

MINISTERE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR ET DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE

UNIVERSITE MOULOU D MAMMERI-TIZI OUZOU

FACULTE DES LETTRES ET DES LANGUES

DEPARTEMENT D'ANGLAIS

جامعة مولود معمري تيزي وزو

كلية الآداب و اللغات

قسم الانجليزية



Field: Letters and Foreign Language

Branch: English Language

Speciality: Comparative literature

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Master in English

Title:

Poverty, Social Class and Social Mobility in Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* (1861) and John Steinbeck's *The Pearl*(1947): A Comparative Study

Presented by:

- Ms. Djahida BAAHMED
- Ms. Karima BOUADMA

Supervised by:

- Dr. AZIZ Rabéa

Board of Examiners

- Dr. AFETTOUCHE Belaid, Senior Lecturer, UMMTO, Chair
- Dr. AZIZ Rabéa, Senior Lecturer, UMMTO, Supervisor
- Mr. KHOUDI Mohamed Amine, Assistant Professor, UMMTO, Examiner

Academic Year: 2023-2024

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Our first praises and thanks go to Allah, the most merciful, the most gracious who granted us with the strength, patience and knowledge to write this dissertation.

Our deepest gratitude goes to the best supervisor we could ever ask for Dr. AZIZ Rabéa, not only for the guidance, enthusiasm, encouraging words, and immense knowledge she kindly provides us with but also for the beautiful soul she has that had a positive impact on our writing process.

We would also like to thank the board of examiners for accepting to read and evaluate this dissertation.

Special thanks go to all the teachers, without exception, who taught us during the last five years, and provided us with motivation.

We would also like to give our undying gratitude to our parents, for all their sacrifice and support, and to our brothers, sisters, and friends.

Finally, we would like to thank each other for the smooth, fun and fruitful journey we had together

DEDICATION

To

-my sweet father Ali and mother Ouiza who encouraged me during my studies,

- my sister and brothers Samira, Idir, Amirouche, Massi and Rafik,

-my husband Mohamed and all my friends.

Djahida.

To

-my father Ali, the secret of my existence, the one who left my world but did not leave my heart,
the one I wished would be with me on this day, may Allah have mercy on his pure soul,

- my mother Ourdia, the candle of my life who played both roles, and gave me courage and
raised me to be the person I am today,

-my sisters and brothers,

-my dearest nephews and nieces,

-all my friends.

Karima

Abstract

The present research provides a comparative analysis of Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* (1861) and John Steinbeck's *The Pearl* (1947) to examine their depiction of the issues of poverty, social class and social mobility. Through the lens of the Marxist theory of Social Class, we have explored problems of poverty and social class in the two treated novels as a case of study. These two novels influenced the Capitalism on the English and American societies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, respectively. Consequently, these two novels provide profound insights into the Marxist theory by exploring social inequality, class struggle, and the dire consequences of Capitalism. The findings of the study revealed that both novels depict the harsh realities faced by individuals living in poverty and the challenges of achieving social mobility. Dickens and Steinbeck emphasize the importance of moral integrity and the dangers of greed in navigating life's challenges .

Key words: Charles Dickens, John Steinbeck, poverty, social class, social mobility, Capitalism, Marxism

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	I
DEDICATION	II
ABSTRACT.....	III
INTRODUCTION.....	01
1. Review of the Literature	01
2. Issue and Working Hypothesis	01
3. Materials	02
 Chapter One: Poverty and Social Class in Dicken’s <i>Great Expectations</i> and Steinbeck’s <i>The Pearl</i>	
1. Overview of Social Structure in Victorian England and Post War America.....	04
1.1. Class Conflict in the English and American Societies.....	05
2. The Representation of Poverty and Social Class in <i>Great Expectations</i> (1861).....	07
3. The Representation of Poverty and Social Class in <i>The Pearl</i> (1947).....	11
4. Similarities and Differences in Portrayal of Social Class and Poverty in <i>The Great Expectations</i> and <i>The Pearl</i>	13
5. Conclusion.....	15
 Chapter Two: Social Mobility in <i>Great Expectations</i> and <i>The Pearl</i>.	
1. Definition of the Concept of Social Mobility.....	16
2. Representation of Social Mobility in <i>Great Expectations</i>	19
2.1. Examination of Social Mobility through the Character of Pip	19
2.2. Examination of Social Mobility through the Character of Estella.....	21
2.3. Examination of Social Mobility through the character of Joe	22
3. The Representation of Social Mobility in <i>The Pearl</i>	23
3.1. Examination of Social Mobility through the Character of Kino.....	23
4. Similarities and Differences in the Portrayal of Social Mobility in <i>Great Expectations</i> and <i>The Pearl</i>	25
5. Conclusion.....	27

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Chapter Three: The Impossibility of Achieving Social Mobilty in *Great Expectations* and *The Pearl*

1. Symbols of Richness in <i>Great Expectations</i> and <i>The Pearl</i>	28
2. Social Barriers and the Inequality of Wealth.....	31
3. Impossibility of Reaching Wealth in <i>Great Expectations</i> and <i>The Pearl</i>	34
4. Conclusion.....	36
CONCLUSION	38-39
REFERENCES	40-44

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

The present research deals with issues of poverty and social class and mobility in the English and American Society of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries respectively. The study is based on two novels entitled *Great Expectation* (1861) and *The Pearl* (1947) by the English author Charles Dickens and American novelist John Steinbeck. The objective of this work is to show that poverty and the division of social classes caused by the Industrial Revolution and Capitalism affect both English and American societies and they have not changed over centuries despite the development that the world has reached.

The field of Anthropology inspired a lot of political thoughts and ideas from Marxism theory which are written by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. So, the Marxism theory is a very essential study that keens to change the global culture as injustice, oppression and inequality. (paraphrased from Josiah Heyman, 2018, p.1). According to some research articles, the German Karl Marx was adopted as the official doctrine of the German Social Democrats during the twentieth century, many communist regimes were founded on the revolutionary ideas of German philosopher Karl Marx. (paraphrased from World History EDU, 2024).

1. Review of the Literature

A lot of reviewers have criticized the two novels of *Great Expectations* and *The Pearl* that reveal how mobility was used in the Victorian age by showing the daily life, difference social levels and seek hard to implant on people the culture of mobility. To discuss these two literary works, we will deal with some literature review as the research of *Marxism* (2018) and *Social Classes Differences in Charles Dickens' Novel David Copperfield* (2014).

This research paper will treat the study of poverty, social class and mobility in Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* and John Steinbeck's *The Pearl*; however, these studies remain fragmented, as they discuss each novel in isolation. There has not been any work that examined the theme of poverty and social class in the two works together, Despite the great attention

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

given by critics to the themes of poverty, social class, and mobility, Therefore, this study embarks on a quest to uncover the sources of poverty, social class, and mobility, and how they permeate society in both English and American societies during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

2. Issue and Working Hypothesis

Our aim is to critically analyze the themes of poverty and social class, with a particular focus on mobility. To reinforce this research, the Marxist theory is employed to examine the two novels entitled *Great Expectations* and *The pearl* and to explore their portrayal of Capitalism in Victorian England and British America, which revolves around the themes of poverty, social class, and mobility. This theory will be applied to both novels. Consequently, these two novels provide profound insights into the Marxist theory by exploring social inequality, class struggle, and the dire consequences of Capitalism. They shed light on the oppressive nature of class divisions and the detrimental effects of a system that prioritizes wealth and power over human rights and well-being.

3. Materials

More importantly, the use of the Marxist theory in literature has a major role in examining literary works and criticizing their content based on social class. Hence, when evaluating a literary work from a Marxist viewpoint, one must consider how class functions in that piece of writing, how the protagonists or characters struggle with oppression, if the work supports or rejects Marxist principles, and how the work addresses oppression and deals with this concept throughout the plot of the work and its events. Therefore, this theory has been selected as lenses through which the present study attempts to analyze the two famous works of Charles Dickens and John Steinbeck comparatively and address the issue of social class and oppression, along with poverty and social mobility in the two selected works of literature.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

The suitability of this theory to our work is related to the fact that it fits the events that occurred in both novels. Dickens examines social class differences and the effects of inequality in *Great Expectations*, highlighting the challenges experienced by people from various backgrounds. The book also emphasizes how the working class is exploited and alienated, highlighting the shortcomings of the capitalist system. Similar to this, Steinbeck criticizes capitalism in *The Pearl* by telling the tale of a poor pearl diver who is taken advantage of by the rich. Both books explore issues of social class, exploitation, and the possibility of revolution, offering readers a provocative look at society and its ingrained injustice.

To achieve the goal of this study, our work will be divided into three chapters. The first chapter will treat the debate of Poverty and Social Class in *Great Expectations* and *The Pearl*. The second chapter will tackle the Social Mobility in *Great Expectations* and *The Pearl*. Finally, the third chapter will be considered as a practical part that analyzes the two novels and is titled *The Impossibility of Achieving Social Mobility in Great Expectations and The Pearl*.

Chapter One:
Poverty and Social Class in *Great*
Expectations and *The Pearl*

CHAPTER 01: Poverty and Social Class in *Great Expectation* and *The Pearl*

The first chapter treats the concept of poverty and social class in the two novels “*Great Expectation and the Pearl*”. Through this theoretical part, some fundamental elements, will be defined such as; an overview of social structure in Victorian England and Post War America. Also, class conflict in the English and American societies. we will also represent the “*poverty and social class in the novel of Great Expectation and The Pearl* ” Furthermore, we will discuss the similarities and differences between them.

