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La structure d'un article scientifique en lettres et sciences humaines se présente comme suit :

Pour un article qui est une contribution théorique et fondamentale : Titre, Prénom et Nom de l'auteur, Institution d'attache, adresse électronique, Résumé en Français, Mots clés, Abstract, Key words, Introduction (justification du thème, problématique, hypothèses/objectifs scientifiques, approche), Développement articulé, Conclusion, Bibliographie.

- Pour un article qui résulte d'une recherche de terrain : Titre, Prénom et Nom de l'auteur, Institution d'attache, adresse électronique, Résumé en Français, Mots clés, Abstract, Key words, Introduction, Méthodologie, Résultats et Discussion, Conclusion, Bibliographie.

Les articulations d'un article, à l'exception de l'introduction, de la conclusion, de la bibliographie, doivent être titrées, et numérotées par des chiffres (exemples : 1. ; 1.1. ; 1.2 ; 2. ; 2.2. ; 2.2.1 ; 2.2.2. ; 3. ; etc.).

3.4. Les passages cités sont présentés en romain et entre guillemets. Lorsque la phrase citant et la citation dépassent trois lignes, il faut aller à la ligne, pour présenter la citation (interligne 1) en romain et en retrait, en diminuant la taille de police d'un point.

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Exemples :

- En effet, le but poursuivi par M. Ascher (1998, p. 223), est « d'élargir l'histoire des mathématiques de telle sorte qu'elle acquière une perspective multiculturelle et globale (...), d'accroître le domaine des mathématiques : alors qu'elle s'est pour l'essentiel occupé du groupe professionnel occidental que l'on appelle les mathématiciens (...) ».

- Pour dire plus amplement ce qu'est cette capacité de la société civile, qui dans son déploiement effectif, atteste qu'elle peut porter le développement et l'histoire, S. B. Diagne (1991, p. 2) écrit :

Qu'on ne s'y trompe pas : de toute manière, les populations ont toujours su opposer à la philosophie de l'encadrement et à son volontarisme leurs propres stratégies de contournements. Celles-là, par exemple, sont lisibles dans le dynamisme, ou à tout le moins, dans la créativité dont sait preuve ce que l'on désigne sous le nom de secteur informel et à qui il faudra donner l'appellation positive d'économie populaire.

- Le philosophe ivoirien a raison, dans une certaine mesure, de lire, dans ce choc déstabilisateur, le processus du sous-développement. Ainsi qu'il le dit :

le processus du sous-développement résultant de ce choc est vécu concrètement par les populations concernées comme une crise globale : crise socio-économique (exploitation brutale, chômage permanent, exode accéléré et douloureux), mais aussi crise socio-culturelle et de civilisation traduisant une impréparation socio-historique et une inadaptation des cultures et des comportements humains aux formes de vie imposées par les technologies étrangères. (S. Diakité, 1985, p. 105).

3.6. Les sources historiques, les références d'informations orales et les notes explicatives sont numérotées en série continue et présentées en bas de page.

3.7. Les divers éléments d'une référence bibliographique sont présentés comme suit :

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Dans la zone titre, le titre d'un article est présenté en romain et entre guillemets, celui d'un ouvrage, d'un mémoire ou d'une thèse, d'un rapport, d'une revue ou d'un journal est présenté en italique. Dans la zone Editeur, on indique la Maison d'édition (pour un ouvrage), le Nom et le numéro/volume de la revue (pour un article). Au cas où un ouvrage est une traduction et/ou une réédition, il faut préciser après le titre le nom du traducteur et/ou l'édition (ex : 2^{de} éd.).

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**GASKELL'S MARY BARTON AND DISRAELI'S SYBIL
AS NARRATIVE APPROACHES TO CLASS CONFLICT
RESOLUTION**

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Abstract: *This article aims to show how in such an animated industrial epoch, so shaken by strikes and conflicts between the oppressed and poor working-class, and the rich Middle class, as the Victorian epoch, Gaskell and Disraeli, used their narratives to bring the two conflicting classes around the same table of truth, repentance, and reconciliation without employing violence however. Indeed, by reading the stories which they tell, each in his or her novel, one notices how suspense drives us step by step towards this dialogue, understanding and this life in symbiosis between both formerly diametrically opposed parties by the difference of their social status, and how these authors all opt for nonviolence.*

Keywords: *Approach, Class, Conflict, Narrative, Resolution.*

Résumé : *Cet article vise à montrer comment à une époque industrielle aussi mouvementée, aussi secouée par des grèves et conflits entre la pauvre classe ouvrière, opprimée et la bourgeoisie aisée, que l'époque victorienne, Gaskell et Disraeli, se sont servi de leurs récits pour amener les deux classes en conflit autour d'une même table de vérité, repentance, et de réconciliation sans pourtant user de la violence. En effet, en lisant les histoires qu'ils racontent, chacun dans son roman, on s'aperçoit comment le suspens nous conduit pas à pas vers ce dialogue, cette entente et cette vie en symbiose entre les deux partis jadis diamétralement opposés par la différence de leur statut social, et comment ces auteurs optent tous pour la non-violence.*

