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### UNCOVERING SCATTERED BRITISH COMPLACENCY IN CHARLES DICKENS' GREAT EXPECTATIONS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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#### ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on uncovering the scattered British complacency which makes one of the major themes of Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*. Dickens' portrayal of British society in the novel critiques the complacency and social stratification that characterized British society during the Victorian era. It critically explores the theme by through the characters, their attitudes, and their behaviors, as well as the social and economical context of the time period in which the novel was written by viewing them through the lens of close reading technique in a qualitative way. The study is significant in the sense that Dickens' critique of British complacency is relevant to contemporary society as this critical analysis sheds light on the underlying themes and social commentary in the *Great Expectations* and provides insight into the ways in which literature can serve as a vehicle for social criticism and change. Keywords: British Complacency, British Society, Socio-economic context, Contemporary society, social criticism

## INTRODUCTION

Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* is a classic novel that has captivated readers for generations with its vivid depictions of Victorian-era society and its memorable characters. The novel *Great Expectations*, despite its enduring popularity and critical acclaim, has been scrutinized and criticized for its portrayal of British society and its sometimes-complacent attitudes towards social inequality. This research paper seeks to uncover and examine these scattered instances of complacency within the novel, using a critical analysis of the text and its historical context.

The paper begins by providing a brief overview of the novel and its central themes, including Pip's journey from poverty to wealth and the various social and class issues he encounters. From there, it delves deep into the text to identify examples of British complacency, such as Pip's disregard for the working class and his naive acceptance of the aristocratic lifestyle.

To contextualize these examples, the paper also explores the broader historical and cultural context of early 19th century Britain, including the rise of industrialization, and the social and economic inequalities that characterized the era. By situating the novel within this larger context, the paper aims to shed light on how Dickens reflects and critiques the attitudes of his time.

Ultimately, the research paper argues that while *Great Expectations* is a powerful and engaging work of fiction, it also contains elements of complacency in the social injustices of its era. By examining these elements in detail, the paper seeks to contribute to a broader conversation about the role of literature in shaping our understanding of history and society.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

1. To find complacency as a determinant of the opposition between bourgeoisies and proletariats in the *Great Expectations*

## RESEARCH QUESTION

1. How does complacency act as a determinant in the opposition between the bourgeoisie and proletariats in the *Great Expectations*?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The Industrial Revolution in the late 18th century introduced capitalism, which allowed previously disadvantaged groups to improve their social and financial status. This led to new ambitions and opportunities that were not available before. The novel explores the pursuit of fortune and social standing in a society with a rigid class system.

Karl Marx's theory of class conflict between the working class (proletariats) and the wealthy capitalist class (bourgeoisies) has been widely debated among social theorists as a crucial element in shaping our society's social structure. Marx's concept of class struggle, which he presented in works such as *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), *Das Kapital* (1867), and *The Wealth of Nations* (1876), is considered by many to be a compelling and dynamic explanation of historical materialism and capitalism. Marx's ideas provide a comprehensive

explanation of contemporary societal issues, including their causes and potential solutions. Peter Blau (1967) writes it is worthy to notice that Marx observed social structure in terms of class struggle and saw it as the engine for societal production and emancipation. He defined class based on property ownership and classified society into three classes: bourgeois, landowners, and the working lower class. This classification was based on consumption, distribution, and reflected the process of production and hegemonic control of society. He writes that class is the theoretical and formal connection among individuals, leading to class struggle, and is characterized by mutual dependence and shared interests. The natural opposition is built between bourgeoisies and proletariats, with the latter being exploited by the former.

The critic further argues that power in a social structure is determined by a class' capital; it determines the extent of their power in society. In capitalist societies, classes are political tools for the states to rule, which are governed by those with more capital, leading to control over the proletariat. This unjust rule may widen the gap between classes and lead to collapse of the social system, resulting in local and national revolts. Ultimately, the proletariat will determine their role and means of production.

Marx, in his book *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1847), discusses the economic changes that occurred within the working class. He notes that the working class now shares a common experience of labor and as a result, is more likely to unite and strike together. This collective action raises the political consciousness of the entire class and makes them more aware of their position. Through this awareness, they gain a proletarian consciousness and realize the alienation they experience in their work. Marx argues that this alienation can only be overcome by acting to dismantle the capitalist mode of production (Harkort, 1973). He suggests that because labor and demand are alike, the coalition should be turned into a political system capable of eliminating the estrangement of labor from society. This estrangement is caused by the capitalist mode of production, which does not adequately compensate workers for their contributions.

