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Marital Relationships in George Eliot's Prose

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## ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

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### Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Předmětem práce bude vybraná próza viktoriánské prozaičky George Eliot. Autorka se zaměří na tři romány (Silas Marner, The Mill on the Floss, Middlemarch) s cílem analyzovat, jakou povahu a funkci v nich mají partnerské vztahy. Text bude uveden krátkou kapitolou nastiňující společenské stereotypy týkající se partnerských vztahů (např. jejich vzniku) ve střední a vyšší třídě během viktoriánské doby. Na základě této části a s použitím relevantní sekundární literatury bude jádro práce tvořit detailní rozbor románů s cílem charakterizovat formu partnerských vztahů ve smyslu míry jejich konvenčnosti a nekonvenčnosti, morálky a statutu žen. Práci uzavře kapitola shrnující výsledky předchozích úvah a zjištění.

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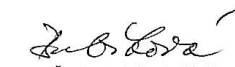
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Souhlasím s prezenčním zpřístupněním své práce v Univerzitní knihovně Univerzity Pardubice.

V Pardubicích

Veronika Koukalová

## Poděkování

Děkuji vedoucímu mé bakalářské práce Mgr. Ladislavovi Vítovi za cenné rady, připomínky a metodické vedení práce.

## **ABSTRAKT**

Tématem bakalářské práce je analýza manželských vztahů v dílech George Eliot. Konkrétně se tato práce zabývá třemi romány – Middlemarch, Silas Marner a The Mill on the Floss.

Cílem práce je porovnat manželské i nemanželské vztahy mezi muži a ženami z hlediska morálky a míry konvenčnosti. Dále také charakterizovat pozici a chování ženy v takovém vztahu a názory okolí na daný partnerský vztah.

Této analýze bude předcházet charakteristika Viktoriánské společnosti zaměřená na Viktoriánskou morálku, pohled na manželství a pozici ženy v devatenáctém století.

Obsah této práce bude podpořen vybranou sekundární literaturou.

## **KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA**

George Eliot, Silas Marner, The Mill on the Floss, Middlemarch, manželství, postavení žen, Viktoriánská Anglie.

## **ABSTRACT**

The topic of this bachelor thesis is an analysis of marital relationships described in the prose of George Eliot. Specifically this work deals with three novels – *Middlemarch*, *Silas Marner* and *The Mill on the Floss*.

The main object is to compare marital and extra-marital relationships between men and women in terms of morality and the degree of conformity to social conventions. Then the attention is focused on the position and behaviour of women in such relationships and the view of society on a particular partnership.

This analysis is preceded by a characterization of Victorian society focused on Victorian morality, the view of a marriage and the position of women in the nineteenth century.

The ideas and opinions stated in this work have been supported by the secondary sources which are listed at the end of the work.

## **KEY WORDS**

George Eliot, Silas Marner, The Mill on the Floss, Middlemarch, marriage, a position of women, Victorian England.



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## INTRODUCTION

The topic is the analysis of marital relationships in George Eliot's prose. Three novels written by George Eliot were chosen for the analysis: *Silas Marner*, *Middlemarch* and *The Mill on the Floss*.

This topic is also connected with Victorian morality, values and the social position of women at that time. Therefore, the first chapter characterizes the Victorian era in England shortly and explains the term 'Victorian England'. It also defines the time period and describes the situation in England. It was a great epoch when a lot of changes happened.

The description of Victorian England is especially focused on society - specifically on the point of view of marriages and relationships between men and women at that time and the morality of contemporary people. It is clear that the circumstances surrounding a marriage were very different from the today's concept of a marriage. At that time the morality and traditions concerning relationships between men and women were much stricter than today. The opinion of the family and friends, the customs and some stereotypes were very important and many men and women had to yield to the wishes of their families and to the pressure of society around them. There were of course a lot of scandals caused by some rebellious couples but usually it brought shame on the family and these couples were sometimes rejected by society.

The question of the social position of women is dealt with too – their power, rights and commitments. There were some traditions and generally accepted rules as to what the women were supposed to do and what they were not allowed to do in the marriage. There were a lot of things which were expected from them – for example total devotion to their husbands, subordination to their husbands' will and commands, and above all the reliability and loyalty during the hard times. They had fewer rights than today's women. On the other hand it was natural for husbands to take care of their wives and children and provide for them. Sometimes it was certainly hard for the husbands, especially when they had little money or had some debts. Women were in fact dependent on their husbands – they were not allowed to

possess any property and till the 1850s they had only few rights. During the second half of the nineteenth century some great changes happened. Certain important acts were passed concerning women's rights and the social position of women became much better. A new perspective on women was introduced and their position changed quite noticeably during this period. The nineteenth century was a very important era not only in terms of scientific and technological expansion but also in terms of social and cultural development.

In this analysis are discussed three novels written by George Eliot. Each of them deals with the problems of marriages but also the relationships between single men and single women and the social position of women. There are various women characters in each novel. The problems are viewed from different perspectives, thus giving different opinions on each relationship and the position of a woman in it. There is always a deep insight into the man and woman's psychology, their feelings about the relationships and about their partners. It is often very crucial for understanding the situation to be aware of the opinions of people around the couple - their families, neighbours and friends. The Eliot's view is often mentioned too.

Eliot often focuses on marriages which are in some way expected, natural and wanted by society. These expectations however do not necessarily mean happiness for the particular couple. There are some cases where the arranged marriage seems to be perfect before the wedding but some weeks of living together bring some unexpected problems to light. On the other hand there are some marriages which begin as scandalous, surprising and not acceptable for society. Nevertheless the marriage can be happy and without any big problems. The people who stand up against the opinion of society have to confront public prejudice and rejection. The position of a woman in a particular marriage differs greatly too. In some cases the wife is submissive, in other cases she is resistant or equal to her husband.

Eliot depicts different types of women and their views on men and marriage. Her aim was to give as various opinions as possible on a particular relationship providing a wholesome picture of society. George Eliot's insight into marriages and relationships between men and women and the way she deals with marital and premarital problems are the main topics of this work.

# 1. BACKGROUND

## 1.1. GEORGE ELIOT

George Eliot, whose real name was Mary Ann Evans, was born in England on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1819. There were not many women writers at that time and it was very difficult for a woman to publish so Eliot decided to write her books under a pseudonym.

There is not much information about her childhood and youth. Her glory, philosophy and her writing style were influenced by her modest roots. “Her development was very slow and very awkward, but it had the irresistible impetus behind it of a deep-seated and noble ambition.” (Woolf, 2 - 5)

In 1854 she met George Henry Lewes and they fell in love. Although he had a wife and four children he lived with Eliot for many years (Milne, 4 - 5). This relation with Lewes isolated her from society - people completely rejected them. Eliot had been “cut off from what is called the world,” she said later but she did not regret it. According to Woolf, Eliot was not very feminine and attractive. The lack of charm affected Eliot’s personality and the frustration showed in her works. Each of her women characters carries some part of her own life experience. She very often “turned her mind to the past, to the country village, to the quiet and beauty and simplicity of childish memories and away from herself and the present.” (Woolf, 2) As stated in Woolf, Eliot often identified herself with the woman characters of her novels. Woolf describes Eliot’s conduct as more open and complete than Maggie’s behaviour in the novel *The Mill on the Floss* and she also likens Eliot to Dorothea Brook from *Middlemarch* (Woolf, 2 - 5).

She was not a typical Victorian novelist. The source of her success was her intellect – “she was an ‘intellectual’ writer” (Cecil, 264). Her novels showed a very critical view of her life. (Cecil, 270) There is a great deal of pathos in her books. “Like most Victorian novelists she likes to brighten her pages with a glistening sprinkle of tears.” (Cecil, 278 - 279). Even her first books: *Scenes of Clerical Life*, *Adam Bede* and *The Mill on the Floss* show great literary power. As Woolf states,

“we move among them, now bored, now sympathetic, but always with that unquestioning acceptance of all that they say and do, which we accord to the great originals only.” (Woolf, 2 - 5)

Woolf also denominates Eliot as a convenient symbol for “a group of serious people who were all guilty of the same idolatry and could be dismissed with the same scorn.” Woolf quotes Eliot, “We ought to respect our influence,” she said. “We know by our own experience how very much others affect our lives, and we must remember that we in turn must have the same effect on others.” (Woolf, 1)

## **1.2. VICTORIAN SOCIETY**

### **1.2.1 Victorian England**

Victorian England is the term covering the period from June 1837 till January 1901. During this period there were great scientific discoveries which changed morality, thoughts and lifestyle of England. The Victorian period in England was the period of middle classes. At the beginning of that time the Whigs and bourgeoisie ruled the country and influenced the English morality through their puritan rigidness. There was a widespread belief that people should lead an ordered life and give up gambling, drinking and sexual pleasure out of the connubial bed. In order to gain wide acceptance of their convictions the ruling classes gave up, at least for appearance’s sake, their delights. In their campaign, the Whigs focused on morality and human virtues.

The court of the Queen Victoria also changed. The Queen’s husband Albert was a very virtuous man and the life of the court was well-ordered and family oriented. The new moral dominated literature too. “Nothing was allowed to plunge red into the woman’s face.” The literature of the time rejected all types of vices (Maurois, 394 – 398).

The second half of the nineteenth century saw the rise of Victorian morality. The term *Victorian period* is related to the Queen Victoria who ruled England at that time. During this period Liberals came into the power and this influenced the view

on the relationship between men and women and brought along a new conception of the role of a woman. The marital relationship became less tied and controlled after the 1850s. At the same time certain taboo developed as to speaking about an intimate relationship between a man and a woman (especially about their sexual life) and such conversation in public was inadmissible. There was an effort to restrict the questions of sexuality and related issues to the private zone. Victorian morality was apparently strictly puritan in the matter of sexuality and marriage. It was improper for a young girl to wear short sleeves or for a painter to paint a woman shoeless. On the other hand promiscuity and obscenity were considered normal and natural in privacy. Also nobody was shocked by the mistresses of rich men as long as these men were able to keep these relationships secret. According to Victorian society improper behaviour became a problem only when it was revealed.

Other great changes happened in society during the second half of the century – women gained the right to some property through marriage, the right to divorce their husband and the chance to seek the custody of their children after divorce (Perkin, 128).

There were different views on premarital relationship between a man and a woman across social classes. Premarital sex was forbidden for women from the middle and upper classes. The maximum sexual contact was a small kiss, a hand around the waist and a fervid pressing of the hand (Frost, 98 – 105).