Initially, Great Expectations and The Pearl are two classic novels that were written by two different authors in different times and places. The first literary work reveals the story of a poor lower class boy in Britain who has great hopes and expectations for his future to be a gentleman and join the upper society in a world that only values money and high social status in life. The second parallel work of literature tells the story of an American black fisherman who fails in a life-threatening attempt to save his son because society ignores the needs of the impoverished and those who cannot provide for their family. Although the two stories are set in different contexts, they convey the similar themes of suffering, poverty, societal prejudice based on financial standing, and the hope for a more honorable future. Charles Dickens and John Steinbeck were able to depict the true suffering of poor people in both the British and American society, and their unjust social treatment that often leads to reshaping people`s personalities, behaviors, and sometimes, even their morals. Through the theory of Marxism the two novels are examined and analyzed in the present chapter to address the themes of poverty and social class in both the Victorian era and in England and the post war in America and portray their representation in both *Great Expectations* and *The Pearl*.

1. Overview Of Social Class Structure In Victorian England And Post War American

The Victorian age refers to the period during which Queen Victoria took claim to the throne in 1837 and ruled England at that time. This period lasted until her death in 1901, but the Victorian literature that was based on depicting the social and political conditions of people at that time persisted for over six decades in the English society. The main theme that dominated the literary scene during the Victoria era manifested in social class struggle and English social structure that was determined and reshaped by

CHAPTER 01: Poverty and Social Class in *Great Expectation* and *The Pearl*

several factors, including the Industrial Revolution. In fact, many Victorian struggles were reflected in the experiences of the characters in the Victorian novel because of its emphasis on a realistic depiction of social life and its issues (paraphrased from Cherra, 2014, p. 5).

Moreover, there are several authors who gained a significant recognition and acknowledgement for their literary works during this era which depicted the real social issues of the Victorian people and the characterizing class struggle that dominated this era. The Brontë sisters (Charlotte, Emily, and Anne) for instance, were successful in producing some of the finest and valuable works of literature that are still the center the admiration and appreciation in today's` modern world. The Brontë sisters' professional writing career lasted a mere seven years, from 1846 to 1853, during which they created seven outstanding pieces of literature which have grown to be classics of the world of arts and literature nowadays (Matthewman, 2016, p.83).

In sum, it can be said that a number of writers received a great deal of fame and respect for their writings that captured the distinctive class conflict that characterized this time period and the actual socioeconomic problems of the Victorian populace. A lot of writers wrote about poverty, inequality, and injustice in their literary works as novels. Hence, the two novels of “*Great Expectations*” and “*The Pearl*” play an important role in shedding light on American and English society by showing the way of life and how people suffer from different issues as oppression and injustice.

1.1.The Class Conflict In The English And American Societies

Class struggle is a major theme that characterized the Victorian literature. Despite the popular perception of Victorian Britain as being warm, conventional, and tranquil, it was actually a period of remarkable advancement and expansion in almost every facet of life It is the turning point that transformed the country from a feudal society to a more industrial one through the unfolding of the Industrial Revolution. The latter introduced radical economic transformations in terms of building factories, using machines in the industry (agriculture, transportation), building railways and steam engines. This revolution led to the emergence of the working class in England which constitutes the

CHAPTER 01: Poverty and Social Class in *Great Expectation* and *The Pearl*

largest population of the English society. (paraphrased from Brindas, 2020, p. 38). for better explanation,

Britain reached its pinnacle in terms of power and prosperity thanks to this revolution. However, a substantial portion of the British population, especially farmers and peasants, moved from the countryside to the great cities in pursuit of work during the country's height of wealth, power and influence. There, they lived in poor living conditions (Brindas, 2020, p. 38). This condition distinguished between three social divisions which include the Aristocracy (upper class), the Bourgeoisie (the middle class) and lower class people who lived in poor and crucial conditions.

In fact, even the upper class was divided into two major sub-divisions due to the Industrial Revolution that allowed many members of society from the middle or lower classes to climb the social ladder and be rich through their businesses or investments. Thus, the English society included the Aristocrats who were born in wealth through their land properties (old money), and the Bourgeoisie (new money) who acquired their wealth and status through labor and investments Both these types formed the British upper class who lived mostly in the capital London in well-attended and presentable establishments. On the contrary of their counterparts, the lower class members who occupied the countryside, or descended to London for employment. (as paraphrased and cited in Cheraa, 2014, p. 28).

Throughout the Victorian era, the British working classes were excluded from the political system and grew more antagonistic toward both the middle class and the aristocracy. This social division and injustice created an internal struggle and conflict in the English society that maximized in volume with years and increased social pressure on the victims of this unjust society. This conflict has been recorded to take many forms, including violence among the citizens, mortality resulting from impoverishment, malnutrition, disease, or dangerous working conditions, coercion, including the fear of losing a job or other life resources (paraphrased from Cheraa, 2014, p. 37).

The consequences of this problem and their significant impact on British society were a compelling reason for writers and authors of that age to address this issue in their literary works and

CHAPTER 01: Poverty and Social Class in *Great Expectation* and *The Pearl*

bring attention to the magnitude of this situation. Therefore, Charles Dickens chose this theme as a persistent topic that was repeatedly addressed and discussed in his novels, including *Great Expectations*. This theme was not limited to British literature; rather, it was also prominent in American literature as well, as one of John Steinbach's works *The Pearl* illustrates, because the British and American societies have the same economic structure that is addressed through authors' literary works.

2. The Representation of Poverty and Social Class in *Great Expectations* (1861)

Dickens had a tendency of shocking his readers with the vivid visions of poverty, injustice, and criminality he presented in his novels, and demonstrated an amazing ability to empathize with the victims of economic, social, and moral abuses during the Victorian era (paraphrased from Brindas, 2020, p.37). Thus, his books orbit around the theme of social class and poverty that characterize his writing style. Therefore, Dickens has been successfully able to portray the theme of social class and social distinctions of the English society. In his work *Great Expectations*, he revealed the living conditions of both middle class and upper class members in one single social context and enabled the readers to witness the diversity of these conditions through the lines of his novel. It is documented in history that the Industrial Revolution has caused the emergence of capitalism that divided societies into separate social classes and groupings; they include upper class (property owners), middle class (descent employees), and lower class (laborers). The upper class members are known to exploit the lower class people to climb up the social ladder and maintain their fortune by exploiting their labor in exchange for low wages with no wealth, power and property.

This social division was depicted through two forms in the novel. First, it was evidenced through Pip's life before and after his life-altering fortune. Throughout his childhood, Pip was expected to grow and learn to be a blacksmith under the apprenticeship of his brother in law Joe. He was supposed to learn the craft and provide for himself and future family through his labor. When he received the fortune however, and was sent to London to start his new life among the gentile society, Pip was only required to be a gentleman. After he got to London, all he had to do was educate himself, so that he could be a respectable member of society and deserving of other people's company.

CHAPTER 01: Poverty and Social Class in *Great Expectation* and *The Pearl*

Mr. Pocket and I had a long talk together. He knew more of my intended career than I knew myself, for he referred to his having been told by Mr. Jaggers that I was not designed for any profession, and that I should be well enough educated for my destiny if I could "hold my own" with the average of young men in prosperous circumstances. I acquiesced, of course, knowing nothing to the contrary (Charles Dickens, 1861, p. 276).

Dickens portrayed the theme of poverty through the life of Pip before he was brought to London to be a gentleman. He described the living conditions that Pip endured in his childhood and adulthood and showed the fancy counterpart living circumstances of the upper class through Miss Havisham's castle to highlight the stark difference between the two. His description of Pip's home with his sister and Joe, the forge, and the surrounding environment showed the desolate living conditions of the lower class families. His description of Estella's view of Pip's cloths and coarse hands that reflect his manual hardships also portrays the poor living circumstances of poor people in the Victorian age who need to do physical work to survive and wear rough and ugly fabrics just for the practical purpose of covering themselves and facilitating their labor.

Moreover, the character of Joe and his limited ambition reflects the social restrictions and limitations that are imposed on the lower class to prevent them from seeking higher social or economic status. Throughout the novel, Joe expressed to have no desire in rising above his station and achieving wealth or collecting money. On the contrary, he accepted his position and saw that his existence as a blacksmith is the only way that he could be in life.

In the same context, Dickens was able to portray the social class distinction through the characters of the book who ranged from upper class members (Miss Havisham and Mr. Drummle) to middle class people (Pumblechook, Jaggers and Wemmick) and to the lower class laborers (Joe, Orlick and Bidly). This social class system was clearly depicted through the events of the novel that revealed the seclusion of each class and its lack of interaction with the other classes. It appeared through the novel that rich

CHAPTER 01: Poverty and Social Class in *Great Expectation* and *The Pearl*

people from the upper class maintain a safe distance from people of the lower class through the state of Miss Havisham and her secluded existence in her castle. She was only in direct interaction and communication with her adopted daughter Estella, family members who visited her from time to time, and Pip who was an exception to the rest. However, her interaction with people from the middle or lower class was non-existing and this is clearly shown through Mr. Pumblechook's statement when he said that he has never seen Miss Havisham in person. Rather, she used to speak to him from behind an ajar door so that he could receive her instructions and fulfill her demands: "Why, don't you know," said Mr. Pumblechook, testily, "that when I have been there, I have been took up to the outside of her door, and the door has stood ajar, and she has spoke to me that way" (p. 50).

