

FATALITY OF HUMAN DESTINY AND ITS IMPACTS IN GEORGE ELIOT'S *SILAS MARNER***TONOUEWA Mèdessè Emile**

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Basing on some Christians' behaviour in George Eliot's *Silas Marner*, it is shown that human being believes that his destiny is controlled by God, by contrast to the African proverb which states that every man is the architect of his own future. But, unfortunately, the belief in God has had both good and bad impacts in the novel, which lets admit that this belief does not compel some Christians not to behave badly towards their neighbours.

Keywords: Human Beings; Belief; Destiny; Positive Impacts; Negative Impacts

Résumé

Se basant sur les comportements religieux de certains croyants dans le roman intitulé *Silas Marner* de l'écrivaine anglaise George Eliot, il est démontré que l'être humain croit que son destin est dans les mains de Dieu contrairement au proverbe africain selon lequel chaque être humain peut forger son destin. Mais cette croyance en Dieu a eu des impacts positifs aussi bien que négatifs dans le roman, ce qui peut faire dire que la croyance à la puissance d'un être suprême d'agir sur le destin humain n'a pas empêché certains croyants de se comporter malhonnêtement envers leurs voisins.

Mots-clés: Etre Humain, Croyance, Destin, Effets Positifs, Effets Négatifs

Introduction

“Every man is the architect of his own fortune,” an African proverb says. This proverb lets suppose that human being can control his destiny. But, while some people are saying and are making their fellows believe that human being is responsible for his future, in George Eliot’s *Silas Marner*, Silas Marner, talking to Godfrey Cass about the arrival of a baby to his cottage, has made the latter know: “My money’s gone I don’t know where and this is come from where I don’t know. I know nothing-I’m partly amazed” (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 139). Silas Marner is saying that the two events; the loss of his money and the arrival of the baby are out of his control. Then, it can be admitted that he thinks that a supernatural power is responsible for what happens to him. So, he believes that human being cannot control his destiny. Thus, the objective of this research work is to show, basing on religious supernaturalism, that human being is mainly superstitious by contrast to the common belief. Consequently, to reach this goal, the study will be divided in two parts consisting of showing human fatality about his destiny and focusing on the impacts of such fatality throughout the novel.

1. Human Fatality about his Destiny in *Silas Marner*

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, ninth edition*, supernaturalism is a theory that events, forces or power cannot be explained by the laws of science and that they seem to involve gods or magic. According to the same dictionary, fatality and destiny, mean respectively the belief or feeling that we have no control over what happens to us, and what happens to somebody or what will happen to them in the future, especially things they cannot change or avoid. George Eliot has shown people’s helplessness as far as their destinies are concerned through their beliefs in God. In fact she has pointed out that the inhabitants of Raveloe regard God as the almighty power, the only reliable power and the only responsible for events and actions on earth.

1.1. Regarding God as the Almighty Power in *Silas Marner*

Silas Marner throughout the following speech, is probably showing that God is the only one who has a complete power over him when he tells his friend William Dane: “God will clear me. I know nothing about the knife being there, or the money being gone” (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 10). When Silas has been accused of stealing money, it is difficult for him to prove his innocence before the minister of the church at Lantern Yard. Consequently, his reaction is to rely on God. So, he believes that God is the only power that can save him from the difficult situation. His behaviour is comparable to the one of some people who usually prefer to confide themselves to God’s will when they are overwhelmed by some problems. Thus, it can be admitted that in general human beings believe that there is a reliable power which is God. In addition, in the following passage, Dolly Winthrop probably wishes to make Silas Marner know that God is the only one who can provide him with some happiness:

Ah, if there’s good anywhere, we’ve need of it, repeated Dolly, who did not lightly forsake a serviceable phrase. She looked at Silas pityingly as she went on. “But you didn’t hear the church-bells this morning, Master Marner. I doubt you didn’t know it was Sunday. Living so lone here, you lose your count, I daresay; and then, when your loom makes a noise, you can’t hear the bells, more partic’lar now the frost kills the sound (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 95).