### **1.2.2. The position of women**

It was supposed that a woman should learn only those things which she would need for the upbringing of her children and for the management of her household. She should be subordinate to her husband and absolutely submissive. A married woman should not work but the unmarried was to be trained. There was also huge inequality in the access to education. The cases of women studying at a university, for example law or natural science, were very rare (Lewis, 302-310).

Women, with their typical womanly qualities such as sympathy or psychological observation, felt uncomfortable in the masculine world, which was

predominantly the world of intellect, social investigation, policy and administration (Lewis, 302-310).

There were of course some feminist organisations. These movements contended that solidarity should be premised on gender rather than on a class. Feminists also successfully questioned the inequality of the marriage contract. These women saw marriage as a form of social service and discipline. (Levine, 160)

After the wedding the woman of middle or upper class usually moved into the husband's house and became a housewife. The wife's task was to create as cosy and pleasant environment for her family as possible. From this point of view marriage was meant to be a form of companionship. The woman was supposed to form the best atmosphere for upbringing and education of her children and for relaxation of her husband (Tosh, 30 - 40). The husband and his wife were just seen as one person and it was the woman who had to adapt to her partner. There was no law to protect the individuality of a woman at the beginning of the nineteenth century. She was totally the possession of her husband therefore a married woman had no independent legal status. She could not earn any money and she could not even inherit anything. In fact she was not allowed to possess anything. She could not have any property such as land, jewellery, money and other personal possessions. All these things were under the control of her husband. Even the wife's body legally belonged to her husband. The woman was supposed to give birth to children but she had no claim to them in case of divorce or after her husband's death. The husband could appoint the wife as guardian but it was not commonplace. If the woman had any personal property there were also problems with her will. She was not allowed to hand down anything to some particular heir without her husband's permission (Perkin, 126).

Some changes were brought by the Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857. Thanks to this law the rights of women and their position in a marriage improved. This Act permitted for example a secular divorce for the first time in England. After the completed divorce the wife was again a single person who could own property, earn some money and inherit or bequeath something on her own. But there were still some differences between men and women concerning the divorce policies. It was far more difficult for a woman to reach and justify the divorce. A

husband easily reached the divorce when he proved his wife's adultery (Dowling, 322-336).

In the early nineteenth century it was difficult to be a woman because there was really no law to protect her property or to give her at least some power or rights.

In conclusion Victorian England was a really great period for the development of this country. The changes which happened during the reign of the Queen Victoria in society, economy, industry and science were remarkable. This period can also be characterized by a *family cult* and the middle class family morality, no matter how two-faced we can consider it. People were virtuous and moral for effect but in fact they sank into vices, debauchery and adultery.

The view on marriage and family life changed during the nineteenth century quite significantly. The position of a woman altered along with it. At the beginning of the century women had hardly any rights. They were totally dependent on their husbands. However the changes after the 1850s brought greater freedom and independence.



## 2. MARRIAGES REJECTED BY SOCIETY

Marriages might be rejected by society for various reasons. The public or the family and friends reject the relationship between a man and a woman because of a disagreement between the families, general antipathy, prejudice or the past events in the family. A frequent reason for rejecting the relationship was the different social class of the engaged couple and also hypocritical morality of society and different views on what is right and what is wrong. All of these reasons occur in the novels chosen for the analysis. In most cases there is not only one of these reasons but a combination of them. Of course each character from the novels has a different opinion about the particular relationship and has his or her own argument against the marriage.

People around a particular couple show their disagreement with a particular marriage in various ways. A family and friends usually express it directly – it means that they try to talk a man and a woman out of marriage. They have a lot of arguments against doing it (different social classes, age, interests ...) People who are not so close to a couple only express their opinions in privacy. Sometimes they try to persuade a family of a particular man or woman of forbidding them to get married.

In the chosen novels each couple has to face some kind of rejection by society. There are different approaches to this fact. Some couples ignore the opinion of society and do what they want even though that often results in turning away from their families and friends. Not all men and women are able to stand up against society and they often succumb to the pressure. It is usually the woman who submits to people and the family and rejects the marriage or relationship in spite of the deep love she feels to the man. But even in these cases she is sometimes expelled by some society, even by her family.

In *Middlemarch* and *The Mill on the Floss* there are four examples of rejected marriages or relationships. In *Middlemarch* there is young Dorothea Brook and her first marriage with much older Mr Casaubon, which is not acceptable for her friends and family because of the age difference and the difference in interests. In this case people around Dorothea just try to persuade her of not marrying Mr Casaubon. Some people want her father to stop the preparing marriage but he does not do anything.

The second problematic relationship is Dorothea's relation with young Will Ladislaw, Mr Casaubon's nephew. This relationship is accepted neither by the family nor by society because of prejudice and some kind of antipathy to Ladislaw. This relationship is so out of bounds that for example Dorothea's sister Celia rejects any relations with Dorothea because Celia's husband does not agree with her conduct.

In *The Mill on the Floss* there is also a young girl, Maggie Tulliver, who, like Dorothea, has problems with two men. First she meets Philip Wakem but their marriage is not possible because of a family dispute. Her next relationship with Stephen Guest is impossible as well. He is her cousin's fiancé so they can not be a couple because of morality and the ties to their friends and families. This relationship is rejected very harshly by people around Maggie. Her brother even drives her off their house. People from Maggie's neighbourhood want her to move away to protect their daughters.

## **2.1. MAGGIE TULLIVER AND PHILIP WAKEM**

Maggie Tulliver is one of the most important woman characters in the novel *The Mill on the Floss*. Maggie is obviously different than the rest of her family in her appearance and behaviour. She has a very good and ardent relationship with her older brother Tom but she often wishes "he cared more about her loving him." (Eliot, 2003, 143) She is really compassionate with other people's pain and her conduct is often influenced by it. According to Milner, she has, like Dorothea in *Middlemarch*, a strong moral judgement so she often acts in accordance with it instead of so-called conventional standards. She also has a big need of being loved. As Milner states "Maggie has in her a good deal of view of feeling: natural, affectionate impulse welling up from the goodness of the heart, the groundwork of human love." (Milner, 23)

Her first suitor is Philip Wakem. He is her brother Tom's schoolmate. Maggie meets him for the first time when she comes to visit Tom at Mr. Stelling's school where the boys stay. Tom and Philip are not friends because of problems between

their families. There is a great dispute started by their fathers which spread over both families. Tom tries to emulate his father's opinion and so the boys never become friends. Mr Tulliver does not support any relationship with Wakem family. He accepted being good to Philip but he is against any close relationship with him.

Maggie and Philip definitely attracted to each other at first sight. Maggie tries to persuade Tom that Philip is a good boy. She says that he can not choose his father and they should be sorry for him because his father is not a good man. A new relationship springs up between Maggie and Philip. It is not love in the true sense because they are still children. Like the relationship between Dorothea Brook and Will Ladislaw also Maggie and Philip's develops for a long time. At the beginning Philip has a strong desire for a sister and Maggie also takes him as a brother. Philip is afraid of leaving Maggie and he does not want her to forget him. When they say good bye to each other Maggie promises to Philip that she will kiss him when they meet next.

During the following years Maggie often thinks about Philip and recalls her promise to kiss him when they occasionally meet. She is sad because there can not be any closeness between them because "the very name of Wakem made her father angry." (Eliot, 2003, 150) Maggie feels very lonely and also lacks any delight or entertainment. She misses the expressions of love or kindness from her father or brother, who are her idols. Tom starts to be very cruel to her and Maggie deals with it by escaping from reality to fantasy. In this stage Eliot states about Maggie that "she had a poor chance for marrying" (Eliot, 2003, 226) and also Mrs. Tulliver, Maggie's mother, says that probably there will be nobody to marry Maggie. During the period of Maggie's loneliness she wishes to meet Philip and talk to him.

Eventually Maggie meets Philip. They are surprised but both of them are glad to see each other. Both feel the same – sadness from parting, loneliness and a desire for a friend. They do not love each other yet but they are both looking for a soul mate. It seems to be perfect for them to meet regularly but there is the old family dispute. Maggie does not want to see Philip any more because of her bound to her father and Tom. Philip replies: "I would give up a great deal for my father; but I would not give up a friendship [...]." (Eliot, 2003, 243) It is evident that Maggie feels bigger responsibility to her family than Philip even though she feels lonely and

not beloved. Unlike him, she does not want to deceive her father and brother, which Philip suggests.

On the one hand she wants to see him sometimes even secretly but on the other hand she is afraid of giving their secret away. She struggles between the bounds to her family and her own pleasure. Philip argues that the friendship between them could possibly dissolve the hostility between their families. Maggie does not feel free; she is tied by her family so she must submit.

From her conduct it is possible to sense some kind of resignation to life and enjoyment - she finds refuge in reading books or listening to music. Philip sees this and wants to wake her to the life again, he likens it to a suicide: “trying to make Maggie see what underlines her credo of resignation [...]” (Milner, 24) Philip is convinced that he does it because of Maggie, to her own good and that it is not selfish. Finally she yields to him and they meet secretly. Philip is happy to see her and he hopes that Maggie might love him. As Eliot writes “there was not the slightest promise of love towards him in her manner [...] perhaps, she would never love him – perhaps no woman ever could love him.” (Eliot, 2003, 248) It is obvious that Maggie does not really think of him as a lover.

During the period when they regularly meet Maggie feels remorseful but at the same time she always looks forward to Philip and their chatting about books. He gets her out of the stereotype of her previous life. One day it transpires that Philip really loves Maggie. She is surprised because she has never thought about him as a lover but she gives him some hope “I think I could hardly love any one better [...] you know we could not even be friends” and she is afraid of it “[...] it will lead to evil.” (Eliot, 2003, 271) Maggie admits that she could live with him but it is evident that it is not because of her love to him but rather because she is sorry for him. At the same time she forbids him to propose to her because she does not want to wound her father.