The novel also reflects a major impact of the social class system in the Victorian age which is the poor people's discontent with their social status and their unjust treatment by rich people. Throughout the book, Pip always felt shame of his up-bringing and discontent for his lack of wealth and education. His great expectations started to develop when he first visited Miss Havisham in her house and saw the differences between himself and Estella (differences between upper class and lower class). From that single encounter in which he was humiliated for his looks, speech and behavior, he started to wish if things were different. He started to resent both his sister's treatment of him at home, and Joe's lowly upbringing that was reflected on his own. "I am not at all happy as I am. I am disgusted with my calling and with my life. I have never taken to either, since I was bound. Don't be absurd" (p. 92). The social differences that he saw and comprehended even as a child, made him resent his lowly existence and want to be something that he was not born to be, he wanted to be a gentleman because he thought it was a better way of existence as a human being: "I want to be a gentleman" (p. 91).

Moreover, Dickens tackled a sensitive psychological aspect of the social class system during the Victorian era that manifests the complexity of the people's characters from the upper class and the simplicity of thoughts and mindset of the lower and middle class members. This diversity in thought was depicted mainly through two main characters, Joe the blacksmith, and Estella. From the beginning of the novel, Joe showed to be a simple minded, kind hearted and friendly person who tolerated the verbal and non-verbal abuse of his wife and accepted her orphan brother as a member of his family to

CHAPTER 01: Poverty and Social Class in *Great Expectation* and *The Pearl*

care and provide for. More than that, he considered Pip to be his friend in better and worse. Even after Pip became a gentleman and hurt Joe's feelings when he excluded him from his life, Joe was the one who saved his life and paid his debt when everything turned against him in London. Estella on the other hand, showed to have a complex character and mindset from the beginning of the novel. she was portrayed to abhor Pip and everything he represents since he is from the lower class.

She came back, with some bread and meat and a little mug of beer. She put the mug down on the stones of the yard, and gave me the bread and meat without looking at me, as insolently as if I were a dog in disgrace. I was so humiliated, hurt, spurned, offended, angry, sorry,—I cannot hit upon the right name for the smart—God knows what its name was,—that tears started to my eyes (Charles Dickens, 1861, p. 47).

Her behavior often made Pip feel shame and disgrace for everything that he presented, and lowered his self-esteem towards himself and his character. In other times however, she would act nice and tolerant in an explicable way.

But she neither asked me where I had been, nor why I had kept her waiting; and there was a bright flush upon her face, as though something had happened to delight her. Instead of going straight to the gate, too, she stepped back into the passage, and beckoned me. "Come here! You may kiss me, if you like (Charles Dickens, 1861, p. 66).

Her shifting and contradictory feelings towards Pip throughout the novel are a clear indicator of her complicated personality and unstable thoughts. Growing up, she developed warm feelings for Pip but chose to marry Mr. Drummle, a cold-hearted and equally complexed gentleman, through fully aware that she would not be happy with him. This demonstration of complicated characters confirms the Marxism theory which explains that the material world and the circumstances surrounding people have an impact on people's attitudes, personalities, and behaviors (Bowens, et al, 1974). This explains the

CHAPTER 01: Poverty and Social Class in *Great Expectation* and *The Pearl*

complexity of Estella`s character, since she was raised by Miss Havisham to hate and break men`s hearts and have no feelings of her own. Estella was surrounded by gloom and darkness during her upbringing and an environment like this can only produce a complicated personality with a dark and cold mindset.

The character of Magwitch also reveals the social class system that subjects lower class people to social discrimination. This injustice involves the authorities` lenience with criminals from the upper class and its sever punishment of people from the lower poor class. As if law is only passed to judge this category of society. Magwitch told his story to Pip and informed him that he was an outlaw who committed robbery and theft with the collaboration of a fellow man from the aristocrats who was named Compeyson. When they were arrested in London and brought in front of justice, Compeyson was only convicted for two years for his good upbringing and social background, whereas Magwitch was convicted with ten years in prison just for the simple cause that he was from the lower class and deserves to be severely punished for his misdeeds. This behavior reflects the major injustice of the British Judicial system during the Victorian age and the social discrimination the people were subjected to due to their social class.

3. The Representation of Poverty and Social Class in *The Pearl* (1947)

The Pearl is a novel written by John E. Steinbeck, an American author who depicts the theme of social class in the U.S through his works of literature. This novel tells the story of Kino, a poor black man living with his small family and small community in post-colonial Mexico in simple brush houses on the Gulf. The story depicts social class system and conflict when Kino`s child get stung by a scorpion. Kino fails to provide medical assistance for his son due to his poverty and lack of financial resources.

The Pearl addresses the theme of poverty and its consequences through the oppression that the main character endured though the events of the novel due to his low social status and his poor living conditions. The opening of the novel is a clear personification of poverty in the Golf countries through which Steinbeck provided a clear description of the living conditions of black poor people from the lower classes in their simple brush and limited means of life, including their attire, their sleeping mats on the dirty floor, their primitive fire pits, and the insects that roamed around their simple brush-house. All of these scenes and passages represent the theme of poverty in the work of Steinbeck *The Pearl*.

CHAPTER 01: Poverty and Social Class in *Great Expectation* and *The Pearl*

Another representation of this theme in this novel is Kino's inability to obtain the doctor's help to cure his son from the scorpion's bite because he did not even have the simple payment of the doctor's services. This implies that Kino was destitute and could not afford even the simplest requirements of his daily life. Steinbeck has even explained through Kino's words that the people cared only about providing food and shelter for their wives and children. This, in the eyes of modern civilized society, is the lowest phases of poverty that one could reach in his life.

Kino and Juana came slowly down to the beach and to Kino's canoe, which was the one thing of value he owned in the world. It was very old. Kino's grandfather had brought it from Nayarit, and he had given it to Kino's father, and so it had come to Kino. It was at once property and source of food; for a man with a boat can guarantee a woman that she will eat something. It is the bulwark against starvation (John Steinbeck , 1947, p. 8).

Hence, the only item of value that Kino and his social class could possess in their life was a canoe. This materialistic possession was their only means of survival through which they could offer their fishing services to get food to sustain their families from starvation.

Through the lens of the Marxist theory, it could be observed that Kino attempted to rise above his situation and attain wealth to improve his life circumstances and better provide for his family in a society that acknowledges money and materialistic substance as the only means of power and competence. This behavior is a result of the social conflict that Kino and his likes of other members from the same social group in their daily life in their unjust social system. A society that only recognizes people of high status and power and regards those with no materialistic means as worthless creatures who are only fit for service and labor, Consequently, Kino tries to maintain the pearl and protect it with his life because it was his only means to achieve his goal. He threatened his family's safety and subjected them to the people's greed for the purpose of abandoning his poor life and achieves wealth and money.

CHAPTER 01: Poverty and Social Class in *Great Expectation* and *The Pearl*

Portraying social class and class struggle theme, Steinbeck demonstrated the vast gap between how society views and treats individuals based on their social level. This treatment was portrayed at the beginning of the story when Kino's baby was stung by a scorpion. In any other similar context, the first logical and acceptable reaction would be to take the baby to the doctor or call for his services. However, when Juana asked for the doctor once hearing her baby's cries, everyone in the brush expressed amazement and astonishment for her request, including Kino himself. This situation reflects the social discrimination to these people are subjected which denies them even the basic needs of their lives for obtaining public services. This aspect was reconfirmed when Kino took his child to the doctor, the first thing the doctor asked for if the father had the money for his fees, when the servant informed him that he does not have enough to pay, the doctor simply declined to treat the child and left him to die.

According to Marxism, this situation reflects the importance of money as the main required form of manifestation of the measure of value that is inherent in social commodities (Moseley, 2005, p. 2). Put differently, the only valuable asset that determines a person's capacity to use public resources and get assistance from society is money. Regardless of the necessity of social services for survival, a human being is considered undeserving of them if they lack this asset or means. Therefore, this situation reflects the importance of money and its role in determining one's value in modern societies.

4. Similarities And Differences In The Portrayal Of Social Class And Poverty In *Great Expectations* And *The Pearl*

As it has been demonstrated through the analysis of *Great Expectations* and *The Pearl*, both novels revolve around the two major themes poverty and social class. Steinbeck and Dickens portrayed these themes in their own writing styles through their own different perspectives in two different settings. The former was implemented in the British social context whereas the latter was located in the American social context. This illustrates the existence of these two issues in two different social contexts. Therefore, there are some similarities between the depiction of poverty and social class between the two authors' works and some differences that distinguish between them.

CHAPTER 01: Poverty and Social Class in *Great Expectation* and *The Pearl*

In terms of similarities, it could be assessed that both novels highlighted successfully the social injustice that lower class people were subjected to by their materialistic societies. The characters of Magwitch, Joe, and Pip were a concrete evidence of social exploitation, snobbery, and judicial injustice through the treatment they received from the upper class; Pip through Estella's humiliation and degradation of him for his poor social upbringing and inferior looks, Joe through people's disdain of him for his simple-minded thoughts and personality of Estella, Miss Havisham, his wife and Pip himself when he rose to money and status, and Magwitch through the British legal system that convicted him severely due to his lowly poor social background. Steinbeck also depicted the same theme through his main character Kino, who was treated unfairly by the people of his town due to his shabby appearance and poor condition.