Mots-clés : *Approche, Classe, Conflit, Récit, Résolution.*

Introduction

In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx and Engels (1910, pp. 7-8) write, “the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggles, contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes.” In fact, throughout history, especially in 19th-century industrial England, we see the oppressor and the oppressed at loggerheads with each other. This fight which, according to Marx, is sometimes hidden and sometimes open, is overtly expressed in Victorian fiction. This class conflict that Elizabeth C. Gaskell and Benjamin Disraeli try to solve in *Mary Barton* and *Sybil*, their respective narratives, pervades these novels as well as those of their fellow-countrymen and contemporaries like Dickens’s *Hard Times* and Eliot’s *Felix Holt* to mention but these two. Contrary to these novels whose authors do not focus on the reconciliation of both classes, Gaskell’s *Mary Barton* and Disraeli’s *Sybil* are compulsive reading in their approaches to the resolution of this class struggle.

Most of Victorian fiction boils down to this class conflict. In the case of Gaskell’s *Mary Barton* and Disraeli’s *Sybil*, the conflicting classes are the Lower Class and the Middle Class, two classes linked by the Industrial Revolution as discussed by Komi Bafana in his thesis (2010) under the title, “*The Industrial Worker in the Victorian Novel: A Study in Four Novels by Elizabeth C. Gaskell, George Eliot, Benjamin Disraeli, and Charles Dickens: Romance as Radical Literature*.” Yet, more recently Moore (2015) has focused his attention both on Derrida’s theory of literature seeing how *Sybil* is built and how she or it can be deconstructed under the titled “Disraeli and the Archi-Textual: Constructions of Authority in *Sybil*.” He tries to present Disraeli’s heroine as an asset to have a flexible approach to the resolution of the conflict, a conflict that is also discussed by Laurie-Fletcher in 2011 under the title “Disraeli and the Early Victorian ‘History Wars’.” Uglow (1993) and Tessa (1986) have fully discussed Gaskell’s fiction, and the truth is that such entire criticism does not deeply focus on a given theme, which makes more space for later critics to pick holes in it.

In front of such a conflict dividing their society, and at hand, a pen, which “is mightier than the sword,” (Bulwer-Lytton, 1839, p. 52), how do Gaskell and Disraeli try to solve this class conflict in their novels?

Gaskell and Disraeli craft suspenseful stories leading up to conflict resolution. Drawing inspiration from their contemporary Bulwer-Lytton’s metonymic adage, one may soon realise that Gaskell’s and Disraeli’s

approaches to this class conflict is based on nonviolence. A recourse to the Marxist theory of literature, which posits that if literature is to be realistic, it should show some concern for the oppressed people in society, is essential to address this issue. The sociological and historical approach are also vital as they will help examine these two Victorian novels primarily in relation to the historical and cultural conditions of their production, and of their later critical interpretations.

This paper has two main sections. The first is devoted to a glance that will be had at the various forms of conflicts in the novels, the second, to conflict resolution by each novelist in their own way.

1. A Glance at the Various Forms of Conflicts in the Novels

The approaches to conflict resolution suggested by both writers in their narratives vary from one writer to another. These variations foreshadow their respective ideological stances and social visions on these staged issues of the industrial disputes.

The violent conflicts that break out between the socio-economic classes are resolved in various ways. These resolutions do not advocate any violent revolution intended to drastically change the pattern of the very social structures that generate these conflicts. None of the two writers under consideration, espouses the idea of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, who proposed a violent revolution that should be led by the working classes in order to effect a change in the social strata. Even if there is in these novels a portrayal of the worker's attempts to overthrow the ruling classes, it is worthy of note that no writer raises a radical change in the class system. This is what one first notices in Gaskell's *Mary Barton*.

1.1. Gaskell's *Mary Barton*: a tale of Manchester

Mary Barton, in full *Mary Barton: A Tale of Manchester Life*, first novel by Elizabeth C. Gaskell, published in 1848. It is the story of a working-class family that descends into desperation during the depression of 1839. With its vivid description of squalid slums, *Mary Barton* helped awaken the national conscience.

On this, Tessa (1986, p. 67) observes, "Gaskell endeavored faithfully to portray the deplorable conditions of the working class. Empowered by her belief system, Gaskell, a woman, became a potent agent of social change, effectively drawing the attention of England's populace to the poor's situation."

John Barton is a respected labourer who is thrown out of work during hard times. He becomes a union organizer, and he journeys to London with other reformers to present the Chartist petition to Parliament. The unionists get short shrift from government and management, and John's frustration turns to bitter class hatred. He is chosen to carry out a retaliatory murder at the behest of his trade union. His victim is Henry Carson, a mill owner's son who has been paying court to Mary, John's daughter. Mary's working-class lover, Jem Wilson, is indicted for the crime, but Mary helps prove his innocence. John Barton dies, his constitution broken by poverty, remorse, and opium. Mary, Jem, and their friends immigrate to Canada to begin a new life.