Maggie’s relationship with her brother is not as good as in the past. However Tom is still proud of her, pleased with her behaviour and he thinks that she is a very fine girl. Both Tom and Mr Tulliver have the same, if not worse, opinion about Philip than in the past. For them he is “very queer and lonely [...] was like a disfiguring disease.” (Eliot, 2003, 275)

One day Tom finds out everything about Maggie and Philip and he holds it intolerable because “[...] she was disobeying her father’s strongest feelings [...].” (Eliot, 2003, 276) He is neither interested in her actual feelings and reasons for doing it nor tries to understand her. Maggie’s first worry is whether her father knows about it. She certainly did not want to hurt him or Tom – she feels loyal to her family and is willing to do everything to rectify it. Tom forces Maggie to make a choice – she could either give up seeing Philip or Tom says everything to their father who would be very disappointed. Unlike Dorothea Brook who does not give up her relationships with either Mr Caussabon or Will Ladislaw, Maggie immediately promises to give up any association with Philip. Maggie has great compunction and she regrets her conduct: “it was wrong of me – but I was so lonely – and I was sorry for Philip.” (Eliot, 2003, 278) She again struggles in herself because she still thinks about the pain she causes to Philip and feels that it is unfair from Tom to ask such sacrifice. Tom is confident that he is right and that there are no other motives than “duty of son and a brother.” (Eliot, 2003, 279) Tom goes with Maggie to see Philip and accuses him of taking the advantage of Maggie’s nature. Philip tries to defend himself – he cares about her and loves her more than her brother. After this quarrel Maggie feels disapproval of Tom’s conduct. It is clear that she subordinates to her family, to her bounds and duties, but inside her she does not feel guilty. After her father’s death Tom forgives her partly but she moves away and becomes a teacher.

## **2.2. MAGGIE’S AND STEPHEN’S RELATIONSHIP**

There are two other important characters introduced in the following chapters of this novel, Lucy Dean, Maggie’s cousin, and her suitor Mr Stephen Guest. By coincidence Stephen and Philip are good friends. Stephen talks to Maggie about Philip a lot but he suspects Philip of some love problems caused by an unknown lady. Lucy and Stephen do not expect that this unknown lady is Maggie who is coming to visit Lucy in few days. Lucy and Maggie have a really deep friendship and they love each other very much.

Maggie feels lonely and depressed again, just like before meeting Philip and she is afraid of her future. The visit to Lucy means a new start to her life. She meets new people who are quite charmed by her – “That cousin of Miss Deane’s looked so very well.” (Eliot, 2003, 323)

After a few days Maggie and Stephen meet for the first time. He is charmed by her appearance and even forgets to pay attention to Lucy. It is evident that they are attracted to each other in some way. After this meeting Stephen thinks about Maggie – he does not admit any captivation by her, he does not believe in love at first sight and besides, he is in love and half-engaged to Lucy.

Maggie still thinks more about Philip because she misses him very much. One day Lucy mentions that Philip is coming to visit them. Maggie is surprised but she likes the idea that they could meet again. However she can not meet him because of the promise to her brother. She dares to ask Tom for permission to see Philip, of course not alone but in Lucy’s company. At the same time she assures Tom that she does not think of Philip as a lover. Finally there is the day when Maggie meets Philip. They both recall their feelings – Philip still loves her and she is still afraid of their relationship because of their families and bounds. In a few days Lucy finds out what happened between Maggie and Philip and she is very excited by that. She would like Maggie to marry Philip and be happy with him but she does not know what is happening between Maggie and Stephen.

In the next few days Maggie and Stephen struggle with their feelings – they both forbid themselves to like each other but it is not easy for them. Eliot mentions that Maggie would be certainly happy if she knew that Stephen longs for some sign of interest from her. At the same time Eliot feels sorry for Stephen because he fluctuates between surrendering and resisting to his feelings. (Eliot, 2003, 339)

One day there is a ball and Stephen is left alone with Maggie. They are both nervous and not able to say anything. Then Stephen can not stand the tension between them and kisses Maggie’s hand. Maggie is very upset and humiliated; she feels that they betray Lucy and Philip. Stephen is desperate and begs forgiveness. Stephen urges her to escape with him – Maggie does not know what to do - she loves him too but she is very responsible, she still thinks about Lucy and Philip. Stephen is, on the other hand, quite selfish because he does not care about Lucy or other’s

feelings. Maggie again struggles between her feelings and her bounds. However, as Milner states, Maggie does not want to struggle any more – she wants to surrender to her feelings and temptation. She can choose between Stephen who represents passionate, emotional, true love and Philip who stands for commitment, duties, pity and the past (Milner, 25 - 26). She finally agrees to escape with Stephen but still there are some doubts and remorse. At one moment she is happy but the next moment she sinks into doubts. Stephen blames her that her love for him is not strong enough to be able to give up other people. After the night which they spend together (sleeping separately) Maggie announces to Stephen that she is leaving him and is going home. She tries to remind Stephen that he was in love with Lucy and persuade him that it is not right to be happy while other people suffer. It is clear that they have already harmed some people and they will have to bear the consequences. It is quite cruel from her because she evidently hurts Stephen very much. She gave him some hope of loving him and at the end she turns him down.

When Maggie runs away with Stephen Tom is not afraid of her death but he is rather concerned about the scandal caused by her, which is quite self-centred.

After leaving Stephen Maggie goes home first. But Tom does not want to see her – “you will find no home with me [...] I wash my hands of you for ever. You don't belong to me.” But her mother feels sorry for her: “my child! I'll go with you. You've got a mother” (Eliot, 2003, 392 - 393)

Some people do not understand how Stephen could let Maggie go away from him when he had a chance to be with her, and they also feel some sympathy and respect to Maggie. Many people however have a completely different opinion.

Eliot writes about two possibilities of the end of this affair and different attitudes of society. She writes that if Maggie and Stephen had married people would probably blame Stephen for all. But in this situation, when Maggie comes back alone, people rather blame her; they feel sorry for Stephen and agree with Tom. They also find her previous relationship with Philip as inadmissible and disgusting. Some people would rather if she moved away as they wish to protect their daughters against her bad influence (Eliot, 2003, 397 – 400)

Maggie ignores the attitude of these people. “Her rebel status is confirmed. She flaunted the rules of Society in going off with Stephen; she now totally disregards Society’s views as to her conduct.” (Milner, 33)

She worries about Stephen, Philip and Lucy. She does not want to go away because she wants to redress wrongs done to Lucy and Philip. She must face the consequences of her and Stephen’s conduct.

After some days she receives a letter from Philip. He is sure that she did not want to hurt either him or Lucy, that she struggled with it and thus rejected Stephen. He writes that “There is something stronger in you than your love for him.” (Eliot, 2003, 408) It is probably the same with her love to Philip. He admits that he does not regret anything, that he is glad to have met her, that he loves her and is faithful to her. Maggie is very grateful to him. As Milner states, “Under the stress of her final conflict she tells herself that marriage with Philip would be ‘the best and highest lot for me.’” (Milner, 30)

Maggie also wants to reconcile with Lucy. When Lucy comes to visit her she does not reproach her for anything and does not want Maggie to worry. Lucy thinks that Maggie suffered much more than she did and is much better than she is. Maggie on the other hand advocates Stephen – he struggled with his feelings and Lucy should forgive him.

At the end Maggie receives a letter from Stephen too. He blames her for dashing his hopes and love but he wants her back because he is not able to live without her. Maggie again does not know what to do so she decides to wait.

There is no “good” solution to Maggie’s situation. Eliot, as confirmed in Milner, uses the flood to solve it – Maggie and Tom both get drowned. “The ‘moral veto’ is no *deus ex machina* that finally resolves the conflict.” (Milner, 28)



### **2.3. DOROTHEA'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH MR CASAUBON AND LADISLAW**

The relationship between a man and a woman rejected by society is the central theme in the novel *Middlemarch*. The most important character is Dorothea Brook. In a similar manner as Maggie, Dorothea enters two relationships with men and her family and friends are not very happy about them.

Dorothea is a nineteen-year old young lady, very zealous and passionate, often characterized by expressions like “ardent, fervid, fervent, inflammable [...]” (Milner, 67) “Her pleasure in the jewels and in riding establishes one component of her “Puritan energy,” while her pleasure in renouncing them establishes the other.” (Blake, 290) She is very clever, pleasant and deeply religious. Men are generally charmed by Dorothea. For example Mr James Chettam, one of her suitors and a future husband of her sister Celia, thinks her very pretty and smart. He considers marrying her in spite of the awareness of her superiority. Their marriage is also expected by the people around them.

However Dorothea meets Mr Casaubon one day - “the aged scholar-pedant who could not find a way out of his own intellectual labyrinth.” (Milner, 70) He is not a very good-looking man but evidently well-educated and Dorothea is attracted to him from the first moment. She has never met such a distinguished-looking man with such a great soul. Her sister Celia however has a different opinion of him, she does not like him. She thinks that her sister can not be happy with someone whose manners and opinions differ so largely from hers. Dorothea looks up at Mr Casaubon with a great interest and is really captivated by him. He is willing to explain everything to her patiently and she is glad to be allowed to listen to him. Dorothea hopes that Mr Casaubon will ask her to be his wife one day and she is ready to accept his potential offer. These thoughts fill Dorothea with a sense of gratitude. One day Mr Casaubon really proposes to Dorothea. She feels blessed and happy even though it is not love what she feels for him. When their engagement is brought to light most people are surprised and dismayed.

Celia: "I am so sorry about Dorothea"

Mr. James is very disgusted: "It is horrible! He is no better than a mummy! [...] Mr. Brook ought not to allow it [...]."

Lady Chettam: "[...] he looks like a death's head skinned over for the occasion. Mark my words: in a year from this time that girl will hate him."

(Eliot, 1965, 79 – 117)

Other people around Dorothea also find the marriage with Casaubon uncomfortable, almost revolting, and compare it with a life in a convent. Mr James is the one who is most shocked by this. He blames Mr Brook, the father, for not preventing Dorothea from marrying Casaubon. She is very young so the father should have a say here.

The intended marriage means a great change for Mr Casaubon. He is not really excited about it even though he is quite aware of good qualifications of Dorothea for wifehood. Moreover she wants to help him with his work and it could be very useful for him.

A few weeks after their wedding it is clear that Dorothea is not very happy. She does not know why she is not content with her marriage and she starts blaming herself. She understands that her husband has a lot of work and she wishes to be useful for him but he rather tries to exclude her from it. She had a different image of their marriage before the wedding. Now that they spend more time together she sometimes feels anger and aversion to him. Casaubon probably tries to fulfil everything what is expected from him but nothing more. He does not provide the emotional support which Dorothea expected. As Blake puts it: "Casaubon has not proved a teacher who will help her [...] she is shut out of his work by himself [...]" Dorothea's realization that Casaubon has his own separate centre of self [...]" (Blake, 295 - 297) Dorothea, just like Maggie before she met Philip, lacks the demonstration of love and affection from Casaubon. She wishes to be allowed to express her feelings for him at least. But Eliot admits that Dorothea is too young to have all the qualities of a good wife. According to Dowling the silence between the husband and wife is a very significant feature in the process of alienation of the two people. As in the case of Lydgate and Rosamond, silence is an indication of a covert pain in Dorothea's marriage. It is evident that Casaubon does not pay enough

attention to Dorothea (he does not speak with her) as does not Rosamond to Lydgate. (Dowling, 322 - 332)

Eliot also deals with Casaubon and his feelings about the marriage. She is sorry for him “His experience was of that pitiable kind which shrinks from pity, and fears most of all that it should be known.” (Eliot, 1965, 313) When he recognizes what the marriage is about he settles for behaving properly and within the bounds of social conventions. However for the people around Casaubon and Dorothea this marriage seems unfulfilling and unsatisfactory. For example Celia, Dorothea’s sister, dislikes Mr Casaubon and thinks no woman would find happiness in marrying him and she is certain he does not like Dorothea adequately.

