# Social Mobility in Selected Literary Works

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# Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the greatest blessings of my life, Reemas and Sultan

# Acknowledgements

It is my greatest pleasure to dedicate my thanks to those who have helped me in the course of my thesis writing. Without a doubt, my greatest debt is to my supervisor Prof. Mohammad Asfour for his patience and generous support. My deepest gratitude also goes to my husband and my family for their constant support, love, and encouragement.

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# CONTENTS

# ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with different cases of upward social mobility in selected English and American literary works. It is an attempt to analyze and study the concept of upward social mobility as a social phenomenon that is a recurrent theme in literature. This is done by scrutinizing different upstart characters in the selected works, and by shedding light on their experience in their new environment.

The main aim of this study is to refute the possibility of upward social mobility, and to show the extreme difficulty the upstarts face when they seem to rise in the world. This study attempts to prove that upward social mobility is in its core sense a change that doesn't exceed appearances. The study pursues an analytical approach in exploring the theme of upward mobility in Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*, F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, and in Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* and *Arms and the Man*.

Chapter One

# Introduction

Literature is widely considered a reflection of society and culture. Studying it is a good way of understanding humans and society. In his article, “The Relationship of Literature and Society”, Milton C. Albrecht states that “literature presents a manifest and latent content, both derived from stresses in society, and both given symbolic meaning” (426-27). This is also verified in Raymond Williams’ article “Literature in Society”, where he argues that literature is a form of social behavior in the form of literary practice, and such literary practice is naturally associated with other practices within the same society” (25). Social class is one of the most important social concepts tackled in literature. Many literary works have a part that reflects social attitudes towards class. So regardless of time and place, class is a prominent concept that plays a significant role in the social system. Speaking less about class doesn’t mean it is nonexistent. Studies that tackle class conflict, social stratification, social inequality, social class mobility, and dreams of a classless society are all studies about class under different titles.

Social class is one type of social stratification that can be defined as “a social phenomenon, based on social and cultural conventions and the authority

and power arrangements in the society" (Mayer and Buckley 9). The concept of class implies "differences in wealth and income [which] are expressed in different ways of life: patterns of consumption, types of education, speech, manners, dress, tastes, and other cultural attributes" (Mayer and Buckley 15). As for social mobility, it is defined by Sorokin as "any transition of an individual or social object of value–anything that has been created or modified by human activity–from one social position to another" (133).

The class system is the most flexible among other stratification systems as it regards the boundaries between different strata. In the estate (the clergy, the nobility, the commons) and the caste stratification systems the boundaries between one stratum and another are rigidly established (Mayer and Buckley 14). So in these systems, individuals are not likely to aspire to rise socially. In the class system, class boundaries are manifested through major differences that create and establish different classes. J. Emmett Winn in his *The American Dream and Contemporary Hollywood Cinema* defines class as follows:

> Social class distinctions abound in life style choices, cultural tastes, and social, secular, and religious affiliations. The privilege of those who identify themselves as upper class is based on cultural taste and educational level as well as on economic capital. How one dresses, what one eats and where, how one entertains oneself and others, one's civic involvements, how one speaks, one's leisure

activities, and professional affiliations mark social class affiliations and taste cultures beyond income level" (5).

Social class mobility succeeds fully if the individual, who moves from one class to another, crosses all the boundaries between his class and the new class to which he has moved. Many have falsely claimed that classes are distributed according to economic status. The problem is that boundaries, as illustrated in Winn's definition of class, go beyond the economic differences. Perhaps, the easiest boundary to talk about is that established by economic differences and their manifestations. Differences in wealth have many consequences, but they merely change appearances. A better economic status leads to a better place of residence, a higher level of education, luxurious furniture, and fashionable clothes, but it has nothing to do with taste, attitudes, or manners.

Differences like taste, attitudes, and manners are considerably significant. These cultural differences are regarded as the core factors that set classes apart. The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu delves into the cultural differences that constitute a major distinction between individuals from different social origins. He rejects any concept that distinguishes classes on an economic basis (Shields 32). Bourdieu expands the concept of capital to cover the immaterial forms of life. He distinguishes several types of capital: the economic, the social, and most interestingly the cultural capital. Naturally, the distribution of capital is unequal

among individuals since they are born; it leads to differences that form different classes each of which has different requirements and different priorities.

The study of class mobility has been one of the prominent issues discussed in the sociology of literature. The concept has been frequently examined as related to the American Dream, class conflict and social inequality. In *Attitudes to Class in the English Novel from Walter Scott to David Storey*, Mary Eagleton and David Pierce maintain that the change in class structure has sharply influenced the novel since it adds new material, new attitudes and new forms to it (13). Also, they state that the rise of working-class fiction conveys new experiences and perceptions of the working-class, especially those associated with class conflict and class mobility (16).

In his book *The American Dream and Contemporary Hollywood Cinema*, J. Emmett Winn points out that social mobility is the basic element that guarantees the American Dream's success. He states that "the dream is a move up, a positive change in social level, a better life. It is the mobility inherent in a shift from the ranks of the poor to the middle class or from the working class to the professional upper class" (2).

Winn maintains that the media, especially Hollywood films, are major means through which the American Dream continues to flourish. To prove the validity of this, he makes use of narratives of different contemporary Hollywood

films. He sheds light on the concept of class mobility, and he considers mobility an act of advancement in all personal and social aspects. His study of the American Dream is directly interrelated to upward mobility, and it is divided into three parts: moralizing mobility, moralizing failure, and moralizing the material. In moralizing mobility he scrutinizes working-class characters that desire upward mobility and succeed in achieving it through hard work and personal motivation. In moralizing failure he sheds light on characters that seek upward mobility and fail to attain their goal, and as a result they cope with their social class due to their failure in joining a higher class. As for moralizing material, it is related to upper-class characters that derive an emotional benefit from their relations with lower-class characters. Finally, he asserts that the criterion of success and failure is determined by the individual happiness and morality. It doesn't matter if one succeeds or fails in achieving upward mobility, but what really matters is his acceptance and happiness in the life he/she has got. Winn's study of the American Dream is useful in many ways. In fact the American Dream is only an idea that has been frequently dramatized. It is so difficult even for the Americans themselves to move upward the social ladder and to abandon one's class. Nowadays the American Dream has become a myth. Winn shows how this myth is still propagated in Hollywood cinema. His study can be useful in supporting the idea that class mobility exists theoretically but not practically. Although it is highly desirable and it exists as a social phenomenon, it is hard to attain in actual life.

In *Locations of Desire: Social Mobility and Ideal Space in Novels by Dickens, Charlotte Bronte, Stendhal and Sand, 1830-1860*, Joy Holland examines social mobility in selected novels and studies social mobility as it is presented from several points of view. She investigates the influence of the social mobility theme on the narrative. She studies the structure of the narrative, the plot devices, and the marginal and the central issues in the novel to show how they correlate with the presented theme of social mobility. She illustrates how the complexity of the narrative structure in some literary works reflects the difficulty and the complexity of movement up and down the social ladder. Also, she examines the description of spaces within the novel and demonstrates that the way those locations and places are described in the literary works mirrors the social space that the protagonists strive to occupy. Holland also studies the different methods characters follow in achieving upward mobility like marriage, patronage, heroism, glory, etc. Moreover, she tackles the contradictions in presenting the theme of upward mobility in different literary texts. She shows that in some texts upward mobility is accessible for any man who works hard to better his life, while in other texts upward mobility is available only for certain kinds of protagonists. Another contradiction, she finds, is that the acceptability of a parvenu varies from one literary text to another. In some texts upward mobility is something good happening to individuals, so they are welcomed and appreciated in the new class. In other texts they are undervalued and not accepted at all because of their social origin. Holland's examination of these contradictions in

presenting the theme of upward mobility is a way to prove that there is no definite acceptability of upward mobility. The present study does not aim to prove that social mobility is good or bad, but to show that it is impossible or at least extremely difficult whatever methods are followed to reach it.

Mary Eagleton and David Pierce in *Attitudes to Class in the English Novel from Walter Scott to David Storey* conclude, building on their investigation of Lawrence's body of works, that class mobility is a motivation for individuals within society, in particular those who have undergone the pressures of world wars. Therefore, class mobility came to be something desired in their life and work. The authors maintain that class and social environment constitute an inevitable theme in the novel because it is a long story about individuals and their life surroundings. Also, they assert that the middle-class and the novelists in general play a significant role in foregrounding themes of their class aspirations, and that they are not always aware of the fact that their works imply their class experiences, perceptions and conflicts. Thus, the novel serves as a supporter of the middle-class in revealing meanings and understanding of issues that otherwise will be concealed.

