts in Victorian Literature*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 24.

The early years of Victoria's reign were widely thought at the time to be bringing about the triumph of the middle classes.²⁹ This was the most important group and probably as well most known class of that period. We have to understand, that middle class was actually quite vast. The biggest boom became after 1850's. Since then, we can say, that middle class is quickly growing group. If economy is pacing forward it creates new professions which require some level of knowledge. And that happened in Great Britain as well. All these white collars, various workers, filled up the middle class. Therefore, we have to divide the middle class to the lower one and two upper classes – working in the professions, for example Mr Lydgate in *Middlemarch*, and manufacturing middle class, such as Mr Thornton in Gaskell's *North and South*.

For our use, we can say, that under the concept of the lower middle class we understand clerks and commerce.³⁰ They were those, whose working abilities were mostly changeable. All new inventions, such as railways, telegraphs, developing banks, post and special shops required well informed and professional workers. All these were members of the lower middle class. One of the already mentioned information is reflecting this social group, these were the workers who came to handle real money from hand to hand, and therefore they were considered as something as dirty but still respectable occupations.

The two sections of an upper middle class can be combined by several indications. First of all is a question of education. Both, sons of doctors and sons of aristocracy or gentry visited the same schoolings. As I said before, the main aim of this group is to become nouveau riche and eventually end up as gentry on a country. The children went send to a private school and best old universities, where they mingled with the aristocracy. When we consider urbanization of the cities, for example London, we can find both groups of middle class living together on one, usually very fashionable place. They had money and if they wanted to “mean something” in the society, they had to show it as well.

Since I have already written about their relationship with the gentry, I would like to draw closely the relationship with the lower class as well. When we divide the life to two spheres, professional and private, we can say, that there was, of course, a huge contact between middle class and lower class, but just within the professional sphere.

²⁹ Martin J. Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit: 1850-1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 14.

³⁰ H.C.G. Matthew and Kenneth O. Morgan, *The Oxford History of Britain: The Modern Age*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 25.

Doctors had to take care of poor ill people as well as the owners of the factories had to talk with their workers or foremen. That was their profession. Ladies, on the other hand, especially those from the upper middle classes, help with charity events and visited hospitals, orphanages and other public buildings where they were in contact with the poor. Of course, the same could be said about the wives of the clergy.

One of the greatest questions of the Victorian England is the question about gender. Gender studies are lately very popular social science which influences many other fields of studies, from history to economics. According to J. Richard Udry gender is the relationship between biological sex and behaviour; a theory of gender explains that behaviour. Gender depends on three concepts: gender role, socialization and opportunity structures.³¹ The opportunity structures could be understood more clearly, if we apply them on Victorian society. As same as we divide people into the classes and subclasses, we have to divide class according to the sex. When we compare women across the spectrum of society, all of them, even if they share common feminine elements, are in fact different. The reason lays in their economic positions and their roles. Women from the lower classes were not expected to be as representative as the ones from the middle one. They bore the economic providing as well as men, they were not allowed to stay home as housewives. Not even on the country. They were economic units as well as their husband, which was part of the foundation of the future suffragette movement as well as a fight for equal rights. On the other hand, when we talk about middle class women, we have to understand, that they were not just trophy wives whose job was to be pretty and presentable, but also they had quite a trouble in the society. Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall in their *Family Fortunes: Men and women of the English Middle class* say, that ideas of a woman's place were underpinned by legal, political and social practices which subordinated women combined with a recognition of economic worth in the family.³²

The sum of information about what we know about the situation of the middle class women is enlarging. Modern historical approaches which prefer micro history over macro history brings new studies. Nineteen century woman is able to write and the diaries or correspondence within her inner circle is easily found if we compare her with for example woman from medieval times. Thanks to that, they are closer to us if we

³¹ J. Richard Udry, "The Nature of Gender," *Demography* 31 (November 1994): 561-573.

³² Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class: 1780-1850*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 78.

decide to study everyday history. These are the heroines of many Victorian novels we know and therefore we can empathize into their lives more easily. And of course, we can find them in work of George Eliot as well.

Middle class women had many responsibilities. While young, they were practicing and studying for their future role of a housewife. We can see it as well on a life of George Eliot, even though she is more exceptional than others since she was eager for education. Most of middle class women were sent to a school. Since it was not really controlled by state during George Eliot youth, the level of education varied. Lessons on music, languages (especially French), embroidery and little bit of geography were taught. More prestige was of course a boarding school in foreign country such as France, Belgium or Switzerland. This theory can be supported also by an example from the literature. We can closely understand schooling system in works of Charlotte Brontë such as *The Professor*, *Villette* and of course *Jane Eyre*. By the end of their education, they had to be able to be fluent in etiquette, house managing and of course care of children and the family. We cannot forget also the etiquette of clothing. The pressure and the amount of information and skills they were required to master was so big, that many manuals which helped the readers to cope with the obligation, were published. From *A Manual of Etiquette for Ladies* (1856) to *Book of Household Management* (1861)³³ helped their readers covered all important requirements into the details. Everything was important, even their clothes which were indicators of the social rank. *The strict demarcation by age as well as status of women and girls in the nineteenth century is indicated by the variety and complexity of their clothes as opposed to the almost uniform drab "workmanlike or business-like" look of men's clothing after the 1840s. Every cap, bow, streamer, ruffle, fringe, bustle, glove or other elaboration symbolised some status category for the female wearer.*³⁴

The question about marriage has changed during the Victorian Period. Every marriage within the class was of course in its own terms unique, but we can say, that the middle class marriage is mostly sealed off after the mutual affections of the future husband and wife. The intellectually stormy transformation at the end of eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century cost by French revolution, its ideas and the age of Romanticism brought new way of thinking within the family. The mortality

³³ Elizabeth Langland, "Nobody's Angels: Domestic Ideology and Middle-Class Women in the Victorian Novels," *PMLA* 107 (March 1992): 290-304, www.jstor.org/stable/462641

³⁴ Leonore Davidoff in Elizabeth Langland, "Nobody's Angels: Domestic Ideology and Middle-Class Women in the Victorian Novels," *PMLA* 107 (March 1992): 290-304, www.jstor.org/stable/462641

of children was lower than before and the approach to the family circle was closer than in the previous times. Therefore even fathers had closer relationship with their children, as we can see in *Mill on the Floss* and the relationship between Maggie and her father. What we can say about the Nineteenth century is that it was more affectionate than the previous one in terms of the approach towards marriage.

After the marriage, they became supportive wives. Reverend E. J. Hardy in his *Manners Makyth Man* describes the prescribed female gender roles as follows: “Sweetness is to woman what sugar is to fruit. It is her first business to be happy - a sunbeam in the house, making others happy. True, she will often have ‘a tear in her eye’, but, like the bride of young Lochinvar, it must be accompanied with ‘a smile on her lips’ woman who remembers that her *raison d’être* is to give out pleasure to all as a fire gives out heat” (cited in Fisher, 1995: 44).³⁵

Aşkın Haluk Yildirim in her article *The Woman Question and The Victorian Literature on Gender* says it nicely when she writes that: According to the stereotypical gender roles, man was supposed to be the breadwinner while woman was to be the homemaker. The ideal woman, as ‘the moral guardian of society’, was responsible for the education and care of the children and the organization of the household as a whole, while man was expected to keep the pot boiling.³⁶ Every woman is unique with her character, so we can expect different “handling” of the situation, for example if we take heroines in George Eliot’s *Middlemarch*: from truly angelic and confused Dorothea Brooke to more evil-like Rosamond Vincy.

On the other hand, we should also discuss the ideal gentleman and the Victorian attitude about the manhood. If we again repeat the information I have already given in the introduction to a women part, gender has its impact on the class members. Therefore we could hardly compare working class man and gentle man from the middle class. Of course as Rosamond Vincy hides her true nature under the lovely picture of a perfect lady, even man were earthier and sometimes even worse than their Victorian picture.

As we know, Victorian England was world ruled by men. Even though the head of the state was Queen Victoria, who was, of course, the best of the women, everything else was operated by men, who dominated every life sphere. Working class men had bigger wages than their working wives and after their shift, they required comfort at

³⁵ Anja Benthin, *Redefining Gender Roles: The Image of Women in Virginia Woolf's 'To the Lighthouse'*, (München: GRIN Verlag GmbH, 2009), 4.

³⁶ Aşkın Haluk Yildirim, "The Woman Question and the Victorian Literature on Gender," *Ekev Academic Review* 16 (June 2012): 45-54. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed April 10, 2013).

home. Their freedom was much greater as well. They could go everywhere without a companion, they could spend, and usually did, their leisure time in pubs. Middle class men owned the public sphere of their family life as well as the domestic one, because their word was law. They left many for then unimportant obligations to their wives, but when something important emerged, they were the ones who decided. In the question of the education, the situation between woman and men is incomparable. Another thing is of course parental wish. They were obliged to continue their father's empires; therefore we can see that many men studied what their fathers did, to keep the family tradition, which would ensure the family line with the final success, becoming gentry. After the education and ensuring the position on the work market, they would try to find a woman, who would represent them and help him with the social climb or ensuring current social rank. Another difference between them and women is that they could have lived their life to the fullest before the marriage; therefore there is hardly any man, who would vow chastity before marriage. After the wedding, he would become a head of a family, visiting gentleman clubs, as we can see in for example many Dickens' novels, being interested in politics and culture. On the other hand, their situation was also difficult from the economic point of view, because they were the main and mostly only wage-earners. And if their character or circumstances brought the family into the poverty or difficulties, it was their mistake, as we can see for example in George Eliot's novels such as Mr Bulstrode in *Middlemarch* or Mr Tulliver in *The Mill on the Floss*.