Another critic, Andrew Lambirth (2010) discusses Marx's idea that the uncertainty of being able to sell one's labor for the highest price is a significant aspect of working-class existence. The review cites Iris, a 19th-century college student and the first in her family to attend college, as an example of a working-class individual who has struggled. Iris believes that being part of the lower class means having to work exceptionally hard to make a living. Her parents also had to work hard to climb the hierarchy and earn a decent wage. Despite this, Iris does not express any resentment towards those who have subjected her family to low wages. The review suggests that Iris's understanding of the working class is centred around hard work and the need to sell surplus labour to earn an income, as Marx had proposed. However, Iris does not seem to view the employer-employee relationship as exploitative. Instead, she considers selling one's labor to be a fair compensation for a day's effort (Lambirth, 2010).

Kevin Harris (1982) observed that in a capitalist society, certain types of workforce and social class attitudes are essential. The class consciousness that develops serves to prevent a rebellious or antagonistic attitude toward the capitalist system and society. Harris argued that teachers are implicated in disseminating the prevailing ideologies of the ruling class, over which they have little influence. One's group membership and the specific class interest one represents define individuals. However, as Karl Marx points out, opinions can always shift, and events can bring about change. With this in mind, the class solidarity of student-teachers may represent the seed of a future attitude shift (Harris, 1982).

The bourgeoisie complacency is manifested in how they keep the proletariat socially, economically, politically, educationally and psychologically marginalized. According to David Kagan (2005), the marginalised class develops a stigmatised and inferior social position as a result of social marginalisation. They have less chances or ways to participate in the social development. As a result of their social rationale's limited access to significant social machinery, they adopt a worldview of low self-esteem. Their access to the most basic social necessities and resources, such as housing, health care, money, and education, is insufficient to enable them to grow up and become successful capitalists. Such marginality has long-lasting and suppressive effects. According to Burton (2005), those who are socially marginalised have a low social standing since they belong to a class that is primarily associated with labour. They fall behind because economic, educational, and cultural marginalisation can happen to them due to their lack of access to social capital (Kagan & Burton, 2005). Due to their fragility, individuals are deprived since they are unable to engage in the social structure as a whole in such circumstances. They go on to say that those who experience economic marginalisation will have a less role in the creation of wealth or income. They will often depend on their employment for their upkeep and revenue sources, owning less property overall. They will be obliged to sell solely their labour, therefore there won't be a boom in their capital profits. Marx and Engels allude to this theory when they claim that because they own less wealth and depend only on their labour for income, the proletariat will not be able to define their social status. A class is forced into political marginalisation when it is denied the opportunity to take part in the political development of their country. Kagan (2005), this proletarian marginalisation happens when the upper class denies them the right to political self-determination. This situation prevents members of the lower class from participating in the political process and forbids them from holding political office, depriving them of the opportunity to live in a democracy (Kagan, 2005).

According to McMahan (2005), educational marginalization occurs as a result of unfair and unequal educational policies that provide fewer opportunities for the working class. Consequently, this class faces multiple forms of discrimination and is deprived of the ability to advocate for themselves due to their lack of education and knowledge. The advancement of knowledge and understanding in a particular class leads to development in various aspects of life. This progress increases the dominant influence of that class, enabling them to exert control over other classes. Those in positions of power shape the

educational policies of the nation, often privileging the working class less (Burton, 2005). Bunch (2016) links psychological marginalization to discriminatory acts within society. She explains that when individuals are falsely represented or portrayed in an inferior manner, it can result in psychological marginalization. In other words, when one class is characterized as inferior, it leads to psychological discrimination. This treatment creates a psychological gap as the powerful class fails to acknowledge the marginalized class (Bunch, 2016).

## **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

The current study employed the technique of close reading to interpret data collected from episodes, events, and scenes that showcase the class struggle and class consciousness according to Marxist concepts. The study examined how the treatment of proletariats by bourgeoisies led to conflict and threats at both social and economic levels, demonstrating the concept of British complacency. The primary source of data collection was the text of *Great Expectations*, while secondary sources included national and international research papers, dissertations, essays, newspapers, documentaries, and movies. The study is qualitative in nature, allowing for diverse interpretations and evaluations based on the study's conceptual and theoretical parameters.