In an essay entitled “Class in Thomas Hardy’s Late Short Stories (1890-1900): ‘For Conscience’ Sake’ and ‘The Winters and the Palmleys,’” Nada Al-Ajmi examines Thomas Hardy’s presentation of class in his late short stories. Thomas Hardy is mostly interested in the theme of social inequality and its

influence upon individuals within society. ‘For Conscience’ Sake’ is a story about a parvenu, Mr. Millborne. Al-Ajmi examines how characters seek to conceal their social origins once they rise socially. Mr. Millborne leaves his lover and moves to the city. But he cannot conceal his humble social origin. Although Mr. Millborne becomes rich and tries hard to hide his social origin, his attitudes, and norms reveal his humble social origin. Al-Ajmi also explores how Leonora, another character in the story, gets married to a curate and tries hard to hide her social origin as well. Al-Ajmi sheds light on Hardy’s presentation of life in the city and in the countryside by exploring Leonora as a case whose life in the city doesn’t suit her at all. Al-Ajmi's study of “For Conscience’ Sake” shows that one cannot abandon one’s class or conceal it.

In light of what has been established so far, it can be noted that upward social mobility is a controversial theme in English and American Literature. The study aims at shedding light on social class in selected English and American literary works from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Particularly, it explores the concept of upward social mobility in Charles Dickens’s *Great Expectations*, F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*, and in Bernard Shaw’s *Pygmalion* and *Arms and the Man.* It argues that social mobility is limited even if desirable. It maintains that each class has its own attitudes, norms and conditions that are slowly and unconsciously acquired and cannot be crossed overnight. Moreover, it attempts to refute assumptions such as those made by Nicholas Grene in his

book *Bernard Shaw: A Critical View*, in which he maintains that ''a lady is only a flower-girl plus six months phonetic training, a gentleman only a dustman with money'' (qtd. in Mugglestone 373). Mugglestone actually thinks that we are all alike, and changing our social class can best be if we succeed in changing the way people perceive us. As in the case of Eliza, Higgins thinks that Eliza's transformation into the middle class is a successful because she succeeds in changing the way others, like Clara, perceive her. Clara meets Eliza twice. Their first meeting is in Act I, Clara perceives Eliza as a cockney flower girl. Their second meeting is in Act III, where Clara perceives Eliza as a lady, as Miss Doolittle, without recognizing that she is the same flower girl she's met before.

The significance of the present study derives from the importance of class mobility as an important literary and social topic. Class is important both in terms of the way it functions in literature, and the way it is manifested in society. Literature depends heavily on conflict, and conflict appears at its clearest in class conflict. This conflict appears between the characters facing difficulties of this kind. But when this conflict appears within the characters, it becomes a question of the person's identity; therefore, there is a scope for further exploration of this theme. The fact that the importance of class as a subject of study has diminished can be attributed to the capitalist way of thinking now prevailing. Although money is not any more the main distinction that sets classes apart, classes still exist.

The present thesis deals with English and American literary works. English and American societies are class system societies. In England people cannot see their society without classes whereas in America many believe that America is classless society. Yet, most sociological studies affirm that 60 to 70 percent of the Americans are working-class (Winn 4), and that "[t]he richest 10 percent of families own over 70 percent of the American wealth" (Winn 4). Still, the highest majority of the Americans identify themselves as middle-class. Such aspects of the American society disprove the classlessness of the society they live in.

The present thesis pursues an analytical approach examining class mobility in selected literary works. It will make use of sociological sources in examining the concepts of class and class mobility in the selected works. Other literary works will be examined to support the hypothesis of this study such as Guy de Maupassant's "The Necklace", Thomas Mann's *Confessions of Felix Krull*, and Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*. The present thesis aims to scrutinize different cases of class mobility, and attempts to provide explanations why social mobility in the full sense is illusory. To this end, this thesis conducts an analysis of themes and characterizations. However, more emphasis will be laid upon interpreting characters and how they are presented after moving up the social ladder.

The present thesis will be divided into three parts, each shedding light on a different aspect of class and how it affect upward social mobility. The first part

will explore the concept of class as a social phenomenon, and how it varies among characters from different social backgrounds. Also, it will discuss the concept of upward social mobility and how it is affected by the various views of the concept of class. The second part will deal with the immaterial boundaries between classes. It explores how class affects one's habits, manners and lifestyle. Such boundaries are difficult to cross or change whether social, educational, or economic. The last part sheds light on the mutual results characters have when the apparent upward social mobility occurs. It sheds light on the characters' life in the new social milieu, and how their dreams turn all to naught. It examines the discontentment and sense of displacement characters endure once they live within the upper-class.

Chapter Two

# Social Mobility as a Social Phenomenon

"You may dive into many waters, but there is one social Dead Sea!"

(Pinero 1. 10)

*Great Expectations* is regarded as Dickens' best literary work. It mainly deals with the theme of upward social mobility through the story of Pip, the main character. Pip doesn't merely narrate his story as the incidents occur; he precisely delivers the nature of the class conditions he has gone through in each stage of his life, and the influence of these conditions on him throughout his life. Dickens' novels mainly deal with social issues and social relationships. They "earned the gratitude of posterity for awakening the social conscience" (Neill 175). His novels "offer the kind of insight into the subjective and inter-subjective realities of people which social scientists hope to glimpse but almost always seem to miss" (Stearns and Burns 2), and they can be approached as data that give an insight into "a worldview" (Stearns and Burns 2).

In general, the Victorian novel provides many examples in which class division is illustrated. Like many other Victorian novels, *Great Expectations*

tackles themes of class and upward social mobility. It is an example among many other nineteenth-century novels that are marked as embodiments of “the vast encyclopedia of knowledge about society” (Watson 172). The rise of the novel as a genre read by many people came as a result of major changes in fundamental social conditions. During the nineteenth century, the middle class emerged as a consequence of the industrial revolution. It acquired more strength especially after the Reform Act was enacted. This Act “can be seen as a rhetorical strategy which constructed the idea of middle-classness” (Price 266); it entailed the emergence of the middle-class as a recognized class with its own rights. Voting became permitted only for those who had a permanent or at least a recognizable place of residence, which led to the separation of the middle-class from the working-class on the basis of their socioeconomic status. The 1832 Reform Act didn’t only recognize this new stratum in society, but also solidified its position. It entailed spreading the power of political representation among different classes after it had long been confined to a small portion of society.

Reading novels was limited only to those who were able to read and could afford to buy them. The price of a novel was so expensive that it was considered a luxury limited to a certain stratum in society (Watt 41). In the nineteenth century the industrial revolution caused an increase in the number of social groups that were engaged in manufacturing and commerce, and later free educational services were offered to ordinary people. Consequently, the price of the novels became much cheaper than before. In his book *The Rise of The Novel,* Watt

states that this change in particular “may have altered the center of gravity of the reading public sufficiently to place the middle class as a whole in a dominating position for the first time” (45).

In her book *A Short History of the English Novel*, Diana Neill states that at the end of the nineteenth century “theory-mongers and satirists seized upon the novel as a means of propagating ideas and, realizing the almost limitless possibilities of using it as a vehicle for social criticism, combined story and realistic characterization with attacks on the foundations of contemporary society” (235-6). As a matter of fact, the English novel played a significant role in reflecting the English social conflicts and problems. Neill states that the middle class “was to become the arbiter of literary taste, at any rate so far as the novel was concerned” (159). This is confirmed by the fact that during the 1930s the Marxist critics in England inclined to approach the novel as providing “pictures of social injustice or examples of class feeling” (Eagleton and Pierce 7).

Dickens’ *Great Expectations* is a bildungsroman novel that is narrated by Pip, the main character in the novel. The novel is concerned with themes of social mobility, class, capitalism, gentlemanliness, and class boundaries. It revolves around Pip’s sudden upward mobility and his life after moving to London. The novel is narrated in three stages corresponding to Pip’s upward mobility. Unlike other stories on upward social mobility to be examined in this thesis*, Great Expectations* is narrated by the same character that goes through

such experience. Pip doesn't merely narrate his story as the incidents occur; he discloses his feelings of self-deficiency, regret, and self-criticism that result from his upward mobility as his great expectations turn out to be empty towards the end of the novel.