The marriage in the Victorian England was almost sacred. The institution of marriage was considered as the final destination of the life and most welcomed gift. The individual who would not be married without any reason, especially women, would be considered as a strange person, *persona non grata*. As we already said before, Victorians who violated morals of the society, tried to normalize their mistakes or scandals. Such was for example even George Eliot while living together with George Henry Lewis. She used to call herself Mrs Lewis and was very glad that she was called like that even by Mrs Lewis by law.

We could find in various sources one main information about the Victorian period and that is that the age was ruled by middle class. Members of the middle class were the columns on which all the morality and etiquette stand upon, those were the watching dogs over the moral goods and behaviour of the whole society. But we have to bear in mind, that there is also the face under the mask of this pathos. Gertrude Himmelfarb

says that she has the impression, that Victorians actually tormented themselves than actually enjoyed themselves.³⁷

2.3.2. Economics and Politics

The second part of my bachelor theses will closely examine George Eliot's novel where money and also politics hold important place in the story. For example in *Silas Marner*, money is the power which accelerates the whole storyline. New ideas about the politic sphere which were actual during the Victorian period, is visible in the character of Will Ladislaw and also Mr Arthur Brooke from *Middlemarch*.

For the closer understanding of Victorian mind it is more important to understand the social impact of the economics on the society that as a science about numbers. As we said before, England in the nineteenth century depicts the state on its top. Industrious rich state and wealthy middle class is not the only picture we could find. Growing cities in industrious areas brought more than economic earning. People who moved to the cities because of work, and we are not talking just about the working class but also about the middle class, which centre was in the cities, and gentry. Business was made in the cities. Various people had to adjust to new circumstances. On the country, work was something which was produced by daylight. But the city factories with its artificial lighting could assure a working environment even for a night period. Also the living space was smaller proportionally to the social rank. Pollution was a danger as well, such as the occurrence of the great stink in London in 1858³⁸. The economic situation of the poor was alarming as we can see even in the social novels from Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* to Dickens's various novels about abandoned children. Nevertheless we can say that middle class and even working class have enough money for extra leisure activities, from pubs to various fairs and culture activities.

After the process of the industrial revolution, England is in the 1820 to 1851 in the stage of a rapid growth³⁹. We could say that this is actually period of George Eliot's novels, because she mentions the great politic reforms concerning the rotten boroughs (1832). The important part of the economy is of course as well agricultural industry, since its purpose was to feed enlarging cities. The Corn Laws (1815, 1846) tried to save

³⁷ Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The De-moralization of Society: From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1995), 24.

³⁸ Susie Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians: Politics, Culture, and Society in Nineteenth-century Britain* (London: Routledge, 2012), 3.

³⁹ Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians*, 81.

and give preference to local British farmers and they are fine examples of the political mercantilism, even though their impact is more than disputable. Last years of the period brought hunger, famine and crisis. It is important to understand, that if the Victorian period is mostly considered as a financially successful, there were many repeated economic crisis, and for our own usage, it is enough to say that they tried to cure symptoms, not cause. The most significant politic affair was the one of the Queen Caroline, who was unhappily married to the king George IV. The affair, when the newly crowned king tried to divorce her wife, who tried to fulfil her queen duties, for adultery. The affair brought firstly huge support to the Queen but also many people pointed out, that the aristocracy moral values are catastrophic when compared to the middle class one. Many reforms happened in this period as I've already listed them above, from the Corn Laws and Great reform, to obtaining of a vote for Nonconformists and Catholics. From the 1830's there is a huge wave of legislation reform.

The term from 1851 to 1873 is mostly, by historians, explained as a period of economic growth and social stability in comparison with other parts of the century. Also the rise of the wages was quicker than prices of the goods.⁴⁰ The position of the Great Britain of that time is visible by the Great Exhibition of 1851 held by Prince Albert and Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce. It was not just exhibition of all kinds of inventions and souvenirs and artefacts from various places, the exhibition sent clear message about the ruling position of the state among others.⁴¹ London was financial centre of the world. Victorian England was a capitalistic empire.⁴² From the politics point of view, we have to mention the problems of Ireland. The wave of European nationalism hit also Great Britain which worsened the situation with Ireland, because they tried to become independent even by the violence (Irish Republican Brotherhood). The political system within the country brought up two probably most famous politicians of the Victorian period, William Gladstone for Liberals and Benjamin Disraeli for the Conservative party.

After the period of a rapid growth we can expect slowing of the progress and incoming stagnation, which also happened. Great Britain started to recover from the stagnation at the end of the century continued until the whole process stopped with the Great War. Politics during this period bring very wild on the domestic sphere. Both

⁴⁰ Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians*, 88.

⁴¹ Nick Fisher, "The Great Exhibition of 1851: The Struggle to Describe the Indescribable." *Endeavour* 36, (March 2012) 6-13. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed April 14, 2013).

⁴² Sean Purchase, *Key Concepts in Victorian Literature*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 52.

leading politics were dead or let out from the government. People were very conscious about the situation in the kingdom. In 1883 the *Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act* passes, and the question of the women arises when they finally obtain a voting right in 1884 by *Third reform Act* (women over thirties and all men). Also the Irish question is still in the air and the government tries to pass Irish Home Rule Bill with no success. These are but information which did not affect George Eliot, because, as we already know, she died in 1880.⁴³

2.3.3. Religion

The nineteenth century was a period of change also in beliefs. This is a century of Charles Darwin's publication of *On the Origin of Species* and Friedrich Nietzsche's quote that the god is dead. The society was changing and its habits as well. Religion in the Victorian England was already discussed greatly in previous sections when we were talking about the moral acts, which were published and established with the help of the Church. The Anglican Church and its monopoly over the rights and many other churches, such as the Utilitarians, Latitudinarians, High Churchmen and Catholics as well, ask for their rights. Many movements such as Oxford movement come into existence as well because of the change of the Anglican Church which came through twenty years of changes in the half of the century.⁴⁴ Church had a great power within the society, its work was also a missionary and charity projects which would spread the consolation from the Bible and help in need. Especially missionary work was very popular among the Victorians who organized many fund-risings campaigns and charity events. Very popular during the Victorian period became the Evangelic Church, who preferred the direct relationship between the believer and God, which would not be mediated by another person. They also preferred the common reading of the Bible and diligence over the pompous ceremonies.

George Eliot was very concerned about the faith as well. When she was a young girl, we could be surprised by her devotion to the Christianity, almost as similar to the one of Dorothea from *Middlemarch*. But with the continuous studying, she became nonbeliever, who understood the need for belief. She was influenced by German thought – especially by David Friedrich Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, which she translated in 1846, and Ludwig Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity*, which she translated in 1854.

⁴³ Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians*, 87.

⁴⁴ Robin Gilmour, "Religion: Reform, Rejection, Reconstruction." In *The Victorian Period: The Intellectual and Cultural Context: 1830-1890*, (London: Longman, 1993,) 63 -110.

These works fuelled George Elliot's conviction that religious belief is an imaginative necessity and a projection of concern for mankind; this is a humanist tendency which goes beyond a single doctrine, and allows Eliot to welcome Darwin's scientific theses without the great crisis of belief which affected many of her contemporaries. Her beliefs were still very unusual for Victorian mind and she met with disapproval of her father and brother, when she wrote to her father:

*I do not hope to convince any other member of our family and probably not yourself that I am really sincere, that my only desire is to walk in that path of rectitude which however rugged is the only path to peace, but the prospect of contempt and rejection shall not make me swerve from my determination...*⁴⁵

The diversity of the churches which emerged during that period could be found in many characters created by George Eliot, from Silas from *Silas Marner* to *Nicolas Bulstrode* from *Middlemarch*. George Eliot's *Felix Holt* is the novel with the strongest religious theme.

3. Victorian Novel

Victorian Novel was the most important form of the then literature. Many literary critics say that the novel emerged right in the nineteenth century. The Oxford Companion to English Literature says, that *novel developed slowly through the memoir novel and the epistolary novel of the 16th and 17th centuries to the novel of the omniscient third-person narrator, which has dominated from the late 18th century to the present time.*⁴⁶ There is also mention Daniel Defoe as the author of one of the first novels. Victorian novel is such a term, that it is by now a collocation with one meaning. Victorian novels were typically quite long with a large amount of characters with plots which revolved around marriage. Victorian novels explored the relationships between the social and the psychological and between the public and private realms⁴⁷. The novels, even though they were fiction, were very true in its substance and its power was huge over the society. For example Dickens' novels about the situation in the slums or among the poor were cited while politics discussed the potential aid for these, who are

⁴⁵ Gordon Sherman Haight, *George Eliot; A Biography*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 42.

⁴⁶ Dinah Birch and Margaret Drabble, *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*. 7th ed.(Oxford: Oxford University, 2009).

⁴⁷ Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians*, 187.

in need. Novels were almost a consumer good; the cheapest way how to reach novels was by its publishing in the newspapers, always by section, such as for example those of Elizabeth Gaskell.