Dolly Winthrop is trying to persuade Silas to believe in God. According to her, by working on Sundays, Silas is losing a lot of advantages. This exhortation not to work on Sundays is not proper to the Victorian period in the sense that nowadays some Christians mainly the preachers always disagree with people working on Sundays. But the question is, when these preachers are preaching and the priests are saying prayers in their churches on Sundays, are they not working? Moreover, as she is sure that only God is responsible for human destiny, she has also advised Silas to take Eppie to church so that the child could be christened:

You must bring her up like christened folks’s children, and take her to church, and let her learn her catechize, as my little Aaron can say off-the ‘I believe’, and everything, and ‘hurt nobody by word or

deed',-as well as if he was the clerk. That's what you must do, Master Marner, if you'd do the right thing by the orphan child (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 145).

Dolly is convinced that Silas will do no good for the child if he does not bring her to church where the latter can learn catechize. But, it is believable that other people from another religious sect may have different view. Still, she insists on informing Macey of the issue:

and it's my belief", she went on, as the poor little cretur has never been christened, and it's nothing but right as the parson should be spoke to; and if you was noways unwilling, I'd talk to Mr. Macey about it this very day. For if the child ever went anyways wrong, and you hadn't done your part by it, Master Maner-'noculation, and everything to save it from harm-it 'ud be a thorn i' your bed for ever o' this side the grave; and I can't think as it 'ud be easy lying down for anybody when they'd got to another world, if they hadn't done their part by the helpless children as come wi'out their own asking (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 145).

As Macey is a parish clerk, Dolly certainly thinks that his advice will be more persuasive than hers and consequently Silas will agree to take the girl to church. She probably believes that bringing the child to church will prevent the latter from any harm. Her behaviour is similar to the one of some catholic preachers who are always eager to make other people believe at any cost that Jesus Christ is the supreme saviour. So, she regards christening as the only good thing Silas should do for the child. Thus, it seems that the woman believes that some good things will come to Silas in a miraculous way if he obeys the christian rules.

1.2. Being Superstitious in *Silas Marner*.

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary Ninth Edition*, superstition is a belief that particular events happen in a way that cannot be explained by reason or science; the belief that particular events bring good or bad luck. Silas Marner has been superstitious after his money has been stolen:

During the last few weeks, since he had lost his money, he had contracted the habit of opening his door, and looking out from time to time, as if he thought that his money might be somehow coming back to him, or that some trace, some news of it, might be mysteriously on the road, and be caught by the listening ear or the straining eye (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 128).

The passage points out that after the loss of his money, Silas has become restless. In other words, he believes that some mysterious power will bring the money back to him. So, in the difficult situation, Silas thinks that only a supernatural force can help him. His belief is noticeable among human beings who usually turn to God when they are helpless to get some miraculous solutions to their problems. One can also notice the villagers' strong belief through their recommendation to Silas on the eve of the New Year Day: "This morning he had been told by some of his neighbours that it was New Year's Eve, and that he must sit up and hear the old year rung out and that new rung in, because that was good luck, and might bring his money back again" (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 129).

The villagers of Raveloe think that if Silas stays awake still the New Year day this will bring him good luck and his lost money will be brought to him. So, according to them, the New Year Day has a supernatural power and they think he may regain his money in a mysterious way. It is obviously for the same reason that the majority of the people in our societies do not want to sleep on the eve of the New Year. In this context it is not wrong to say that George Eliot is a realistic novelist. The following statement also shows how mysterious life is for the author:

How and when had the child come in without his knowledge? He had never been beyond the door. But along with that question, and almost thrusting it away, there was a vision of the old home and the old streets leading to Lantern Yard-and within that vision another, of the thoughts which had been present with him in those far-off scenes (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 130).

George Eliot is saying that Silas does not know when the child has come in his cottage though he is inside. Then, it can be said that the appearance of the child to his house is miraculous to him. Under such

a situation, it is likely he believes that some unusual power has brought this child to his cottage. Thus, it can be admitted that he is amazed before the event. The author has even written about him:

The thoughts were strange to him now, like old friendships impossible to revive; and yet he had a dreamy feeling that this child was somehow a message come to him from that far-off life: it stirred fibres that had never been moved in Raveloe-old quiverings of tenderness-old impressions of awe at the presentiment of some Power presiding over his life; for his imagination had not yet extricated itself from the sense of mystery in the child's sudden presence, and had formed no conjectures of ordinary natural means by which the event could have been brought about (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 130 - 131).