However there are some people who approve their marriage, or at least Dorothea’s conduct. For example Rosamond Vincy, one of local young ladies, thinks that “it is not so very melancholy to be mistress of Lowick Manor (the home of Dorothea and Casaubon) with a husband likely to die soon.” (Eliot, 1965, 237)

At this moment Dorothea meets Will Ladislaw, Mr. Casaubon’s nephew. He is charmed by her and he can not understand why she is with his uncle. At the beginning there is no notion of his love for her. He just wants to be her good friend whom she can talk to about a lot of things. Mr Casaubon does not like him very much and he makes it clear to his wife. Will also dislikes his uncle and Mr Casaubon’s marriage with Dorothea additionally increases his aversion to him. In the next weeks Will visits Dorothea very often and Casaubon starts to be jealous of him and suspicious about their relationship. He even forbids Ladislaw to visit them.

Casaubon considers Will and Dorothea’s meetings threatening and treacherous. She submits to him but there is something irritating in her inner strength. Dorothea is a devoted wife but it is not enough for Casaubon - “[...] her wifely devotedness was like a penitential expiation of unbelieving thoughts [...].” (Eliot, 1965, 455) This tribulation contributes to Casaubon’s illness. Due to this he becomes even more jealous. He suffers from the thought that after his death Dorothea would enjoy her life with Will. He writes a testament according to which Dorothea would lose everything if she married Will.

During the Casaubon and Dorothea’s disputes over Will she becomes fully aware of the despair and loneliness brought by her marriage. At this moment she

stops blaming herself and realizes that it is not her fault. “Now she said bitterly, ‘It is his fault, not mine.’” (Eliot, 1965, 463) She feels a strong desire for someone who would love her and demonstrate it openly.

After a few weeks of fighting the disease Casaubon really dies and the version of his last will again upsets Dorothea’s family. They believe that there is no inclination to Will on her side. But they mistrust Will.

“I say that there was a meaner, more ungentlemanly action than this [...] a positive insult to Dorothea,”

“I don’t believe anything of the sort about Dorothea [...] but I suspect Ladislav. I tell you frankly, I suspect Ladislav.”

(Eliot, 1965, 526 – 532)

Dorothea is shocked by her husband’s testament too and she suddenly feels some sense of resistance to her late husband. She realizes that their marriage was a mistake and that there are not very good memories of it.

When Dorothea becomes a widow some people around her advice her to remarry when the time comes. Many people think that her family should be more concerned with her future marriage to avoid another disastrous marriage. Other people, like Mr. James, maintain the position that there is something wrong with the second marriage of a woman and Dorothea should stay single for the rest of her life. Dorothea herself does not want to marry again. She wants to administer her property on her own.

Dorothea however starts to think about Will after a while. He is not a typical gentleman of Middlemarch; he is quite free-thinking, “he has a ready tongue, a sunny brightness of manner, a careless ‘romantic’ charm [...] Life to him meant love and pleasure [...] Ladislav was notorious in Middlemarch for his unpredictable licence of behaviour [...]” (Milner, 82)

After some weeks Dorothea and Will come to acknowledge their mutual love. Dorothea is very happy when she finds out that Will could love her. She is ready to defend him against all kinds of prejudice. Their relationship is not free of problems though. One day she finds out that Will has probably had some affair with Rosamond Vincy. Dorothea is very disappointed and feels hatred to both of them. Later Rosamond explains to Dorothea that Will is only her friend, although she has

hoped for something more, and that he loves Dorothea very much. Now Dorothea wants to speak to him but she feels a little guilty. “[...] she had a throbbing excitement like an alarm upon her – a sense that she was doing something daringly defiant for his sake.” (Eliot, 1965, 865) Will admits his devotedness and love to her. She is afraid of the relationship with Will; she tries to struggle it and does not want to yield to her feelings, just like Maggie Tulliver. Will knows that it is almost impossible to marry her because of his low status. At the end however he proposes to her regardless of her family and society and Dorothea accepts his love and they get engaged.

Dorothea’s family is really overtaken by surprise. Mr Brook tries to talk her out of doing it but it is useless as she is determined to marry Will. Her whole family condemns her conduct

“[...] Dorothea degrading herself by marrying him [...] delicacy ought to have forbidden her from seeing him again [...] I cannot bear to see her again [...] I think that Dorothea commits a wrong action in marrying Ladislav.”

Celia even goes to visit Dorothea and endeavours to persuade her not to marry Will – “You have disappointed us all so ... Nobody thinks Mr Ladislav a proper husband for you.”

(Eliot, 1965, 874 – 879)

Unlike Maggie, Dorothea does not succumb to the pressure of her family and marries Will. As Milner argues Eliot created the figure of Ladislav to make him worthy of Dorothea’s love (Milner, 83) however Blake writes that “Will is often criticized as inadequate for his impressive wife [...] Will is a slight creature beside her.” (Blake, 306 - 308)

After some years some people still had doubts about Dorothea and her marriage, e.g. James still considers her relationship with Will as a big mistake but Dorothea never regrets her loss of property to marry Will.

“Many who knew her, thought it a pity that so substantive and rare a creature should have been absorbed into the life of another [...] Those who had not seen anything of Dorothea usually observed that she could not have been ‘a nice woman’, else she would not have married either the one or the other.”

(Eliot, 1965, 893 - 896)

## 2.4. CONCLUSION

The fact of rejection of the marriage by society is dealt with very differently by the two main characters of the novels. By making Dorothea find happiness in her second relationship in spite of her family's resistance Eliot expresses her belief that pursuing one's love and happiness is a justifiable act.

Unlike Dorothea, Maggie is not able to stand up against the disapproval of her family and friends. She first rejects Philip and then leaves Stephen too. Even though her succumbing to the pressures of society is not the act of weakness or fear but of a great sense of responsibility, she ends up being desperate and making other people unhappy too. On the other hand Dorothea is fortunate at least in the second marriage with Ladislav although her family disagrees with it.

Both Dorothea and Maggie are ready to face the consequences of their conduct. In both cases these women are brave heroines, each in a different sense. Dorothea risks losing her friends and her family by marrying Ladislav while Maggie sacrifices her love and passion to maintain a good relationship with her family. Her sacrifice however leads to a disaster not only for her but also for all the people involved.

### **3. MARRIAGES ACCEPTED BY SOCIETY**

There are a lot of marriages which are accepted by society and the families. These marriages are anticipated because of some previous agreement set up by the families or just because of the appropriateness of a particular relationship. Such anticipation however does not mean that the couple will be happy even if society approves their marriage. Sometimes the marriage is a result of the man and woman yielding to the pressure of their families and friend. They do it just because they think that it is the right thing or because of the presumed duties to their families and society in general.

It does not mean that all the arranged and accepted marriages must be unhappy. There are a lot of contended couples which are welcomed by the people around them.

For the purpose of the analysis of the marriages welcomed by society there are used three different couples, each taken from one of Eliot's novels. These are Rosamond Vincy and young doctor Tertius Lydgate in *Middlemarch*, Nancy Lammeter and Godfrey Cass in the novel *Silas Marner* and the relationship between Lucy Deane and Stephen Guest in *The Mill on the Floss*. All of these three relationships are anticipated and welcomed but each ends differently.

#### **3.1. THE MARRIAGE OF ROSAMOND AND LYDGATE IN MIDDLEMARCH**

First there is the story of Rosamond and Lydgate. Miss Vincy is one of the most beautiful women in Middlemarch and she is aware of it. She is very proud of herself because of her charm and loveliness. She has also a very poor opinion of the people of Middlemarch, especially about the men who are very often her suitors. People around her are charmed by her and think very high of her: "The best girl in the world! He will be a happy fellow who gets her!" (Eliot, 1965, 196) Her aunt however critically refers to her irresponsibility and vain: "She is so pretty, and has been brought up in such thoughtlessness [...] it is pride in Miss Vincy – I am sure it

is nothing else [...]” (Eliot, 1965, 328) Rosamond dreams about a stranger who will come to Middlemarch and be her lover. She becomes excited when young Lydgate comes to Middlemarch. She wants to meet him and seduce him.

One day she comes to visit her relatives and meets Lydgate there and becomes immediately attracted to him. Her friend thinks that Lydgate behaves arrogantly and coldly but Rosamond is captivated by these very properties. “I rather like a haughty manner. I cannot endure a rattling young man.” (Eliot, 1965, 142) Here she refers to her Middlemarch suitors. She is also charmed by other qualities of Lydgate. She soon notices that all people always listen to him carefully and he is polite to them. Rosamond is confident that it is the love at first sight not only on her side. She is sure that Lydgate is also in love with her and that this is a new start for some romantic adventure and possible future with this stranger. However Eliot lets us see what Lydgate thinks. He actually does not think about a marriage with any woman. He is enchanted by Rosamond’s beauty but

“[...] he did not in the least suppose that he had lost his balance and fallen in love but he had said of that particular woman, ‘She is grace itself; she is perfectly lovely and accomplished. That is what a woman ought to be [...].’”

(Eliot, 1965, 121)

He does not ignore Rosamond’s feelings though because he is really captivated by her personality and that is why he is very nice to her too. By this conduct he makes some people, especially Rosamond’s suitors, very angry and evokes hatred towards himself. He does not consider the consequence of his behaviour – Rosamond thinks about him as her suitor and her future husband. It is not clear whether she is really in love with him, she rather thinks about his ancestry and his feelings to her. As Eliot writes, it is not surprising that she thinks that Lydgate could love her because she is used to be an object of love of many young men. (Eliot, 1965, 197)

In the next few weeks they meet very often and Rosamond seems very cheerful and happy. Their relationship is based rather on a flirt than on love, but for Rosamond it is clear enough sign of inclination. On the other hand, for Lydgate it is still nothing important and serious. “To Rosamond it seemed as if she and Lydgate



were as good as engaged. ... Lydgate had the counter idea of remaining engaged [...].” (Eliot, 1965, 304 – 305)

Eliot again aims to show the situation from different perspectives through the views of different people on the seriousness of the relationship. Some friends believe in their engagement while others do not consider their relationship important. Rosamond’s aunt decides to go and talk to Rosamond about Lydgate because of these speculations. She wants to know whether Lydgate asked Rosamond to marry him and tries to talk her out of thinking about him as a lover. Rosamond feels very hurt and humiliated because she realizes that Lydgate has never expressed his feelings to her. At this time Lydgate also realizes that it is not right to inspire Rosamond’s hope and his conduct changes accordingly. He does not visit her so often, he is reserved and restrained to her and she is very unhappy about his behaviour.