By the time of the publishing George Eliot's novel, the genre was firmly established and it was domination the field of the literature production. The reason for Mary Evans to choose fictional persona, the pen name, George Eliot as the author of her realistic novels, was quite disputable. I believe that there were actually two reasons. One of them was the general opinion upon women writers. Of course that at that time, we can find many authoresses who did use their own names, but there was also some, who did use them, such as Bronte sisters. Women were considers as the authors of the lighter more domestic novels, who were not such accomplish as their colleagues of the opposite sex. George Eliot clearly did not want to bear the burden of the woman writer, as the authors of "silly novels". When her first novel, *Adam Bede* (1859), was published, it huge success make the readers guess who is the author of the sensation. There was also one man, who claimed the book as his own. Mary had serious doubts about stepping forward and to own up the authorship, because of the second reason why she was hiding under the male pseudonym. Her relationship with George Lewes closed many Victorian doors to the society, since it was out of marriage relationship and it was against the morals of that time. In the end, she did step up to the authorship of the novel and with her surprise; there was not a huge impact on the number of her admirers.⁴⁸

3.1. Middlemarch

*It is not that her power diminishes, for, to our thinking, it is at its highest in the mature Middlemarch, the magnificent book which, with all its imperfections, is one of the few English novels written for grown-up people.*⁴⁹ These words written about *Middlemarch* belong to Virginia Wolf. *Middlemarch* is indisputably one of finest Victorian novels. It is the magisterial 'answer' of Victorian realism in the way that it sought to balance claims between inner and outer worlds, community and personal morality, tradition and modernity.⁵⁰

George Eliot was a very gifted author with excellent skill of making the characters into the complexity. *Middlemarch* is a fine picture of the small town and characteristic

⁴⁸Rosemary Ashton, *George Eliot: A Life* (New York: The Penguin Press, 1996), 172.

⁴⁹ Virginia Woolf in F. R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1948), 35.

⁵⁰ David Amigoni, *Victorian Literature*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 64.

values which are known for its provincial inhabitants. Her complexity of the picture is so perfect for the stadium of the social classes, because she depicts many different and diverse heroes. It is clearly visible, that the novel was put together from previous works of the authors, a work about Dorothea Brooke and work about the family of Vinci's,⁵¹ since the book consists of eight books. Some would say that the connection between the storylines is sometimes very vague, but I believe that the novel as the whole unit leaves the reader with the feeling of the complexity and there is no need for such a baseless criticism. When they published the first volume in 1871, which was a ten chapter long part concerning the story of Mrs Brooke till the time of her marriage with Mr Casaubon, it was already accepted as a masterpiece. The novel is in many ways also a very modern novel with regards to its psychology of the characters. Even though the novel was written by a woman, it is not a silly novel, but very intellectual work with many citations and references to philosophy and classic history. In my opinion, the novel consists of many themes and it fully satisfied the Victorian audience by its visible values, which I will discuss in the later parts of my bachelor thesis.

3.1.1. Summary of the novel Middlemarch

Middlemarch is probably set into the 1830's as I have already mentioned before. The novel consists of three large parts, whose narrators are already mentioned Dorothea Brooke, a young doctor Tertius Lydgate and Fred Vinci. The most important story for my bachelor thesis is the one in which occurs Nicolas Bulstrode.

Middlemarch is a provincial city whose mayor, Walter Vincy, is a mayor who is from a very respectable family. His two children, unambitious Fred Vincy who did not finish his university studies because of his lack of aptitude for studying and young aspiring Rosamond, a local beauty. Fred has a financial trouble and is in a huge debt, which he cannot pay back since his lack of any occupation but gambling. His financial security brought by his rich dying uncle, Mr Featherstone, fails and the sum of money is paid by the family of Garths, who are the most moral and positive family in the town. He is very disappointed when his uncle leaves the property and estate to his illegitimate son. Fred starts to work for Caleb Garth and became more honest and almost decent and respectable person who marries his child love Mary Garth.

The town is in shock when young new doctor, Tertius Lydgate comes to the city with surprisingly new ideas about the medicine and tries to change the way of health in

⁵¹ E.A. Horsman, *The Victorian Novel*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 316.

the city. Doctor's community is of course against his methods of treatment and try to stop him. Rosamond seizes her chance uplift her position in the society and marries a doctor from a huge town with possible link to distant aristocratic family, in these regards she fully complies the aim of a young Victorian lady and recipe for happiness. In the end, Lydgate is, against his will, forced to work with Nicolas Bulstrode, a local banker, which brings him into a moral dilemma and hesitation when he enters the politics around the new hospital which is slowly emerging in the town and Bulstrode wants him to vote about a hospital chaplain according to his opinion. When Lydgate marries Rosamond, who has no sense for money, he starts to fall hugely into the depths all over to city and owns money to Bulstrode, who gains power on him.

The last very important story teller in Dorothea Brooke, who is a young naïve and pious girl, who is together with her sister raised by her foolish bachelor uncle, Mr Brooke. Even though she is courted by a local aristocrat, James Chettam, she ends up marrying old and conservative Mr Casaubon with hopes of being his helpful companion while he works on his great opus about the mythology. James Chettam marries her sister but still keep a watchful eye over Dorothea. Young and aspiring Will Ladislav who is related to Casaubon through his grandmother, who married under her standing, appears in Middlemarch and then, they meet again on honeymoon trip in Italy. While they come back Casaubon becomes very ill with unspecific hearth condition. Dorothea's position is unbearable, but since her deep devotion and piety, she remains morally clean, while having doubts about her husband's qualities, which end up by her sobering up. Dying Casaubon tries to bind Dorothea with promises in purpose to be in charge of her life even after his departure from the earthy realm. After his death, she discovers, that he left a clause in his will, which says that if she marries will she will forfeit all Casaubon property. From her position, she helps the Garth family as well as indebted Lydgate and by this, she strengthen her position as one of the purest characters of George Eliot. Then she gives up her fortune and marries young Will Ladislav, who discovers that Mr Bulstrode is very obliged to him with regards to his financial situation, which we will discuss later.

Bulstrode buys a property of Mr Featherstone which would ensure his position as a respectable inhabitant of Middlemarch, but his dark secrets start to emerge which ruins him and his family as well as Lydgate.

3.1.2. Character of Nicolas Bulstrode

Nicolas Bulstrode is firstly introduced on a social event hosted by Mr Brooke, when the author describes the hosts of the dinner party. *The philanthropic banker ..., who predominated so much in the town that some called him a Methodist, others a hypocrite.*⁵² As we discover, he is related to the mayor, by marrying his sister-in-law. Methodists believe in a power of a congregation and personal experience of salvation and relationship with God. It was a very appealing movement for working class because it did not required pompous celebration and also it taught the simplicity in clothing.⁵³ His supposed high morality values are already seen in his first dialog, when he compares coquetry to devil. He is very fond of a new doctor, Lydgate, who he defends against the poisonous speech of others.

I believe that relationship with Lydgate has two reasons for Nicolas Bulstrode. First reason is that as Lydgate, even Bulstrode is not a lifelong resident of Middlemarch. When he came, with no family and no recommendation, he married Mr Vincy's sister, who was considered as a member of a very respectful local family. The marriage secures him with a status in the town, which he lacked because of his unknown origin. He sympathizes with Lydgate, who does not entirely belong to the centre of a society and because of that, he keeps him close. The second one is because he needs ally for his plans in the city and he feels that he could use Lydgate to his advantage.

Fred Vincy, his nephew, needs to get his uncle's signed evidence about his innocence while handling the money, in purpose to get some ore from his rich uncle, Mr Featherstone, who thinks about Bulstrode he is *a man who knows most of what goes on in Middlemarch. It's that fine, religious, charitable uncle o' yours.*⁵⁴ As we can see, Bulstrode has a strong position in Middlemarch, when we look at Mr Featherstone's appraisal of Bulstrode's character, who even does not know him; therefore his deduction is based on gossips or evidence of others. The only thing he mentions quite negatively is his religion: *—He may come down any day, when the devil leaves off backing him. And that's what his religion means: he wants God A'mighty to come in. That's nonsense! There's one thing I made out pretty clear when I used to go to church—and it's this: God A'mighty sticks to the land.*⁵⁵ Later on in a novel, we learn that old Featherstone did not approve of Bulstrode, but I believe, that it is caused more

⁵² George Eliot, *Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life*, (London: David Campbell, 1991), 88.

⁵³ Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians*, 218.

⁵⁴ George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, 113.

⁵⁵ George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, 114.

by Featherstone's character than actual actions, since he never really met with him. He was probably jealous of Bulstrode and his influence and power.

His religion is one of mentioned themes in the novel. For example Lydgate unfavourably thinks about him when scanning his figure, that he is not enjoying many tangible things. His devoutness is not comprehended by others such as the devoutness of Dorothea Brooke, clearly because of a different faith. People of Middlemarch, afraid of his power and seemingly spotless character, used his confession as a weapon for partial staining of his personage. Even his brother-in-law, Mr Vincy uses it in the argument when he comes to him asking for an approval letter for his son, Fred. After a very unpleasant talk, Bulstrode succumbs.

Bulstrode position in Middlemarch is subsequent:

Mr. Bulstrode's power was not due simply to his being a country banker, who knew the financial secrets of most traders in the town and could touch the springs of their credit; it was fortified by a beneficence that was at once ready and severe—ready to confer obligations, and severe in watching the result. He had gathered, as an industrious man always at his post, a chief share in administering the town charities, and his private charities were both minute and abundant. ... In this way a man gathers a domain in his neighbors' hope and fear as well as gratitude; and power, when once it has got into that subtle region, propagates itself, spreading out of all proportion to its external means. It was a principle with Mr. Bulstrode to gain as much power as possible, that he might use it for the glory of God ... There were many crass minds in Middlemarch whose reflective scales could only weigh things in the lump; and they had a strong suspicion that since Mr. Bulstrode could not enjoy life in their fashion, eating and drinking so little as he did, and worretting himself about everything, he must have a sort of vampire's feast in the sense of mastery.⁵⁶

Bulstrode power is not welcomed in the town, most of the city is narrow-minded and they do not like being suppressed or commanded by firstly someone from the outside world and secondary someone of a different religion. From a psychological

⁵⁶ George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, 160.

point of view, George Eliot shows us her perfect understanding of a human nature. When we consider similar circumstances which happened in history, we could, maybe exaggeratedly compare Bulstrode with Jewish bankers during the times of pogroms. A Jewish banker would have many interests in the city and by that, he would gain certain power. As well as Bulstrode, he is, for a medieval townsman, a strange element in the city. His religion and origin is also not local, therefore local inhabitants are waiting for an excuse to attack or ostracize.