Silas is perplexed and it seems to him he is dreaming when he sees the child in his cottage. Under such a circumstance, it is almost certain that he is thinking that it is a message sent to him by an uncontrollable force. His perplexity is probably increased when he takes the child:

Marnier took her on his lap, trembling with an emotion mysterious to himself, at something unknown dawning on his life. Thought and feeling were so confused within him, that if he had tried to give them utterance, he could only have said that the child was come instead of the gold- that the gold had turned into the child (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 144).

The above passage discloses the fact that Silas is unable to do or say anything when he takes the child. So, he has not understood what has happened. But considering the child as a gain, he is making a parallel between it and his lost money. In other words, it is likely he is thinking that the child is sent as a substitute for his stolen money. On his side, Godfrey Cass has also expressed his faith in God when he tells his wife, Nancy: Everything comes to light, Nancy, sooner or later. When God Almighty wills it, our secrets are found out (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 190).

After he has been reluctant for more than fifteen years to make his wife Nancy Lamerter know Eppie is his daughter, Godfrey finally decides to tell the truth. His speech lets say that he believes his final desire is due to God's will since he has no child with this wife. In other words, he probably believes that his childless situation is a punishment from God in order to oblige him to open his heart to his wife. Silas Marnier has also expressed his superstitious behaviour once more when he has later on been narrating his story to Eppie: Eh, my precious child, the blessing was mine. If you hadn't been sent to save me, I should ha' gone to the grave in my misery. The money was taken away from me in time; and you see it's been kept-kept till it was wanted for you. It's wonderful-our life is wonderful (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 193).

Silas Marnier's speech shows he is in a situation which cannot be understandable to anyone. In fact, it is obvious that nobody can know how the money which has been lost is kept untouched and brought to Silas by Godfrey when Eppie is a grown up. It is almost certain one of George Eliot's ways to show that life is a mystery. Silas even makes Eppie know: It takes no hold of me now, the money doesn't. I wonder if ever could again-I doubt it might, if I lost you, Eppie. I might come to think I was forsaken again, and lose the feeling that God was good to me" (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 193-194).

Silas Marnier, in his intention to keep Eppie instead of regaining the money that has been stolen from him, believes that if Eppie is taken from him, this means God no longer loves him. Thus, it is believable that he is thinking of God's hands being behind what will happen to him. Consequently, he makes Godfrey know, when the latter comes to claim his parental right over Eppie: "God gave her to me because you turned your back upon her, and he looks upon her as mine: you've no right to her! When a man turns a blessing from his door, it falls to them as take it in" (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 198).

When, after fifteen years, Godfrey wants to take Eppie from Silas, the latter tells him it is God who has given him Eppie. Moreover, he believes that the girl is a blessing which he has voluntarily accepted and as Godfrey has the courage to refuse it, he has no right over it. This lets suppose that people think if they wish to live in good living conditions, they ought to seek God blessing. Thus, it is imperative to show how George Eliot has dealt with some impacts of the faith in God in the following lines.

2. The Impacts of the Fatality of Human Destiny in the Novel.

2.1. The Positive Impacts of Faithfulness to God.

The belief in God has led to some behaviour in the novel. Some Christians for instance believe it is better to go to church and encourage other people to do the same to glorify God. Others think that prayers can work everywhere. In addition, some of them are ready to make some celebrations or to help their neighbours.

2.1.1. Going to Church and Encouraging other People to Do the Same.

Macey, the parish clerk has for instance advised Silas Marner to start going to church in order to forget about his sorrow: "If the knowledge wasn't well come by, why, you might have made up for it by coming to church reg'lar; for, as for the children as the Wise Woman charmed, I've been at the christening of 'em again and again, and they took the water just as well. And that's reasonable" (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 90).