One day Lydgate visits her and is overwhelmed by unexpected feelings. He suddenly looks at Rosamond differently. “[...] an idea had thrilled through the recesses within him which had a miraculous effect in raising the power of passionate love [...].” (Eliot, 1965, 335) Driven by these feelings he kisses her and they finally become engaged. This engagement is generally expected but there are some opinions against this marriage. It is mainly Rosamond’s father who disagrees with it. Essentially he has nothing against their relationship, he respects Lydgate quite a lot but he rejects their marriage because of Lydgate’s lack of money. Also some other people are surprised by their engagement but in general they accept it. Rosamond worries about her father’s attitude to her engagement but she soon forgets these worries because she is so excited about her future marriage. It is evident that Rosamond and Lydgate are satisfied and enjoying their relationship. “Rosamond thought that no none could be more in love than she was; and Lydgate thought that after all his wild mistakes and absurd credulity, he had found perfect womanhood [...].” (Eliot, 1965, 387)

Their marriage is not free of troubles. Rosamond is accustomed to the high standard of the life and Lydgate does not earn enough money. There is also another problem – Rosamond does not submit to her husband. She does not respect his wishes and advice. Thanks to her stubbornness and defiance she miscarries but

Lydgate does not reproach her for it. It is her obstinacy and unwillingness to conform to Lydgate what brings the biggest trouble in their marriage and Lydgate is shocked by it. This is also evident from Eliot's comments on it: "There was gathering within him an amazed sense of his powerlessness over Rosamond [...] she believed in her own opinion more that she did in his [...] affection did not make her compliant [...]." (Eliot, 1965, 631)

As Milner states it, Rosamond realizes that her marriage with Lydgate is not so wonderful as she had imagined before the wedding. She is disappointed and frightened and "her dismay that marriage is not bringing the anticipated social fruit is deepened." (Milner, 76 -77)

Lydgate is sure that she loves him and he very often makes concessions to fulfil her wishes. Due to this he becomes more and more indebted which is evident for lots of people but not for Rosamond. Their debts are caused mainly by the Rosamond's lifestyle – she throws parties very often, she does not settle for any plainer meals, furniture or her dresses – and Lydgate tries to satisfy her. He thinks it is not only his problem but it is their mutual problem. As they are a husband and wife they should share good and bad times and try to solve their problems together. He decides to say everything to his wife and asks her to sell some of their furniture. He is amazed by her reaction. "What can I do, Tertius? [...] Rosamond's thin utterance threw into the words: 'What can I do!' as much neutrality as they could hold." (Eliot, 1965, 640) Unlike Nancy Lammeter in *Silas Marner*, Rosamond does not stand up for her husband in a disagreeable situation. Also as Milner writes, she feels degraded and she wants to move to her father's home (Milner, 77) which she considers as the best solution. Lydgate gets really frustrated because he anticipates some sympathy from her. At the same time he is evidently very sorry about her because she suffers. It is obvious that she worries mainly about her comfort and the judgement of society. Her own luxury is more important for her, as Milner states: "her tenacious will to preserve a way of life based on conventional prescriptions of comfort and decorum [...]." (Milner, 77) At this moment, when Rosamond does not admit any participation in their debts, Lydgate grows away from her.

People around them do not notice anything wrong in their marriage. Most of them think that Rosamond is a devoted wife and their marriage is certainly

contented. Some attentive observers however notice that Lydgate has some problems. Mr Vincy does not speak to him much and Rosamond does not care about her husband properly. As Blake states it, Eliot tries to excuse Rosamond: “Eliot’s bid for our sympathy with Rosamond depends less on our feeling that she is wronged than on our understanding that the wrong she does proceeds from her position as a woman.” (Blake, 302) These problems further deepen their alienation. Lydgate expects that their mutual love could help overcome this trouble but he gradually loses his hope. He urges Rosamond to be with him, to help him, to give up her standard and lower her requirements. He wants her to love him in this hard moment. Seemingly she submits to his demand but inside she is far away from him. Lydgate’s worst worry fulfils – he can see that she does not love him any more and that she is not loyal to him.

“In marriage, the certainty, ‘She will never love me much’, is easier to bear than the fear, ‘I shall love her no more.’ [...] his inward effort was entirely to excuse her [...]” and Rosamond does not mind his attempts to express his ‘love’ to her but she is not able to reciprocate it – “[...] she welcomed the signs that her husband loved her and was under control. But this was something quite distant from loving him.

(Eliot, 1965, 702)

As Dowling puts it “Lydgate’s growing dread of Rosamond’s quiet elusive obstinacy is similar in kind to Dorothea’s nightmare of a life in which every energy was arrested by dread [...]” (Dowling, 331) She is not willing to submit to him and she wants to do what is right according to her intuition.

One day Lydgate cannot bear the stress and his wife’s conduct and he is quite rude to Rosamond. She starts to hate him, feels aversion against him and realizes that their marriage is not really happy.

Rosamond’s father thinks that it would be better for them to go away from Middlemarch. At the same time he says that he does not blame Lydgate. But Rosamond does not want to hear it.

At this moment Lydgate meets Dorothea Brook and she believes that he is innocent and that he is not the one to blame for their problems. She stands by Lydgate and wants to talk to Rosamond about him to convince her of Lydgate’s high

morals. Dorothea sees Rosamond's loneliness and understands it. Dorothea is also determined to lend some money to Lydgate to pay his debts. In a few days Dorothea really visits Rosamond and speaks about Lydgate very nicely. "[...] the injustice that has been shown towards Mr Lydgate [...] You will like to know that your husband has warm friends, who have not left off believing in his high character?" (Eliot, 1965, 852) This meeting is very crucial in the change of Rosamond's mind. She realizes that Lydgate is a really good husband. Even though she never admits her share in the troublesome situation she changes her ways and the couple reconciles. However, as comes clear from Eliot's comment on their marriage in a few years time:

"She simply continued to be mild in her temper, inflexible in her judgement, disposed to admonish her husband, and able to frustrate him by stratagem. As the years went on he opposed her less and less, whence Rosamond concluded that he had learned the value of her opinion [...]."

(Eliot, 1965, 893)

### **3.2. NANCY LAMMETER AND GODFREY CASS IN SILAS MARNER**

The second expected marriage is the one between Nancy Lammeter and Godfrey Cass presented in the novel *Silas Marner*. "[...] Godfrey is the weak-willed and reticently hypocritical son [...] Nancy Lammeter is the good but pedantic wife [...]" (Wiesenfarth, 229) There are two principal problems in this relationship. The first one is Godfrey's secret marriage with Molly. The second problem is Godfrey's admission to an illegitimate daughter.

Nancy and Godfrey are from the same social class and their relationship is generally known. When they are introduced in the story for the first time some coldness from Nancy is evident. It is related to Godfrey's conduct at some time in the past – he disappeared for some time and nobody knew where he was. From Eliot's remark it is clear that during this time he secretly married a very poor woman Molly (Eliot, 1967, 121 - 130). This marriage could be dealt with in the previous chapter where the marriages rejected by society were analysed. This marriage was not accepted because of different social classes and even Godfrey realizes that it was a mistake. In any case he is not willing to confess the marriage with her. Wiesenfarth

also criticises Godfrey “[...] he shirks duty, marries stupidly, and casts off wife and child. At the same time he courts Nancy, who will not marry irresponsible man. Godfrey refuses to be manly, drinks, [...]” (Wiesenfarth, 231)

When he comes back he tries to gain Nancy’s love and trust but she is not sure about his feelings to her. Nancy is admired by all people, especially men, around her. On a ball, hosted in Cass’s house, everybody is charmed by her.

“[...] when I look at Miss Nancy here, I begin to think the lasses keep up their quality [...] there’s nobody ‘ud think as anybody could be so pretty [...]” and they also speak highly about Godfrey – “I should like you to pick me out a finer-limbed young fellow nor Master Godfrey [...].”

(Eliot, 1967, 153 - 160)

People of course assume their future marriage but nobody understands Godfrey’s recent disappearance.

During this ball Godfrey has a chance to speak to Nancy. He wants to persuade her that he learnt his lesson and is ready to be a better person. He wants to remedy his deeds from the past and behave according to Nancy’s wishes. She rejects his offer and gives a balance impression but she is very nervous inside her and it is evident that she is not indifferent to him.

At the same time when Godfrey and Nancy are on the ball, Molly with her and Godfrey’s daughter is trying to find him. Unfortunately it is winter and Molly, who is a drug-addict, is not able to continue in her journey and dies. When Godfrey learns that there is a woman who is probably dead, he runs quickly to the place. He is afraid of the disclosure of his secret marriage. He struggles with himself between morality and awareness of the chance to be free. “Is she dead? If she is, I may marry Nancy; and then I shall be a good fellow in the future.” This vision is clouded by the other possibility – “She may live, and then it’s all up with me.” (Eliot, 1967, 174) The next moments will dramatically affect his future – if she survives it will be the end of his relationship with Nancy. And there are of course his duties to their daughter. He feels that he should fulfil his duties to the child but he is too cowardly to do it and give up Nancy. When he sees his daughter he has mixed feelings – he is happy on the one hand but on the other one he feels some kind of regret because his

daughter does not pay any attention to him. Then it is confirmed that Molly is dead and a weaver, Silas Marner, will take care of Godfrey's daughter Eppie.

As Milner states it, Godfrey is satisfied: “[...] Cass's moral deception and defeat. The death of Godfrey's first wife (long willed by him) ironically brings 'salvation' to himself (he can marry Nancy Lammeter.)” (Milner, 42)

Godfrey decides to provide all necessities for his daughter but he will never confess to paternity. Godfrey is also confident that he will never say anything about it to Nancy.