### ***Tools Used During Close Reading***

The researcher utilized multiple models of close reading in their investigation to thoroughly examine different aspects of the text. They combined models from various sources, including Tison Pugh and Margaret Johnson (2014), Greenham (2019), Sylvan Barnet and William Cain (2004), John Mullan (2006), and McMahan (2017), in order to achieve greater clarity in their argument. To begin the close reading process, the researcher selected passages from the novel and explored deeper meanings, paying close attention to recurring themes, motifs, and rich imagery. The model by Margaret Johnson and Tison Pugh (2014) was used to examine the point of view, plot structure, characters, setting, themes, and tone of the text. The model by Sylvan Barnet and William Cain (2004) was utilized to analyze the characters, foreshadowing, atmosphere, and symbols of the text. Finally, John Mullan's (2006) model was employed to investigate the narrative technique of the text, specifically the use of first person, second person, or third person narrative.

The current research employs a first-person narrative, with Pip as the narrator, and emphasizes the importance of setting in storytelling. McMahan (2017) notes that setting plays a crucial role in establishing the story's mood revealing characters and conflicts by providing insight into the story's theme. Specifically, *Great Expectations* (1861) is set in rural marshlands, where the working class resides, and the urban city of London, where Pip pursues his education and aims to become a wealthy gentleman.

One tool frequently used in the process of close reading is the examination of characters. The practice of characterization has traditionally been a key aspect of any work of fiction. Tisen (2014) describes that characterization as a literary device whereby authors use details to inform readers about a person,

which is then utilized throughout the story to narrate the plot. Within the scope of this particular investigation, characters play a critical role in the analysis, serving as the focal point through which class differences and conflicts between the proletariat and bourgeoisie are portrayed. For example, in *Great Expectations*, Pip's mistreatment by Estella and Miss Havisham leads to the development of class consciousness.

The investigation of a fictional work involves analyzing various elements, and one important aspect is the plot. According to McMahan's (2017) definition, the plot in creative writing refers to the sequential arrangement of scenes and events that make up the story. This story is created, developed, and concluded within a specific time frame, and it includes exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. In this study, the researcher found that the plot was well-organized with a cause-and-effect relationship. However, since the work was published in fifty-nine chapters on a weekly or quarterly basis, some events and episodes were loosely connected to the main plot, even though the story was concluded in an excellent way with a fantastic resolution.

The use of tone is a significant tool in the creation of fiction, which refers to the author's mood and voice. It can be serious, playful, ironic, intimate, upbeat, objective or any other style crafted by the author. In the present study, the tone changes with the course of events in the novel. It is innocent and soft when Pip is a child, but becomes harsh and rude in relation to Estella and Miss Havisham, and carries a sense of guilt towards the end of the story. Therefore, the researcher employed the aforementioned tools to analyze the concepts of class struggle, class conflict, and capitalist complacency depicted in the Victorian era in the novel. By incorporating these tools, the researcher provided an in-depth analysis of the plot, characters, tone, setting, and narrative technique in the subsequent section of the study.

## **DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

In "*Great Expectations*," the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are portrayed as opposing forces in Victorian Society. The bourgeoisie are the wealthy, upper-class citizens who hold power and privilege, while the proletariat is the working-class individuals who struggle to make ends meet. Complacency, or the act of being satisfied with the current state of affairs, plays a significant role in this conflict.

One way that complacency affects the opposition between the bourgeoisie and proletariat in the novel is by allowing the bourgeoisie to maintain their power and privilege. The bourgeoisie are portrayed as complacent, satisfied with their position in society and unwilling to challenge the status quo. As a result, they are able to maintain their dominance over the proletariat, who lack the resources and opportunities to challenge the system.

At the same time, complacency also contributes to the dissatisfaction and frustration felt by the proletariat. The working-class characters in the novel, such as Joe Gargery and Magwitch, are portrayed as hardworking and honest, but they are constantly thwarted in their efforts to improve their lives. The complacency of the bourgeoisie, who are content to maintain the status quo,

creates a sense of injustice and inequality that fuels the opposition between the two classes.