After Silas Marner's money has been stolen, he has become a sorrowful man. Macey believes if he starts going to church he will be better off. He is probably certain that if Silas starts praying to God in the church some miraculous events will happen in his life. In other words, he thinks that by praying to God, Silas can get some advantages. He has also persuaded Silas of the importance of coming to church: "And so, Master Marner, as I was saying-for there's windings i' things as they may carry you to the fur end o' the prayer-book afore you get back to 'em-my advice is, as you keep up your sperrits" (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 90).

According to Macey, it is possible that Silas regain his happiness through prayers. Other believers from other religious sect would surely give Silas the same piece of advice. He has gone further asking Silas: "why, you've never heard me say 'Amen' since you come into these parts. And I recommend you to lose no time, for it'll be poor work when Tookey has it all to himself for I mayn't be equil to stand i' the desk at all, come another winter" (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 91). Macey is amazed that Silas never hears his prayers. Consequently he urges him to go to church the other winter. He is certainly convinced that Silas will get his way in the church, which is not automatically true. The following dialogue between Dolly and Silas shows she also disagrees with him when he tells her he never goes to church:

Nay, nay, he said, I know nothing o' church. I've never been to church
 No! said Dolly, in low tone of wonderment. Then bethinking herself of Silas's advent from an unknown country, she said, "Could it ha' been as they'd no church where you was born?"
 Oh, yes, said Silas, meditatively, sitting in his usual posture of learning on his knees, and supporting his head. "There was churches-a many-it was a big town. But I knew nothing of 'em-I went to chapel" (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 96).

Through the dialogue, one can notice that Dolly thinks that Silas is ignorant about the importance of going to church. It seems she thinks that it is necessary to make her hearer know that he is on a wrong way. Her behaviour lets suppose she is going to encourage Silas to start going to church. Her disagreement with him when he tells her he never goes to church is obvious in the following passage: "But I beg and pray of you to leave off weaving of Sunday, for it's bad for soul and body-and the money as comes i' that way 'ull be a bad bed to lie down on at the last, if it doesn't fly away, nobody knows where, like the white frost" (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 99).

Dolly is telling Silas he had better not work on Sundays. She is also making him know that the money earned on Sundays by working is not profitable. She surely believes that starting going to church is the only way for Silas to get out of his distress. In other words, her belief is probably that only the church goers can be better off. Thus, her conception of her religion lets suppose she is a religious extremist which means she might be ready to contradict other religious beliefs. George Eliot is likely criticizing religious extremism which is one of the reasons for the increasing number of the religious sects and social conflicts in our societies nowadays. Similarly, she has shown that some people believe that prayers can be efficient even out of church in the following passages.

2.1.2. Believing that Prayers Are Helpful Everywhere in the Novel.

George Eliot probably wants to tell us that human beings believe that God is helpful everywhere when she writes about Silas Marner:

He had inherited from his mother some acquaintance with medicinal herbs and preparation—a little store of wisdom which she imparted to him as a solemn bequest—but of late years he had had doubts about the lawfulness of applying this knowledge, believing that herbs could have no efficacy without prayer, and that prayer might suffice without herbs (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 7- 8).

The author's speech lets know that however powerful Silas is, he still believes that the herbs he is using to cure some people of their illnesses will not work well without prayers. Silas Marner's belief is common among certain human beings. In fact, what matters for some people is prayers rather than going to any church or mosque. Nancy Lamenter for instance has acknowledged the importance of prayers when she has been talking to her husband about Eppie: "It'll be different coming to us now she's grown up", said Nancy, shaking her head sadly. "But it's your duty to acknowledge her and provide for her; and I'll do my part by her, and pray to God Almighty to make her love me" (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 192).

Godfrey Cass' wife, Nancy is advising her husband to start taking care of Eppie, the girl the latter has forsaken for more than fifteen years. She believes that by the grace of God Eppie will love her. So in her desperate childless situation, she thinks that God is the only person who can help her get some happiness. But, as she does not suggest her husband that they should regularly go to church to pray for God's blessing, it is likely she believes that God will answer her prayers wherever she is. Besides, it is probable that George Eliot is pointing out throughout the novel that human beings are convinced they will be blessed if they regularly celebrate God.