The fact that workers at Mr. Carson's burnt mill had to endure the effects of losing their jobs, and consequently their families, to face starvation because their breadwinner was out of employment, is the sign of a conflict masquerading as something else between the employer representing the middle class and workers representing the lower class. We read that though his mill is destroyed by fire, Mr. Carson and his family are not affected in any manner by the effects of the fire because the mill was well protected, through insurance, against such industrial accidents. The beneficial effect of the insurance is that whatever crisis that may happen in the industrial world, the employers are always on the safe side. They do not undergo the same effects as the workers do.

Mr. Carson belongs to the class of the new Bourgeoisie, a class that made their fortune thanks to the Industrial Revolution. In fact, he first belonged to the lower or poor class as evidenced in this passage:

In the days of his childhood and youth, Mr. Carson had been accustomed to poverty; but it was honest decent poverty; not the grinding squalid misery he had remarked in every part of John Barton's house, and which contrasted strangely with the pompous sumptuousness of the room in which he now sat. Unaccustomed wonder filled his mind at the reflection of the different lots of the brethren of mankind. (*Mary Barton*, 1849, p. 375)

It is obvious that his former equals in the labouring class, with their little innate human jealousy, may not like his sudden accumulation of wealth. The worst of it all is that Old Mr. Carson and his son are not sensitive to the plight of workers, even if these workers are agonizing. In fact, when Davenport is agonizing, his fellow workers, led by James Wilson, go to see Mr. Carson for assistance, and all he can do is to issue an out-patient order for the dying worker, after taking all his time to finish his breakfast. Below is the

conversational exchange between Wilson, who asks Mr. Carson for a patient order and Mr. Carson himself:

“Well, Wilson, and what do you want to-day, man?”

“Please, Sir, Davenport ’s ill of the fever, and I’m come to know if you ’ve got an Infirmary order for him?”

“Davenport — Davenport; who is the fellow? I don’t know the name.”

“He’s worked in your factory better nor three years, Sir.”

“Very likely, I don’t pretend to know the names of the men I employ; that I leave to the overlooker. So he’s ill, eh?”

“Ay, Sir, he’s very bad; we want to get him in at the Fever Wards.”

“I doubt if I’ve an in-patient’s order to spare at present; but I’ll give you an out-patient’s, and welcome.”

So saying, he rose up, unlocked a drawer, pondered a minute, and then gave Wilson an out-patient’s order. (*MB*, p.68)

This conversational exchange shows that Mr. Carson is inhumane. Ignoring the welfare of his employees is very callous. He does not care to know the names of his workers, despite the fact that they are limited in number in his mill.

As sad as this appears, before Wilson returns to Davenport’s home with this out-patient’s order on the condition that it could only be used on the following Monday, the agonizing patient dies. Mr. Carson is not anyhow moved by the fact that he can save the life of a human being like himself. He is only concerned with the survival of his factory as he was reluctant to release in-patient’s order that may allow Davenport immediate access to the infirmary. In his opinion, as in that of his like, workers are objectified, and therefore, they do not deserve the required attention when they stand in need of it. Their alarming voice is not heard as well. As the employers turn a deaf ear to their complaint, they become dumb workers

Sabin (1998, p. 51) places Gaskell in the same category as one of the major representatives of the ideology of the dumb workers, as she puts:

Mainstream Victorian writers, even those most sympathetic to the working-class plight, pay little regard to the struggle for verbal enfranchisement central to Lovett’s Chartism. Thomas Carlyle, Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Gaskell, even Friedrich Engels, all deny the working-classes ability to function effectively in plain English, and base their

sympathetic appreciation, as well as their disdain, on the very fact of this verbal exclusion.

Old Carson was such an employer before his hot-headed, wealthy, handsome, and arrogant son Harry Carson got killed by the Chartist leader John Barton, as a symbol of the civil unrest amongst the mill workers, opening up in this way the violent conflicts between the two classes. Old Carson pretended not to know that everything is paid down here, and that if you spit into the wind, it only ends up back on your own face. Disraeli's hero, however, does not first, behave like Old Carson.

1.2. Disraeli's *Sybil, or the Two Nations*

Disraeli's *Sybil, or the Two Nations* was first published in 1845. It has for protagonist, Charles Egremont, who styles himself as one "Franklin" and goes undercover to join the cause of the working classes. Egremont is disillusioned with disparity between England's aristocracy and labourers. He falls in love with the title character, Sybil (whom he eventually marries), who is the daughter of another reformer. His brother is Lord Marley, who prefers that Egremont marries a Lady Joan, heir to the Mowbray estate.