In the next chapter Nancy and Godfrey are depicted after some years; they are a married couple now. Nancy is unhappy because she is not able to have a child. She is not frustrated only because of it but also because of the evident discontent of her husband – “I am contented with the blessings we have, if he could be contented,” she adds “He's the best of husbands.” As Eliot writes, one might expect that Nancy should be more unhappy because of her childlessness but she copes with it very bravely. (Eliot, 1967, 212 - 215) It is evident that she does not see their marriage as a mistake or anything of that kind – she does not regret it. She is not so submissive as it may seem. Godfrey wants to adopt a child but she is against it and she resists to her husband's wish. Godfrey completely accepts her decision and never blames her from anything. Nancy has some remorse because of her rejection of adoption so she tries to be as good a wife for Godfrey as possible.

He is still in love with her very much. It is impossible for him to confess to Eppie but “[...] his conscience, never thoroughly easy about Eppie, now gave his childless home the aspect of retribution [...].” (Eliot, 1967, 220) He feels guilty.

However after short time some events force Godfrey to plead guilty. He admits everything to Nancy, he begs her forgiveness and at the same time he admits he is not able to live without her. Nancy does not feel angry: “The wrong to me is but little, Godfrey: you've made it up to me – you've been good to me for fifteen years.” (Eliot, 1967, 225) She wishes he had confessed it much earlier to make it possible for them to take care of Eppie and bring her up as their child. When Godfrey hears Nancy's opinion he wants to take Eppie now and tend her so they decide to go to Silas Marner and ask him for Godfrey's daughter. Godfrey and Nancy are very nervous when they come there. They express their offer and are sure

that it will be accepted. “ [...] such feeling the Casses have no understanding when they come to seek Eppie and when they blame Silas for not immediately relinquishing her [...].” (Wiesenfarth, 231) Eppie disillusions them – she rejects their suggestion. Nancy understands her but at the same time she feels sorry for her husband. Godfrey is upset – Eppie spoils his effort of atonement and the effort to remedy his mistake. Nancy also tries to talk Eppie into living with them but Eppie is unyielding and she again rejects their offer. Godfrey and Nancy leave alone.

During their journey home they speak about their marriage. Both of them are satisfied by it – Godfrey is sorry about his unfavourable conduct to Nancy but now he is a better man and is glad to be her husband. But she does not feel any negative feelings to him – unlike Rosamond Vincy, she completely stands up for her husband in good and bad.

### **3.3. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LUCY AND STEPHEN**

In the novel *The Mill on the Floss* there is a description of another welcomed relationship, between Lucy Dean and Stephen Guest. This man and woman are not engaged yet but nobody doubts their future marriage. Lucy and Stephen are in the stage when they are blissful and happy to see each other. Lucy is happier in the relationship with Stephen than he is. She is impressed by him and by his love to her. From Stephen’s thoughts it is evident that on his side there is not such passion and unconditional love as we can see at Lucy. Stephen is not so excited about her; he is more ‘practical’.

“A man likes his wife to be pretty: well, Lucy was pretty, but not to a maddening extent. A man likes his wife to be accomplished, gentle, affectionate, and not stupid; and Lucy had all these qualifications. Stephen was surprised to find himself in love with her [...]”  
(Eliot, 2003, 299)

The situation changes when Lucy’s cousin Maggie comes. Stephen is immediately captured by her. At the beginning he still loves Lucy and tries to struggle with his feelings to Maggie. In the public he is gallant and solicitous to

Lucy who does not have a slightest idea about Maggie and Stephen's relationship and is absolutely not jealous of Maggie. Although Stephen really tries not to yield to his feelings to Maggie, at the end they escape together.

Lucy is very careworn and disappointed and she becomes ill. Despite everything she does not feel anger either to Maggie or to Stephen. She understands and forgives them both.

### **3.4. CONCLUSION**

There are three different relationships of men and women in this chapter. All of these are in some way accepted or expected by society. Although there are not so obvious obstacles to these relationships, they are not all happy and satisfactory. Lucy and Stephen's relationship does not last a long time because of the third person who steps into their relationship. A third person also influences the marriage of Nancy and Godfrey – it is Godfrey's first wife and then also his illegitimate daughter. Problems in Rosamond and Lydgate's marriage are caused mainly by them. Two of these three couples succeed in doing away with their problems, the relationship between Lucy and Stephen does not end well.

Eliot describes different types of wives and the ways their manners affect the relationships. Rosamond is not able to submit to her husband. She turns her back on him and does not help him very much in difficult situations. In contrary to this, Nancy stands by her husband also in bad times. Even though he confesses to his secret marriage and the daughter, Nancy does not blame him for anything. She is not inferior to him but she is just loyal to her husband.



## CONCLUSION

The aim of this work is to show how nineteenth century relationships were influenced by Victorian morality. The opinion about relationships between men and women and about a marriage in the nineteenth century was quite different than it is today. There were diverse traditions, customs and a completely different conception of marriage. Men and women were not equal as they are today. In a marriage a husband was more powerful and superior to his wife. There was no law to protect woman's interests and rights. A woman was supposed to be loyal to her husband, to be a decent wife and care about children and her husband's comfort. A married woman was seen as a possession of her husband and she was not allowed to act independently. She could not have any money or property and she even had no legitimate claim to her children. There came some changes concerning the position of women in the second half of the nineteenth century. Thanks to these acts women's conditions got better. A divorce was permitted for the first time and after a divorce a woman became single again. It is clear that it was not easy and painless to be a woman in the nineteenth century.

In her work George Eliot was influenced not only by Victorian society but also by her own life experience. She, as a woman, was also determined by contemporary morality and prejudice. The fact that her only chance to write and publish her work was to write under male pseudonym is a demonstrable example of discrimination of women in the nineteenth century. Her social life was dramatically limited when she fell in love with a married man. They decided to live together even though society disagreed with it and condemned them for it. This experience also had a great effect on her writing and she used the motive of a denounced relationship in her novels.

I analysed seven relationships between men and women in this work, both happy and unhappy. There are relationships, such as between Maggie and Philip or Maggie and Stephen, which are condemned to disaster because of some prejudices, presumed moral duties or disagreements between the people around them. The failure of other relationships is caused by the couple themselves, by their fallacious picture of a marriage and their unfulfilled expectations, as is evident in the case of Rosamond and Lydgate's or Dorothea and Casaubon's marriage.

The position of a woman in these marriages is very different too. Some women, such as Dorothea and Nancy, are subordinate and loyal to their husbands. They try to stick to them even in difficult situations. It is not because they are not clever enough to oppose their husbands. In Dorothea and Casaubon's marriage she stands by her husband not because of some great love but because she respects him and thinks highly of him, at least at the beginning of their marriage. She married him and their marriage means that she should be loyal to him. Nancy respects Godfrey because of her love for him and because he is a good husband to her. Only in one case she is quite unyielding – she does not want to adopt a child even though it is her husband's wish. Unlike Rosamond, Nancy stands by Godfrey even in the time when his previous secret marriage and his illegitimate daughter are revealed.

Another type of a woman, represented by Rosamond or Maggie, is not so willing to conform to the men's wishes. Each of them however is resistant in a different way and for different reasons. Rosamond is quite stubborn by nature. She does not find her marriage with Lydgate as happy as she expected and she acts according to her own intuition. She certainly does not want to hurt Lydgate or to cause problems to him but she acts of her own will and disrespects his advice. She resists to fulfil Lydgate's wishes mainly because of her own pride and vanity. Maggie also does not comply with Phillip and Stephen's wishes. Both Phillip and Stephen want her to be with them but she feels bigger responsibility to her family and society. The main reason for not subordination to her suitor's wishes is her submission to social conventions and the sense of duty, not the lack of love or respect.

It is evident that opinions of society, of their families and friends hardly influence the happiness and contentment of a couple. There are successful marriages which are never accepted by society such as Dorothea and Ladislav's marriage. Their relationship developed for a long time and it was certainly not easy but, compared to her marriage with Casaubon, the relationship with Ladislav was based on true love and the equal position of the couple.

The marriages welcomed and anticipated by society are not free of problems either, as in the case of Rosamond and Lydgate. First it was Rosamond who loved

Lydgate more. During their marriage the situation changed. Rosamond grows away from Lydgate and in problem times it is him who relies on their mutual love.

However there are some cases when people around the couple have the right judgement about the unsuitability of the relationship, as is evident in the case of Dorothea and Mr Casaubon. In this case Dorothea's family warns her against the marriage with Casaubon because of different age and personalities. Dorothea marries Casaubon regardless the family advice and after his death she regrets her decision.

It is evident from the analysis of these three novels that the opinion of society influences the decision of a woman whether or not to marry a man. However the happiness and successfulness of a particular marriage is determined by the personality of the man and the woman, their expectations, feelings and morality rather than by the people around the couple.

## RESUMÉ

Téma bakalářské práce je Manželské vztahy v díle George Eliot. Konkrétně jde o analýzu třech románů od této autorky – *Silas Marner*, *The Mill on the Floss* a *Middlemarch*. V jednotlivých kapitolách se rozebírají nejenom manželské a nemanželské vztahy mezi mužem a ženou, ale také postavení a vliv ženy v takovém vztahu. Tato práce porovnává daná manželství z hlediska morálky a míry konvenčnosti. Analýza těchto třech románů je zaměřená na to, jak rodiny, přátelé a celá společnost nahlíží na daná manželství. Jestli určitý vztah podporují a akceptují nebo nejsou naopak schopni přijmout dané manželství a veřejně ho odsuzují. Názory společnost někdy podstatně ovlivňují rozhodnutí a průběh manželství na druhé straně ve vybraných románech jsou i taková manželství, která nehledí na názory a postoje svých rodin i celé společnosti. Ve všech třech románech Eliot také líčí i pocity a myšlenky samotných manželů – jak se oni sami cítí v manželství, co jim vadí na svém protějšku, jestli jsou ve vztahu šťastní nebo jak vnímají názory okolí. Většinou je popsán také vnitřní boj, který svádí hlavní představitelky románů, když se snaží jednat správně podle svého svědomí a morálky a nechtějí podlehnout svým citům, touhám a pokušení. Velmi často je v těchto románech také uveden názor samotné autorky, George Eliot o jednotlivých vztazích mezi mužem a ženou. To napomáhá k lepšímu pochopení autorčiných představ o daných postavách. Je jasně uvedené, co se odehrává v myslích různých lidí a je proto lépe srozumitelné chování jednotlivých osob. Všechny tyto postoje a stanoviska jsou shrnuty a analyzovány v této práci.