2.1.3. Considering Greatly Celebrations in the Novel.

Throughout *Silas Marner*, George Eliot has shown that human beings believe that some celebrations can bring them happiness. Her belief may be noticeable through the following speech: "But Christmas puddings, brawn, and abundance of spirituous liquors, throwing the mental originality into the channel of nightmare, are great preservatives against a dangerous spontaneity of waking thought" (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 86).

George Eliot is making us know that the celebrations of Christmas allow some Christians to forget about their past problems. So, it can be admitted that people always celebrate Christmas all over the world on December 25th, in expectation of joyful future. The intention may also be attributed to other celebrations such as the New Year Day, Assumption, Easter etc. in the Christian Community. It is certainly the same belief which is the cause of some celebrations and sacrifices among the Muslims and fetishists in their respective religions. Thus, on these celebrations, people are anxious to show how charitable they are. The author has said;

This change to a kindlier feeling was shown in various ways. The odour of Christmas cooking being on the wind, it was the season when superfluous pork and black puddings are suggestive of charity in well-to-do families; and Silas's misfortune had brought him uppermost in the memory of housekeepers like Osgood's wife (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 88).

George Eliot's speech points out that some believers try to show their good nature by offering their neighbours good food. This kind of generosity is equally noticeable nowadays on Christmas Day and on the New Year Day when Christians and other people do not mind offering whoever visit them drink and food or sending presents to their relations and friends. But, one can ask himself if celebrations should normally be the only opportunities to show generosity. Dolly for instance has spoken to Silas Marner as if the Christmas Day were the only day human beings can receive God's blessing:

But now, upo' Christmas-day, this blessed Christmas as in ever coming, if you was to take your dinner to the bakchus, and go to church see the holly and the yew, and hear the anthim, and take the sacramen', you'd be a deal the better, and you'd know which end you stood on, and you could

put your trust i' them as knows better nor we do, see in' you'd ha' done what it lies on us all to do (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 95 - 96).

According to Dolly, Christmas Day is a blessed day. Consequently, she is advising Silas to go to Church that day. She surely believes that Silas who is sorrowful due to the theft of his money, will recover his psychological strength if he sets foot to church that day. Thus, it is as if prayers on that day could give Silas a strange power. To be more convincing, she orders her son Aaron to sing Christmas song to Silas:

God rest you, merry gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas-day (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 98).

Dolly is doing her best to make Silas be conscious that Jesus Christ is the only saviour. Her behaviour is normal as she is a Christian. But, she has shown her extremism as far as religion is concerned when she tells Silas Marner:

There's no other music equil to the Christmas music-'Hark the erol angils sing.' And you may judge what it is at church, Master Marner, with the bassoon and the voice, as you can't help thinking you've got to a better place a'ready-for I wouldn't speak ill o' this world, seeing as Them put us in it as knows best (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 98-99).

She is praising the Christmas music so that Silas could believe that Christmas Day is a joyful and wonderful day. It is likely she has noticed that despite her friendly recommendations, Silas is still reluctant to go to Church. Her behaviour to Silas lets predict her friendship to the latter to some extent.

2.1.4. Promoting Friendship in *Silas Marner*.

It is generally admitted that God is love. As such, it is believed that a Christian will receive God's blessing in his activities if he shows his neighbours some affection. It is probably the existence of this friendship that the author wants to tell us when she writes: "Among the members of this church there was one young man, a little older than himself, with whom he had long lived in such close friendship that it was the custom of their Lantern Yard brethren to call them David and Jonathan" (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 8).

Silas Marner and William are two pen friends. They are so close friends that they are called David and Jonathan. As this kind of friendship is recommended in the Christian Community, it is believable that Christians will help other Christians as well as other people. In fact, Christians believe that they will not receive God's help if they do not help their neighbours. George Eliot, through the following speech is telling us that the villagers of Raveloe have acknowledged the parishers' charity: "well, Master Marner you're no worse off nor other poor folks, after all; and if you was to be crippled, the parish 'ud give you a'allowance" (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 89).