Overall, the research paper highlights the complex relationship between complacency and social conflict in "Great Expectations." The novel suggests that complacency can both reinforce and challenge existing power structures, and that it plays a key role in shaping the dynamics between different social classes.

In Lousada's (2018) perspective, complacency refers to a mental state where an individual is satisfied and at ease with their current situation, regardless of potential threats or shortcomings. This can result in neglecting the needs or struggles of others, and is observed in both personal and socio-economic contexts. The theme of complacency is evident in literature, particularly in Victorian novels like *Great Expectations*. The character Ms Havisham embodies complacency through her calm and contented demeanor, and her fixed watch represents her fixation on order and economic stability. However, the protagonist Pip disrupts her complacency with his adventurous spirit and challenges to the social and economic norms of the time. Through this story, Dickens demonstrates the downfall of the complacent upper class and their disregard for those less fortunate.

The novel portrays Pip's struggle to establish a sense of identity amidst the social upheaval of nineteenth-century England. Despite his difficulties in fitting into the existing societal categories, Pip eventually forges his own path and takes control of his destiny. Throughout the story, Pip grapples with confusion about his identity, largely due to the class and hierarchical systems in place, as well as his lack of knowledge about his parents. This is highlighted early on in the novel when he attempts to read the text on his parents' tombstone but fails to do so accurately. As an adult, he reflects on this experience and acknowledges his earlier misconception. Ultimately, Pip learns to define himself on his own terms, rather than relying on the rigid societal structures of his time and says: "I read 'wife of the Above' as a complimentary reference to my father's exaltation to a better world" (Dickens, 1861, p. 38). The character, Pip in this scene misunderstands his own hierarchical position, thinking that "above" refers to the social status of their parents. This indicates that he has little knowledge of his own family background and social identity. However, this confusion presents an opportunity for him to discover himself and define his own identity within the strict Victorian class system. He feels a desire to learn more about himself and observe others in the class system in order to earn social status and a fortune. To achieve this, he needs to become aware of the different classes, their roles, and their wealth. He decides to become a bourgeoisie with property and capital, and in doing so, develops class consciousness and improves his social standing.

The concept of class consciousness refers to an individual's ability to identify their socioeconomic status and the class they belong to in society. This notion, as explained by Marx, encompasses an individual's understanding and awareness of their economic and social class. It involves recognizing one's position in a community in terms of their economic and social status.

Additionally, being class conscious entails an awareness of the unique economic and social traits of individuals and their shared values, which can influence their earning and production capabilities (Marx, 1848).

According to Marx, the main reason for social conflicts in capitalist societies is the economic inequality between the working class (proletariat) and the wealthy class (bourgeoisie). He believed that capitalism can only thrive if the workers are unaware of their collective power and interests. However, if the workers become conscious of their shared identity as a class and the interdependence of their struggles, they will eventually resist the oppressive capitalist structure and overthrow it through a workers' revolution. This study demonstrates the conditions that could lead to such a revolution as Dickens writes: "We came to Miss Havisham's house ... great many iron bars to it" (Dickens, 1861, p. 53). During the Victorian era, the wealthy elite owned the majority of the land and properties, leaving the lower classes struggling to find basic necessities such as shelter. Pip, a young boy of seven, narrates his first visit to Satis House, describing its architecture and design. The brick and tile construction exemplify the traditional upper-class style, with metal barricades symbolizing their power and dominance. However, the house's dark and gloomy atmosphere suggests a decline in the upper class's influence during the Victorian era. During his visit, Pip becomes aware of his own social status and compares himself to Estella and Miss Havisham.

Pip's encounters with the upper class serve as a constant reminder of his social status, causing him to feel vulnerable and insecure about his economic standing. Due to his limited ownership and mobility, he becomes a target for social attacks. Consequently, he responds to such situations with either verbal or mental retaliation. This is because he is aware that his linguistic abilities and mannerisms are not as flexible as those of the other family members, and he is often commanded to act in a certain way, as demonstrated by Estella's demands: "I have a sick fancy that I want to ... her right hand; 'play, play, play!'" (Dickens, 1861, p. 54). The way in which the Satis household communicates and interacts with Pip suggests that they desire power and authority over individuals of a lower social class. Estella consistently uses direct and concise language, rather than using flowery language, which implies that they believe it is acceptable to treat individuals of a lower social status in such a manner.