He had been brought up to enjoy every comfort and luxury that refinement could devise, and wealth furnish on earth. He was raised as a spoilt child since his parents were from a long standing rich noble family. The writer presents him as someone who has extravagant tastes and expensive habits with a reputation for lively talents though uncultivated for his acquisition of Eton. He only lives in the most refined circles of the supper class society. For this reason, he is keen on life and has good expensive tastes.

He was born in a system of exclusive manners and feelings which had helped him develop a refined emancipated intellect and an expanding intelligence. He is one of the rare bourgeois who are not satisfied with their education, despite the fact that he has been to public schools and attended university. He is always anxious to acquire further knowledge. Through the portrayal of Charles Egremont, the writer creates two contrasting images of a divided society presenting two extremes with on the one hand workers who have no education at all and the bourgeois and aristocratic people who enjoy the highest level in terms of refinement life can offer on the other. The symbol of the "two nations" is ever present at every stage of Disraeli's writings. Here he portrays Egremont who is refined by opposing him to the misery life of the workers.

Egremont is described by the narrator as having refined characteristic with remarkable appearance, which hardly hides the fact that he had many manly accomplishments. The characteristics he presents are in sharp contrast with those of someone who had gone through some hardships, as it is the case with Stephen Blackpool, who is not able, despite his riches, to have his humble origins. Egremont is represented in a gracious manner that befits his aristocratic background:

with a mien and visage that at once took the fancy and enlisted the affections. Indeed, a physiologist would hardly have inferred from the countenance and structure of Egremont the career he had pursued, or the character which attached to him. The general cast and expression of his features when in repose was pensive: an air of refinement distinguished his well-moulded brow; his mouth breathed sympathy, and his rich brown eye gleamed with tenderness. The sweetness of his voice in speaking was in harmony with this organization. (*Sybil*, 1845, p. 29)

Egremont's main concern now in life is to face responsibility and administer the family estates for the benefit of the whole family. To do this, he even challenges his mother who has not been able to manage it properly when he was abroad. He did not leave out the family property. He regularly meets with the representatives of the lower class namely Stephen Morley and of course Walter Gerard and his daughter Sybil whom he will firmly marry after many trials related to the issue of class barriers.

Egremont's family does not own, strictly speaking a factory; but their main business is the management of the family estates which Egremont now heads. How to control politics in Parliament is the main concern of Egremont and the rest of his family members who are more bent towards political activities than the rest of the bourgeois families. The wide gulf between the two worlds is voiced in Morley's speech to Egremont:

Two nations; between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy; who are as ignorant of each other's habits, thoughts, and feelings, as if they were dwellers in different zones, or inhabitants of different planets; who are formed by a different breeding, are fed by a different food, are ordered by different manners, and are not governed by the same laws. (*Sybil*, p. 76)

Social injustice and the corrupt political system intensify the antagonism and polarity between the two classes as illustrated in Sybil's words, which run counter to the Biblical promise of a kind of 'Sugarcandy Mountain' as

preached by Moses in Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1945, p.10). Sybil's words run, "the dove and the eagle will not mate; the lion and the lamb will not lie down together; and the conquerors will never rescue the conquered" (*Sybil*, p. 305).

In addition to studying the different forms of conflicts in the two novels, it is great time we saw how these conflicts have been resolved in these novels.

2. Conflict Resolution

The two writers rather lay emphasis on the necessity for the individual employers to recognize that those who are suffering because they are reduced to the life of workers also deserve by natural rights an acceptable degree of well-being in the common society in which all of them live. This idea of giving an equal share of what is good in life is also shared by Keating (1971, p. 228), who pertinently asserts that:

What is particularly noticeable about violence in industrial fiction is the amount of blame allotted to the employers. This is not because the novelists are adopting a working-class viewpoint, on the contrary, these are very much novels about the condition of England as seen from above. The reason lies in the limited social philosophies of the novelists. Changes are desired but not changes of too radical a nature. They are demanding a revolution in class relationships without any alteration in the balance of the power. By personalizing class conflict and placing the blame on the human failings of individual employers and employees, sympathy is aroused for the worker's appalling conditions without this being taken to imply that there is anything fundamentally wrong with the social structure as a whole.

Here, in the light of this quotation, no party is wrong or right, the two classes are to be brought closer to each other in order to establish an understanding of the realities pertaining to each class, and this is what the two writers under scrutiny have tried to do in their different approaches. These different approaches in the resolution of the conflicts represent their respective points of view on the industrial working-class problems. For example, Disraeli adopts an opinion that favours the necessity of creating a sense of responsibility between the two classes. Gaskell's approach, as shown below, dwells on repentance and reconciliation which should foster a humane relationship between the workers and the masters.

2.1. Gaskell's Mea culpa-based Approach

Another strategy used to suggest an approach to the resolution of the conflicts in the novels is the one outlined by Gaskell, who tries to bring the two classes into close and intimate contact. She does this through a process

of repentance and confession of mutual guilt. The process, in her opinion, should lead to fostering a high sense of humility and humanity that should be restored between the two classes. This process of reconciliation happens after both parties had gone through many sufferings.