Another similarity that is observed in both works of literature presented in this study is the struggle for betterment and improvement. Both Pip and Kino strived to rise above their status and abandon their poor social standing to improve their social status and receive better treatment in their social surroundings. Kino manifested that he was willing to do anything to gain money so that people would acknowledge his existence and regard him as an equal human being who deserves to live and breathe. Similarly, Pip showed that he is willing to abandon his childhood life, friends and family just to be a member of the upper society and be acknowledged as a gentleman by his beloved Estella and her social circle. This aspect reflects the resentment of people from the lower class of their living conditions and their desire to elevate their social status.

Moreover, there are some differences between the two novels that give a special touch for each literary work and its author. As it has been implied before, there are two different settings that have been portrayed in the novels; *Great Expectations* took place in a British Victorian society during the 19th century, whereas *The Pearl* was set in early 20th-century Mexico, in a rural, impoverished American community. This difference in time and place proves the persistency of social class conflict over time and the supremacy of money over social morals and principles.

Additionally, another major difference between the two novels involves the end of the stories presented by both Dickens and Steinbeck. Admittedly, the end of a story has a significant meaning and

CHAPTER 01: Poverty and Social Class in *Great Expectation* and *The Pearl*

revelation of the author's perspective and point of view. In *Great Expectations*, Dickens concluded Pip's struggle and conflict with a hopeful closure in which Pip was able to reconcile with his family members (Joe and Biddy) and come to terms with his social status in a sense that he became more satisfied with what he has instead of what he lacks. However, *The Pearl* was disclosed with somehow a tragic ending where Kino lost his son and his fortune at the same time and could not gain anything from his conflict, neither his family safety nor his financial profit. This implies that Dickens has a more hopeful perspective towards those from the lower class who strive to elevate their social status and improve their living conditions provided that they return to their morals and principles. Whereas, Steinbeck appears to condemn the lower class members who are driven by their greed and high expectation and limit their aspirations with bleak disclosures and endings.

5. Conclusion

The present chapter demonstrates the representation of poverty and social class themes in Dickens and Steinbeck's works of literature, it could be stated that both novels presented vivid description of both the social class system in global societies and their impact on individuals' life and decisions. Dickens elaborated the issue of poverty and social class discrimination that led Pip to abandon his childhood family and surrounding and made him pursue his great expectations in London so that he could elevate his social standing and win people's recognition and acknowledgement. Steinbeck was also able to depict the crucial social treatment that poor people were subjected to due to the lack of materialistic substance, and the effect of this social discrimination on reshaping one's morals through the character of Kino who was overcome by greed and aspiration for wealth and money when he found the precious pearl. In conclusion, it could be said that social class and poverty have a powerful impact on one's mental stability and emotional resolution. This was proved by both novels which depicted the change of character that both Kino and Pip experienced when they were introduced to the chance of gaining wealth and changing their social standing.

Chapter Two:
Social Mobility in Great Expectations
and the Pearl

The previous chapter has presented a comparative analysis of two issues represented in both Dickens and Steinbeck's novels that addressed the concept of poverty and its role in the emergence of social class. Dickens depicted these two themes in a Victorian England society, whereas Steinbach tackled these themes in community that was subjected to social division. Both works have been criticized through the Marxist theory to discuss the structure of the society during these two periods and how poverty could influence one's social class and his position in society. The present chapter addresses another related theme that is linked to poverty and social class which is social mobility. Moreover, the present chapter provides background information of this concept and analyzes its representation in both *Great Expectations* and *The Pearl* with reference to the similarities and differences of both these representations.

1. Definition of The Concept of Social Mobility

Reviewing some of the definitions of social mobility in literature reveals that this concept does not have a commonly agreed upon description or a particular definition. It is rather defined in different ways by different scholars in different contexts. For instance, this concept is defined by Fields as the flow of certain individuals or groups through the allocation of their financial status over time, determining the degree to which one's present financial situation is reliant on one's previous situation, and connecting individuals' experiences with motion to the general state of the economy in which they function (Galiani, 2010, p.n.d). In other words, this concept is used to refer to one's social freedom of movement in social circles based on his financial status and the relationship between the present financial status and the previous one. Thus, this concept limits one's present situation in society and relates it to his previous status in the past that is also related to the family background that created that situation for him.

CHAPTER 02 : Social Mobility in Great Expectation and the Pearl

In the same context, social mobility relates an agent's relative economic standing to beginning factors like family history or parental income, hence, in order to analyze the causes or factors of mobility, one must investigate the various channels, such as inherited gifts, education, formal regulations, skills, opportunities, and working spirit, through which an offspring's income is associated with that of his parents (Galiani, 2010, p. n. d). Therefore, one`s social mobility is heavily dependent on one`s economic status that has been defined in society based on one of the factors of inheritance, gifts, social conduct, social offers and others.

In another effort to frame the concept of social mobility, this term was defined as one`s ability to shift from a lower to a higher degree of education or occupational rank, or social class or income group (Iversen, Krishna & Sen, 2021, p. n. d). Thus, it could be also described as social ascend through which people from the lower class ascend a virtual social ladder to change their financial or social position in society. In other words, this could be also referred to as moving above one`s station in society. This concept indicates the shift of poor people with poor educational background from the lower class to the higher class in society and their embrace of an esteemed social and financial position in respectable society.

Through the varied examination of the factors of social mobility, education is highlighted as one of the most important factors that control one`s social standing. It is believed that good education can help people become more proficient in their abilities and knowledge, not only may it lead to better careers, but it can also have a bigger impact on society (Choiril, 2023, p. 1). Stated differently, one`s education and the quality of that education plays a major role in determine the type of jobs that they are entitled to, and the kind of social treatment that one is subjected to.

More importantly, there are several aspects that determine one`s social mobility based on their education quality. They include better job perspectives as mentioned before, income increase, access to more high-quality health and administrative services, social superiority in

CHAPTER 02 : Social Mobility in Great Expectation and the Pearl

terms of avoiding discrimination and systematic inequality (Choiril, 2023, p.1). Therefore, social mobility, which is determined by social class, finance and education, allows individuals the access to many social services and type of treatment that distinguish them from other people of low financial status who are experience social inequality, discrimination, and limited access to social services (health, education, living conditions, and others).

The concept of social mobility has been represented in literature in two forms. It is stated that there are two types of this concept; they include Intergenerational and Intra-generational social mobility. The first type refers to the transmission of social and economic position from one generation to the next, which is measured by intergenerational social mobility based on a variety of social and economic outcome metrics, such as family revenue, individual profits, educational achievement, social class position, and occupational status (Duque & McKnight, 2020, p. n. d). In other words, it could be comprehended that this type of social mobility revolves around one`s socio-economic position in society that was inherited through his parents through their occupation, their educational and financial background, or even their own social status in society.

On the other hand, the Intra-generational social mobility is more related to the social transition that occurs as a person moves up or down the social ladder in their lifetime (Lam&Cuong, 2017, p.16). Stated differently, this type of social mobility is concerned with one`s change of social and economic status during his life, which excludes his parents` involvement in this shift and the influence of their social and financial status. Moreover, it is also indicated through this statement that social mobility has two ways to change socio-economic position, it could be either upward or downward. Therefore, individuals could move from the lower class to the upper class, or vice versa, meaning that they could be lowered from their high social class to the lower social class as well.

Through the review of the concept of social mobility, it could be comprehended that this concept could be closely related to the theme of poverty. Moreover, it is more closely related to the concept of social inequality that subjects poor people to the injustice of social systems and the discrimination of the people. It is even stated in research that social mobility would be irrelevant and non-existent in a society devoid of inequality (Jonsson, Sebastian, Hammarström & Gustafsson, 2017, p. 1). This statement highlights the major effect of social injustice and inequality on the concept of social mobility. Therefore, if poor people from the lower classes of society were not subjected to the discrimination and deprivation of their rights in their society, these people would not feel the need rise above their station and ascend the social ladder to join the upper circles of society and enjoy their same dignified treatment they receive in society.

2. Representation of Social Mobility in *Great Expectations*

Social mobility has been a dominating theme in Charles Dickens` *Great Expectations*, just like the other two themes of poverty and social class. It could be even implied that social mobility could be strongly linked to the aspect of poverty and social discrimination that divides the British society into different categories from the lowest to the highest. This theme has been depicted in the novel through different characters, starting from the main protagonist to the rest of the characters.