Most of the occasions in the books when Nicolas Bulstrode is mentioned, is around the politics of the city, such as the matter of hospital. When he achieves the election of his candidate, Mr Tyke, he wins even by breaking the uncertainty of a young Lydgate, who votes according to him, even though it means he will vote against his closest friend in the town, a vicar Camden Farebrother. From that moment, young Lydgate is considered as one of the closest Bulstrode's men.

The opinion of the Middlemarch community about their relationship is most visible during the time when the talk about the wedding between a doctor and Rosamond emerges. Everybody thinks that it is a blessing since Bulstrode is clearly on good terms with him and will serve almost as father. Bulstrode reveals his opinion about it when his wife in private when she asks him about it. *"I could have wished that Mr. Lydgate had not entered into such a union; but my relations with him are limited to that use of his gifts for God's purposes which is taught us by the divine government under each dispensation."*⁵⁷ As we can see, his devoted character is always visible.

Lydgate does not feel entirely in favour of Bulstrode, but he understands him and he deeply appreciate his involvement in the hospital, which stand on his investment. This is uncovered by a conversation between Lydgate and Dorothea. *And this Hospital is a capital piece of work, due entirely to Mr Bulstrode's exertions, and in a great degree to his money. ... Of course he looked forward to help. And now there's a mean, petty feud set up against the thing in the town, by certain persons who want to make it a failure. ... and he explain her why do people wish for a failure that they have other objections to him (then just a religious tone):—he is masterful and rather unsociable, and he is concerned with trade, which has complaints of its own that I know nothing about.*⁵⁸

⁵⁷ George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, 275.

⁵⁸ George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, 438-439.

The hospital is financed only by Bulstrode who almost establishes dictatorship there. It results into abandoning of the hospital by local doctors, who start to spread gossip about Lydgate's charlatanism. In the end, the hospital stands on Lydgate and Bulstrode alone, with financial help from Dorothea. We could say that the project of a new modern hospital sunk.

Bulstrode, as I have already mentioned, had for a very long time desire to buy a property, where he could establish his position as a wealthy Victorian banker, which would ensure his position in Middlemarch. This last on a way to be a proper country gentleman brings for Bulstrode destruction, which brings him down and terminates his Middlemarch's career.

The property which draws closer Bulstrode's interest is former Featherstone's estate. With huge Fred Vincy's disappointment estate inherits Featherstone's illegitimate son, Mr Rigg. Rigg does not have a relationship to Middlemarch at all and therefore his intention is to sell it. Bulstrode as a Methodist always believed in that his life path was directed by a God and therefore his purpose to buy this property was wished by God. *...he interpreted it as a cheering dispensation conveying perhaps a sanction to a purpose which he had for some time entertained without external encouragement; he interpreted it thus, but not too confidently, offering up his thanksgiving in guarded phraseology.*⁵⁹ He intends to make it as a centre of his future property, as a seed for his future occupation of a land magnate.

Mr Rigg's stepfather is someone who figure in Bulstrode's pre-Middlemarch world. This is the moment, the revelation which was awaited by all Bulstrode's opponents. The reader discovers that Bulstrode is tied with Will Ladislaw family. His grandmother ran away from a family and married a Polish artist named Ladislaw and they had a son, who married Sarah Dunkirk, who also had run away from a family because of her wish to be an actress and also because her father's pawnshop with illegal merchandise. After Mr Dunkirk death, a widow married her second husband, a fellow-member of a strict sect, who worked as his associate. His name was Nicholas Bulstrode. After her death, according to law, her daughter should have inherited a certain amount of money, but he moved away from London, where they lived, and started a new life elsewhere. Mr Rigg's stepfather, Mr Raffles, was an associate in Bulstrode's business in London, who helped him to keep the money away from a rightful owner. And now, he

⁵⁹ George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, 520.

is in Middlemarch, asking for money from his now rich step-son, while he discovers that Mr Bulstrode lives there as well and that his position as a respectable inhabitant could be easily destroyed by the truth about him. That makes Bulstrode a perfect aim for blackmailing and source of money.

Of course that we can expect, that the apparition of Mr Raffles was a very shocking thing. *Mr. Bulstrode's usual paleness had in fact taken an almost deathly hue. Five minutes before, the expanse of his life had been submerged in its evening sunshine which shone backward to its remembered morning: sin seemed to be a question of doctrine and inward penitence, humiliation an exercise of the closet, the bearing of his deeds a matter of private vision adjusted solely by spiritual relations and conceptions of the divine purposes. And now, as if by some hideous magic, this loud red figure had risen before him in unmanageable solidity—an incorporate past which had not entered into his imagination of chastisements.*⁶⁰ Bulstrode is very burdened with a dark secret which is also very visible on his appearance. Mr Raffles lives at the expense of other people and he sees Bulstrode as his new donor. The situation is unbearable and Bulstrode tries to take care of the situation by settlement with young Will Ladislaw, but he declines the offer because of the origin of the corrupted money. Bulstrode is stroked by Will's disdain and his psychical and psychological condition starts to fail. Bulstrode's painful perplexity helps to create the ambiguous sympathy the reader feels for him.⁶¹ He immerses into a faith and become more obsessive with God's will. He understands that hospital was not intended by God's wish and therefore he connects new and old hospital together and renders finance to Mrs Casaubon. He abandons also Mr Lydgate, who hoped, that Bulstrode could help him with his debts enlarging by Rosamond.

Mr Raffles' alcoholism and rough character causes, that the gossip about Mr Bulstrode starts to spread. The First Middlemarch inhabitant who discovers the truth is Mr Garth who refuses to deal with Bulstrode but promises not to spread anything he knows. Nevertheless, Mr Raffles spreads the gossip while drunk to others as well and there is no way how to stop the spread.

He is psychically exhausted, but the providence strikes seemingly to his favour when he finds very ill Mr Raffles in his house while he was away on a business trip. Mr

⁶⁰ George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, 522.

⁶¹ Eugene Hollahan, "The Concept of "Crisis" in Middlemarch" *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 4 (March 1974):450-457. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2933238>

Raffles overstep his amount of happiness by being too pushy. Mr Bulstrode takes him to his new estate where he takes care of him. Doctor Lydgate comes to a patient, and surprisingly, Bulstrode gives him money to cover his debts. During Mr Raffles' illness, Bulstrode decides, that death of the witness would be probably best result of this situation and after thorough consideration followed by devoted meditation and prayers decides to hasten up Mr Raffles departure. The gossip in a small town is one of the strongest weapons. When they discover, that Lydgate's debts were paid off with Bulstrode money, and that certain Mr Raffles, who brought interesting information into the circle, suddenly died, all things comes on the light.

During the meeting of the hospital board, Bulstrode is confronted in front of the local gentlemen and members of the board.

*It is our united sentiment that Mr. Bulstrode should be called upon—and I do now call upon him—to resign public positions which he holds not simply as a tax-payer, but as a gentleman among gentlemen. There are practices and there are acts which, owing to circumstances, the law cannot visit, though they may be worse than many things which are legally punishable. Honest men and gentlemen, if they don't want the company of people who perpetrate such acts, have got to defend themselves as they best can, I don't say that Mr. Bulstrode has been guilty of shameful acts, but I call upon him either publicly to deny and confute the scandalous statements made against him by a man now dead, and who died in his house...*⁶²

Bulstrode shows his misery and while realising, that his God abandoned him, tries to save himself, but without any chance. His life in Middlemarch is over. His wife discovers what gossips are spread around the town about her husband. People feel sorry for her and explain the situation, that poor Harriet Bulstrode married an outlander and that she did not know about him. Even though Mrs Bulstrode is considered as a silly character, she is a loyal and faithful wife and when Mr Bulstrode assures her about his innocence in whole process, they move away and Mr Bulstrode is sentenced to live his miserable life in a place where nobody knows him.

⁶² George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, 726.

With regards towards Mr Bulstrode character, we have to understand that his deep devotion to God helped him through his own known existence. God was his weapon, excuse and also a support. Bulstrode was certain about God's plans about his own person. Therefore the end of his career was marked with disillusion. God let him down while he was exposed to for him rotten would-be Christians and respectful townsmen. He was utterly in shock. I believe that we cannot consider Mr Bulstrode as a negative character. He was a victim of his own character and belief in God. He worked in an illegal business, he did not acknowledged Will's mother about her inheritance and he had his share of guilt on case of Mr. Raffles' death. But all his acts could be understood from his point of view, he was sure, that his actions were authorized by God. All his work was made for God's glory. He excused his previous behaviour by his moderate way and style of living and he despised by people, who did not live as moderately as he did. He did put all the "dirty money" into praiseworthy projects, such as a hospital. He was a very respectable banker. According to Bulstrode, when Mr Raffles shows up at his house ill, he understands it as a God's sign. He explains the situation not as a murder, but as merely observation letting the problem in God's hands, who decided to kill Mr Raffles. Therefore he cannot understand God's behaviour later on and his ultimate punishment is not jail, where he would probably end up, but banishment from Middlemarch.