This chapter examines the different ways characters from different social classes conceptualize class and their consequences in having a variety of views concerning upward social mobility. It also aims to highlight the social origin as a significant and a highly valued boundary. It examines whether social origin is easy to conceal and neglect once money is no longer a consideration, and whether education, money, and learnt manners are enough to make of Pip a gentleman in the traditional sense. In sum, the chapter aims to scrutinize Pip's unsuccessful upward mobility through emphasizing the main reasons behind his failure and comparing him with other characters in the novel.

In the first stage of his life, Pip talks about his life since childhood until his early youth. For many reasons this part of the novel presents the role of class in shaping one's attitudes, and manners. It indicates the constant impact of one's social origin on his/her view of life. It reveals many cases of class conflict occurring between characters from different social origins. Also, it illustrates a variety of views concerning class and the lower-class's own understanding of upward mobility. The second stage presents a detailed depiction of Pip's upward mobility since his first day in London. The third stage deals with Pip's life after

identifying his benefactor and how his great expectations have all come to naught.

Pip was born into the lower-class and had been supposed to be a blacksmith's apprentice. Since his early childhood, Pip started visiting the Satis House. He was sent there to play with Miss Havisham's adopted daughter, Estella. Class differences start to appear from this point on in the novel. After his first visit to Miss Havisham, Pip walks back home thinking of the reason that makes him lower-class:

> "I was a common laboring-boy; that my hands were coarse; that my boots were thick; that I had fallen into a despicable habit of calling knaves Jacks; that I was much more ignorant than I had considered myself last night, and generally that I was in a low-lived bad way" (98; chap. 8).

Within Pip, a sudden recognition of his humble social origin has been aroused. This, according to Joy Holland, "is the instant in which Pip's world-view undergoes a revolutionary (or rather, counter-revolutionary) change, and in which Estella's tastes and attitudes (which are entirely those of her class) impose themselves on his consciousness as being intrinsically correct. One could characterize this as the moment of the imposition of bourgeois hegemony on an individual consciousness" (262). Pip has never gone through such a conflict or even heard about one. He starts to notice accessories, like his boots, that didn't

mean anything to him before. His class-consciousness is widened and a class conflict is stimulated within him. At that moment, though he has been a little child, he understands that the differences between him and Estella have to do with more than money. He wishes that “Joe had been rather more genteelly brought up” (93; chap. 8), so Joe would have known how to bring up Pip the same way he had. At that point an immediate change happens inside Pip. The snobbishness and strong class conflict that he encounters at the Satis house have evoked Pip’s will to change. That will keep recurring every time he sees Estella and Miss Havisham. However, the consequences aren’t all positive; Pip never has pride of place. He despises his home, his job to be, and his relatives sometimes. Becoming a Gentleman becomes the main target in his life no matter what this target will cost him.

The definition of class doesn’t only vary among scholars, but also among individuals from different social classes. Each class has its own manners, habits, and lifestyle that are exemplified in the actual life of individuals of each class. The concept of class has been one of the most controversial concepts; it has no one definite definition so far. In *Great Expectations*, the first and the second stages of the novel provide a detailed depiction of Pip’s life and the people around him. Each of these stages depicts the lower and the upper classes’ manners, habits, and lifestyle. Characters from different social origins approach class differently. The understanding of class boundaries varies among them; it is influenced by their social knowledge and experiences that they go through. Having contact with

characters from other social classes enhances one's understanding of what makes one class different from another. In *Great Expectations* the attitudes that each class inherits constitute the cornerstone of class differences. Apparently, the characters' understanding of the class concept varies according to their social background. On the one hand, the lower class, which is represented by Pip's relatives, friends, and benefactor, think of class in terms of economic, appearance, and educational differences. They highly value anyone who belongs to the upper-class however miserable his/her life is. On the other hand, those who belong to the upper-class deeply value the social origin as a significant feature that sets classes apart. The upper-class despise parvenus, and money for them is not the determining factor that makes an individual a member of the upper-class.

In his narrative, Pip talks about several incidents that demonstrate how members of the lower-class react towards issues associated with class. We notice that those who belong to the upper-class are always praised and highly valued by those who belong to the lower-class. The social class to which someone belongs is the strongest determinant feature according to which people are praised and respected by the lower-class. Miss Havisham's case offers a good example on this. She is one of the upper-class characters; she exerts great influence on Pip's life since his early childhood. The woman is well-known among the upper-class for the miserable life she has decided to live after her wedding catastrophe. Julie and Alison Levine assign characteristics of "excessive feelings

of shame, weakness, and failure" (64) to Miss Havisham, who is said to have "the desire to escape or isolate herself from society" (63). Moreover, Estella is brought up to "wreak revenge on all the male sex" (269; chap. 22). Miss Havisham's will to revenge is based on Estella; Lavine states: "Miss Havisham is living vicariously through her [Estella], that she takes pleasure in the thought of her daughter breaking the hearts of men in the way that she never could" (64). Consequently, neither Miss Havisham nor her adopted daughter has ever got a bright image among her own social class. Her relatives show pity and sympathy towards her. However, having contact with her is a great pleasure for people from the lower-class. That is very clear when Mrs. Gargery compliments Mr. Pumblechook for having contact with Miss Havisham, and condemns Mr. Gargery, Joe, for not being aware of her name. Besides, Mrs. Gargery and Mr. Pumblechook are anxious to know every single detail about her, and her house and manners. When Pip comes back home from his first visit to Miss Havisham's house, he is beaten to say every single detail about his visit there. At that moment no one cares how the kid feels and what he has gone through. No one thinks of the influence these visits have on Pip's self-image. Instead, he is forced to go and play there regardless of the negative impact on the child's self-image.

Besides, the lower-class' humble and naïve understanding of class boundaries makes it easier for them to think of upward mobility and crossing the boundaries. Pip's benefactor Abel Magwitch is another lower-class character that has the same common understanding of the concept of class. Magwitch spends

his life “[i]n jail and out of jail, in jail and out of jail, in jail and out of jail” (532; chap. 42). When he recounts his story to Pip and Herbert, he highlights the role of appearance and manners in concealing the social origin, which are significant factors that work against him in the court. Magwitch reveals to Pip the outcome of such an experience. After he is exiled, he recognizes that his reputation and his age won’t give him the chance to change. However, his anxiety about gentlemanliness leads him to think that he can create one: Pip. Magwitch goes through a class conflict that affects him heavily; he tells Pip that his appearance and behavior affects the judge’s sentence. Magwitch believes that he and Compeyson are two faces of the same coin, but Compeyson cleverly hides behind the image of a gentleman. He is set free because he looks like a gentleman in his appearance, manners, and education.

Magwitch’s understanding of class boundaries is very similar to the way Gargerys and Mr. Pumblechook approach it. Magwitch’s several experiences don’t deepen his understanding of class or even change it. When he first meets Pip, he informs him of his own definition of a gentleman:

> “a gold 'un and a beauty: that's a gentleman's, I hope! A diamond all set round with rubies; that's a gentleman's, I hope! Look at your linen; fine and beautiful! Look at your clothes; better ain't to be got! And your books too” (494; Chap. 39).

Magwitch recognizes the importance of money, appearances, and education in making his own gentleman. At one occasion he informs Pip of what distinguishes Compeyson as a gentleman saying, “He set up fur a gentleman, this Compeyson, and he'd been to a public boarding-school and had learning. He was a smooth one to talk, and was a dab at the ways of gentlefolks. He was good-looking too” (534; chap. 42). When Jaggers goes to deliver the contract to Pip, he informs him that his benefactor wants him to move to London and to be brought up as a gentleman. But Magwitch’s view, like that of other lower-class characters, isn’t sufficient. He sets out two conditions that Pip should accept to benefit from his offer. Significantly, these two conditions are in themselves resembling the shortcomings of Pip’s upward mobility because they contradict the aspects that the upper-class consider as distinguishable characteristics of its nature such as the social origin and the source of money.