2.1. Examination of Social Mobility through the Character of Pip

Pip`s social mobility and his conception of this idea started with his first realization of the difference between his social status and that of Estella and Miss Havisham during their first encounter in the castle. Their meeting made him realize the difference between his life and theirs, it made him more conscious about his poverty and lower background. Therefore, he started to develop a resentment towards his simple lifestyle with Joe. He stated:

CHAPTER 02 : Social Mobility in Great Expectation and the Pearl

I lived in a state of chronic uneasiness respecting my behavior to Joe. My conscience was not by any means comfortable about Biddy. When I woke up in the night-like Camilla-I used to think, with a weariness on my spirits, that I should have been happier and better if I had never seen Miss Havisham's face, and had risen to manhood content to be partners with Joe in the honest old forge. (Charles Dickens, 1861, p.385)

This statement reveals Pip's regret to meeting Miss Havisham; because he wished that he stayed ignorant of the difference between their lives instead of hoping to be something more in life, something that exceeds his simple life with Joe and his sister. Throughout his life, Pip always knows what he wants and accepts his destiny as Joe's apprentice and future blacksmith. His aspirations were limited to what was passed to him through living with Joe and his sister. Therefore, he was content with the life he had with them despite its hardships and his sister's harsh treatment. However, during his encounter with Miss Havisham when she summoned him to the castle to play, and after meeting Estella and being subjected to her sneers and her condescension of him based on his worn clothes and ugly iron shoes, Pip became aware of his poor background and he started to develop a disdain for his socio-economic position.

Furthermore, it should be also brought to discussion the importance of education and its manifestation in *Great Expectations*. Dickens shows in the novel that Pip strived for a good education during his growing-up phase even though he was still expected to pursue the life of a blacksmith, and therefore, he did not need any type of education. However, Pip maintained his pursuit of educating himself in a consistent manner for years, asking for Biddy's assistance. This reflects his strong belief that he would someday rise above his station and be a gentleman who is worthy of Estella. This also reflects the vital significance of education and its role in identifying one's status in society. Therefore, he made sure that once the time comes and he joins the upper social class, he would not be hindered with poor education that could reflect bad on his position.

As a result, it could be deducted that Pip represented the theme of social mobility through his intra-generational upward shift in society through which he abandoned his humble

CHAPTER 02 : Social Mobility in Great Expectation and the Pearl

and poor position in Joe's household and moved to London to be a gentleman through a mysterious inheritance from an anonymous benefactor. This shift entailed a drastic transformation in this character through changing both of his looks and conduct in order to fit into the respectable London society. The treatment that Pip receives from people and his easy access to all social services while he was in London, depicts the social injustice that people are subjected to due to their financial means.

Another type of social mobility is represented in *Great Expectations* through the same character. After a while of changing his social and financial status, Pip became self-conscious about his shallow thoughts that dominated his values and overlooked the good morals that were ingrained in him from his childhood. He came to realize the shallow and superficial fabric of the London society and regretted his actions towards Joe. He was also stripped from his financial means after his mysterious benefactor was held captive by the authorities and brought to justice, with the confiscation of all of his money. This way, Pip was destitute again and his financial position shifted once again backward to take him back to his original lower class position. This phenomenon, as explained earlier, is identified as backward social mobility through which Pip abandoned his social position in the London society and reclaimed his social status in his town with Joe and his new wife. Pip realized the importance of family relations and social ties that were absent in his journey in the prestigious upper-class London society. He preferred to go back to his own village and embrace the life that was meant for him to live before his struggle with great ambitions begun many years ago.

2.2. Examination of Social Mobility through the Character of Estella

Another representation of social mobility in *Great Expectations* was depicted through Estella's character. Estella was revealed at the end of the novel to be Magwitch's daughter who was raised by Miss Havisham in her castle to be a destructive weapon for men's hearts. Since Magwitch was both a thief and a convict who escaped the authorities, Estella is originally

considered to be a poor individual from the lower class families. Therefore, her position with Miss Havisham is classified as an intra-generational upward social mobility through which she was able to rise above her station and avoid the social inequality which she was destined to experience due to her socio-economic background. Her social mobility enabled her to secure a marriage proposal of Bentley Drummle, who was an esteemed aristocrat of the upper class society. This marriage manifests a great achievement for someone with low parental origins who could climb the social ladder and reach a high social and economic position in society.

However, this character reflects also the sad and dull existence of people from the upper class who enjoy high social status and a wide range of social services but are also cursed with emotional detachment and internal conflicts. This idea has been elaborated in the first chapter, through which Estella's complicated personality was analyzed. Estella represents the cold emotional behaviors that people from the upper class adopt when dealing with their life decisions. In her case, marriage was a business transaction that is conducted to maintain her socio-economic status. Therefore, despite her feelings for Joe, she married Bentley Drummle to secure her position in society and sustain her social mobility.

2.3. Examination of Social Mobility through the Character of Joe

Social mobility, or rather social immobility was also represented in Dickens work through Joe's character. Joe is a simple minded man whose life revolves around his house and forges. Joe's satisfaction with his life and his lack of interest in obtaining education reflect the lower class contentment with their position and the limited opportunities provided to them for social climb. Marxism identifies this notion as "social roles"; this concept refers to an individual's social position that fundamentally defines his or her function in society. Therefore, Joe fulfilled his role in society and did not aspire to occupy a different position.

CHAPTER 02 : Social Mobility in Great Expectation and the Pearl

Moreover, Joe`s character presented an explanatory argument for the lack of education in the lower class environment. When Pip asked him why he did not go to school when he was young, he answered that:

I`ll tell you. My father, Pip, he were given to drink, and when he were overtook with drink, he hammered away at my mother, most on-merciful. It were a most the only hammering he did, indeed, `xcepting at myself. And he hammered at me with a wigour only to be equaled by the wigour with which he didn`t hammer at his anwil,-You`re and understanding, Pip? (Charles Dickens, 1861, p. 63).

Joe proceeded to explain that his father`s abuse was an obstacle to his education because he had to defend his mother. More importantly, he also had to work because they were poor and any income was welcomed no matter how scarce it is. Consequently, Joe had to leave school and immerse in labor to provide food for his family. This reflects the situation of most families of the lower class who were pre-occupied in the Victorian age with labor to survive and fight starvation instead of pursuing the luxury of education. Hence, education was only accessible for upper class members whose only aim was to refine their personalities and social status.

3. Representation of Social Mobility in *The Pearl*

John Steinbeck's *The Pearl* is taken as another literary work that portrays the theme of social mobility in the American society. Unlike Dickens who portrayed this theme through different characters with different stories, Steinbeck depicted this theme only through his protagonist Kino. He is a poor man who was subjected to a harsh social discrimination that fueled his desire to gain wealth and status to change his life.

3.1. Examination of Social Mobility through the Character of Kino

As discussed through the first chapter, Kino is a black pearl hunter who lives on the edge of town with his small family and other members of society and lead a peaceful and simple life. The accident that his son had with the bite of the scorpion exposed Kino to social inequality through which he could not even have access to a doctor to examine his son due to his poverty. This reveals the maltreatment that people endure on the hands of the American society and their

CHAPTER 02 : Social Mobility in Great Expectation and the Pearl

inability to have access to the basic social services due to their poverty. On the contrary, when Kino found the pearl, the same services that he was denied was then offered to him with pleasure. This reflects the difference that money makes and how social mobility could provide people with access to the things that they were deprived of. Therefore, the pearl formed a significant symbol of wealth and a means for Kino to change his socio-economic status and achieve social mobility.

Kino`s desire for social mobility and his dream to rise above his station was as strong factor that led him to risk his own life and his family`s to achieve that goal. Even when people started to attack his house, looking for the pearl to steal it, and Juana tried to convince him to abandon the pearl for their safety, Kino could not resist the allure of social mobility and the amount of opportunities that would be provided to him. His determination was evident in his behaviors: *“I will fight this thing. I will win over it. We will have our chance. No one shall take our good fortune from us”* (p. 57). Therefore, Kino saw the pearl as his only chance to improve his social status and gain the wealth which would radically transform his life and enable him to build a decent life for his wife and son. His deep desire reflects his dream for intra-generational upward mobility that could gain him a respectable social status with access to different social services.

Therefore, Steinbeck depicted the theme of social mobility through his main protagonist Kino who aspired for a better life for his small family. The pearl is used in this novel to symbolize the possibility of success and upward mobility, and the ability to rise above one's current station in life. It represented Kino`s hope for achieving success in life through wealth and money. Therefore, this novel illustrates the role of financial means in determining one`s social position in society and the type of treatment or services he is entitled to. However, with the advancement of the events of the novel, the pearl`s symbolism shifts to represent a different meaning. The opposition that Kino encounters in achieving his purpose in selling the pearl turns

him into a greedy and selfish being who risks the safety of his son and wife for his own interests. Therefore, the pearl turns into a symbol of human greed and corruption that eventually leads to destruction.

4. Similarities and Differences in The Portrayal of Social Mobility in *Great Expectations* and *The Pearl*

The analysis of both novels indicates that both Dickens and Steinbeck had their own style in depicting social mobility through their main characters. However, they did resemble each other in one thing, which is their ability to portray the pressing need for social mobility and the impact of poverty in creating this urge in individuals' selves in the first place. Moreover, they both illustrated that this desire was provoked by a paramount life-altering event that made the main characters realize their social limitations and aspire for social freedom and mobility. For Kino, this life-altering event was the fatal injury of his son that made him feel crippled and helpless when no one offered him help due to his poor social background. For Pip, this event was his encounter with Estella and his infatuation with her that made him deeply captivated in the concept of changing his social status and gain financial means to be worthy of her. Therefore, in this aspect, both authors were able to describe the effect that social inequality could cause to individuals' lives and mental stability.