Throughout the novel, Miss Havisham tries to reinforce her persona of upper class and superstructure of the class system embodying an individual of self-entitlement as she commands to Estella: "Estella, take him down. Let him have something to eat ... look about him while he eats. Go, Pip" (Dickens, 1861, p. 56). Through these words, she wants to remind Estella of Pip's role that he cannot have an association with her because he is from the lower class. There is an extreme control of bodily functions and activities. She is commanding her that look for him when he roams and eats. She wants to reinforce her tenet of higher class and allowing Estella to do anything to him as she wants. She permits Estella to control his actions as she says: "You can break his heart" (Ibid, p. 55). Rather allowing them to have a friendly relationship, she permits Estella to use Pip by taking no care of his emotions



for her. Even before a start of relationship, she shuts the doors for any such proceeding in the coming days. This immediate denial is centered in the class standings of Pip where he is not permitted to approach any girl from the higher class. Such treatment made him conscious about his class after which he starts to achieve a noble class of gentlemen. Such inequality or lack of mobility between classes during that time echoes the idea of class consciousness.

Pip's encounters with the other characters in the novel show that the rigid system of his time is problematic in nature. His visit to the Satis house and his treatment by Estella and Miss Havisham remain at the central position as far as this disparity is concerned. He finds a clear distinction in the upbringing of Estella and his own. He is called a 'boy' by Estella though she is of the same age as Pip. She is defining him without knowing about his actual age as he is determined by the elders of that family. This is a difference in mannerism of two classes one representing a proletariat working class while the other one representing a capitalist bourgeoisie class. Moreover, the language and the phrases used by Estella clearly defines him as someone from the lower pedigree of a society which make him conscious about his class as Dickens puts: "With this boy! Why he is a common labouring-boy" (Dickens, 1861, p. 55). Such calling of him demonstrates how the people at Satis house are perceiving and addressing him and suggests how roles are put outside of an individual and determined by others in interaction. The belittlement of Pip establishes that Estella is having a higher social attitude than him, occupying a place in the upper super structure of the society.

At yet another instance he himself admits that I have never been called or addressed as someone of dignity and high values. I am always made ashamed of who or what I am as Dickens write: "I had never thought of being ashamed of my hands before, but I began to consider them a very indifferent pair" (Ibid, p. 55). In this case, in a very defining way, he acknowledges the treatment of others around him which is making him conscious about his social class. He is talking about the priorities of Victorian age where you are prioritised according to your earning and sources of capital or income. Victorian society built its social norms based on the worth and capital of an individual. They categorised their society based on net worth or a property a person had. In such situations, Pip has no worth at all since he was from a family of blacksmith—a poor one. Therefore, he starts assuming his own identity in his own terms. He found it difficult to distinguish between him and the rest of the society because he had no record of his parents. The only criterion for his definition was the rigid class system of that time. He categorised himself as one who is miserable, who is going to suffer for the rest of his life. Therefore, this novel stresses on the prejudices and injustice thrust upon the lower class of that society.

When the members of the upper and lower classes encounter, class consciousness develops. When Pip is brought to the Satis House, he sees some strange people, places and things for the first time in his life. Pip describes the house where Miss Havisham and Estella live. As Pip entered the room, he sees Ms Havisham in her bridal dress and jewels. "She was dressed in rich Materials-satins, and lace, and silk" (Dickens, 1861, pp. 56-57). In this line,

there is a description of the well-furnished room where the candles are shattering light and her dress is symbolising the upper-class complacency of high price. The materials she is wearing, the laces, the silk all are the reasons for Pip to raise his eyebrows. Such sophisticated environment is quite unknown to Pip. Ms Havisham's dresses, jewellery and the way she was talking represent the upper class of Victorian society. That class was very small in number but possessed a lot of income. For a single family, their income per annum was £1000 at that time. They had rent property and interest as their sources of income. They had lands, properties; wealth thus lived a lavishly comfortable life. They controlled the local, national and imperial political arena of England.