3. 2. Silas Marner

Silas Marner bares imprint of George Eliot's talent, it embodies both the legendary tale and its realistic treatment and this accounts for its ambivalent reception.⁶³ George Eliot alone said about it that it is a legendary tale which was given realistic treatment.⁶⁴ Many critics see inspiration by Wordsworth⁶⁵ and his romantic lyric pictures of the country and a tale of Rumpelstiltskin⁶⁶ and its story about a magical weaver. Within the works of Victorian novels, it is a fine rustic novel which has many rich characters which resemble many others, for example, the plot around Silas Marner's money is quite similar with her *Brother Jacob*. When we compare *Silas*

⁶³ George Eliot and David Carroll, *Silas Marner: The Weaver of Raveloe*, (London: Penguin Books, 2003), viii.

⁶⁴ Peter Simpson, "Crisis and Recovery: Wordsworth, George Eliot, and Silas Marner," *University Of Toronto Quarterly* 48 (April 1978): 95. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed April 20, 2013).

⁶⁵ Ralph Stewart, "Eliot's Silas Marner," *Explicator* 56 (March 1998): 76. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed April 20, 2013).

⁶⁶ Peter Simpson, "Crisis and Recovery," 95.

Marner and *Middlemarch*, we can see similarity in the characters of Silas and Bulstrode. Firstly their origin in Middlemarch/Raveloe, where they give impression of strange people since they are not local and they do not know their origin and secondary because of their religion, where both of them share a past in a strict religious sect. On the other hand, Bulstrode shares a similarity with Godfrey Cass as a respectable citizen, but lacks a label of something foreign.

Even though *Silas Marner* stands out among other George Eliot's novel by its considered shortness, it is a highly considered Victorian novel.

3.2.1. Summary of Silas Marner

The story is told by a narrator, who puts the story line at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Silas is a weaver who avoids the society of the village he lives in, Raveloe. Silas came to the village because he left his Puritan religious community, Lantern Yard, disappointed after grievance caused by his closest friend, William Dane, who frames him for the theft. Silas devotion is partly caused by his medical condition, because he suffers from cataleptic seizures, when he cannot move and cannot react and perceive any outer perception. While framed and wrongly accused and found guilty, he leaves the convict with lost faith in God as well as people.

Silas' reputation in the village bares also a trace of magic, since he can heal people with help of herbs. Simple villagers believe that Silas has supernatural power, and he speaks with devil. The picture of witchcraft is supported also by his solitude. His only occupation, besides his work, is counting his earned gold, which he hides under his cottage floor.

Raveloe is controlled by local gentry, a family of Casses. The squire Cass has two sons, who are both quite problematic. Godfrey took one of the tenant's money for his own use on his brother's inducement and now, he is obliged to sell his horse, in order to replace the money. The squire threatens to evict the tenant so he needs to act quickly to keep his reputation in front of the father. His brother takes his horse on a hunt to sell it while a social event takes place in a village. Godfrey Cass seems to be a very respectable young gentleman, who admires a local beauty from a respectable family, Nancy Lammeter. Godfrey is already secretly married to a barmaid who lives in a different city. He is very miserable in his position and does not know what to do, so he indulges in alcohol while trying to cope with his future fall.

His evil-minded brother Dustan sells the horse and afterward kills it in hunt by impaling it on a stake. He tries to solve the misery by stealing presumed Silas' gold, which he heard of. He succeeds and leaves the empty cottage. Silas returns and finds out that his entire savings are missing and runs into a tavern horrified by the circumstances. After initial presumptions against Silas, the local people help him to form a group and call the constable. The gold is nowhere to be found, a false accusation is brought on a travelling seller whom disappeared from the village some time ago. Even though Silas is devastated misfortune, he partly connected with locals, that now they bring him even gifts. The fear of unfamiliar is replaced with pity.

Dustan's absence is quite a frequent event; therefore nobody seems to be suspicious. Godfrey is left with the unpleasant assignment and has to tell the truth to his father, about the missing money. The squire is unpleasantly surprised by his son's behaviour but in the end, he forgives his son. Godfrey's wife problem is also solved in his favour. While having a ball, his wife and their child travel to Raveloe to surprise everyone. Her addiction to laudanum costs her life near Silas cottage, where the baby steps in and falls asleep on Silas, while he has one of his cataleptic seizures. When he wakes up, he follows the baby's steps and finds a woman. He rushes to the ball, since he knows that the doctor is there and tries to seek a help. Godfrey recognizes the child on Silas' hands and volunteers to check on a woman. When he finds his dead wife, he decides that he keeps his secret hidden and marries a wife he loves, Nancy, and becomes a most respectable man. Silas decides to keep the baby and christens her Eppie. The village is drawn closer to Silas more than ever.

After sixteen years, Eppie is a grown woman who plans to marry a local boy. Godfrey is not satisfied by his situation since his marriage bared no children. Godfrey wants to adopt Eppie while keeping the secret about fatherhood hidden. After land adjustments, they discover Dustan's skeleton in the Stone-pits near Silas' cottage, and with him also Silas' money. The discovered money is given back to their lawful owner and under the found circumstances, Godfrey tells truth about the parentage of young Eppie to his wife. Nancy feels sorry for the whole situation, because she could have raised her as their own and they ask Eppie to become part of the family. She refuses to leave Silas for she has been his daughter for a long time and she remains till the end of her days.

The Casses therefore try to easy their life on a financial bases and Eppie marries a local boy and live together with old Silas.

3.2.2. Character of Godfrey Cass

Godfrey Cass is a member of the aristocracy. Since he is a firstborn son, it is presumed that he is the heir of the estate. He should be an ideal gentleman and successor of his father. At the beginning of the novel, the situation seems desperate because he already made too many mistakes to be considered a gentleman. I believe that we could call him a weak-minded person, when we consider his behaviour toward his younger brother. The money he took from his one of the father's tenants gave actually to his brother, whom he hate and fears at once. Dustan knows about the secret marriage and threatens Godfrey with the revelation. We could say that Godfrey is weak in many ways regarding to his character. Firstly, when we think about the question of his marriage, which would be quite a scandal if revealed. He married without his father's approval which would be not granted by his father, since he married under his rank, which was even more shocking. The second think would be quite a scandal, if he would bring his wife into his estate. His wife, a former bar-maid and laudanum addict, would not be a proper housewife for a local gentry. In this way, Duncan had a powerful weapon against his brother, which could have ruin him entirely. There would be even a worse problem when he would lose his status as gentleman since he courted to Miss Nancy Lammeter while married to another woman.

He is also a very weak character in a way of not standing up to a problem and solving it. He keeps drinking and waits for his own apocalypse. He is completely controlled by his brother, afraid of the impact of the whole situation. He is actually not really burdened with the money episode and he rather loses his favourite horse and pays every penny his brother asks to because *still, there was one position worse than the present: it was the position he would be in when the ugly secret was disclosed; and the desire that continually triumphed over every other was that of warding off the evil day, when he would have to bear the consequences of his father's violent resentment for the wound inflicted on his family pride—would have, perhaps, to turn his back on that hereditary ease and dignity which, after all, was a sort of reason for living, and would carry with him the certainty that he was banished for ever from the sight and esteem of Nancy Lammeter.*⁶⁷

⁶⁷ George Eliot and David Carroll, *Silas Marner: The Weaver of Raveloe*, (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 30.

One of the greatest attribute of Godfrey's character is his pride. When we consider his status in the society, it is quite understandable. It is one of the finest qualities among young gentlemen. Even when he discovers about the faith of his favourite horse, he keeps his temper and does not show that the trade was actually a necessity and not a favour. He tries to behave as a distinctive member of gentry.

The only thing he had to do after his brother's disappearance was the confession to his father about the money. *"I don't pretend to be a good fellow," he said to himself; "but I'm not a scoundrel—at least, I'll stop short somewhere. I'll bear the consequences of what I have done sooner than make believe I've done what I never would have done. I'd never have spent the money for my own pleasure—I was tortured into it."*⁶⁸

His father forgives him but he pushes him into the marriage with Nancy. He would like to do it as well, so he knew, that it was already a matter of time when he loses his position in the society while confessing his secret. Therefore he thanked to God when he discovered that his wife died on a way to find him in purpose of confrontation. The New Year's Eve ball is one of the most significant nights in Godfrey's life. He discovers that his wife is probably dead and he sees resolution of his entire problem, when Silas rushes into a hall looking for a doctor. He did not felt how he should have: *here was one terror in his mind at that moment: it was, that the woman might not be dead. That was an evil terror—an ugly inmate to have found a nestling-place in Godfrey's kindly disposition; but no disposition is a security from evil wishes to a man whose happiness hangs on duplicity*⁶⁹. Of course that in such a situation, he needed to assist and make sure, that he could really escape without any visible detriment. With a single sentence about the origin of a little baby, he gives up his only child, he will ever have. *"I don't know—some poor woman's who has been found in the snow, I believe," was the answer Godfrey wrung from himself with a terrible effort.*⁷⁰ When he goes to the place where his wife died, he truly sees that this art of his history is really closed and with gratitude, he goes back to the ball with best resolutions about his future.

The truth is that the wild youth Godfrey spend into the fullest and hasty marriage made him a better person and he truly tried to live as a perfect gentleman. The punishment for his previous acts was his lack of children. Godfrey tried to help Silas

⁶⁸ George Eliot and David Carroll, *Silas Marner*, 65.

⁶⁹ George Eliot and David Carroll, *Silas Marner*, 114.