Tato práce má celkem tři kapitoly. Po krátkém úvodu je první kapitola, která se zabývá autorkou George Eliot a také charakteristikou společnosti ve Viktoriánské Anglii. Druhá kapitola je rozdělena na tři podkapitoly a zabývá se manželstvími a vztahy, které jsou pro společnost nepřijatelné a lidé je proto odsuzují. Pro tuto kapitolu byly použity dva ze tří románů a to *The Mill on the Floss* a *Middlemarch*. Rozebírají se zde čtyři vztahy, které se ale týkají dvou hlavních hrdinek. V románu *The Mill on the Floss* se jedná o vztah mezi Maggie Tulliver a Phillipem Wakem a také o její vztah se Stephenem Guestem. V románu *Middlemarch* jde o vztahy Dorothee Brook s panem Casaubonem a Willem Ladislawem. Všechny tyto vztahy

jsou společností odmítané a každá z těchto dvou ženských hrdinek se zachová jinak. Třetí kapitola má také tři podkapitoly a jsou v ní popsána manželství, která jsou společností akceptovaná, v některých případech přímo očekávaná. V této kapitole jsou analyzované všechny tři vztahy mezi mužem a ženou, každý z jednoho vybraného románu. Nejdříve je popsán vztah mezi Rosamondou a mladým doktorem Lydgatem z románu *Middlemarch*, následuje manželství Nancy Lammeter a Godfreyoho Casse, které je vylíčeno v románu *Silas Marner* a poslední je krátká analýza vztahu z románu *The Mill on the Floss* a to mezi Lucy Dean a Stephenem Guestem. Na závěr této práce je krátký závěr, kde jsou shrnuté hlavní myšlenky a zjištění této práce.

V první kapitole je nejdříve stručně popsán život a práce George Eliot. Žila v devatenáctém století a její pravé jméno bylo Mary Ann Evans. V její době nebylo běžné, aby žena vydala nějakou knihu, proto Mary Ann začala používat svůj pseudonym. Její romány byly hodně ovlivněné jejím vlastními zkušenostmi a hlavně vztahem s ženatým mužem Georgem Henrym Lewesem. Kvůli tomuto vztahu byli oba odsuzováni lidmi kolem sebe a Eliot byla velmi často izolovaná od společnosti. Jak ale sama potvrdovala, nikdy svého vztahu s Lewesem nelitovala. Velmi často se také ztotožňovala se svými hrdinkami. Byla velmi inteligentní žena, která vyčnívala nad ostatní viktoriánské spisovatele a stala se symbolem pro spoustu lidí, kterými společnost opovrhovala, stejně jako opovrhovala jí. Ve druhé části této kapitoly je charakterizována Anglie devatenáctého století. Tomuto období se říká Viktoriánská Anglie podle královny Viktorie, která v této době vládla. Bylo to období velkého rozmachu Anglie v oblasti vědy, techniky a kultury. Během devatenáctého století se událo mnoho změn, které ovlivnily názory a myšlení tehdejších lidí. S touto dobou je také spojován pojem viktoriánská morálka. Týká se především vztahů mezi mužem a ženou a také postavení ženy ve společnosti. Na jednu stranu politici prosazovali ctnostný způsob života bez hazardních her, pití a sexu na straně druhé nebylo tajemstvím, že téměř každý muž z vyšších vrstev si užívá s milenkami. Problémy týkající se manželství a sexu byly považovány za velmi soukromé záležitosti, které by se neměly rozebírat na veřejnosti. Viktoriánská Anglie byla dobou středních vrstev. Pro ženy z této vrstvy byl samozřejmě jakýkoliv bližší předmanželský vztah s mužem tabu. Postavení ženy v Anglii v devatenáctém století se výrazně liší od

pozice ženy v dnešní době. Žena v tomto období neměla téměř žádná práva, neexistovaly zákony, které by chránily její majetek, ani neměla nárok na své děti. Předpokládalo se, že se žena naučí pouze takové věci, které bude potřebovat pro manželství a výchovu dětí, což bylo jejím hlavním úkolem. Musela se ve všem zcela podřizovat svému manželovi, nemohla vlastnit, zdědit ani vydělat žádné peníze. Názory na pozici ženy ve společnosti se změnily až ve druhé polovině devatenáctého století. V padesátých letech byl například poprvé povolen rozvod a mohla o něj požádat i žena, která se po potom stala opět svobodnou ženou. Pro ženu byl ale stále proces rozvodu velmi komplikovaný a stále upřednostňoval zájmy manžela. Být ženou v devatenáctém století bylo opravdu komplikované, protože neexistoval téměř žádný zákon, který by ženy chránil nebo jim dal alespoň nějaká práva.

Druhá kapitola se zabývá manželstvími, která společnost odmítá a odsuzuje. Lidé odmítali některé vztahy mezi mužem a ženou z různých důvodů, například kvůli různým sociálním vrstvám odkud muž a žena pocházeli. Dalšími důvody byly například různé rodinné rozepře, předsudky nebo nelichotivá minulost jednoho z potencionálních manželů. Ve většině případů popsanych v této kapitole se jedná spíše o kombinaci různých důvodů pro nepřijetí a odsouzení daného manželství. V každém románu použitém pro analýzu je také vidět jak rozdílně hlavní postavy reagují na mínění svých rodin a celé společnosti a jak je tyto názory ovlivňují v jejich rozhodování. Některé páry se o názor ostatních lidí nezajímají a dělají, co sami uznají za vhodné, některé páry naopak podlehnou tlaku společnosti. V románech, které jsou v této kapitole analyzovány, je to většinou žena kdo se poddá přání a názoru své rodiny, přátel a celé společnosti a odmítne vztah s často milovaným mužem.

V této kapitole je nejdříve popsán vztah mezi Maggie Tulliver a Philipem Wakem. Maggie má velmi blízký vztah se svým bratrem Tomem a cítí velkou odpovědnost ke své rodině. Její vztah s Philipem je ovlivněný sporem, který mezi sebou vedou jejich otcové. Maggie a Philip jsou uchvázeni jeden druhým už při prvním setkání jako děti, ale zpočátku je jejich vztah spíše přátelský, protože oba dva touží po spřízněné duši. Když se po několika letech potkají, oba dva jsou rádi, že se vidí. Philip Maggie přemlouvá, aby se pravidelně vídali, ale ona se bojí, co by na to řekl její otec a bratr. Bojuje sama se sebou – chce se stýkat s Philipem a povídat si

s ním, zároveň ale cítí povinnosti ke své rodině a nechce ji zklamat. V této situaci je vidět, že Maggie je více oddaná své rodině než Philips, protože on vůbec nepřemýšlí, jaké následky by mohl jejich tajný vztah mít. Po dlouhém přemlouvání ji Philip nakonec přemluví k tajným schůzkám. Ani v této chvíli ještě není jeden do druhého zamilovaný. Během doby kdy se scházejí, má Maggie stále výčitky svědomí z toho, že podvádí svého otce a bratra, ale zároveň se vždycky těší na setkání s Philipem, protože v ní znovu probudil chuť k životu. Jednoho dne vyjde najevo, že Philip je do Maggie zamilovaný. Ona je velmi překvapená, protože nikdy nepomyslela, že by se z nich mohli stát milenci. Maggie je Philipa líto, ale zakáže mu o takových věcech mluvit, protože nechce zranit svého otce. O pár dní později její bratr Tom zjistí všechno o jejich tajných schůzkách s Philipem. Maggie je rozrušená a chce odčinit všechno, čeho se na své rodině dopustila. Tom ji dá na výběr ze dvou možností – hned ukončí své přátelství s Philipem nebo se to všechno dozví její otec a bude velmi zklamaný. Maggie se okamžitě zřekne vztahu s Phillipem, ale cítí se provinile, protože ví, že Phillipovi hodně ublíží. Sice se poddá svým povinnostem a poutům ke své rodině, ale uvnitř cítí, že je nevinná a nic špatného neudělala.

V této kapitole je dále popisován vztah Maggie se Stephenem Guestem. Tento vztah je komplikovaný, protože Stephen je snoubenec její sestřence Lucy. Zároveň se Stephen přátelí s Phillipem, kterého Maggie neviděla už delší dobu. Když se Stephen poprvé setká s Maggie, je velmi okouzlený jejím vzhledem a stále ji pozoruje. Po tomto setkání si Stephen nechce přiznat žádnou náklonnost k Maggie, hlavně z důvodu jeho lásky k Lucy. Maggie je také oslněná Stephenem, ale stále spíše myslí na Philipa, který ji velmi chybí. V několika následujících dnech si Maggie i Stephen začnou připouštět určitou sympatii k tomu druhému. Oba se snaží bojovat s jejich pocity hlavně kvůli Lucy a Phillipovi, který se náhle objevil. Jednoho dne se koná ples, kde Maggie a Stephen zůstanou chvíli sami. Stephen nevydrží a políbí Maggie ruku, ta se cítí ponížená a zlobí se na něj. On chce, aby s ním Maggie utekla – ona opět bojuje se svými city. Na jedné straně Stephena miluje na straně stále myslí na Lucy a Phillipa a jak by jim ublížila. Stephen se vůbec nestará o city druhých a žádá ji, aby ho milovala a žila s ním. Maggie po nějaké době souhlasí a odhodlá se utéct s ním – nechce už dále bojovat, ale

podlehnout svým citům a touhám. Stále má ale výčitky svědomí vůči své rodině a přátelům. Nakonec Maggie Stephenovi oznámí, že se vrací zpátky domů. Poté co se dostane domů, ji její bratr odmítne pustit domů a zřekne se jí. Její matka s ní naopak soucítí a odejde s ní. Většina lidí ji odsuzuje a považují za nejlepší řešení, kdyby odjela z města. Maggie se ale chce setkat s Phillipem a Lucy a odčinit své jednání. Lucy ji jednoho dne opravdu navštíví a překvapivě ji z ničeho nevinní. Naopak ji lituje, protože pro ni muselo být opravdu těžké opustit Stephena. Jednoho dne také Maggie dostane dopis od Phillipa. Ani on ji z ničeho neobviňuje, je si jistý, že ona nikomu nechtěla ublížit. Zároveň ji ujišťuje, že ji miluje a je jí věrný. Nakonec Maggie přijde i dopis od Stephena. Viní ji, že ho opustila, ale zároveň ji prosí, aby se k němu vrátila. Ona neví co má dělat proto se rozhodne čekat. Je jasné, že tato situace nemá rozumné řešení a Eliot se nakonec uchýlí k různému řešení – Maggie se společně se svým bratrem Tomem utopí při povodni.