Moreover, at one another instance, Dickens hints the class consciousness in Pip as he sees Estella for the first time. She is a girl of his age but brought up and rose in a different environment: "She was of about my own age. She seemed much older ... as if she had been one-and-twenty, and a queen" (Dickens, 1861, p. 59). The scene is where Pip is giving details about the appearance and attitude of Estella. He says that she is girls of my age; however, she looks older than me because of her upbringing. Soon he realises that he is only a regular working child, not as educated as Estella. She is too lovely yet proud and scornful. Despite being close in age to him, she appeared older. She is having a better physique than Pip since she belongs to the higher class and had money to purchase the comforts of her life, whereas Pip belongs to the lower class and has been working in the forge with his brother-in-law, Joe and yet doubtful about the fulfilment of his basic needs.

Moreover, this psychological conflict does not rest here. Pip's exposures to such luxury life and wealth of Miss Havisham as well as his encounter with Estella's rude and discriminated behaviour lead him to develop his class consciousness in the story. He classifies himself as the member of the lower class who has nothing as Dickens puts: "I had considered myself last night, and generally that I was in a low-lived bad way" (Dickens, 1861, p. 65). Estella's proud and discriminated attitude toward Pip is the root cause of class consciousness. Her treatment of Pip is so discriminately throughout his stay at Satis House. He is humiliated and disgraced on many occasions and is used as labourer "as if I were a dog in disgrace" (Ibid, p. 62). Pip is treated in a way as if he is a dog in disgrace. Through his treatment he has been realised many times that he belongs to the lower pedigree of the society. As explained earlier that every kind of relegation or subjugation starts with psychological dominancy. In the above two instances, Pip is exploited mentally or psychologically as he is called a dog in disgrace. He is at the first hand marginalised psychologically then silenced socially and economically. In this case, Pip does not represent the lower peasantry only but the middle class as well because in Victorian England, it was only the upper class who enjoyed the supremacy of being special, higher and elite. They called themselves the owner of properties and moral standards of that time as well.

The characterisation of Herbert is also playing a key role in this bi-polar yet parallel going situation of class consciousness as his first reaction to see Pip is to ask, "Who let you in?" (Dickens, 1861, p. 90). And at yet another instance

Dickens puts that Pip “born only to be the victim of others’ needs,” (Ibid, p. 145). Such treatment clearly shows that Pip is dealt in a very low terms where he is the victim to Miss Havisham’s sick mind and cruelty of treating a child. Herbert’s class superiority is making Pip feel that he is not even socially eligible and privileged to enter a room where the upper class resides. He is not socially acceptable because he is inferior. Due to his lesser role in mainstream, they are not giving him enough attention as he discloses: “I want to be a gentleman on her account” (Ibid, p. 156). Estella has always a power and control over Pip because of his lesser values in social accounts and this hegemonic dominancy is determined and directed by the difference in capital earning that is why Pip discloses that I too want to be gentlemen to win her. He wants to gain a new social position. Such interactions clearly show that he is made conscious about his class all the time and felt insecure about his economic and social position. He experiences a controlling behavior on part of Satis house residents and such experiences are derived from class differences.

Dickens proceeds about Miss Havisham in a lucid manner: “She has never allowed herself to be ... then lays hands on such food as she takes” (Dickens, 1861, pp. 262–63). She has self-imposed manners and self-obsessed nature being a wealthy woman. Her lack of appetite symbolically is a grotesque display of that society that has anorexia nervosa which is a habit of high-class people. Such habits are adopted by them to increase the market value of their being. It is adopted for a purpose to attract as much men as possible. Moreover, Estella considers herself as an ornamental object of Miss Havisham because she is groomed for this purpose. She is used to tantalize men and break their hearts. She incites obsessive emotions in men though she herself is without emotions for any one because she is trained in this way. Pip remarks about Estella as: “you speak of yourself as if you were someone else” (Ibid, p. 286). This reveals Dickens’ implicit purpose to create an environment which can truly represent the aristocratic nature of the upper class where Miss Havisham has designed her child to tantalize the male because she is seeking revenge on men. In such conditions, Pip is compelled to have a consciousness of his existence, his very being as an adult.

Furthermore, such classes a difference lead to hatred and encounters that are full of vengeance. Dickens narrates such negative attitudes of Victorian society in a skillful way as Estella addresses Miss Havisham: “Mother by adoption, I have said that I owe everything to you ... my gratitude and duty cannot do impossibilities” (Dickens, 1861, p. 323). Estella says that my mother I owe everything to you. My adoption is purposed for your commands and beyond that I have nothing. It is my gratitude to obey you. She is characterised for this purpose to show the cunning nature of that society. She represents a person having no desires, no appetites, staged as a nightmare and trained to be desired and to be the object of appetite.