Additionally, both authors were able to depict the unlimited access to social services and utilities that social mobility allows for people with financial means. Dickens showed this aspect even in the rigid Victorian society that condenses people with lower social class. However, with the amount of money that Pip had, his extravagant appearance, and his new luxurious lifestyle, he was able to interact and socialize with highly esteemed aristocrats and members of society. Kino was also able to have access to the doctor's services after finding the pearl and gain a measure of respect from other people with his newly found treasure.

CHAPTER 02 : Social Mobility in Great Expectation and the Pearl

In terms of differences, Dickens depicted the source of Pip's social mobility through the inheritance of financial gift of the secret benefactor (Magwitch). This gift maintained a flow of money that enabled Pip to lead a luxurious life style in London and have access to its respectable society. Steinbeck only presented the illusion of social mobility and the promise of wealth that the pearl provided. In *The Pearl*, Kino's source of social mobility and his desire to climb the social ladder was the pearl. After hearing about him hunting a pearl, Kino was subjected to the kind of life and treatment that he would receive once he sells the pearl and gains its money. Thus, in *The Pearl*, the protagonist did not actually experience social mobility, but he rather had a taste of it before this illusion faded away.

Moreover, education was highly emphasized in Dickens work as a crucial factor of social mobility more than it was addressed in Steinbeck's work. Dickens delivered the moral that pursuing social mobility is a void and empty promise of happiness which could be achieved through compassion and social relations. Thus, Pip reached this realization at the end of the novel and concluded that he did not want to be part of a fake society that is concerned with money and appearance. Whereas, Steinbeck wanted to show the major consequences of social mobility, and the greed that it could provoke through the painful ending of Kino who lost both of his family and the pearl. Thus, he was responsible of destroying his own dream of wealth and ruining his family with his own hands.

The analysis of both literary works and their representation of the theme of social mobility revealed that each of Dickens and Steinbach had his own way in depicting this concept. In the case of Dickens, social mobility was portrayed in detail through different characters to demonstrate the strong influence of social class on achieving social mobility. He portrayed the importance of social mobility and its role in making life easier for individuals for the opportunities it provides and access to social services. However, he also depicted the shallow and selfish existence of people with social mobility and how they cannot manifest their natural

CHAPTER 02 : Social Mobility in Great Expectation and the Pearl

human feelings and emotions like it was shown in the character of Estella. Steinbach on the other hand, showed the impact of social mobility through only one character who was not fully occupying a high social status but on the verge of achieving it through obtaining wealth. He also showed the grave and devastating consequences of greed and its impact on the destruction of the human morality, unlike Dickens who showed that people could learn their lesson through less severe consequences.

Chapter Three:

The Impossibility of Achieving Social
Mobility in *Great Expectations* and *The
Pearl*

CHAPTER 03: The Impossibility Of Achieving Social Mobility In *Great Expectation* And *the Pearl*

The previous two chapters illustrated the social class division that characterized the British and American society in the 1800`s and 1900`s. This class system that was built on the level of richness and poverty of individuals and determined their position in society based on their financial assets. Dickens and Steinbeck portrayed in their novels the impact of social class on creating people`s expectations in a better life and their aspiration of social mobility through achieving financial success and wealth. This wealth was seen as the only means of obtaining social mobility that would liberate the characters from their social oppression and elevate their position in society. This chapter sheds light on the social barriers that the two main protagonists in *Great Expectations* and *The Pearl* encountered and prevented them from achieving their dream of richness.

1. Symbols of Richness in *Great Expectations* and *The Pearl*

In both *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens and *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck, richness and wealth represented major themes and symbolic interpretations of different aspects throughout the novel. In *Great Expectations*, wealth represented a significant factor for the protagonist Pip to become worthy of his beloved Estella. At the beginning of the novel, Pip is a destitute orphan living in the English countryside with his sister and her husband, Joe. His meeting with the wealthy Miss Havisham and her beautiful ward, Estella, fuels his ambition for financial success and social progress. Therefore, Pip starts to see wealth as a way to achieve social acceptance and realize his goals of a better life. He aspires to become a gentleman and escape his lowly beginnings in order to be adequate enough for Estella, believing that she despised him for his poverty. Thus, he developed the idea that if he became rich, Estella would not show the same disdain and snobbery towards him and she would accept him as her equal. In this case, wealth symbolizes social status, mobility and recognition of one`s position in society.

CHAPTER 03: The Impossibility Of Achieving Social Mobility In *Great Expectation* And *the Pearl*

However, with the progress of the events of the book, wealth signifies to another important factor which is self-awareness and identity. It was noticed that when Pip moved to London and started to associate with the upper class society, he became distant from his friends and family in the country side and their memory started to be a source of shame to his new existence. This was reflected in the event when Joe visited Pip in London. Joe was a reminder of Pip's old identity as a poor apprentice in a blacksmith store. He was the evident of his past life that contradicts with his new identity as a gentleman in London. Therefore, the wealth that Pip enjoyed at this point of the novel formed an abstract barrier that prevented him from welcoming Joe to his new surroundings and embracing his new identity as a gentleman with no past of poverty and destitution. Thus, wealth and richness are used as a symbol of identity crisis and lack of one's self-awareness and his exact belonging.

At the end of the novel however, richness and wealth had a different symbolism that addresses lack of morality and social corruption. This is revealed when Pip discovered the source of the money that was given to him and realizing that it was not actually from Miss Havisham. The source of his money was from Magwitch who gained his wealth through illegal means and human crimes before he was convicted. This also shows the hypocrisy of the English society and the lack of morality that dominates its sphere; the lawyer who was providing Pip with money was aware of the crimes of Magwitch and the source of wealth, but he kept his silence and offered his cooperation with this convict in exchange for money. Therefore, wealth in this case represents the lack of morality of individuals and their acceptance of social mobility and class regardless of the corruption of the wealthy and their ill-gotten gains.

In *The Pearl*, Steinbeck used richness and wealth as a symbol of social liberty and freedom. The protagonist in this novel was subjected to social discrimination due to his poverty and low social standing. Therefore, wealth represented the illusion of breaking free of social

CHAPTER 03: The Impossibility Of Achieving Social Mobility In *Great Expectation* And *the Pearl*

constraints that were imposed on him and his family. He believed that if he was rich, he would be able to provide a house for his wife and education for his son “*Kino`s brain burned, even during his sleep and he dreamed that Coyotito could read, that one of the people could tell him the truth of things. And in his dream, Coyotito was reading from a book as large as a house, with letters as big as dogs, and the words galloped and played on the book*” (*The Pearl* 37). This passage shows the simplicity of Kino`s mind and his big dream in educating his son by selling the pearl he found and achieving wealth. Therefore, it could be also deducted that richness crated an illusion of a happy life for Kino; it fueled his imagination with the life that he could obtain by selling the pearl and achieving richness.

In addition, richness also symbolizes corruption and human greed. At the end of the novel, Kino`s pursuit of wealth leads to tragedy and suffering to him and his family. The social opposition and the threats he encounters from other greedy members of his society did not stop Kino from maintaining his pursuit of richness despite the objection of his wife who warned him of the evil of this new found treasure “*This thing is evil! This pearl is like a sin! It will destroy us*” (p. 39). However, Kino proceeds with his struggle, endangering his family`s safety until eventually, he loses his son as a consequence. As a result, wealth and richness become a symbol of violence, corruption, and greed.

In fact, the pearl did not only reveal the greed of the people who tried to steal Kino`s treasure, but it also showed Kino`s dark side as well and his greed to achieve wealth and richness. In the part where his wife Juana, took *the pearl* in the middle of the night and tried to throw it in the water. As mentioned earlier, Juana viewed the pearl as a source of evil and bad luck that attracts people`s hostility and endangers the life of her son and her husband. Therefore, she tried to get rid of it without Kino`s knowledge to save them all. However, Kino was awake, and he followed her to the beach

CHAPTER 03: The Impossibility Of Achieving Social Mobility In *Great Expectation* And *the Pearl*

and then she heard him coming and she broke into a run. Her arm was up to throw when he leaped at her and caught her arm and wrenched the pearl from her. He struck her in the face with his clenched fist and she fell among the boulders, and he kicked her in the side, In the pale light, he could see the little waves break over her, and her skirt floated about and clung to her lungs as the water receded (John Steibek, 1947, p. 59).

This event reveals the extremes that the human being could reach when overwhelmed with greed and thirst for power. Kino was blinded with his obsession of the money that he could get and the life he was about to have once he sells the pearl. Therefore, he did not want to risk his good fortune and was willing to kill even the closest person to his heart in order to achieve his aim. Consequently, richness and wealth, which were represented through the item of *the pearl*, were symbols of human greed and violence in the novel.

2. Social Barriers and the Inequality of Wealth

Social class could be described as a rigid social system that was established in the British and American societies for decades at the time of *Great Expectations* and *The Pearl* were written. Therefore, moving from a lower social class into an upper class is a challenging task that is encountered with crucial social opposition. In his study about social mobility in the Victorian age, Powell (2020) demonstrated that the radical shift of social structure in the second half on the nineteenth century in England made is challenging for people to go through upward social ascend that made them move from their lower class to upper class social status through financial means. This explains the rigidity of the English society and its attachment to social standards that determines one`s social class and belonging in society. Consequently, Dickens portrayed these social challenges through Pip`s character when he moved to London, highlighting the barriers that prevent upward mobility for those born into poverty. It is true that Pip was able to penetrate the upper class society through the money he was provided and reside in London and buy his way into society, however, his money did not buy him people`s

CHAPTER 03: The Impossibility Of Achieving Social Mobility In *Great Expectation* And *the Pearl*

acceptance and did not also prevent their snobbery. Mrs. Pocket is one of the characters who depicted the social barriers in the novel that prevented Pip from achieving his aspired social mobility and equality. Ms. Pocket is an upper class woman and one of Miss Havisham relatives. From the beginning of the novel, she is portrayed as a haughty and condescending person who looks upon people from lower class like Pip. Despite her own financial difficulties, Ms. Pocket despises Pip and his family because of their low social standing. Even after Pip transforms into a gentleman, her snobbery and disdain of him remains the same.