After the murder of Harry Carson and after it had been established that John Barton was the murderer of his son, Old Mr. Carson went to John Barton's home to pour vengeance on him. However, in lieu of pouring bitter vengeance on the murderer of his son, Old Mr. Carson rather met a different situation in which John Barton found himself.

In fact, John Barton was agonizing at this moment, and the writer used this occasion to bring them together in a reconciliatory tone which favoured the dialogue between the dying John Barton and Mr. Carson. It is a way to bring the suffering working class closer to the affluent upper class. Bringing the workers to talk with the employers in an intimate way is the strategy used by Gaskell to bridge the gap between the class of the poor industrial workers and that of the masters with the view of setting up a healing co-existence between the upper classes and the lower ones. By bringing the two classes together, the writer does not blame any one of them; she puts them face to face so that each class would conduct an in-depth analysis of its respective situation in order to admit responsibility where it is due. This is what Gaskell tries to show in her novel *Mary Barton*.

The fact that Gaskell committed her writings to the plight of working-class people has, however, earned her a bitter criticism of being biased in favour of this class. But she defended herself by saying that she wanted to be truthful to the material she depicted, that is to say the Industrial Revolution and its impact on the workers. She also satisfied the requirements of the Marxist view of literature, which posits that if literature is to be realistic, it should show some concern for the oppressed people in society, who are the workers in this case. Gaskell was criticised for developing a plot that indicted the upper classes. After the murder of his son, Mr. Carson is brought to forgive the murderer. The upper and the middle classes' readership did not appreciate this stand of Gaskell. The readers from these classes rather wanted the writer to condemn the murderer. Gaskell took notice of this feedback and wrote *North and South* in which she showed a balanced picture of both classes. Gaskell is not, in fact, the first female writer to delineate these miserable industrial characters, as Uglow (1993, p. 197) points out:

Gaskell used her fiction to draw attention to the plight of the factory

worker in Manchester, and to argue for reconciliation between employers and workers. While Gaskell was not the first woman to tackle industrial strife and expose the suffering of the workers in fiction. Mary Barton painted a grim picture of working life in which mill owners grew rich on the back of their long-suffering workers. The novel turned a drama of conflict between classes into an examination of humanity's essentially divided nature.

More importantly, Gaskell was aware of the guilt from both sides. Under this perspective, Keating (1971, p. 228) clearly remarks, "the workers of course are not left blameless. They too must offer up scapegoats or bow in repentance if the necessary class balance is to be achieved. Gaskell was particularly conscious of this."

The process of the resolution of this class conflict in *Mary Barton* goes climaxes in the assassination of Mr. Carson's son by John Barton. It is a process of repentance, which presupposes that each class has admitted having done something wrong. In Gaskell's novel, it occurs after the two parties namely. Mr. Carson representing the upper class and John Barton, the working class, have a pathetic exchange between them about whether Mr. Carson should be merciful to John Barton or not, on the motive that he comes forward to admit being guilty of the murder of young Carson. Below is the description of Mr. Carson, the master, in a face-to-face contact with John Barton, the worker who murdered his son:

"And have I heard you aright?" began Mr. Carson, with his deep quivering voice. "Man! have I heard you aright? Was it you, then, that killed my boy? my only son?"—(he said these last few words almost as if appealing for pity, and then he changed his tone to one more vehement and fierce). "Don't dare to think that I shall be merciful, and spare you, because you have come forward to accuse yourself. I tell you I will not spare you the least pang the law can inflict,—you, who did not show pity on my boy, shall have none from me." (*MB*, p. 432)

Mr. Carson was overwhelmed by a bitter hatred and at this very crucial moment, the only thing that could assuage his hatred was for him to see John Barton hanged purely and simply. He was at this stage dominated by the principle of tit for tat, and nothing more than hatred for hatred, which would lead to a situation where violence would be breeding more violence. Surprisingly something strange and irregular rather dominated John Barton's behaviour, who, did not ask for any merciful treatment from the part of the

one he had wronged. He was not scared at any rate of the threat of being hanged as a punishment for the crime he committed. Here Barton admitted his guilt and was ready to undergo any form of punishment, even if it was by death through hanging. He himself wanted earlier to commit suicide in order to put an end to his miserable life:

"As for being hanged, sir, I know it's all right and proper. I dare say it's bad enough; but I tell you what, sir," speaking with an outburst, "if you'd hanged me the day after I'd done the deed, I would have gone down on my knees and blessed you. Death! Lord, what is it to Life? To such a life as I've been leading this fortnight past. Life at best is no great thing; but such a life as I have dragged through since that night," he shuddered at the thought. "Why, sir, I've been on the point of killing myself this many a time to get away from my own thoughts. I didn't! and I'll tell you why. I didn't know but that I should be more haunted than ever with the recollection of my sin. Oh! God above only can tell the agony with which I've repented me of it, and part perhaps because I feared He would think I were impatient of the misery He sent as punishment—far, far worse misery than any hanging, sir." He ceased from excess of emotion. (*MB*, p. 433)