The first condition demands Pip to keep his name and never change it. Pip has never bothered about his name until he starts to experience a new taste of a new class that distinguishes it from his former one. In his book *Distinctions. A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste,* Pierre Bourdieu studies taste as a distinctive factor that sets classes apart. He demonstrates that taste, unlike other class boundaries, is acquired through time. It cannot be learnt, but acquired by time. Supposedly, names are a matter of taste and “they reveal more about the people doing the choosing” (Kremer). Pip’s “infant tongue could make of both names [Pirrip and Philip] nothing longer than Pip” (1; chap. 1). He has never

thought of his name as a signifier of his social origin. He had never noticed or even thought about changing his name before going to London. When Mr. Jaggers informs Pip about this condition, he agrees immediately without hesitation. Most interestingly is that only those from the upper-class notice that his name doesn't fit a gentleman. So when he visits Miss Havisham, a woman from the upper-class, to tell her that he is moving to London, she hints to him that he should always keep his name; yet he doesn't understand that his name reflects his humble social origin.

When he meets Herbert in London, Herbert has the taste and manners of the upper-class that Pip lacks. So Pip learns from him the manners and the appropriate behavior that will make him acceptable to among the upper-class. At their first meeting Herbert proposes another name for Pip. He thinks that the name Philip

> "sounds like a moral boy out of the spelling-book, who was so lazy that he fell into a pond, or so fat that he couldn't see out of his eyes, or so avaricious that he locked up his cake till the mice ate it, or so determined to go a bird's-nesting that he got himself eaten by bears who lived handy in the neighborhood" ( 272; chap. 22).

He proposes a name after a well-known musician named Handel. The name he has chosen connects Pip figuratively to his past. It is chosen after a famous piece of music by Handel called "The Harmonious Blacksmith". In his

“The Freedom of Choice: a Snob or a Gentleman?”, Mahmut Terci demonstrates that Pip’s name reveals his humble origin. He reveals that Dickens “connects [Pip’s] lower class position with the name ‘Pip’ which also means a ‘pip-card’ or ‘a low card in a card game, namely beggar-my-neighbor’’ (1). No matter what efforts Pip does to hide his humble social origin, his name will always reveal it. Therefore, the first condition keeps Pip connected to his humble social origin that he strives to conceal.

The second condition demands keeping the identity of the benefactor unknown until he decides to reveal it. The identity of the benefactor represents the source of money that makes Pip a gentleman. Pip always wishes Miss Havisham to be his benefactor, in order to rest assured that the money that will solidify his position in the upper class comes from a respectable source. However, the identity of his benefactor turns out to be the convict he met in the marshes many years earlier. The benefactor belongs to the lower-class and has a criminal record. Knowing the identity of his benefactor ends all the dreams he has entertained. He wishes if he had never gone through this experience or even left the forge. The source of money is always important to the upper-class. There is always a question about it. The upstarts are admitted into the upper-class for their financial capacity, but the moment they lose it they are deserted from. They go back to the class they originally come from. To illustrate this point one may refer to Edith Wharton’s *Age of Innocence*, where Julius Beaufort is an English Banker, and a careless hospitable millionaire. He is married to Regina Dallas, a

woman from the upper-class. Beaufort is admitted and married into the upper-class. The upper-class accept his invitations and go to his parties. They cultivate his friendship. Yet, “who is Beaufort?” is a question that frequently occurs to their minds. He “had speedily made himself an important position in the world of affairs; but his habits were dissipated, his tongue was bitter, his antecedents were mysterious” (Wharton 34; chap. 3). Also, he is the one who trains the servants, teaches the chef new dishes, and selects the guests. Mr Sillerton Jackson, who is a great authority on family, is the only one who can tell who Beaufort is. A person like Lawrence Lefferts, who is the “foremost authority on ‘form’ in New York” (Wharton 13; chap. 1), despised foreign nouveau riches as Beaufort to be admitted into society. At one occasion Lefferts booms: “we shall see our children fighting for invitations to swindlers' houses, and marrying Beaufort's bastards” (Wharton 638; chap. 33). After all, when his business collapses, he leaves their society in shame. Though his wife Regina Dallas goes to Mrs. Manson Mingott, the matriarch of the Mingott family, asking her to help her husband, no one helps. They are deserted by New York society. Similarly in *Great Gatsby,* Gatsby holds lavish parties in his mansion every weekend. Invitations are sent to the upper-class in New York. They accept his invitations, eat there, drink and enjoy his parties till the wee hours of the night. Yet, Gatsby has been the subject of their gossip. Just like Beaufort, they keep questioning his origin and the source of his money. When he dies, nobody goes to his funeral except his neighbor, some servants, and his father. All the guests and friends

who accepted his invitations and spent nights at his mansion have disappeared. Some of them apologize and others say they have other engagements that day. In Richard Jefferies' short story "Snowed Up: A Mistletoe Story," three men propose to a lady from the upper-class. Her father prefers to have her marry a man who can help him in keeping his name and status in society. One of those men is a nouveau riche, Mr. Alderman Thrigg. He has gained all his money from developing a grocery shop. Though he has many advantages, she refuses to marry him because of his social origin. Thrigg improves his position in society because of the money he makes, but the recurrent question is what will happen if he loses it especially after the snow storm. After all money, which raised his status in society, won't keep him among the upper-class if he loses it. He gains admittance into their society, but he is never considered as one of them.

Some social scientists argue that the United States' upper-class contains two divisions: Upper-upper-class and lower-upper-class (Kendall 55). Through this division the conflict of old money versus new money is illustrated. The designation "lower-upper-class" refers to the nouveaux riches. They climb the social ladder through economic and educational capital. The social origin and the history of their family is not established or known. Whenever they lose their money, they are ejected from the upper-class like Beaufort, Gatsby, Mr. Thrigg, and Pip. On the other hand, the designation "upper-upper-class" refers to prominent families that have inherited their status across generations. Money is not the distinctive feature that made them upper-class. Consequently, if any one

of them loses his/her money, he/she is not deserted by his/her class. An example of this is the Eynsford Hill family in Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*. The Eynsford Hills are one of the upper-class families that is economically declining. Mrs. Eynsford complains to Mrs. Higgins that they are poor and her daughter gets few parties. Though they are not so wealthy, they remain a recognizable upper-class family. The decline in their economic status doesn't bring them downwards because money is not the factor that made them upper-class. They remain upper-class in their attitudes, manners, lifestyle, and, most importantly, tradition.

In *Confessions of Felix Krull* by Thomas Mann, Felix, whose father's business is ruined, goes to Paris to work as a waiter in a hotel. At one occasion, while he is working at the hotel, he thinks about what he calls interchangeability: "With a change of clothes and make-up, the servitors might often just as well have been the masters, and many of these who lounged in the deep wicker chairs, smoking their cigarettes, might have played the waiter. It was pure accident that the reverse was the fact, an accident of wealth; for an aristocracy of money is an accidental and interchangeable aristocracy" (199). An aristocracy of money does exist, but genuine aristocracy is supposed to be deeply rooted in history and tradition. In Pip's case, Magwitch gained his money after being "a sheep-farmer, stock-breeder, other trades besides, away in the new world" (Dickens 490; chap. 39). So it is not only his social origin that brought him shame among the upper-class, but also the origin of his money and benefactor. He tries to conceal his social origin, and neglects his relatives and friends. But his

benefactor's past is worse than them all. Magwitch's conditions reveal his ignorance of significant social notions. Magwitch thinks that he has succeeded in making a gentleman out of a blacksmith through improving his appearance and education. These two conditions, the name that signifies his social origin and the source of his money highlight two important aspects that cannot be bought by money. Both of them highpoint Pip's humble origin and his failure to conceal it. Throughout the text, Dickens shows in many other occasions that most characters who have limited experiences out of their own social sphere, mainly from the lower-class, lack the social knowledge that is necessary to enable them to cross class boundaries. Accordingly, most of those characters that are not acquainted with this knowledge have a similar view of Pip's upward mobility. When people in town know about Pip's movement to London and his likely fortunes there, most of them change their attitude towards him. The first thing he does is to visit Mr. Trabb to have new clothes tailored for him. When he enters the shop, he finds Mr. Trabb "having his breakfast in the parlor behind his shop, and … [he] did not think it worth his while to come out to me [Pip], but called me in to him" (231; chap. 19). But when Pip informs Mr. Trabb about his fortune "a change passed over Mr. Trabb" (231; chap. 19) he cuts his breakfast immediately and "he respectfully bent his body, opened his arms, and took the liberty of touching me [Pip] on the outside of each elbow" (232; chap. 19). Mr. Pumblechook, on his first meeting with Pip after he knows about his fortune, shows excessive care towards Pip and keeps holding his hands whenever he

gets the chance. Besides, he keeps asking Pip the permission to call him “my dear friend”. Later on, when Pip’s great expectations vanish, all the respect and caring from those people vanish as well. He goes back to the forge to start over as before.