I went circuitously to Miss Havisham's by all the back ways, and rang at the bell constrainedly, on account of the stiff long fingers of my gloves. Sarah Pocket came to the gate, and positively reeled back when she saw me so changed; her walnut-shell countenance likewise turned from brown to green and yellow. "You?" said she. "You? Good gracious! What do you want?" "I am going to London, Miss Pocket," said I, "and want to say good-bye to Miss Havisham." I was not expected, for she left me locked in the yard, while she went to ask if I were to be admitted. After a very short delay, she returned and took me up, staring at me all the way (Charles Dickens, 1861, p. 109).

Sarah's behavior, or the conduct of Ms. Pocket after seeing Pip in his new attire and understanding that he became a man of means, demonstrates her unchanging opinion about him and his unworthiness as a lower class member. Therefore, her character emphasizes the class divide between the lower and upper class in the English society and the challenges that this divide on people from the lower class to pursue social mobility and richness. There are other encounters of Pip with other members of society who remind him of his humble social background and prevent him from blending in with the upper class society, such as Mrs. Jagers and Lord Drummle. These occurrences demonstrate the societal barriers that Pip faces on a daily basis throughout the novel, emphasizing the difficulties and complexities of navigating the strict class system of the English society during the Victorian era. Pip is constantly reminded of the social limitations placed on him by his birth and low upbringing, despite his ambitions to rise beyond his lowly beginnings and his attainment of money and financial means.

CHAPTER 03: The Impossibility Of Achieving Social Mobility In *Great Expectation* And the *Pearl*

In *The Pearl*, Steinbeck demonstrates the social barriers that prevent social mobility and one's upward social ascend through his main character Kino through different events of the novel. The first social barrier that was depicted in the novel was portrayed through the doctor's treatment of Kino. After Kino's son was injured, he was taken to the only doctor in town to help save his life. However, the doctor refused to examine the baby for free and declined Kino's request for help due to his poverty. However, after hearing about the found pearl and Kino's anticipated fortune, the doctor changes his attitude and went to Kino's place of residence to treat his child. This event shows the social barrier that prevents poor people natural access to the basic human rights and facilities in their own towns. It also depicts the social discrimination that they are subjected to due to their low social status.

The second indicator of social berries in the novel is the opposition that Kino encountered from the elite members of his society when news about his new found treasure "the pearl" spread across the town. Kino was met with several challenges starting with the man who tried to deceive when he attempted to sell to pearl and extending to the people who tried to steal it from him regardless of the cost. After discovering the value of the pearl in the market, the dealer tried to undermine the true value of the pearl, stating that: "This pearl is like fool's gold. It is too large. Who would buy it? There is no market for such things. It is a curiosity only. I am sorry. You thought it was a thing of value, and it is only a curiosity" (p. 49). Therefore, despite the significant value of the pearl and its true price, the dealer offered a small fraction of its value to Kino, believing that he would accept his offer due to his ignorance and simple mind. This event reflects the systematic and social exploit of the upper class towards the lower class members; this passage in the novel reflects Kino's sense of exploitation and danger coming from the dealer and his colleagues in town "But Kino had grown tight and hard. He felt the creeping of fate, the circling of wolves, the hovers of vultures. He felt the evil coagulating about him, he was helpless to protect himself" (p. 51). This statement does not only reveal the

CHAPTER 03: The Impossibility Of Achieving Social Mobility In *Great Expectation* And the *Pearl*

exploitation of the upper class members of their lower class counterparts, but it's reflects the powerlessness of the poor lower class people and their inability to defend themselves towards this exploitation. This exploitation is considered as one of the social obstacles that prevent people of the lower class to ascend the social ladder and rise above their situation in society.

Throughout the novel, especially after finding the pearl, the town's people in which Kino resides show direct hostility and feelings of resentment towards Kino, demonstrating their opposition of his fortune and his new upcoming wealth that could disrupt the balance of power in their society. They indicated their belief that Kino was born poor and should remain poor for the rest of his life; thus, remains at the bottom of the power ladder in their opinion and not dare ascend to their position.

Therefore, it is deducted that these incidents shed light on the social barriers and injustices that Kino had to deal with. They also demonstrate the systemic oppression that the upper class members practice on the lower class people due to their social authority and position. Kino's attempts to change his situation are consistently blocked by the deeply ingrained social class system that upholds the poor's marginalization and fuels the cycle of exploitation and poverty that could be only described as endless in both the British and American societies.

3. Impossibility of Reaching Wealth in *Great Expectations* and *The Pearl*

In *Great Expectations*, Dickens addresses the theme of the impossibility of reaching wealth through his main protagonist Pip. The novel takes the reader through a journey of ambitions, self-discovery and social transformation that turns Pip, a lower class member into a gentleman and a member of the upper class London society. However, at the end of the novel, Dickens reveals that wealth is a vain and abstract concept that strips one's morality and neglects social relations. Thus, he reveals that wealth or richness are a bright illusion that hides the ugly

CHAPTER 03: The Impossibility Of Achieving Social Mobility In *Great Expectation* And *the Pearl*

nature of the human being and portrays him as someone who has everything, while in fact, he has nothing of real significance. Pip came to this realization at the end of the novel after he went through some of the psychological struggles of selfishness, greed, temptation, and shame of his past. He also reached the conclusion that family and friends are more important than money and substance in times of need and support. Pip is fascinated by the concept of turning into a gentleman and being wealthy throughout the entire novel. His experiences with Miss Havisham and Estella fueled his desire for wealth, making him believe that having it will make him happy and fulfilled. But as the story unfolds, Pip realizes that chasing money is an illusion that would only leave one disappointed and disillusioned. Therefore, he loses all of the money he obtained from Magwitch, pay off his debts with the help of Joe and returns home to his comfort zone with Joe and Biddy, finding resolution and fulfillment in the comfort of his family, instead of money. The end of the novel depicts Dickens' concept that achieving wealth is an impossible endeavor. It also reveals his belief that true wealth lies in friends and family, not in money and substance.

In *The Pearl*, Steinbeck shows the theme of the impossibility of achieving richness through his main protagonist as well, Kino. Throughout the novel, Kino strongly believed that his life will change when he sells the pearl and achieve richness through its significant value. Despite his simple mind, and the deception of the dealers, he realized that the pearl is worth a significant fortune that will change his life and the life of his family. He goes through several challenges to maintain the pearl and keep it from greedy people who want to steal it at any cost, he also challenges his wife and subject her to violence when she tries to stand between him and his dream. He also puts his son's life in danger, knowing that the people of the town would not stop their attacks until they obtain the pearl. However, all of his endeavors evaporate at the end of the novel when his son dies and he throws the pearl in the sea without achieving his dream.

CHAPTER 03: The Impossibility Of Achieving Social Mobility In *Great Expectation* And the *Pearl*

Therefore, Steinbeck reflects the theme of the impossibility of achieving richness through the end of Kino who was left with deep regret and remorse for his actions.

Throughout the novel, Steinbeck challenges the idea that materialistic and concrete wealth is correlated to happiness and fulfillment, this is a notion that many people believe in; that money brings happiness. However, the end of the story reveals that the pearl causes sorrow and pain, despite Kino's expectations that it will give his family security and opportunity for a better and happier life. Consequently, Steinbeck portrays that the quest of wealth exposes the meaninglessness and pointlessness of materialism and seeking richness, by causing moral decline, loss of self, and degradation of the human dignity as it has been demonstrated by Kino who lost his self and morals in pursue of wealth.

4. Conclusion

In summary, *Great Expectations* explores individual ambition, social inequality, and moral decline through the lens of the difficulty of achieving richness, which serves as a major theme in the novel. Dickens highlights the dangers of materialism in the Victorian age and the significant importance of moral integrity and inner richness in the pursuit of real happiness and fulfillment through Pip's experiences. His novel reveals that true happiness is in the inner peace of the person with those he loves; and this was depicted in the end of Pip's experience.

The Pearl on the other hand, explores the same themes of human ambition, social inequity, and the effects of greed by emphasizing the difficulty of achieving richness as a primary theme. Steinbeck sheds light on the dangers of materialism and the significant importance of moral integrity and inner richness in the pursuit of genuine pleasure and fulfillment through Kino's experiences. However, Steinbeck's lesson at the end of the novel is not as enlightening and satisfying as Dickens'; while Dickens depicts a happy ending for Pip after the realization that true wealth is not in materialistic means, Steinbeck was more severe in

CHAPTER 03: The Impossibility Of Achieving Social Mobility In *Great Expectation* And the *Pearl*

his lesson through the major loss of Kino who lost his son in order to realize that true richness is in the family, not in meaningless substance of money.