⁷⁰ George Eliot and David Carroll, *Silas Marner*, 116.

financially and by that, he was praised among the locals. Godfrey tried to adopt Eppie many repeatedly, but his wife did not praised it.

When the skeleton of Dustan is revealed, also Godfrey reveals his secret. He comes with the news about his brother to his wife and tells her the whole truth. She, burden with a disappointment of not having any children, gave him an answer which would have made their life entirely different. *At that moment Godfrey felt all the bitterness of an error that was not simply futile, but had defeated its own end. He had not measured this wife with whom he had lived so long.*⁷¹

When we compare the final punishment of Godfrey Cass with the one of Bulstrode, we can see that George Eliot was not harsh on him as she was on a poor banker. Both of them lost something with had a certain value, Nicolas Bulstrode partially his faith and power, and Godfrey Cass an opportunity of a complete family with a nice and lovely wife he dearly loved. I would say that there is a mild resemblance between Godfrey and Fred Vinci, even though Godfrey's "skeleton in the closet" could have ruined his reputation entirely and Fred did not committed such a moral crime. They both matured into the fine gentleman also thanks to their wives, who were morally above them. They learned from the lection life gave them and they lived up the society's expectation.

3.3. The Mill on the Floss

The Mill on the Floss – the introduction of a new and rather curious kind of art; and it has been found to be peculiarly feminine, from the first good novel by Fanny Burney to the last good novel by May Sinclair. New in a sense that it lets loose many of the things that are old. What the novel deals with is what women have to deal with, the differentiations, the twists and turns of this eternal river (of womanhood). The key of this new form of art, which we call fiction, is sympathy.⁷² The novel is considered by many critics as highly autobiographical, but great English novelist A. S. Byatt, who wrote an introduction to the Penguin's publication, actually says, that the novels written and published before 1880, the year of *The Mill on the Floss*'s publication, such as *Scenes from a Clerical life* and *Adam Bede* bore autobiographical traces as well, especially in a resemblance of the novel characters and actually friends or

⁷¹George Eliot and David Carroll, *Silas Marner: The Weaver of Raveloe*, (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 163.

⁷²G. K. Chersterton, *The Victorian Age in Literature*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1946), 58-59.

people around George Eliot.⁷³ The most fascinating part of the novel is the surprisingly deep understanding of a children life and nature. When I wrote about the life of George Eliot I have mentioned the close relationship between her and her brother Isaac. It is easily believable that Tom and Maggie are actually Isaac and Mary, since both of the men harshly judged their sisters.

In previous chapters we have discussed the skeletons in the closet of fine Victorian gentleman. I believe that it is also important discuss Eliot's heroines. I would like to show on a role of Maggie how strict were values during the Victorian England, which actually suppressed true feelings, desire and love, especially toward women. I would like to concentrate particularly on her childhood, since I believe that that was the period, which affected Maggie mostly. Psychological critics of *The Mill on the Floss* have tended to emphasize Maggie's overwhelming nostalgia for childhood, home, and a psychic state in which self and others were not sharply differentiated.⁷⁴ But in my opinion, the children are, after the birth, when we do not take into consideration hereditary precondition, *tabula rasa*. Maggie here is in a sense closer to Bulstrode than to Godfrey Cass, because as well as a banker, even she is a victim of ostracism, not because of a crime, but because of her desire for love and fulfilment.

3.3.1. Summary of the Novel

The beginning of the story of *The Mill on the Floss* is dated in the year of George Eliot's own childhood. Dorlcote Mill and its farm are owned by family of Tullivers. Mr and Mrs Tulliver have two children, Tom and Maggie. The story begins with Mr Tulliver's decision upon Tom's education. He would like to push his son on an educational ladder up, because his wish is to send him away that he will be something more than his father. His second child, Maggie, is very dear to his hearth and is smarter than her brother, which she unreservedly loves.

Her brother comes back and he is furious since Maggie forgot to feed his rabbits, who all died. He is very angry and holds it against her. This pattern is repeated many times during the novel.

Tom travels to new school of Mr Stelling. He does not like the lesson because he has no traits for studying. Phillip Wakem joins him, a son of lawyer whom Mr Tullivers

⁷³ Eliot, George, and A. S. Byatt. *The Mill on the Floss*, (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 11.

⁷⁴ Eva Fusch, "Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*," *Explicator* 52 (March 1994): 79. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed April 20, 2013).

dislikes greatly. Tom does not like him first, partly by his physical deformity, but his relationship with Philip changes to better when Maggie comes to visit.

Two years after Tom's new school education, even Maggie becomes a student and goes away with her cousin Lucy, but nevertheless, she is called back when the family goes to bankrupt. Mr Tulliver lost the suit against another farmer, Mr Pivart, and huge debts cause that they almost lose their mill and the farm, but the mortgage is hold by Mr Wakem. Tom comes home from the school and after an initial trouble gets a job at his uncle's business. Mr Tulliver loses his senses and recognizes only Maggie. Mr Wakem now owns the mill and after a discussion with Mr. Tulliver decides that he keeps recovering Mr Tulliver as a manager. The Tulliver family tries to save enough money in purpose to buy the mill back. Bob Jackin, a childhood friend of Tom and Maggie, gives Maggie as a gift some books which persuade her, that self-renunciation is the only way to happiness. Bob also helps to Tom to earn distinctive money.

While alone in the town, Maggie secretly meets with Philip Wakem, and they keep their acquaintance for almost a year. Philip falls deeply in love with Maggie and she loves him as well, but she gives preference to her father and brother, who would not be satisfied with her behaviour and choice of a suitor. Tom finds out about their secret meetings and he threatens Maggie with the father's condition and disclosure of the whole affair. He is very harsh on Philip and forbids any further connection between them.

Tom's business earns him enough money which would pay off all the debts. Mr Tulliver runs into Wakem's to tell him about his new situation, but in temper hits Mr Wakem with a horsewhip. By this action, Mr Tulliver comes down with an unspecific stroke, after which he soon dies, telling Tom to never forgive Wakems and to work hard in purpose to get the mill back. After the death of her father, Maggie works in a school but she is invited to stay with her cousin Lucy. With help of her cousin, she partly renews the relationship with Philip Wakem, who is also in Lucy's circle of acquaintance. But she is drawn closer to Lucy's fiancé Stephen Guest. Even though she tries to escape the unlucky situation by going away, Stephen Guest finds her and confesses her his love. Maggie is, after a great struggle, determined not to harm Lucy or Philip. Lucy tries to romantically put together Philip and Maggie, but Philip realizes the romantic bound between her and Stephen and rearranges the boat, unintentionally letting Stephen and Maggie alone. He proposes Maggie and takes advantage of Maggie's tiredness. But while they board on the ship she decides that the duty towards

her family and friends in more important than her happiness. She leaves Stephen and five days later, she comes back. It is too late, her reputation is destroyed, and she is refused by her beloved brother. Her mother supports her and she lives with Bob Jakin. Maggie is offered a position of a governess to the clergyman's children, but soon gossips starts to sprawl about her and the clergyman so she is let go. Lucy and Philip forgive her entirely and she gets a letter from Stephen who does not give up about their future. She terminally turns down his proposition while discovered that the water flooded Bob Jakin's house in the middle of a night. She gets into a boat in purpose to get to her brother in Dorlcote Mill. Tom gets into the boat with her. Almost *deus ex machina* occasion costs them both lives, which they find caused by a wooden debris and quick current.

3.3.2. Character of Maggie Tulliver

Maggie Tulliver is a very complex character. When we compare her with other female character of George Eliot, I believe that she stands out with her accessibility toward the reader's feeling. Dorothea from *Middlemarch* is too distant for a modern reader; Eppie is not drawn into the detail in purpose to be loved by the audience. But character such as Maggie could be easily found even in a modern literature or movies. The childhood, which Maggie likes to remember, was actually a very painful period of her life. We could say that she was probably depressed most of the time. Her unconditional love toward her brother, who is almost ill-natured boy, is something so innocence and clean that just children are able of that kind of feeling, if we take into a consideration Tom's behaviour and constant torment.

Another thing is, is her natural intelligence, by which she surpass her closest surrounding. She suffers from the inadequate challenging and directing of a keen mind.⁷⁵ Since women in Victorian England was considered as a shallow somewhat silly creatures with no great quality regarding a schooling system, even Maggie had to obtain her knowledge by self-studying, since there is no closer information about her boarding school lectures that etiquette.

Ever since she was little, she lived in a shadow of other people, her mother and her family scolds her for various reasons, such as her indomitable hair. There is no warm feeling towards Maggie from her mother's side. *I'm sure the child's half an idiot i'*

⁷⁵ Banerjee, Jacqueline. 1994. "Girls' Education and the Crisis of the Heroine in Victorian Fiction." *English Studies* 75, no. 1: 34. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed April 20, 2013).

*some things; for if I send her upstairs to fetch anything, she forgets what she's gone for, an' perhaps 'ull sit down on the floor i' the sunshine an' plait her hair an' sing to herself like a Bedlam creatur', all the while I'm waiting for her downstairs. That niver run i' my family, thank God! no more nor a brown skin as makes her look like a mulatter. I don't like to fly i' the face o' Providence, but it seems hard as I should have but one gell, an' her so comical."*⁷⁶ As we can see, her mother lacks any kind of understanding toward her, closely because she is nothing like her. She clearly gives preference to her niece Lucy: *here's her cousin Lucy's got a row o' curls round her head, an' not a hair out o' place. It seems hard as my sister Deane should have that pretty child; I'm sure Lucy takes more after me nor my own child does*⁷⁷.