Pip shows through the first stage that most lower-class characters think of a gentleman in terms of money and education. Money is enough to gain their respect and to be treated as a gentleman. However, the criteria in London appear to be different. Pip’s second stage presents more serious class boundaries. Pip thinks it is easy to attain the status of a gentleman in London. Yet, after indulgence in that society he discovers that he will not be one of them. Even if he appears to live the way a gentleman does, he never feels like one of them.

The Pocket family represents the atmosphere that Pip indulges in during the first years of his movement to London. He is the only one among his friends and relatives who has had experienced upward mobility. Through the experience of living with people from a different class, Pip understands very well the differences that distinguish him from others in that house. Beyond appearances and the money in the pocket, he is acutely conscious of the fact that the boundaries between him and them are rigidly established in attitudes, manners, and origin. Symbolically, the family stands for the paradigms that are found in every gentleman. Mr. Matthew Pocket stands for education and high culture. He

is well-known among the upper-class and he is a highly recommended tutor. Mrs. Pocket stands for social origin and genuine aristocracy. Herbert Pocket stands for manners and attitudes. Pip the upstart finds staying in their house very difficult. So he decides to move to stay in Barnard's Inn where he feels more comfortable. In Edith Wharton's novel *The Age of Innocence*, at one point in the novel, Mrs. Archer is anxious to inform her children about the four genuine aristocratic families within their society. By this, she excludes other families that claim to be aristocratic. Her point is that aristocracy has to do with history and tradition, not merely economic status. Even her son, Newland Archer, conceives this notion as "a part of the structure of his universe" (Wharton 87; chap. 12). Similarly, Mrs. Pocket, whose grandfather was a knight, emphasizes the noble social origin she belongs to. Pip frequently describes her while reading her book on titles; the book includes a part on her grandfather.

As a nouveau riche who does a lot to conceal his social origin, Pip doesn't gain acceptance by the upper-class. He has the money, becomes educated, and learns their manners but he is never considered as one of them. He is despised among some of the upper-class members. Sometimes he is neglected and occasionally insulted. Estella informs Pip that Mr. Pocket's people "beset Miss Havisham with reports and insinuations to your disadvantage. They watch you, misrepresent you, write letters about you (anonymous sometimes), and you are the torment and the occupation of their lives. You can scarcely realize to yourself the hatred those people feel for you" (411; chap. 33). On another occasion,

Drummle describes Pip's part of the country as a "beastly place", and he tries to tease Pip about his social origin through exploring the marshes as they belongs to his past place of residence.

Dickens illustrates gradually the reasons behind Pip's failure in his attempt to rise socially. First, he takes the reader through different points of view towards upward mobility through characters from different classes. He shows the differences between the two classes meticulously depicted through a detailed narration of Pip's life through occasions and discussions. The difference in manners and attitudes of each class resembles the impenetrable boundary that guaranteed Pip's failure. Thoroughly, Dickens shows the importance of the social origin in determining the person's social class. When someone is born into a class, his manners, his attitudes, and his identity are fully shaped by that class. Money and education are not sufficient to replace an inheritance acquired through time, place, and people.

Pip's great expectations turn to naught for many reasons. First, Pip's ignorance of the rigid role of the social origin and the source of money to the upper-class makes him think that being a member of the upper-class is easy and possible. The lower-class generally think of money as a determining factor of gentlemanliness. However, the upper-class think of the noble social origin rooted in history as a determining factor for gentlemanliness. Second, Pip's benefactor belongs to the lower-class, so both of them are ignorant of fundamental social

notion regarding class. The reasons behind his failure are ironically exemplified as the basis of his upward mobility; the conditions Magwitch sets are built on an ignorant background and prefigure the inevitable up-coming failure. Third, Dickens presents several characters with similar conditions to Pip in London. Each character differs in nothing from Pip but in their social origin and their source of money. Drummle is presented as a character that gains attention and respect for his noble social origin. Mr. Jaggers likes him and describes him as “one of the true sort” (333; chap. 26). The significance of the social origin appears at its clearest in the societal judgments through comparing Pip with Estella. Towards the end of the novel, we learn that Estella is the daughter of Pip’s benefactor Magwitch, and her mother is a servant at Mr. Jaggers house. Both of her parents have a criminal record, so her concealed social origin is shameful. Accordingly, the main difference between Pip and Estella lies in three main factors: the social origin, the source of money, and the social milieu.

Pip’s and Estella’s social origin is one and the same. But Pip lives his childhood and early youth as one of the lower-class. Pip wasn’t accepted among the upper-class for his humble origin even after he enhanced his cultural and educational capital. Ironically he belongs to the same class that Estella is truly from. Estella is always presented as the adopted daughter of Miss Havisham. Nobody mentions or questions her social origin. She is respected, accepted, and married into the upper-class. When Pip reveals to Mr. Jaggers and Wemmick that he knows the secret of Estella’s parents, the three of them agree that

revealing her real origin will bring her nothing but disgrace. They all settle to keep the secret unrevealed so she may live secure the rest of her life. So the consensus on hiding her humble origin between three characters from different social classes reveals the validity of social origin as significant.

In his article "'What do You Play, Boy?': Card Games in *Great Expectations*", Kirsten Parkinson examines the figurative meaning of games in the novel. Parkinson demonstrates that the games in the novel intertwine with the themes of class and class mobility. One of the games that he examines is the card game that Pip and Estella often play. The card game namely Beggar-my-Neighbor gathers Pip and Estella during their first meeting at Miss Havisham's house. The game depends mainly on luck. No intellect or education is required to play it. As Parkinson explains, mathematicians suggest that "the probability that one player wins a single game of beggar-my-neighbor is never greater than 60 percent unless the game is played only with court cards" (qtd. in Parkinson 122). Yet Estella wins every time. Parkinson considers this an illustration of the "psychological power she has on Pip" (123). Similarly, in their social life Estella figuratively wins. In comparison with Pip, Estella's social origin is concealed and she is brought up to the upper-class tradition. Hence, she is accepted among the upper-class more than Pip. She obtains the attitudes and the manners of the upper-class since her early childhood. In their first meeting, the difference between Estella and Pip is quite clear. She recognizes his humble social origin and talks about it. Pip hasn't ever before that meeting recognized the social

differences between them until she said it. Also, each one of them calls the cards differently; Pip narrates this saying that he “had fallen into a despicable habit of calling knaves Jacks” (98; chap. 8) and he regards that difference in calling cards to his humble social origin. So, Pip’s humble social origin is illustrated figuratively and literally throughout the novel.

“[T]he gentleman what I made! The real genuine One!” (509; Chap. 40), Magwitch said. Apparently Dickens knew that sarcasm is the lowest form of wit. So he delivers these words through the most ignorant character in the novel. Yes, Pip in Magwitch’s consideration is a real genuine gentleman. The dream that occupied both Pip and Magwitch came all to be illusory at the end. Bruce Robbins states that “The overturning of the expectations gracefully acknowledges the extraliterary fact that most apprentice blacksmiths do not become London gentlemen while insinuating that it might not be a good thing for society as a whole if they did” (75). The economic status might resemble one of the boundaries that set classes apart, but it is not the only one. The economic status is the easiest boundary to overcome in climbing the social ladder. Most important are the impenetrable boundaries that are rigidly established in society. The social origin is one of those boundaries that have to do with history and tradition.

Chapter Three

# Social Mobility in *Pygmalion* and *Arms and The Man:* Innateness of Class

> "[N]o varnish can hide the grain of the wood; and the more varnish you put on, the more the grain will express itself."
>
> (*Great Expectations* 276; chap. 22)

In 1670 the playwright Molière wrote *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, a comedy in which he satirizes a bourgeois' intensive efforts to become a gentleman. Monsieur Jourdain hires several tutors to teach him music, dancing, philosophy, and fencing. Besides, he hires a tailor to keep him dressed extravagantly. These masters themselves mock Jourdain's ignorance and "the visions of nobility and gallantry that he has gotten into his head" (1). Most tutors who deal with social climbers have the same attitude towards them. In *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* Jourdain's tutors know that teaching Jourdain won't make him a gentleman, but they keep teaching him for the sake of his money. Unlike the tailor, who deals with clothes and appearances, tutors deal with a part of the individual's personality. They deal with the immaterial differences influenced by the social background. Tutors of the upstart face difficulties in shaping new manners, attitudes, and tastes. All in all, these core differences are

merged as a consequence of the social and cultural differences that set classes apart. The theme that is presented sarcastically in Jourdain's case keeps recurring in many other later literary works.