V poslední části druhé kapitoly se řeší vztahy Dorothey Brook nejdříve s Casaubonem a později s jeho synovcem Willem Ladislawem. Její rodina a přátelé nesouhlasí se sňatkem s Casaubonem protože on je proti ní příliš starý a má podle nich určitě jiné zájmy než ona. Dorothea je jím ale naprosto okouzlená, protože je velmi chytrý a ona mu chce pomáhat s jeho prací. Casaubon je rád, že bude mít takovou manželku jako je Dorothea, ale je jasné, že do ní není zamilovaný. Krátce po svatbě je jasné, že Dorothea je v manželství spíše nešťastná – chybí jí zájem a jakékoliv projevy lásky či náklonnosti. Nechápe co je špatně a tak začne obviňovat sama sebe. Casaubon necítí, že by dělal něco nesprávně – snaží se dělat všechno co se od něho jako manžela očekává, ale nic víc. Jejich vztah se dostane do krize, když přijede Casaubonův synovec Will Ladislaw. Will svého strýce nemá moc rád a také odsuzuje jeho manželství s Dorotheou. Během následujících týdnů Will velmi často Dorotheu navštěvuje a Casaubon začne žárlit. Casaubon je velmi nemocný a nesnese pomyslení, že až umře, tak si jeho žena bude užívat života a jeho majetku společně s Willem. Napíše proto závěť, podle které Dorothea nedostane nic v případě, že se vdá za jeho synovce. Poté co zemře, tato závěť velmi rozčílí její rodinu i Dorotheu samotnou. Nikdo ji ze vztahu s Willem nevinní, spíše nevěří Willovi. Dorothea se nejdřív už nechce znovu vdávat, ale po nějakém čase začne myslet na Willa. Je velmi šťastná, když si představí, že by ji mohl také milovat. Zároveň se ale vztahu



s ním bojí a proto zpočátku se svými city bojuje, jako Maggie Tulliver. Will nejdříve také nedoufá v jejich manželství kvůli jeho nízkému postavení, ale přiznává, že ji miluje a chtěl by s ní žít. Nakonec Dorothea, na rozdíl od Maggie, podlehně svým citům a s Willem se zasnoubí i přes nesouhlas své rodiny. Ta ji odsuzuje a dokonce i její sestra se s ní nemůže vídat. Maggie ale svého rozhodnutí nelituje a je jasné, že s Willem je šťastná.

Ve třetí kapitole této práce jsou popisovány manželství a vztahy mezi mužem a ženou, které společností přijaté a schvalované. Tato manželství mohou být očekávaná například kvůli dřívější dohodě rodin nebo prostě jenom kvůli výhodnosti daného sňatku. I když společnost některé manželství přijme a podporuje ho, neznamena to, že bude tento vztah šťastný. Některé páry podlehnou tlaku okolí a vezmou jen proto, že si myslí, že je to správné a že tím potěší i svou rodinu. Ale je zde i hodně manželství, která jsou úspěšná a jsou přijatá společností. Pro tuto kapitolu jsou použité všechny vybrané romány.

V první části této kapitoly je analyzován vztah Rosamondy Vincy a mladého doktora Lydgata. Rosamonda je velmi atraktivní mladá slečna a kvůli tomu je velmi pyšná a očekává nápadníka, který by jí byl hoden. Jednoho dne do města přijede Lydgate, Rosamonda je jím uchvácená a je si jistá, že je to láska na první pohled. Začne přemýšlet o jejich budoucím manželství a je díky tomu velmi šťastná. Lydgate ale v žádném případě na manželství s žádnou dívkou nepomýšlí. Vztah s Rosamondou považuje spíše za flirt a nepochybuje o tom, že Rosamonda to cítí stejně. Ve společnosti Lydgate věnuje svou pozornost převážně Rosamondě a proto si lidé kolem nich myslí, že se určitě zasnoubí, pokud už tak tajně neučinili. Není jisté, zda je do něho Rosamonda skutečně zamilovaná nebo se spíše zabývá jeho předky a jeho city k ní. Přestože Lydgate nemá na svatbu ani pomyšlení shodou okolností se s Rosamondou nakonec přeci jenom zasnoubí a vezmou se. Jejich manželství ale není bez problémů. Rosamonda je zvyklá žít na vysoké úrovni a Lydgate nemá tolik peněz, aby jí mohl poskytnout všechno vybavení, které by si přála. Lydgate se proto dostane brzy do dluhů. Dalším problémem v jejich manželství je, že Rosamonda není schopná se podřídit přáním jejího manžela a jedná pouze podle svého uvážení, čímž způsobuje řadu nepříjemností. Jednoho dne jsou jejich dluhy už tak velké, že jim začnou hrozit exekucí. Lydgate je přesvědčený, že i

takový problém mohou společně zvládnout. Odhodlá se proto svěřit Rosamondě s jejich problémem, který ve skutečnosti zavinila ona sama svými vysokými nároky. Rosamonda se o jejich dluhy ale odmítne starat. Lydgate je zklamaný, protože předpokládal, že jako manželé spolu musí nést dobré i špatné věci. Rosamonda se trápí, ale je jasné, že hlavně kvůli sobě a také kvůli mínění jejich přátel a sousedů – je pro ni více důležité její pohodlí a pověst než manželství. Díky těmto problémům se navzájem čím dál více odcizují. Lydgate se jí snaží přemluvit, aby mu pomohla a vzdala se některých svých návyků a vybavení, které je příliš drahé. Ona se mu na pohled podvolí, ale uvnitř sebe je daleko od něho a není v manželství šťastná. Lydgate se nejvíc bojí toho, že ji přestane milovat, protože pak by pro něj bylo velmi těžké v manželství setrvat. Jednoho dne Lydgate potká Dorotheu Brook, která mu věří, že jeho problémy nezpůsobil on a je odhodlaná mu půjčit peníze na zaplacení dluhů a promluvit o něm s Rosamondou. O pár dní později skutečně navštíví Rosamundu a mluví s ní velmi pěkně o Lydgatovi. Tento rozhovor zásadně změní chování Rosamondy, která si uvědomí, že Lydgate je dobrý manžel. Nikdy však nepřipustí, že její úsudek byl špatný a nikdy se Lydgatovi nepodřídí.

Ve třetí kapitole je dále rozebírán vztah Nancy Lammeter a Godfreyho Casse, který je zobrazen v románu *Silas Marner*. Tento vztah prochází problémovým obdobím ještě před svatbou. Jejich vztah je všeobecně známý a nikdo nepochybuje o jejich budoucím zasnoubení. Jednoho dne ale Godfrey zmizí a nikdo po nějakou dobu neví kde vlastně je. Z poznámek Eliot je jasné, že se během této doby tajně oženil s ženou nízkého původu Molly a má s ní dokonce dceru. Tohoto manželství ale Godfrey lituje a nechce se k němu nikdy přiznat. Když se vrátí, Nancy se k němu chová chladně a on se snaží znovu získat její náklonnost. Jednoho dne se koná ples, na kterém Godfrey přesvědčuje Nancy, že už je z něho opět dobrý muž. Ona odmítá jeho city k ní, ale je zřejmé, že jí není úplně lhostejný. Během toho plesu jeho žena Molly i s jejich dcerou blíží k jeho domu. Protože je ale Molly drogově závislá usne a protože je zima, umrzne. Když se to Godfrey doví, neví, co má dělat. Na jedné straně doufá, že Molly je mrtvá, protože jinak by jeho vztah s Nancy skončil. Na straně druhé má výčitky kvůli své dceři. Nakonec je rád, že Molly zemřela, protože teď může znovu začít s Nancy. Jeho dcery se ujme tkadlec Silas a dá jí jméno Eppie. Godfrey se rozhodne, že se k ní nikdy nepřizná, ale bude ji podporovat. Po několika

letech jsou Nancy a Godfrey zobrazeni jako šťastní manželé. V jejich manželství jeden problém ale je – Nancy nemůže mít děti a je velmi nešťastná protože ví, jak moc by si Godfrey děti přál. On ji ale nic nevyčítá a velmi ji miluje. Jednoho dne ho ale okolnosti donutí přiznat se Nancy ke své nemanželské dceři. Nancy ho překvapivě z ničeho nevinní, je ji pouze líto, že se nepřiznal dříve, protože mohli Eppie vychovávat, jako by byla jejich vlastní. Na rozdíl od Rosamondy, Nancy stojí při svém manželovi i když má problémy a neotočí se k němu zády. Nakonec se rozhodnou jít k Silasovi, přiznat, že Eppie je Godfreyova dcera a požádat ji, aby žila s nimi. Eppie ale jejich žádost odmítne, protože za svého otce považuje Silase. Godfrey a Nancy jsou velmi zklamaní, když odcházejí domu sami. Godfrey má výčitky kvůli tomu, jak se v minulosti zachoval k Nancy, ale teď je rád, že může být jejím manželem. Nancy ho z ničeho nevinní a stojí při něm v dobrém i zlém, což Rosamonda nedokázala.

Poslední vztah, který je v této práci popsán je mezi Lucy Dean a Stephenem Guestem. Nejsou ještě zasnoubení, ale nikdo nepochybuje o tom, že se z nich jednoho dne stanou manželé. Je zřejmé, že Lucy je do Stephena mnohem více zamilovaná, než je on do ní. Ona je jím naprosto uchvácená. Jeho láska k ní není tak vášnivá a Stephen je spíše praktický, ale i on je do Lucy svým způsobem zamilovaný. Situace se změní, když přijede její sestřenice Maggie. Stephen se do ní na první pohled zamiluje. Nejdříve se snaží se svými city bojovat – ve společnosti svou pozornost převážně Lucy a ta si díky tomu ničeho nevšimne. Přestože se Maggie i Stephen snaží čelit svým pocitům a vášni, nakonec oba podlehnou a utečou spolu. Nancy je velmi zklamaná, ale nakonec nevinní ani Stephena ani Maggie, která ho stejně opustila, a oběma odpustí.

V této práci je popsáno celkem sedm vztahů mezi mužem a ženou. Některé z nich jsou šťastné a úspěšné, některé naopak ztroskotají ještě před svatbou. Na některé páry, například Maggie s Phillipem nebo Stephenem, má velký vliv názor společnosti, některé páry tlaku okolí nepodlehnu a dělají, co sami uznají za vhodné, jako například v případě Dorothee a jejich dvou manželství. Také postavení ženy v jednotlivých manželstvích je různé. Některé ženy jsou podřízené svým manželům – Dorothea a Nancy. Jiné ženy reprezentované Rosamondou a Maggie se málokdy podřídí přáním mužů a spíše se ohlíží na svůj názor a mínění společnosti.

V některých případech je manželství nešťastné kvůli mylným očekáváním, kvůli nějaké třetí osobě nebo kvůli rozdílným povahám manželů. Na druhé straně některá manželství jsou šťastná, i když je lidé kolem od začátku odsuzují

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