Mr Tulliver likes her definitely more than his wife, but who is most important in Maggie life, is her brother Tom, who has almost a god-like features for her. He is well aware of his power over his sister and he troubles her quite often. He often tells her that he does not love her and that he would replace her with someone else, for example with Lucy.

There is one daring question I would like to draw closely. As we can already see, the closest members of her family did show Maggie, that her cousin Lucy is more preferable than she is. We can agree upon Maggie character, which dominant element is self-sacrifice. She would do anything for people she loves and respects. But when she falls in love with Lucy's fiancé, there could be another motive, hidden even to Maggie's inner vision, since there is no evidence in the novel. What if her constant reminder of Lucy perfectness in her childhood leaves subliminal imprint in her behaviour and future action? This "skeleton in the closet" would be hidden so deep, alarming, but emphatically understandable. What if the actual theme at the end of the novel, when she falls in love and "steals love from perfect Lucy" actually seems like a victory of a battle over the affection of the surroundings? Since George Eliot was a strikingly good psychologist of her characters, it is not impossible for Maggie to gain a final satisfaction. If the probe into Maggie's mind would be a little bit deeper, I believe, that we could find character values which would not be just angel-like. Of course that in the end the morally corrected decision wins and brings her something she valued most in her life, the reconciliation and affections of her brother.

⁷⁶ George Eliot and A. S. Byatt, *The Mill on the Floss*, 14.

⁷⁷ George Eliot and A. S. Byatt, *The Mill on the Floss*, 15.

George Eliot's own reconciliation with her brother came, as well as Maggie's closely before her death. Who knows if she knew that she is not going to live much longer, but in 1880 she is finally given a rapprochement with her beloved brother, Isaac, who congratulates her abruptly on her wedding. I believe that only someone with a similar mind as Maggie could have created her, and therefore I dare to say, that her wedding was partially initiated by her yearning for reconciliation. She did love Lewis greatly, but their living together cost her relationship with brother. Therefore she became an honourable woman also because of her brother.

Maggie did hesitate a little and I would say that Tom is worse than Isaac, since Maggie did not succumb to a sinful life, but George Eliot did. Maggie finds her redemption during her last moments of life and probably she could have not imagined better death than she actually had. Because even "*in their death they were not divided.*"⁷⁸

4. Conclusion

George Eliot was a proper Victorian novelist. Her novels are full of rich various characters who represent any possible rank or type of people. Her talent for detail brings original testimony about a time she lived in. Her books were appreciated during the second half of the nineteenth century as well as nowadays, because her characters speak to us through the time and we can identify with them easily.

George Eliot's protagonists I have chosen for my bachelor theses represent three different categories. Nicolas Bulstrode from *Middlemarch* is a foreign banker who gained power over locals, Godfrey Cass from *Silas Marner* is a member of local gentry who learns from his mistakes and middle-class Maggie Tulliver from *The Mill on the Floss* seeks affection almost as abandoned street animal. The connection between these characters is visible in the impact of their action. Since we talk merely of "the skeletons in the closet" regarding moral values, not criminal offense, I have discovered that the main punishment of the society was the usage of the ostracism. I have chosen three characters whose connection with ostracism is different. Godfrey Cass escapes it without any moral punishment, by luck and also by his fortune. Nicolas Bulstrode ends up living in a different society, therefore we can say, that his punishment was completed

⁷⁸ George Eliot and A. S. Byatt, *The Mill on the Floss*, 554.

into fullest. Maggie was ostracized in a sense of *A Scarlett letter*, but her life was ended up prematurely, almost *Anna Karenina*-like.

I have discussed moral values in the Victorian society and closely examined several impacts of the culture and political climate upon the characters of the novels I have chosen. I have also found connection between the characters and George Eliot, since both of the mentioned are Victorians and they were influenced by the same cultural environment, even though characters are of course influenced through their maker. George Eliot as a well-educated woman put her knowledge also into her novels and characters as well. There is evidence about her opinion about church and many characters actually bare the same stadiums of faith as she did during her life.

The Victorian values emerged quite violently and to keep them unimpaired was almost unrealistic also for Victorians. They tried to seem normal and respectable even though they knew that their behaviour or actions are not purely good. The good irreproachable reputation was the most important thing one can possess with no needed connection to a respectable class.

George Eliot was one of the finest Victorian women who lived interesting life which helped her to constitute her writing skills and her understanding of the human nature and various characters. She proved that women can write also serious and successful fiction, not just silly novels as some Victorian novelists and critics thought. She acquired respectable amount of knowledge and by that she surpassed not just her family members, but most of the Victorian population. Her work is rightfully placed among the best of the English language.

5. Resumé

Cílem této práce je přiblížit tvorbu viktoriánské spisovatelky George Eliot a porovnat chování vybraných postav s morálními hodnotami tehdejší společnosti. Tato práce také shrnuje největší historické milníky Anglie v devatenáctém století z důvodu pochopení kulturních okruhů, se kterými se může čtenář v díle George Eliot setkat. George Eliot jsem záměrně vybrala, jelikož je často literárními kritiky zmiňována jako jedna z nejlepších spisovatelů viktoriánské literatury vůbec a mezi její klady patří hloubka a plastičnost postav, které překvapují svou věrohodností.

Viktoriánská Anglie patří mezi jedno z nejvíce zmiňovaných historických období tohoto ostrovního státu. Anglie v devatenáctém století stála na vrcholu nejen technologickém, když ji porovnáme s ostatními státy té doby, ale také územním, neboť ovládala mnohá území v Africe a Asii, jako byla například Indie, kde královna Viktorie zastávala post císařovny. Angličtí politici se mnohdy vrací a často zmiňují toto období s tím, že ho dávají za vzor k úspěchu. U anglického diváka i čtenáře je toto období také velice populární, o čemž značí také to, že BBC kostýmní dramata a adaptace patří k nejsledovanějším programům televize.

Devatenácté století je všeobecně známé jako století střední, měšťanské třídy, na které stojí celkový průmysl a ekonomika. Také v Anglii je možno říci, že tehdejší doba stála na úspěchu střední třídy. Početné měšťanstvo bylo ve společnosti velice důležité, neboť ovládalo několik sektorů tehdejší společnosti, od církve a vzdělání po obchod. Viktoriánská Anglie je kromě svého komerčního úspěchu známá také morálními hodnotami a stkriktní etiketou a pokud bychom měli jmenovat společný faktor těchto entit, vyšla by nám právě měšťanská společnost. Buržoazní společnost bažila po nobilezaci, kterou si spojovali s aristokratickou etiketou. Aristokratická etiketa již mnohdy neexistovala, jako byl například skandál královny Karolíny, a tudíž bedlivě sledovali jakékoliv vybočení z daných norem. Byli nakonec těmi nejpřísnějšími soudci a největším trestem bylo vypovězení ze společnosti.

Tato práce se také částečně soustředí na popis tehdejší společnosti z pohledu třídního rozdělení a genderu. Pro pochopení veskrze viktoriánského románu, které psala George Eliot poplatně normě realismu, je také potřeba prozkoumání anglického třídního systému, a hlavně vztah a propustnost mezi nimi. Jelikož je George Eliot mnohdy spisovatelkou, která se zabývá právě postavením a příběhy střední třídy, soustředila jsem se také já na právě tuto třídu. Gender studies jsou také velice důležitou částí pro

pochopení celého systému, neboť jak role žen, tak role mužů byla nejdůležitějším stavebním kamenem celé společnosti. Muži byli považováni za živitele rodiny, kteří měli za úkol také reprezentaci rodiny ve sféře veřejné. Jeho slovo bylo zákonem jak vně tak i vevnitř rodiny a jeho chování muselo splňovat chování gentlemana. Naopak ženy byly vedeny již od mala ke své roli budoucí manželky a matky, čemuž bylo podrobeno také jejich nevelké vzdělání, které bylo soustředěno hlavně na praktické znalosti a dovednosti.

Celkový tlak společnosti na jedince a nároky na chování byly opravdu veliké. Důkazem toho mohou být také mnohé knižní manuály, které se věnovaly od etikety oblékání a stolování, po domácí práce a celkový management domácnosti. Nároky byly často nedodržovány, neboť byly mnohdy neslučitelné s praxí. Velice zajímavou informací je jedna z nejhorších charakterových vlastností, která je přivlastňována Viktoriánům, a to pokrytectví a jeho dopad na společnost. Je mnohdy pravdou, že lidé, kteří soudili osoby okolo nich, měli své vlastní kostlivce ve skříní, kteří, pokud by byli vystaveni dennímu světlu, by byly mnohdy přetřásáni více než ti momentálních provinilců. Také George Eliot, i když žila v nemanželském svazku s Georgem Henry Lewesem, byla ráda, když ji okolí nazývalo paní Lewesovou a podle svědků či známých byla velice ráda, když ji tak nazývala hlavně právoplatná paní Lewesová, manželka jejího druha.

Druhá, praktická část, mé bakalářské práce, zhodnocuje poznatky o viktoriánské společnosti a aplikuje je na postavy románů George Eliot. Kostlivci ve skříní postav George Eliot, jsou rozdílné povahy. Nicolas Bulstrode z románu *Middlemarch* je zdánlivě dobrodíným a zbožným bankéřem, který přispívá ve městě potřebným a na jiné dobročinné účely. Jelikož je z jiného města než Middlemarch, je v maloměstské společnosti neoblíben, i když je jeho manželka z velice vážené společnosti. Jeho metodické vyznání víry a moc ve společnosti není vítána a tudíž, v momentě, kdy obyvatelé zjistí, že jeho moc je vystavena na cizím a nelegálním majetku a navíc na jeho rukách může být domnělá krev svědka jeho minulosti, jeho trestem je trest nejvyšší a to ostrakismus.