The villagers of Raveloe think that the parishers of their church will not mind giving Silas some allowance if the latter happens to come and tell his problem. So, they believe that these parishers can help Silas whose money has been stolen get out his sorrowful situation. The parish clerk, Macey has even told Silas Marner how helpful the parson and himself have been since he has started his job: "I've been clerk of this parish forty years, and I know, when the parson and me does the cussing of a Ash-Wednesday, there's no cussing o' folks as have a mind to be cured without a doctor, let Kimble say what he will" (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 90).

The parish Clerk, Macey is making Silas know that the parson and he have always been doing a good job for people without any discrimination. Thus it can be admitted that he is telling Silas he can be helped in the parish. Through what he has said, one can say the parishers are devoted to other people, which is the general conception we have of a church. Macey has even once more given Silas an example of his kindness: "There's Tookey, he's a poor creatur, but he's got my tailoring business, and some o' my money in it, and he shall make a suit at a low price, and give you trust, and then you can come to church, and be

a bit neighborly.” (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 91). He is giving Silas the proof of his kindness. This lets say that what he is saying is probably true. Then, it can be admitted that he has a Christian love for his neighbours. But, by being so generous, it is likely he is expecting some reward from God. Moreover the author is showing us that some believers like Dolly think that they have the duty to give their neighbours some presents:

I'd a baking yesterday, Master Marner, and the lard-cakes turned out better nor common, and I'd ha' asked you to accept some, if you'd thought well. I don't eat such things myself, for a bit o' bread's what I like from one year's end to the other; but men's stomichs are made so comical, they want a change-they do, I know, God help 'em (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 94).

Dolly Winthrop has come to Silas Marner's house to offer him some cakes. As Silas is sorrowful after the theft of his money, Dolly has decided to give the former some cakes. Thus, it can be admitted that she is showing Silas her sympathy. A similar compassion is often noticeable in our churches where “Brothers” and “Sisters” spontaneously collect money to support a fellow who is facing a problem. The spontaneity of their gift can be attributed to the fact that they believe that by doing so, they may get some blessing from God or the one they are helping will be helpful to them. The following statement is also a proof that Dolly has for Silas both a feeling of sympathy and sadness: “Dear heart!” Said Dolly, pausing before she spoke again. But what a pity it is you should work of a Sunday, and not clean yourself-if you didn't go to church; for if you'd a roasting bit, it might be as you couldn't leave it, being a lone man.” (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 95).

She is not pleased with Silas Marner's loneliness. Her feeling for Silas lets suppose she will not mind helping him going out of his solitary living situation. Because of her susceptibility to Silas Marner's living conditions, it will not be an exaggeration to say that she is not an ordinary Christian. In addition, the following advice from her confirms both her sensibility for the man's situation and her eagerness to become his friend:

Oh, no thank you, Master Marner, said Dolly, holding down Aaron's willing hands. we must be going home now. And so I wish you good-bye, Master Marner; and if you ever feel anyways bad in your inside, as you can't fend for yourself, I'll come and clean up for you, and get you a bit o'victual, and willing (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 99).

Dolly, with her son, after the theft of Silas' money, has gone to the latter to comfort him. She has also promised to help him if she is informed of any problem about him. Her behaviour lets say that Silas is held in deep affection and sympathy. Such an affection which is rarely witnessed is naturally recommended in our daily life. This allows to say every human being believes in a supernatural power. In other words every human being tends to put God before their actions. But the belief that human destiny is out of human being may make some people abuse their neighbours or not take serious actions to overcome some difficulties.

2.2. The Negative Impacts of Faith in God in *Silas Marner*.

As it is believed that whatever happens in our life depends on God's will, some people may take advantage of their positions to humiliate their neighbours, and others may not worry about their future. It is probably what the author wants to show through some Christians' behaviour.

2.2.1. Hypocrisy in *Silas Marner*

According to *Oxford advanced Learner's Dictionary, Ninth Edition* hypocrisy is the behaviour in which somebody pretends to have moral standards or opinions that they do not actually have. It is likely this evil George Eliot is pointing out through Silas Marner's friend William Dane's behaviour:

William exhorted his friend to confess, and not to hide his sin any longer. Silas turned a look of keen reproach on him, and said, "William, for nine years that we have gone in and out together, have you ever known me tell a lie? But God will clear me
 Brother, said William, "how do I know what you may have done in the secret chambers of your heart, to give Satan an advantage over you (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 11).