In other literary works, social climbers' tutors have a similar experience to Jourdain's tutors. In Dickens' *Great Expectations* and in Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* the tutors of the upstarts, Pip and Eliza, refer to the difficulty they face in teaching social climbers. In *Great Expectations* (1861), Mr. Pocket is a well-known tutor in London. He teaches students from different social backgrounds, like Bently Drummle from the upper-class, and Pip, a nouveau riche originally from the lower-class. On one occasion Herbert informs Pip that Mr. Pocket believes that "no man who was not a true gentleman at heart ever was, since the world began, a true gentleman in manner" (Dickens 311; chap. 22). In *Pygmalion*, Eliza's cockney English reveals her lower-class origin. So learning how to speak English like a duchess is just like learning a new language. Higgins tells his mother teaching Eliza how to speak like a duchess is much easier than teaching the upstarts of the middle classes and the American millionaires.

Annette Kuhn refers to class as "something beneath your clothes, under your skin, in your reflexes, in your psyche, at the very core of your being." (qtd. in Sayer 22) The social milieu has a vital role in shaping the individual's skills, taste, attitudes, and manners. So when social mobility occurs the individual is exposed to another social stratum where manners, habits, skills and tastes vary in

different degrees. The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu refers to these differences as the immaterial differences that essentially set classes apart. Bourdieu deals with the cultural differences as major differentiae between individuals from different social classes. He rejects any notion that sets boundaries between classes on an economic basis. He expands the concept of capital to cover the immaterial differences that set classes apart. He distinguishes several types of capital: the economic capital, the social capital, and the cultural capital. According to Bourdieu, the distribution of capital is unequal among individuals since birth, which leads to differences that form different classes. Accordingly, each class has different requirements and different priorities. In other words, an individual who is born into the upper-class has a different state of being from another who is born into the lower-class; subsequently, their capital requirements will be different. Naturally, the upper-class is the class that has the most capital.

In his article “The Forms of Capital,” Bourdieu distinguishes three forms in which the cultural capital may exist: the institutionalized state, the objectified state, and the embodied state. The institutionalized state appears in the form of academic qualification. The objectified state occurs “in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc)” (37). The embodied state of cultural capital occurs “in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body” (47). It refers to the embodied state of the cultural capital in the individuals due to their being exposed to the culture for a long time. This

exposure leads to a state in which the “external wealth converted into an integral part of the person, into a habitus, cannot be transmitted instantaneously (unlike money, property rights, or even titles of nobility) by gift or bequest, purchase or exchange” (48). Thus, the individual tends to behave and think habitually according to the way he/she is used to. The embodied state corresponds to the level of cultural capital that each class has. This distinction between an upper-class member and a lower-class member can neither be crossed nor hidden, because it requires a long time of exposure until it becomes natural. When an upper-class member loses all his money, he/she doesn’t lose this kind of cultural embodied state because it is an “integral part” in himself/herself. On the other hand, when a lower-class member suddenly moves to the upper-class, he/she can’t change his/her embodied state of cultural capital immediately.

Accordingly, when upward social mobility seems to occur, the social climber seeks to accumulate more cultural capital to reach a similar level to that of the upper-class. However, when upward mobility seems to occur, the accumulation of cultural capital is not as easy as the accumulation of the economic capital. Cultural capital is time consuming and difficult to increase especially in its embodied state. For this reason horizontal mobility differs from upward mobility. In horizontal mobility cases the individual already lives and grows up among the upper-class, so he/she accumulates cultural capital like anyone from the upper-class.

This chapter explores the role of the cultural capital on the characters. It highlights how the immaterial differences constitute boundaries characters face when social mobility seems to occur. It attempts to prove that upward mobility changes nothing significant in the individual but appearances. Several cases from different literary works will be examined. The literary works to be examined are *Pygmalion*, and *Arms and the Man.*

Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* revolves around the story of Eliza, a flower girl, who seeks upward mobility through education. Higgins, a professor of phonetics, bets that he can make Eliza a lady in six months through teaching her how to speak English properly. Higgins regards education as one method through which an individual can rise socially. So through learning Eliza to speak English properly, Eliza thinks she can change her future and become a lady. The play illustrates the fact that class boundaries cannot be crossed even through education.

The role of appearance, manners, and language are demonstrated as the main boundaries that Eliza needs to cross to become a lady from the upper-class. So once Eliza and Higgins make their agreement, Eliza's clothes are burned and new clothes are ordered for her. Mrs. Pearce, Higgins' housemaid, stresses the importance of manners and prestige. So she notifies Higgins about the way he behaves and what he says before Eliza. Higgins responds to this by saying: "I may do these things sometimes in absence of mind; but surely I don't

do them habitually" (23). Bourdieu maintains that" social class is not defined solely by a position in the relations of production, but by the class habitus which is 'normally' (i.e., with a high statistical probability) associated with that position" (*Distinctions* 372). Habitus mainly resembles the "internalized form of the class condition and of the conditionings it entails" (101). The member of any class becomes unconsciously aware of how, what, and when to act towards social stimuli. The habitus is related essentially to the embodied state of cultural capital, and it functions "as a classifying mechanism" (Sayer 24). It reveals the social origin of the individuals through their habitual interacting in their ordinary life. In Eliza's case, after six months of training she becomes able to speak English as anyone from the upper-class. She tries always to control herself and behave like a lady, but once she escapes her conscious control over her behavior. She behaves as she used to do before the experiment.

Coincidently, Eliza meets the same characters before and after Higgins' experiment. The first act opens at Convent Garden, where several characters are standing under the portico of St Paul's church to protect themselves from the rain. The scene gathers several characters who appear to be from different social classes; Mrs. Eynsford Hills and her daughter are waiting for a taxi, Eliza is selling flowers, Higgins is taking notes, and Pickering is waiting for the rain to stop. Eliza appears as a cockney flower girl whose speech, appearance and reactions show her humble social origin. After several months from that day, Eliza goes to Mrs. Higgins' house to be tested in a social situation. She meets

the Eynsford Hills again at Mrs. Higgins' house. Eliza is able to speak English properly just like a lady. She is introduced as Miss Doolittle who "produces an impression of remarkable distinction and beauty as she enters that they all rise" (38), and speaks with "pedantic correctness of pronunciation and great beauty of tone" (38). In his Book *Women in the Plays of George Bernard Shaw* Sangeeta Jain illustrates: "through Eliza Shaw shows that the training of 'middle class manners,' 'education in phonetics' are important factors to survive in a sophisticated society" (65). Eliza may feel more secure after the experiment where people respect her more than before; yet, learning those manners and how to speak won't change her social background and cultural capital that are totally different from all the others at Mrs. Higgins' house. Unlike the others, she is raised into the lower-class tradition, and there is nothing mutual between them. Therefore, Higgins specifies two general topics that she can speak about, and he puts strict rules to her behavior. She is allowed to speak about; weather and health. Elisa's appearance is stunning, her pronunciation is perfect, but, as Higgins says, "you have to consider not only how a girl pronounces, but what she pronounces" (35). Eliza enters the room and everything goes on the right track until she starts to speak. When she enters Mrs. Higgins asks her about the weather, Eliza's answer is taken from a meteorological report. Although she pronouns the words correctly she's unable to interact naturally with the situation. So when others laugh at her answer she doesn't recognize that the reason is what she says, but she starts defending herself thinking that pronunciation is the

most important thing when she speaks. Later on, they speak about the influenza and Eliza gets excited and starts talking about her aunt's death. When she speaks, she pronounces the words very beautifully but the content of her speech and the stories she tells reveal the social environment she comes from. Some of her expressions are vulgar but pronounced in an upper-class accent. The Eynsford Hills get shocked with her speech and expressions. However, she doesn't have an idea of the mistakes she is committing. Thinking that language is the main boundary between her class and the upper-class, Eliza doesn't recognize that what she says reflects her humble social origin the same way her cockney English does.