After this pathetic exchange between John Barton and Mr. Carson, the gentlemen wept bitterly; each lamenting his unfortunate plight. Mr. Carson regrets his beloved son and appeals to God to help him: "He was my sunshine, and now it is night! Oh, my God! Comfort me! Cried the old man, aloud" (*MB*, p.435) On his part, John Barton whose eyes grew dim with tears, has come to the realisation that the employers are as vulnerable as the rest of human beings in the world. He has discovered that the rich and the poor experience the same lot when it comes to grieving after having seen how his master is suffering. He has now realised that grieving is equally shared among human beings, no matter whether they are workers or employers. His understanding of the relationship between the two classes has now changed. The writer used the binary opposition patterns to bring the reader to his conclusion:

Rich and poor, masters and men, were then brothers in the deep suffering of the heart; for was not this the very anguish he had felt for little Tom, in years so long gone by, that they seemed like another life! (*MB*, p. 435)

Both the master and the employee have gone through the same experience; both of them know how it feels to lose a son, no matter whether

it is out of hunger or out of a criminal action. John Barton's son died because of starvation and it, among other reasons, prompted him, to accept to kill the son of his employer. After the death of his son, the same John Barton had to lose his wife out of lack of adequate medical care because he had no money at that time. The writer appears here to have allowed the two characters to experience life from the same side, especially the bitter side. It is through this experience that each party admitted its wrongdoings that succeeded in bringing on board the reconciliation between the representatives of the two classes. This experience proved very instructive to John Barton who then came to the realisation that:

The mourner before him was no longer the employer; a being of another race, eternally placed in antagonistic attitude; going through the world glittering like gold, with a stony heart within, which knew no sorrow but through the accidents of Trade; no longer the enemy, the oppressor, but a very poor and desolate old man. (*MB*, p. 435)

John Barton is now a changed man who regrets his criminal actions. As the hatred against the upper class is now over, he now looks at the world with different eyes. As he himself admitted, it was the accident of trade that had created divide between the two classes which, in fact, are made of the same humankind. That is why Gaskell concludes in the following terms, "But now he knew that he had killed a man, and a brother—now he knew that no good thing could come out of this evil, even to the sufferers whose cause he had so blindly espoused" (*MB*, p.436). One can infer from this conclusion by John Barton that, the writer does not approve of violence of any kind as a means of conflict resolution. She created John Barton as a violent prone character, who later regretted his criminal action before repenting, by clearly saying that he does not see the usefulness of this violence. This shows with ample evidence that Gaskell does not advocate any form of violence as an avenue to resolve conflict. The fact that she has brought John Barton to regret and repent his crime does testify to this philosophy of nonviolence.

The writer appears here to have brought down Mr. Carson to the lower position in society from his pedestal in the upper class. Gaskell consequently suggests the development of a sense of solidarity between the employers and the workers by bringing them to a levelled ground. To express this idea, she creates John Barton as an advocate of solidarity between the two classes. About the conflicts between the class of workers of the employers, John Barton declares that two the classes can: "Distrust each other as they may, the employers and the employed must rise or fall together. There may be some difference as to chronology, none as to fact" (*MB*, p.221). The writer

implies that society must stand together as one house. She bears in mind that a house divided against itself cannot stand. As if to say, a society like the English society divided against itself cannot prosper. For Gaskell, one class cannot triumph over the other and leave it behind. With this idea, she says that the working class should not be dreaming about the overthrow of the ruling classes in order to control the affairs of society to the detriment of the ruling ones. She calls upon the upper class to be mindful of the needs of the working class. She gives to each class its sense of responsibility. For her, each class must develop a sense of responsibility towards the other.

The writer reminds the employers of the necessity to reckon with the rights of the workers to enjoy a good life through their hard work. She argues that, if the employers treat the workers as their brothers and friends by paying them reasonable wages, this will help bring a peaceful co-existence of the two classes in a healthy society. She brings the employers to know that enjoying a good lifestyle is not a preserve of the upper classes only. Gaskell contends that, the employers should not believe that the workers have rights to share the well-being they enjoy exclusively on the grounds that they are the employers, or capital owners.

