

# CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

## A. Background of the Study.

The concern for values, especially moral values and ethics, is as old as mankind. In every era of human history, laws, ethical codes and other concerns moral behavior have been talked about and passed down through oral tradition. George Eliot believes a moral law governs human behavior, ensuring punishment to wrongdoers. Sometimes the retribution comes from a person's conscience, sometime it is external.

George Eliot was extremely critical of such works of what she called 'silly fiction masquerading as reality'. Such novels could only do damage to real art. Art is not meant to be an escape from life, on the contrary it was meant to provide a meaning and an understanding of life. For George Eliot, art had a moral mission:

"If Art does not enlarge men's sympathies, it does nothing morally...the only effect I ardently long to produce by my writings, is that those who read them



should be better able to imagine and to feel the pains  
and the joys of those who  
differ from themselves in everything but the broad fact  
of being struggling erring human creatures.”

{Eliot:1854}

Silas Marner appeals directly to the moral consciousness and the story is used as a device of George Eliot's moral thought. She conveys her moral thought by using an interesting experience of Silas Marner's life, the main character who is fleeing from destroying societies and must suffer many trials and tribulations before achieving final happiness.

George Eliot was sure that those who live a virtuous life are essentially contented, that those who live a vicious life are essentially discontented. She was sure that we cannot escape the consequences of our own actions. That our sins find us out, that the slightest slip will be visited on us, if not immediately then later.

It is the light of these views that George Eliot constructs the novel. The idea, which is the germ, is the moral one as well as the conflict which is the mainspring of the action is also always the moral one. The characters are put in the position to do what they think right.

If we overlook these, we can plainly see what makes this work deeply interesting and become an unquestioned masterpiece of the 19th century of English fiction.

Behind all these, it is George Eliot (1819-1880), the pen name of Mary Ann (Marian) Evans who appears on the English scene as the first modern English novelist. Many of her novels are based upon the consequences of defying moral laws and her lifelong loving service to others showed her deeply religious nature. She typified better than anyone else for the nineteenth century search on ethical standards.

Lord David Cecil in his Early Victorian Novelists comments that George Eliot's concentration on the moral side of human nature is the chief source of her peculiar glory, the kernel of her precious unique contribution to our literature. The ideas at the back of her novels and the conflict she develops in her characters are always moral. This consistency gives her an advantage over other writers of the Victorian period. (Haight S, 1965:218)

Silas Mamer is the story of Silas Mamer himself, the weaver of Raveloe. It is the story of a simple and trusting man who is accused and convicted of theft by his close friend. This separated him from the community in which he was rooted and lost his faith

in man and God at one blow. Isolated from his kind, he goes to live among strangers and gives his heart to the accumulation of gold. Then he is drawn back into the healthgiving life of the community by a child.

Silas Marner is a short and simple story as it is. It portrays only a single village community and how the simple life of the villagers is surrounded by. But it has something wider than that. Silas Marner reflects much of what both interesting and important in human life which is the moral values.

### **B. Statement of the problem**

Based on the background of the study above, the writer is interested to analyze the problems which are formulated as follows:

1. How far are the moral values revealed through the plot and the setting?
2. How should the moral values in the characters be evaluated?

### **C. Objective of the study**

The objective of this study is to present the analysis of the moral values which are found in the story. The moral values in the

story are revealed through the plot, characters as well as the setting.

1. This study presents the analysis of moral values which are revealed through the plot and the setting.
2. This study also presents the evaluation of moral values in the characters by using the ethical background.

#### **D. Significance of the study**

The significance of this study is to provide the readers with some examples of the rights and wrongs of human conduct with their consequences. That every good or bad action bears fruit which may cause spiritual bliss or torture in this life. By considering this fact, the readers are stimulated to make decisions that are congruent with the moral values, those they share in great part with other human beings.

For the writer herself, she hopes that this study will broaden her knowledge about literature, a novel especially and giving new insights about human experience and better understanding about life itself.

### **E. Limitation of the study**

George Eliot uses Silas Marner as a vehicle of her moral thought. Every event, character and situation conveys this message. She does this by contrasting and comparing each of them so the message is brought home very clearly.

The writer limits the study by searching for the moral values in the story through the plot, setting and characters by using the psychological and sociological background. At the same time the writer analyzes the moral values as the characters reveal, she evaluates it by using the ethical background.

### **F. Theoretical Background**

As a starting point of the analysis, the writer uses the Intrinsic approach since the moral values in the story are reflected through the plot, character and setting which form the intrinsic elements. Then it is appropriate for the writer to use the Intrinsic approach.

In analyzing the main point of the study, the writer applies the psychological and sociological background. The psychological background helps the writer in explaining the reasons of why people behave as they do. The rural sociology gives the writer a

valuable information about the characteristics of rural society. The writer also applies the ethical background since it is the only science which judges the conduct of the human being.

### **G. Method of the study**

The writer conducts this thesis by searching, collecting and selecting data from books dealing with literature, especially on George Eliot's, Silas Marner and the analysis itself.

The methodology of this study is the descriptive method. This method will give us some description about the aspects of the literary work that is analyzed. The descriptions of those aspects are clarified by the data related to the analysis.

### **H. Definition of key terms**

Moral Values : - The values about what is good or bad and right or wrong.

- It resides in awareness of rules of good and bad but interpreted in terms of reward and punishment. (Bernard, William, Morality: An Introduction to Ethics, 1972:2)

- Isolation** : - cut off from human contact or very little human
- It also symbolizes the feeling of loneliness in Silas Mamer's mind and heart.
- Miser** : a person who hoards money and hates spending it.
- Gold** : money, but it also represents Eppie. Both symbolize Silas' happiness which support his courage to face life.

### **I. Organization of the paper**

This thesis is divided into four chapters. The first is Introduction which consists of Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Objective of the Study, Significance of the Study, Scope and Limitation, Theoretical Background, Method of the Study, Definition of the Key Terms and Organization of the Paper.

The second chapter is Theoretical Framework in which the writer will explain the approach and several backgrounds which are used in the analysis.



**Chapter three is Analysis. Here, the writer explains the moral values in the story which are revealed through the plot, setting, and characters a by using the intrinsic approach, psychological as well as the sociological background. The writer also seeks further to evaluate the moral values which are revealed by the characters, by using the ethical background.**

**Chapter four is Conclusion, the final chapter. The problems concerned with this thesis are going to be solved in this forth chapter.**

# **CHAPTER II**

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**