Furthermore, Eliza becomes unable to respond correctly to any social stimuli. What she has in mind is totally different from what the others have in mind. So when Mrs. Higgins asks her if she is going to walk across the park, Eliza says, "Walk! Not bloody likely. I am going in a taxi" (40). For her, walking is associated with inability to afford a taxi. Also, the expression "not bloody likely" is a vulgar and horrid expression for the upper-class. She pronounces it properly but it still reveals her vulgarity. In this test, it becomes clear that Eliza is really excellent at pronunciation but she doesn't become a lady. She knows how to speak but she doesn't know what to say whenever she needs to. At this point of the experiment it becomes clear that Eliza's class identity controls her reactions, mentality, and habits. On another occasion, in the fifth act, Eliza meets Higgins at his mother's house after she leaves his house. She speaks to him like a lady and

assures him that she is unable to speak the way she used to do before the experiment. Eliza thinks that she has changed her habitus and acquired a new one. However, when she sees her father she gets shocked, loses her self-control, and starts to speak and produce sounds the same way she used to do before. Eliza's apparent upward social mobility illustrates the role of the habitus and the cultural capital as a class signifier.

The change that occurs when someone moves from one class to another covers a wide area of his/her life. This change is not limited to material differences due to economic status, but also to the immaterial differences that are translated into differences in lifestyle, taste, skills, attitudes and many other manifestations. In Eliza's case the confusion lies in her lower-class habitus and upper-class way of pronunciation and appearance. So education isn't enough to erase her past and to make her a lady like Clara who is born into an upper-class and brought up in that environment. Eliza thinks the same way she used to do before the experiment. Her attitudes, concepts, and social experiences are almost the same. Although Higgins thinks that Eliza's speech is "filling up the deepest gulf that separates class from class and soul from soul" (43), in reality it does the opposite. Eliza represents the gap between the lower-class and the upper-class. Eliza's spontaneous reacts towards any social stimuli reflect her humble origin. So when she speaks spontaneously, she unconsciously reveals her lower-class identity through the incidents she narrates, the reactions she makes, and the expressions she uses.

The variation of manners on a class basis doesn't necessarily signify any evaluation. It only reflects one of the aspects that forms a class and makes it different from another. In the third act, Clara comments on Eliza's "new ways" by saying that: "it's a matter of habit. There's no right or wrong in it" (3. 41). These manners are performed habitually and represent one side of immaterial class differences. Correspondingly, the change that Eliza goes through helps in improving her and in adding more to her cultural capital in regard to language and behavior. But it is not enough to change an embodied state of cultural capital that she already has and has been exposed to since birth.

In Bourdieu's *Distinction*, a study on how the social position firmly affects the cultural choices, he asserts that cultural practices are strictly connected to the social status. These cultural practices are particularly influenced by education and the social origin. He distinguishes several cultural practices from legitimate to personal. The legitimate domains refer to art, music and all other aspect of culture that can be learnt through education. The personal domain has mostly to do with the domestic life as food, furniture, and clothes. The social origin plays its major role in the domestic life domains. When the individual accumulates more educational cultural capital, he/she is likely to cover the cultural capital as any person from the upper-class, whereas the personal domains cannot be learnt through the accumulation of more educational capital. The individual's social origin mainly affects his/her personal tastes. What makes educational capital

insufficient to achieve the elite social class is that it is limited to legitimate domains.

In *Great Expectations* Pip narrates details of his domestic life before and after moving to London. When he moves to London, he informs Mr. Pocket that he wants to stay at Bernard's Inn instead of living at Mr. Pocket house. He says: "it occurred to me that if I could retain my bedroom in Barnard's Inn, my life would be agreeably varied, while my manners would be none the worse for Herbert's society" (302). In his childhood, Pip used to compete with Joe on who first finishes the pie at dinner. When he first has dinner with Herbert, he mentions that whenever he forgets to control himself, he starts eating the way he used to do before. Although he gets the same education Drummle and Herbert have got, he still doesn't feel like one of them. The difference between the upstart and the upper-class is that the upstart learns the new manners but doesn't always feel comfortable with them, or even enjoy them.

*Arms and the Man* is a three acts play by Bernard Shaw. The whole play takes place at the Petkoff's house in Bulgaria during the peace treaty of Serbo-Bulgarian War. The Petkoffs have newly climbed the social ladder, and they are eager to show their Westernized lifestyle and their advanced status in society. As manners and lifestyle are the basic characteristics that differentiate a class, the Petkoffs do their best to exhibit them. But their humble taste and manners are

revealed throughout the play. A great deal of the description is devoted to show their humble social origin.

The first act opens with a description of Raina's room. Shaw describes it as follows: "The interior of the room is not like anything to be seen in the west of Europe. It is half rich Bulgarian, half cheap Viennese" (1). In his article "The Bulgarians of Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*" Stoyan Tchaprazov refers to these lines as an indication of the Petkoffs' bad taste. Though the Petkoffs are able to afford a luxurious life, their taste always reveals their humble social origin. Catherine wears the tea gown on all occasions. Tchaprazov says "Catherine can be an attractive and strong woman, but only if she remains within the limits of her environment. There is a visible disparity between Catherine's Viennese gown and the prosaic dullness of her mountainous surroundings. The gown, which is usually viewed as the attire of the Western European, upper-class woman, becomes a symbol of awkwardness and not-belonging on Catherine; it underscores the fact that Catherine does not know her place, that she wants to be a European lady, but that her mountainous environment does not allow her" (73). As a woman with a humble background she seeks a higher social status through adopting a European lifestyle. On one occasion, she asks her husband when he comes back home if he behaved properly before the Russian officers. Petkoff is not impressed by his wife's new adopted manners. So when she tells him that she has a sore throat, he replies:

“Petkoff: (with conviction). That comes from washing your neck every day. I've often told you so.

Catherine: Nonsense, Paul!

Petkoff (over his coffee and cigaret): I don't believe in going too far with these modern customs. All this washing can't be good for the health: it's not natural [ . . . ] I don't mind a good wash once a week to keep up my position; but once a day is carrying the thing to a ridiculous extreme.

Catherine:You are a barbarian at heart still, Paul. I hope you behaved yourself before all those Russian officers.

Petkoff: I did my best. I took care to let them know that we had a library.” (20)

Catherine tries always to modernize her house, and she insists on Petkoff to follow the modern customs; for example, she insists upon using the bell to call the servants instead of shouting because civilized people don’t shout. At the same time, Petkoff says that civilized people don’t hang their clothes where people can see them. The discussion that is presented between Petkoff and his wife illustrates their humble origin, which money cannot veil. Though Catherine tries to do her best to follow the modern customs, she still lacks the taste of the upper-class and her embodied state of cultural capital is totally humble. So she

doesn't really know what is civilized and what is not. She imitates what she thinks is civilized and proper. When Petkoff tells her about hanging clothes, she replies that civilized people don't notice them. This exhibition of the Petkoffs' domestic life demonstrates that domestic life is a significant part of the individual's life where differences between classes are very clear.

The Petkoffs are eager to show their economic independence through appearances. They want everyone to know that they have a library in their house and a bell to call the servants. Raina tends to show off to maintain her high status, she tells Bluntschli the first moment she meets him that they have a library at their house. The Pekoffs have attained a certain lifestyle, but they don't really fit into it. In the beginning of Act Two, the description of the library is given as follows:

> "It is not much of a library, its literary equipment consisting of a single fixed shelf stocked with old paper-covered novels, broken backed, coffee stained, torn and thumbed, and a couple of little hanging shelves with a few gift books on them, the rest of the wall space being occupied by trophies of war and the chase. But it is a most comfortable sitting-room…. There is one object, however, which is hopelessly out of keeping with its surroundings. This is a small kitchen table, much the worse for wear, fitted as a writing

table with an old canister full of pens, an eggcup filled with ink, and a deplorable scrap of severely used pink blotting paper" (35)

As this shows the room is far from being a library, but all they care about is the appearance rather than the value of it. The library to the Petkoffs is a way to show off and prove their economic independence. The description of the library makes it clear that the Petkoffs try to fulfill the criterion of a lifestyle they wish to obtain, but they are not able to do so.

Bluntschli who belongs to an extremely wealthy family doesn't show off at all. He is very humble. He notices the fakeness of the Petkoffs' noble attitude and lifestyle. In the first act, Raina tells him that they have a library, they go to the opera every season, and that they spend one month in Vienna. Bluntschli doesn't get impressed at all; nothing seems extraordinary to him. Instead of praising the Petkoffs, he says, "I saw at once that you knew the world" (13). Bluntschli ironically means the opposite. On another occasion while he talks to Raina, Bluntschli gets enough of Raina's acting before him as an upper-class lady. He asks her to stop and tells her: "I can't help it. When you get into that noble attitude and speak in that thrilling voice, I admire you; but I find it impossible to believe a single word you say" (40). She admits it and she says, "You know, I've always gone on like that—I mean the noble attitude and the thrilling voice. I did it when I was a tiny child to my nurse. She believed in it. I do it before my parents. They believe in it. I do it before Sergius. He believes in it" (40). The difference

between those who believe her and Bluntschli is that Bluntschli belongs to a higher social strata, and his experience in the world makes him able to distinguish fake from real.