After he has stolen the money, William he is begging his friend Silas to confess that he has stolen the sum of money. He is also telling Silas that he cannot know what has happened. In other words, he is saying only God can give the truth information about what has happened. So, though he is conscious he is responsible for the theft, he is claiming his innocence before God. We should condemn the hypocrisy of this kind among some Christians who are always ready to lie to their neighbours. William is even supported by the Minister of the church of Lantern Yard as the latter has told Silas:

The proof is heavy against you, brother Marner. The money was taken in the night last past, and no man was with our departed brother but you, for William Dane declares to us that he was hindered by sudden sickness from going to take his place as usual, and you yourself said that he had not come; and, moreover, you neglected the dead body (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 11).

Instead of listening to Silas, the Minister has contented himself with William's declaration to consider Silas guilty of the theft. Thus, it seems that he knows in advance what has happened. In other words it is probable that the money be stolen with the connivance of this Minister of the church. Thus, one can say it is a coup against Silas Marner. The author is also pointing out the absurdity in the Christian community when she believes that there is obscurity in the religion:

Any resort to legal measures for ascertaining the culprit was contrary to the principles of the Church: prosecution was held by them to be forbidden to Christians, even if it had been a case in which there was no scandal to the community. But they were bound to take other measures for finding out the truth, and they resolved on praying and drawing lots. This resolution can be a ground of surprise only to those who are unacquainted with that obscure religious life which has gone on in the alleys of our towns (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 12).

The author's speech shows that Christians are not allowed to find out the truth or correct information about any event by legal means. Consequently, they must content themselves with prayers. This measure to find out the truth seems arbitrary and not reasonable. But nowadays, this measure for ascertaining the culprit is not largely noticeable in our churches. So, it is likely in the Victorian period there is no separate judicial system and therefore the Ministers of churches are both priests and judges. In this context due to the dogma in the Christian community what a priest has said can be nothing but an unquestionable truth which every believer should follow. Thus, it can be said that everything is done or said in the name of God.

2.2.2. Negligence in *Silas Marner*.

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary Ninth Edition*, negligence is the failure to give somebody or something enough care or attention. Dolly Winthrop in the novel, has not taken her husband's behaviour towards her seriously:

Ben Winthrop, who loved his quart-pot and his joke, got along so well with Dolly; but she took her husband's jokes and joviality as patiently as everything else, considering that 'men would be so', and viewing the stronger sex in the light of animals whom it had pleased Heaven to make naturally troublesome, like bulls and turkey-cocks (G. Eliot, 1861, p. 92-93).

Dolly Winthrop, instead of reproaching her husband his bad behaviour towards her, believes that the latter cannot behave otherwise. Consequently, one can say that she believes it is not normal to condemn him. So, she thinks that her husband is not responsible for his bad behaviour. This kind of negligence is commonly noticeable among most of the believers who do not want to make any effort to overcome some misfortune as they believe that God is in control of every event. But, as human beings are always facing some mysterious problems, is it reasonable that we keep our hands folded before some difficult situation?

In other words, in our daily life, is it not normal that we consider seriously any situation in order to find the suitable solutions to our problems?

Conclusion

George Eliot has shown that the belief that human destiny is controlled by God has led to both good and bad behaviour. Her conception of human nature lets admit that the fear for a supreme power has not necessarily made some people behave humanly. And she has probably wished to underline certain hateful behaviour in *Adam Bede* when Poyser's wife is telling his husband who is suggesting that they let the house without anybody: "I never left th' house to take care of itself since I was a missis and I never will. There's been ill- looking tramps en oo' about the place this last week" (G. Eliot, 1859, p. 212). The speech allows to say that the woman is suspecting that a thief or a robber will break the house. A similar wrongdoing is nowadays witnessed even in our churches where motorcycles are regularly stolen. In such a context can we say that these thieves or robbers believe in God's supremacy over their destinies?

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