GENERAL CONCLUSION:

GENERAL CONCLUSION:

GENERAL CONCLUSION:

The themes poverty, social class and social mobility are intertwined in literature. These themes demonstrate the social class system that both American and British societies were based upon to classify people and identify their type of treatment that they were entitled to. Dickens and Steinbeck addressed these themes in their works of literature *Great Expectations* and *The Pearl*. Within the context of Marxist theory, the comparative study of both novels selected offers insightful information about the complexities of poverty, social class, mobility, and the impossibility of achieving richness. Both authors portray the harsh reality that those who live in poverty must endure, emphasizing the rigid social division and social discrimination through their main protagonists in the novels. Dickens depicted the theme of poverty and social class discrimination that led Pip to abandon his childhood family and surroundings and made him pursue his great expectations in London so that he could elevate his social standing and win people's recognition and acknowledgement. Steinbeck was also able to depict the crucial social treatment that poor people were subjected to due to the lack of materialistic substance, and the effect of this social discrimination on reshaping one's morals through the character of Kino who was overcome by greed and aspiration for wealth and money when he found the precious pearl. In conclusion, it could be deduced that social class and poverty have a powerful impact on one's mental stability and emotional resolution. This was proved by both novels which depicted the change of character that both Kino and Pip experienced when they were introduced to the chance of gaining wealth and changing their social standing.

Moreover, the comparative analysis of *Great Expectations* and *The Pearl* revealed that both Dickens and Steinbach had a unique style in depicting the theme of social mobility in their literary works. Dickens illustrated social mobility in great detail using a variety of characters to show the significant impact that social class has on obtaining social mobility. He highlighted the value of social mobility and how it helps people live better lives by giving them access to social services and opportunities. But he also showed how socially mobile individuals lead

GENERAL CONCLUSION:

shallow and self-centered lives and are unable to express their true human emotions, as demonstrated by Estella's character in his book. In contrast, Steinbach utilized a single character who was close to attaining a high social standing but did not yet fully occupy it through wealth acquisition to illustrate the effects of social mobility. He also demonstrated the catastrophic impacts of greed and how it undermines human morals, in contrast to Dickens who suggested that people could learn their lessons from less dire outcomes.

In conclusion, a key issue in *Great Expectations* is the difficulties of reaching riches, which is used to examine moral decay, social injustice, and individual ambition. Dickens uses Pip's experiences to illustrate the dangers of materialism in the Victorian era as well as the critical role that moral integrity and inner richness play in the quest for true happiness and fulfillment. The epilogue of Pip's story illustrates how true happiness lies in a person's inner peace with those they love. *The Pearl*, on the other hand, emphasizes the difficulty of attaining riches as a key theme while exploring similar themes of human ambition, social injustice, and the ramifications of greed. Through Kino's experiences, Steinbeck illuminates the dangers of materialism and the crucial role that moral integrity and inner richness play in the search for true happiness and fulfillment. But unlike Dickens, who gives Pip a happy ending after realizing that true wealth does not come from materialistic means, Steinbeck's lesson at the end of the novel is not as enlightening or satisfying. Instead, Steinbeck was more severe in his lesson, requiring Kino to lose his son in order to realize that true richness comes from within the family. Therefore, it could be deduced that both Dickens and Steinbeck, despite the difference in writing style, emphasize the importance of moral integrity, humility, and compassion in navigating life's challenges and finding true fulfillment. They caution against the dangers of greed, ambition, and the pursuit of material wealth at the expense of one's humanity and ethical values. Through their compelling narratives and vivid characterizations, Dickens and Steinbeck deliver timeless moral lessons that resonate with readers across generations.

REFERENCES :

REFERENCES :

REFERENCES :

- Astuti, P. L. (2018). *Social Mobility In Charles Dickens' Great Expectations Novel (1861): A Marxist Perspective*. Retrieved from: <https://eprints.ums.ac.id/61208/13/naspub%20oke%20aja.pdf>
- Ball, T & Dagger, R. (2024). *Communism Ideology*. Retrieved from: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/communism>
- Bowens Tyneisha, Ben Carroll, LeiLani Dowell, Elena Everett, Julie Fry, Larry Hales, David Hoskins, Caleb Maupin & Dante Strobino. (1974). *What Is Marxism All About? A Street Guide for Revolutionaries*. Published by World View Forum.
- Brindas, O. Ecaterina. (2020). *Charles Dickens, The Victoria, Novel Writing and The New Spirit of Reform*
- Brock, T. (2024). *Marxism: What It Is and Comparison to Communism, Socialism, and Capitalism*.
- Cherra, B. Zahia. (2014). *Social Classes Differences in Charles Dickens' Novel David Copperfield*. English Language and Literature and Civilization. Anglo- Saxon Literature.
- Choiril, Anwar. (2023). *Social Mobility in Modern Society*.
- Christy, R. S. (2013). *The Unsuccessful Class Struggle as Represented by Kino's Experience in John Steinbach`s The Pearl*.
- Dunne Luke. (2023). *Marxism and Literature: 3 Key Ideas*. Retrieved from:. Accessed on February 14th, 2024.
- Dupavac, J.(2022). *Charles Dickens Disloy of social space and class Hierarchy in Great Expectations*
- Duque, Magali & McKnight, Abigail. (2020). *Understanding the Links between Inequalities and Poverty (LIP). Understanding the relationship between inequalities*

REFERENCES :

- and poverty: a review of dynamic mechanisms*. The London School of Economics and Political Science. <https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/103457/1/CASEpaper217.pdf>.
- Galiani, Sebastian. (2010). *Social Mobility: What is it and why does it matter?* Maestría en Economía Universidad Nacional de La Plata. https://www.cedlas.econo.unlp.edu.ar/wp/wp-content/uploads/doc_cedlas101.pdf.
 - Hahn, S. (2021). *Land of Capital The history of the United States as the history of capitalism*.
 - Helleberg, E. (2021). *The portrayal of class and social mobility in Charles Dickens' Great Expectations*. Centre for Languages and Literature English Studies.
 - Hunter, A. (2023). *Victorian Era Social Classes | Distinctions & Examples*.
 - Iversen, Vegard; Krishna, Anirudh & Sen, Kunal. (2021). *Social Mobility in Developing Countries: Concepts, Methods and Determinants*. Oxford University Press.
 - Jaishi, J.R . (2009). *Stigma of Poverty in John Stenbeck's The Pearl*
 - Jonsson, Frida; Sebastian, S. Miguel; Hammarström, Anne & Gustafsson, E. Per. (2017). *Intragenerational social mobility and functional somatic symptoms in a northern Swedish context: analyses of diagonal reference models*. International Journal for Equity in Health.
 - Josiah. H. (2018). *Marxism*. University of Texas. America DOI:10.1002/9781118924396.wbiea1860
 - Lam, T. Nguyen & Cuong, V. Nguyen. (2017). *Intragenerational and Intergenerational Mobility in Viet Nam*. Asian Development Bank Institute.
 - Lichter, T. D & Patterson, T. J. (2002). *America's Struggle Against Poverty in the Twentieth Century*. Contemporary Sociology A Journal of Reviews 31(2):130. ResearchGate.
 - Marxism and Literature. (1977). *Unit 1: Marxism and Literature*. Retrieved from: <https://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/22646/1/Unit-1.pdf>

REFERENCES :

- Matthewman Laurence. (2016). *'We are three sisters...'* The Brontë sisters: from objects of speculation and curiosity in Victorian times to the subjects of a contemporary tourist and cultural phenomenon. *Miroirs : Revue des civilisations anglophone, ibérique et ibéro-américaine*, 2016, Vol.1 (4), pp.81-101. fhal-03640067.
- Moseley Fred. (2005). *Marx's Theory of Money: Modern Appraisals*. Mount Holyoke College, Massachusetts, USA.
<https://files.libcom.org/files/Marx%20on%20Money.pdf>.
- Phillips, B; Cheng, W; Florman, B & Burns, J. (2002). *Great Expectations* Charles Dickens. Retrieved from:
- Powell, Victoria Elizabeth. (2018). *The knight from nowhere: a biographical case study of social mobility in Victorian Britain*. [Thesis] (Unpublished).
- Rafferty, J. P. (2017, September 30). *The Rise of the Machines: Pros and Cons of the Industrial Revolution*. Encyclopedia Britannica.
- Rummel, R. J. *Understanding Conflict and War: Vol 3: Conflict in Perspective*. Chapter 5: Marxism, Class Conflict and the Conflict Helix. Accessed on February 15th, 2024.
- Steinbeck, John. the Pearl.
<https://www.tesd.net/cms/lib/PA01001259/Centricity/Domain/575/The%20Pearl%20Ebook.pdf>.
- Urfiani, U. L. (2016). *The Representation of Class Struggle in John Steinbach`s The Pearl*. Retrieved from:
<https://repository.unej.ac.id/bitstream/handle/123456789/72151/Ulfiatul%20Ifit%20Urfiani%20-%20090110101089.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

REFERENCES :

- Williams, J. (2024). "The Pearl" *Summary and Analysis A Book by John Steinbeck*.
Retrieved from:
- World History EDU. (2024). *Karl Marx*. Article visited on 22/10/2024 :
<https://worldhistoryedu.com/karl-marx/>