Godfrey Cass z románu *Silas Marner*, je zástupcem místní aristokracie. Tajemství jeho bouřlivé mládí, ve kterém se skrývají závažné činy, od nepovedeného zakázaného manželství, zatajené dcery a vydírání bratrem, jsou naštěstí neodkryta a Godfrey se i se svými kostlivci ve skříní stává velice respektovanou společenskou

osobností s morálně čistým profilem. Jeho trestem tudíž není ostrakismus, kterému unikl s velkou dávkou štěstí, ale manželství bez legitimních potomků.

Maggie Tulliver z *The Mill on the Floss*, je jedinou ženskou postavou kterou jsem pro svou bakalářskou práci vybrala, a to kvůli autobiografickým prvkům postavy. Maggie je oběť svého pohlaví a také dětství, které je autorkou překvapivě detailně zpracováno z psychologického hlediska. Bažící po lásce okolí a hlavně svého bratra hledá svou cestu a věří, že sebeobětování je jediným způsobem ke šťastnému životu. Nešťastně zamilovaná se nejdříve rozhodne pro život s mužem, kterého miluje, ale její morální citění a láska k bližním převáží její vlastní potřeby. Nicméně je již pozdě a její pověst byla pošpiněna. Společnost před ní zavírá dveře jako před ženou s pochybnou morálkou, je tedy stejně jako Nicolas Bulstrode ostrakizována, nicméně má stále známé, kteří jsou ji ochotni pomoci. Její životní osud končí ale náhle v záplavě, nicméně v objetí její největší životní láskou, bratrem. Její osud končí autorka stejně jako osud ukončil Tolstoj Anně Karenině.

V závěru této práce je tedy shodnocení potrestání postav a srovnání s danými viktoriánskými hodnotami a chováním. Zjistila jsem, že George Eliot je opravdu velice detailně smýšlející spisovatelkou a zástupcem viktoriánského realismu, jenž popisuje dané situace a chování okolí stejně jako by to dělala opravdu viktoriánská společnost.

6. Annotation

Author:	Tereza Kalousková
Faculty and department:	Faculty of Arts, Department of English and American Studies
Title:	The Skeletons in the Closet in George Eliot's Novels
Thesis supervisor:	Mgr. Ema Jelínková, PhD.
The number of pages:	50
The number of signs:	88 169
The number of annexes:	0
The number of works cited:	39
Key words:	George Eliot, Victorian novel, Victorian England, virtues, morality, secrets

The main aim of this work is to introduce George Eliot and her work as the mediator of the Victorian England. The first part of the work contains information about the Victorian society and its structure of values, such as etiquette, faith, politics, economy, class division and gender roles. There is also a chapter which introduces the reader with the life of George Eliot. The second part of the work contains analysis of three mayor works of George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, *Silas Marner* and *The Mill on the Floss*. Each of the novels is represented by one character with a certain secret, which was against the society believes and values. The reader can understand the power and impact of the society on its members by the penalty which is given to the members who broke the moral law.

7. Anotace

Autor:	Tereza Kalousková
Název fakulty a katedry:	Filozofická fakulta, Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky
Název práce:	Kostlivci ve skříní v románech George Eliot
Vedoucí práce:	Mgr. Ema Jelínková, Ph.D.
Počet stran:	50
Počet znaků:	88 169
Počet příloh:	0
Počet titulů použité literatury:	39
Klíčová slova:	George Eliot, viktoriánská Anglie, viktoriánský román, hodnoty, morálka, tajemství

Hlavním cílem této práce je představit George Eliot jako prostředníka s kulturou a společností viktoriánské Anglie. První část této práce obsahuje informace o viktoriánské společnosti a její morálce a morálních hodnotách, jako je etiketa, víra, politická situace, ekonomika, rozdělení sociálních tříd a genderové role. První část také seznamuje čtenáře s životem George Eliot. Druhá část této práce obsahuje analýzu tří předních děl autorky, Middlemarche, Silas Marneru a The Mill on the Floss. Každé dílo je poté reprezentováno jednou postavou, jejíž tajemství atakuje tehdejší morální zásady a zvyky. Čtenář může díky této analýze pochopit sílu a dopad společnosti na jedince a to díky trestu, který tyto morální provinilce postihne.

7. Bibliography

- Altick, Richard D. *Victorian People and Ideas: A Companion for the Modern Reader of Victorian Literature*. New York: Norton, 1973.
- Amigoni, David. *Victorian Literature*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011.
- Ashton, Rosemary. *George Eliot: A Life*. New York: The Penguin Press, 1996.
- Banerjee, Jacqueline. "Girls' Education and the Crisis of the Heroine in Victorian Fiction." *English Studies* 75 (January 1994): 34-45 .Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed April 20, 2013).
- Bennett, Joan. *George Eliot: Her Mind and Her Art*. Cambridge: University Press, 1962.
- Benthin, Anja. *Redefining Gender Roles: The Image of Women in Virginia Woolf's 'To the Lighthouse'*. München: GRIN Verlag GmbH, 2009.
- Birch, Dinah, and Margaret Drabble. *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 7th ed. Oxford: Oxford University, 2009.
- Caine, Barbara. "When Did the Victorian Period End? Questions of Gender and Generation." *Journal Of Victorian Culture* 11 (September 2006): 317-325. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed March 15, 2013).
- Clough, Arthur Hugh. *Poems, with a Memoir*. Cambridge: Macmillan, 1862.
- Cooke, George. *George Eliot: A Critical Study of Her Life, Writings and Philosophy*. Boston: J.R. Osgood and Company, 1883.
- Davidoff, Leonore, and Catherine Hall. *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class: 1780-1850*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

Downs, Gene. "A Clear-eyed Look at the Life of George Eliot," *Savannah Morning News* September 12 (1999): 4E.

Eliot George. *Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life*. London: David Campbell, 1991.

Eliot, George, and David Carroll. *Silas Marner: The Weaver of Raveloe*. London: Penguin Books, 2003.

Eliot, George, and A. S. Byatt. *The Mill on the Floss*. London: Penguin Books, 2003.

Fisher, Nick. "The Great Exhibition of 1851: The Struggle to Describe the Indescribable." *Endeavour* 36, (March 2012): 6-13. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed April 14, 2013).

Fuchs, Eva. "Eliot's The Mill on the Floss." *Explicator* 52 (Winter 1994): 79 - 90. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed April 20, 2013).

Gilmour, Robin. "Religion: Reform, Rejection, Reconstruction." In *The Victorian Period: The Intellectual and Cultural Context: 1830-1890*. London: Longman, 1993.

Haight, Gordon Sherman. *George Eliot: A Biography*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1968.

Himmelfarb, Gertrude. "Manners into Morals What the Victorians Knew." *American Scholar* 57 (Spring 1988): 220-231. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed April 4, 2013).

Himmelfarb, Gertrude. *The De-moralization of Society: From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values*. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1995.

Hollahan, Eugene. "The Concept of "Crisis" in Middlemarch." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 4 (March 1974):450-457. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2933238>

- Horsman, E.A. *The Victorian Novel*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.
- Chersterton, G. K. *The Victorian Age in Literature*. London: Oxford University Press, 1946.
- Jones, Neil. "Grandmother of Europe." *Britain* 79 (January 2012): 40-47. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed March 15, 2013).
- Langford, Paul, and Christopher Harvie. *The Oxford History of Britain: The Eighteenth Century and the Age of Industry*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Langland, Elizabeth. "Nobody's Angels: Domestic Ideology and Middle-Class Women in the Victorian Novels." *PMLA* 107 (March 1992): 290-304, www.jstor.org/stable/462641
- Leavis, F.R. *The Great Tradition*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1948.
- Matthew, H.C.G., and Kenneth O. Morgan. *The Oxford History of Britain: The Modern Age*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Purchase, Sean. *Key concepts in Victorian literature*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- Simpson, Peter. "Crisis and Recovery: Wordsworth, George Eliot, and Silas Marner." *University Of Toronto Quarterly* 48 (April 1978): 95-110. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed April 20, 2013).
- Steinbach, Susie. *Understanding the Victorians: Politics, Culture, and Society in Nineteenth-century Britain*. London: Routledge, 2012.
- Stewart, Ralph. "Eliot's Silas Marner." *Explicator* 56 (March 1998): 76-89. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed April 20, 2013).

- Thomson, E.P. "Eighteen-Century English Society: Class Stuggle without Class?." *Social History* 3 (March 1978): 146-163.
- Udry, Richard. J. "The Nature of Gender." *Demography* 31 (November 1994): 561-573.
- Uglow, Jennifer S. *George Eliot*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1987.
- Wiener, Martin J. *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- Yildirim, Aşkın Haluk. "The Woman Question and the Victorian Literature on Gender." *Ekev Academic Review* 16 (June 2012): 45-54. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed April 16, 2013).
- Youngs, Tim. "Victorian Britain and 'Primitive' Africa: Figures and Tools of Imperialism." *Africa* 1 (March 1991): 118-127. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed March 29, 2013).
- Others:
- "Censorship." National Library of Scotland. <http://www.nls.uk/learning-zone/politics-and-society/themes-in-focus/censorship/activity-7> (accessed April 1, 2013).
- Crombie, Neil. "Jane Austen: The Unseen Portrait?" BBC 2 (December 26, 2011).
- Walden, Brian. "Interview with Margaret Thatcher." LWT: *Weekend World*, January 16, 1983.