In the story, it is the Satis house that boosts up the expectations of Pip for becoming a gentleman with a higher fortune and capital because he is made so by such discriminatory treatment. It arouses desire in him to have a lifestyle by breaking the chains of inferiority and achieve a high position. Meanwhile, Magwitch provides an offer to him to earn a fortune after getting some

education. He is now provided with a chance which proletariats never have in their whole life spans. He starts to progress as a gentleman as he discloses, "I was so doubtful of myself now" (Dickens, 1861, p. 443). He is doubtful about his present conditions after when he realizes the relationships and influences on him will not let him to earn a future. He begins to move as a gentleman and takes all the opportunities in his favor. At the end, his self-determination overpowers every discrimination once thrust upon him. His authoritative behavior wins everything for him even Estella who once treated him as labouring boy.

Finally, the end of the novel has the celebration of self-creation by Pip. His development from the lower to the higher class scatters the complacency of the Satis House where they do not bother about the living conditions of other people. In competition, Pip stands on his self though he initially considers their treatment as a threat for his economic development. His achievements and self-determination make him able to achieve peace with the Satis House at equal terms. It can be seen at the end of the novel when he joins with Estella at her house: "I heard of her leading a most unhappy ... who had used her with great cruelty" (Dickens, 1861, p. 458). The unhappiness and treatment of Estella provide him the opportunity to bring about his expectations which he has from himself. He acts on those expectations since his lifestyle is much better than Estella at the end of the story. He is more successful than the members of the Satis house as he says: "I work pretty hard for a sufficient living, and therefore—Yes, I do well" (Ibid, p. 459)! His statement at the end shows that it is possible with self-determination to achieve those things which were not available to him before. He has worked hard that is why he is living well.

## CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the bourgeoisie are portrayed as complacent, satisfied with their position in society and unwilling to challenge the status quo. As a result, they are able to maintain their dominance over the proletariat, who lack the resources and opportunities to challenge the system. At the same time, it also contributes to the dissatisfaction and frustration of the proletariat. The working-class is constantly thwarted in its efforts to improve life style. Pip struggles to establish a sense of identity amidst the social upheaval of nineteenth-century England. Throughout the story, Pip grapples with confusion about his identity, largely due to the class and hierarchical systems in place, as well as his lack of knowledge about his parents. However, this confusion presents an opportunity for him to discover himself and define his own identity within the strict Victorian class system. He feels a desire to learn more about himself and observe others in the class system in order to earn social status and a fortune. To achieve this, he needs to become aware of the different classes, their roles, and their wealth. He decides to become a bourgeoisie with property and capital, and in doing so, develops class consciousness and improves his social standing.

The concept of class consciousness, as explained by Marx, refers to an individual's ability to identify their socioeconomic status and the class they belong to in society. This notion involves recognizing one's position in a

community in terms of their economic and social status (Marx, 1848). Pip's encounters with the upper class serve as a constant reminder of his social status, causing him to feel vulnerable and insecure about his economic standing. Due to his limited ownership and mobility, he becomes a target for social attacks and he responds to such situations with either verbal or mental retaliation. It is observed that the Satis household communicates and interacts with Pip suggests that they desire power and authority over individuals of a lower social class. Estella consistently uses direct and concise language, rather than using flowery language to fittingly treat individuals of a lower social status.

Miss Havisham tries to reinforce her persona of upper class. She permits Estella to control Pip's actions rather allowing them to have a friendly relationship. She permits Estella to use Pip by taking no care of his emotions for her. Even before a start of relationship, she shuts the doors for any such proceeding in the coming days. This immediate denial is centered in the class standings of Pip where he is not permitted to approach any girl from the higher class. Such treatment made him conscious about his class after which he starts to achieve a noble class of gentlemen. Such inequality or lack of mobility between classes during that time echoes the idea of class consciousness. This complacency of the upper class is reflected in Ms Havisham dresses, jewellery and the way she was talking represent the upper class of Victorian society. That class was very small in number but had lands, properties, wealth and lived a lavishly comfortable life. The class had controlled the local, national and imperial political arena of England.

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