She adopts a humanistic approach to the resolution of the conflicts in her novel. She wants the employers to abandon their ideological stance and come down to the realities of life and recognize the workers as their fellow human beings and stop looking at them as if they were a different race of people living in a different world. She is of the view that both workers and employers belong to the same race, the same society and consequently deserve the same treatment in terms of rights and obligations in society. In her opinion, the employers and the workers should develop a relationship based on the solid foundation that they are partners in society, and that partnership should be entertained for the mutual benefits of both parties. The well-being should be shared equally with every human being irrespective of the fact that one is an employer and the other, a worker. Through this narrative approach, Gaskell reminds each class of its responsibility. Keating (1971, p.234) argues that:

For her the division of society into classes of men hostile to each other has got nothing to do with the pressure of industrialism or the struggle for power in a rapidly changing society, but rather results from the indifference of employers. Had they treated the work-men as ‘brethren and friends’ and explained that ‘it was the wise policy of the time’ for sacrifices to be made on both sides, then the misunderstanding that is at the root cause of class conflict would be removed.

Evidently, Gaskell advocates the sense of solidarity and understanding between the classes. She insists on the humane relationship that should exist between the employers and the workers. There should be a friendly relationship or even better a brotherly relationship between the masters and the workers in the running of the business in the industry in which policies and programmes should be explained to the workers with the view of avoiding any misunderstanding between the two classes. This brotherly relationship should be based on the Christian ethics of brotherhood. The writer ends the conflict in the novel by bringing face to face the two classes. This view is further explained by Williams (1958, p. 102), who says this about the respective representatives of the two classes:

John Barton dies penitent, and the elder Carson repents of his vengeance and turns, as the sympathetic observers wanted the employers to turn, to efforts at improvement and mutual understanding. This was the characteristic humanitarian conclusion, and it must be certainly respected.

Gaskell does not espouse the Marxist idea that advocates the turning of the tables whereby the working class should replace the upper class in order to create a classless society. But the fact that she has focused her delineation on the plight of the working class brings her closer to the Marxist literary theory, which advocates that art, and literature in particular, should be used to reflect the realities of the working classes, or to give prominence to the oppressed people. Gaskell appears in *Mary Barton* to have done two important things. First, she has given in her writing great deal of importance to the working-class plight. Second, she has suggested a humane relationship between the workers and the masters that will contribute to the remodelling of modern industrial society.

In a nutshell, in *Mary Barton*, Gaskell espouses the Christian idea that advocates love, peace, and happiness. She hopes that employers and employees achieve “a perfect understanding, and complete confidence and love” (MB, p.388), in which these opposing parties “acknowledge the spirit of Christ as the regulating law between [them]” (MB, p. 388).

Her fellow novelist Disraeli takes a more or less different step, more different because this step puts a love story on the foreground, and the industrial-related crime on the background, as shown in the lines below.

2.2. Disraeli's Romantic Approach

An assessment of *Sybil* reveals that the storyline ends with the marriage of Egremont to Sybil and, which serves as a way of bringing the upper and

lower classes together thereby resolving their conflicts. Disraeli has a knack of solving this nearly impossible issue in crafting a love story between a working-class girl and an aristocrat, which is a sign showing that the writer wishes to see the two warring classes sitting at the same negotiating table. Through love of Sybil, Egremont, a member of an old titled family becomes interested in the "lower classes" and investigates the conditions of their lives. As a result, we are given very vivid and startling pictures of the horrible and distressing circumstances of the lives of the laboring people. The hero's sympathies are enlisted, and he takes up the cause of the Chartists in Parliament.

Disraeli's characterisation of Sybil as a beautiful lady whom several of the male characters, like Stephen Morley, entertain thoughts of marrying, shows this romantic approach to get the two conflicting nations together as one. Sybil, like her father, is very reform-minded. She believes in moral power and advocates for more peaceful reform than her suitor, Morley. Writing on this novel, Moore (2015, p. 59) says, "In *Sybil*, buildings and bodies often run together: early in the novel, Egremont compares Marney Abbey to a 'great body' (p. 59), and later, on seeing Sybil in Westminster Abbey, he is 'caught by the symmetry of her shape and the picturesque position which she gracefully occupied' (p. 232), viewing her as part of the abbey's structure." In Disraeli's own words, we read:

The sounds -- those mystical and thrilling sounds that at once elevate the soul and touch the heart -- ceased, the chaunting of the service recommenced; the motionless form moved; and as she moved Egremont came forth from the choir, and his eye was at once caught by the symmetry of her shape and the picturesque position which she gracefully occupied; still gazing through that grate, while the light pouring through the western window, suffused the body of the church with a soft radiance, just touching the head of the unknown with a kind of halo. Egremont approached the transept door with a lingering pace, so that the stranger, who he observed was preparing to leave the church, might overtake him. As he reached the door, anxious to assure himself that he was not mistaken, he turned round and his eye at once caught the face of Sybil. He started, he trembled; she was not two yards distant, she evidently recognised him; he held open the swinging postern of the Abbey that she might pass, which she did and then stopped on the outside, and said "Mr. Franklin!" (*Sybil*, p. 140)

Like Richardson's heroine, Pamela whose virtue is her own reward, Sybil has her justification to be regarded as the eponymous character of the novel. Egremont and Sybil are "two hearts living in two separate worlds" to repeat Elton John's lyrics from 'Sacrifice'. Thumbing through Sybil, one may feel that Disraeli displays bias towards the lower class, a class to which his heroine belongs. It is, as such, no wonder that he uses her as the eponymous character, who is otherwise defined as the two nations. In her are wedded the upper class and the lower class. This marriage of Egremont and Sybil, a symbol for the reconciliation of the two classes, as Laurie-Fletcher (2008, pp. 47-48) argues:

...marriage involved a shared understanding of landed labourers and the industrial poor. Disraeli used the marriage of Egremont and Sybil as emblematic of a forging of a new aristocracy from both 'nations' of the rich and poor symbolizing greater understanding between the 'Two Nations' that would, in turn create one nation that would not only be stronger but also peaceful.

Such Disraeli's romantic approach to conflict based on mutual responsibility between the two different classes was formerly used by Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet* to solve the long-standing family feud between the Montagues and the Capulets. The loss of a child on both sides, has called the two conflicting families to reconciliation. Disraeli, like Shakespeare, tries to show how powerful love is. Disraeli, like Gaskell, adopts a Christian-like idea in that Egremont, like Christ, leaves his upper class to descend and champion Sybil and therefore the cause of her lower class as she is "subject to aggressive masculine attempts to possess" her, if we are to believe Moore (2015, p. 67).

Through this wedlock, Disraeli is trying to solve the controversial issue ranging from what he terms the two nations living separate lives as if they were governed by different laws. With this method of class reconciliation and mutual understanding through interclass marriage, Disraeli seems not to adopt the ideology of Marx and Engels, who advocate a violent revolution by the working classes in order to overthrow the ruling classes and take over the affairs of the classless society that would be formed later on, into their own hands. Such ideology was later espoused by George Orwell in his *Animal Farm* while he noticed that the gulf between the upper class and the working class kept on widening. Disraeli is not in favour of a replacement of the established order by a revolutionary change of roles. He is rather trying to present a different image of the aristocrat class which is basically perceived by the working-class members as oppressors. What is true is that, Sybil

herself believes that Egremont is her natural enemy who is born among the privileged and the nobles with whom she should not have any business in life at any pretext. Egremont himself in one of the conversations he often has with Sybil, perfectly illustrates this view of the author:

There is a dayspring in the history of this nation which those who are on the mountain tops can as yet perhaps only recognize. You deem you are in darkness, and I see a dawn. The new generation of the aristocracy of England are not tyrants, not oppressors, Sybil, as you persist in believing. Their intelligence, better than that, their hearts are open to the responsibility of their position. But the work that is before them is no holiday-work. It is not the fever of superficial impulse that can remove the deep-fixed barriers of centuries of ignorance and crime. Enough that their sympathies are awakened; time and thought will bring the rest." (*Sybil* p. 237)

This presentation of a positive image and a change of attitude in the behaviour of the upper class, is a way for Egremont to persuade Sybil to marry him. There is an attempt on the part of the ruling class, following the words of Egremont, to mend the fences and be more responsible towards the lower-class people before adding that they cannot effect any change in society on their own. So, for Disraeli, both classes must stop their conflict and give a chance to society to effect its own transformations and improvements. The author's decision to let the two classes confront each other, is purposely designed for the necessity for each one to develop a sort of healing dialogue and a sense of responsibility towards the other. In making Sybil, the eponymous character of his novel, Disraeli may be seen, like Gaskell, displaying a poor bias. For Fraser (2011, p.467), as he argues, it is not a problem of bias, but a problem of reception:

To judge *Sybil* as one might judge an ordinary novel is to miss the point, both men argue. *Sybil* is a novel with an important political purpose, and to dismiss it is to dismiss the suffering of thousands and the political leaders who tried to end that suffering.

Like the two writers under scrutiny, Fraser draws the attention of readers and urges them to take the two opposed extremes into consideration for their peaceful coexistence and advancement.

Conclusion

This paper has been written on the premise that Gaskell and Disraeli respectively wrote *Mary Barton* and *Sybil* as narrative approaches to class conflict resolution. After close scrutiny, their stories prove powerful and

successful steps to bring the Lower class and the Middle class together as one people in the Victorian society. The “not by strength, but by guile” approach and Bulwer-Lytton’s metonymic adage have successfully worked in their novels.

The non-violent strategy employed by both authors is not quite different from that employed by the Chartist at that time, which partly consisted in using petitions to put pressure on politicians to concede manhood suffrage. These novelists and chartists addressed the issues similarly, but were looking forwards to different reforms : economic and political. Chartism thus relied on constitutional methods to secure its aims, though there were some who became involved in insurrectionary activities, notably in South Wales and in Yorkshire, which, to some extent, resembles John Barton’s earlier criminal impulses before he becomes a changed man.

In a nutshell, notice has to be given that Gaskell’s and Disraeli’s approaches to conflict resolution display nonviolence in that their narrative titles surprisingly bear the names of female characters, the symbols of softness and tenderness.

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