In *Arms and the Man* the conflict of class and the desire to climb up the social ladder is demonstrated as a major theme in the play, first, by the Petkoff family as upstarts who try uselessly to fit themselves into higher-class manners and lifestyle, and, second, it is demonstrated through the two servants in the play. Nicola and Louka are two servants with two totally different mentalities. Louka is a beautiful and attractive servant who seeks upward mobility. She believes that no one is better than her even Raina and her mother. She believes that she can be like any one of them if she marries Sergius, Raina‘s fiancé. She shows disrespect to Raina and never feels guilty for her inappropriate behavior. On the other hand, Nicola is a servant who believes that classes are rigidly established and that upward mobility is impossible. He works for the Petkoffs for ten years; his goal in life is to collect money so he can have his own shop. The conflict of social mobility appears at its clearest when they discuss in the second act as follows:

> Louka: I believe you would rather be my servant than my husband. You would make more out of me. Oh, I know that soul of yours.
>
> Nicola: (going up close to her for greater emphasis). Never you mind my soul; but just listen to my advice. If you want to be a lady,

> your present behaviour to me won't do at all, unless when we're alone. It's too sharp and impudent; and impudence is a sort of familiarity: it shews affection for me. And don't you try being high and mighty with me either. You're like all country girls: you think it's genteel to treat a servant the way I treat a stable-boy. [. . . ]
>
> Louka: (rising impatiently). Oh, I must behave in my own way. You take all the courage out of me with your cold-blooded wisdom. Go and put those logs on the fire: that's the sort of thing you understand.

Louka frequently tells Nicola that he has the soul of a servant. She refuses his advice and always tells him about her ambition to become a lady just like Raina. The Petkoffs is an example of upward social mobility before Louka's eyes. She makes use of Sergius's attraction to her. So she plans to ruin his engagement to Raina. She informs him about Bluntschli, convincing him that Raina is betraying him. Sergius, who is already attracted to Louka, announces his engagement to her after he makes sure that Bluntschli gets into Raina's bedroom.

Class boundaries are illustrated sarcastically in the play. There are no considerations to class boundaries; instead these boundaries are considered mindlessly and ignorantly. Shaw makes fun of the Petkoff family by displaying their unfitness to the manners, and lifestyle that they try to adopt. Catherine

considers their status historical though it goes back to less than twenty years. Sergius follows the appropriate manners subjectively; at a certain moment he refuses to apologize to Raina, but in the same scene he apologizes to Louka because that is what gentlemen do. All these representations of the Petkoffs' domestic life and manners illustrate the difficulties they confront when adopting upper-class manners and lifestyle.

The upstarts face many difficulties when upward mobility occurs due to their being brought up into the tradition of another class. Although the social climbers get used to the new ways and manners, feelings of discontentment and displacement are mostly there. Individuals may accumulate more cultural, social, or economic capital. But that doesn't erase the impact of their social background on them. None of the examined characters have really changed. They claim change, but they cannot change the color of their skins.

Chapter Four:

# *The Consequences of Apparent Social Mobility: The Unfulfilled Individual*

> "Now what we call 'bourgeois,' when regarded as an element always to be found in human life, is nothing else than the search for a balance. It is the striving after a mean between the countless extremes and opposites that arise in human conduct" (Hesse 63).

Roland Barthes defines the bourgeoisie as "the social class that doesn't want to be named" (137). Because it lacks genuineness, the term "bourgeois" has been widely used with the negative connotations implied both in literature and sociology. It "refers to the class between the very wealthy and the working class" (Brown 5). When social mobility appears to occur, the upstart is able to afford everything that shows his/her economic independence. Although the upstart tries hard to change his/her norms and attitudes by obtaining upper-class attitudes and norms of living, he/she cannot get rid of the embodied state of cultural capital. Fulfilling the expectations of the new class becomes a burden that tasks the abilities of the social climbers. When upward mobility seems to take place, the individual moves to a new class whose characteristics are different from the earlier class. It is valuable to know whether the upper-class really deserves struggling for. Do the consequences of upward mobility satisfy the upstart's

ambitions? This chapter examines what comes after the supposed rise in the world. It highlights the consequences of this movement on individuals' life, and explores the outcome of vertical upward mobility by examining several characters who have gone through this experience. It aims to highlight the hollow life and discontentment they start to have after the apparent rise in the world.

Upward social mobility is highly desirable, but when it occurs, if it ever does, it brings in consequences that touch every aspect of the individual's life. The individual seeks to fill in the gaps and differences between his/her earlier class and the new one. In their book *Class and Society*, Kurt Mayer and Walter Buckley state that "differences in wealth and income are expressed in different ways of life: patterns of consumption, types of education, speech, manners, dress, tastes, and other cultural attributes" (15). So when class mobility occurs, the upstarts "must be transformed into appropriate behavior and correct 'prestige' symbols in order to win the approval and acceptance of high-status" (143). Unlike horizontal mobility, the individual who goes through upward mobility needs to change and to accumulate sufficient cultural capital to meet the expectations of the new class, whereas those who go through horizontal mobility are members of the class to which they belong since birth. They don't go through the process of moving from one social class to another in their lives. As it will be discussed in this chapter, the representations of the consequences of the apparent upward mobility have a lot in common. The obstacles they face are ascribed to the social and cultural differences between classes. This chapter attempts to show how the change in the upstart characters doesn't exceed their new milieu.

In *Great Expectations*, Pip lives with his sister at the marshes. He aspires to develop himself as much as he can. He starts to learn reading and writing with Biddy at Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt's evening school in the village. At that time, he feels happy and distinguished because he will be apprenticed to Joe at the forge. But his visits to Miss Havisham have a significant impact on his life. "I had believed in the forge as the glowing road to manhood and independence" Pip says. "Within a single year all this was changed. Now it was all coarse and common" (162; Chap. 14). He starts to recognize the materialistic differences and to change his view of life. Besides, education doesn't make him feel uncommon or distinguished anymore. The class conflict he has gone through and his feeling of inferiority in front of Miss Havisham and Estella affect his perspective on life. Pip narrates: "The change was made in me" (162; Chap. 14). He starts to feel ashamed of his home, his life, and the people around him. His goal in life becomes to be a gentleman, and when he passes a shop window he asks himself "What would I buy if I were a gentleman" (201; Chap. 15). Afterwards, all his dreams and happiness start to hang on upward social mobility.

Eventually, Pip's dream comes true and he becomes a gentleman. Anything that may reveal his social origin has been sensitively and particularly hidden. He feels ashamed of his past, home, and of Joe, who becomes unwelcome anymore. As an upstart, Pip is despised for his low social origin; however, later on he is admitted into the new class. He starts to learn the upper-class's manners and get educated like any one of them. He joins clubs and spends lots of money till he falls in debt. Nevertheless, the new social class never brings him happiness. Pip regularly regrets the decisions he has

made, and wishes to go back to his earlier life at the forge where he used to be contented. He wishes he had never met Miss Havisham or Estella. After he gets accustomed to his life in London, Pip says:

> "When I woke up in the night,—like Camilla,—I used to think, with a weariness on my spirits, that I should have been happier and better if I had never seen Miss Havisham's face, and had risen to manhood content to be partners with Joe in the honest old forge. Many a time of an evening, when I sat alone looking at the fire, **I thought, after all there was no fire like the forge fire and the kitchen fire at home**" (419; chap. 34).

Throughout his narrative, Pip frequently tries to justify his acts that come as a result to the class conflict he has gone through. Pip says: "What could I become with these surroundings? How could my character fail to be influenced by them? Is it to be wondered at if my thoughts were dazed, as my eyes were, when I came out into the natural light from the misty yellow rooms?" (145; chap. 12). At another occasion, Pip admits the emptiness of his life among the upper-class. He joins their clubs, where he meets people and spends as much money as he can trying to fulfill his desire to be a gentleman; however, he just feels more miserable. Money doesn't bring him happiness or fulfillment. Pip refers to this by saying that "There was a gay fiction among us that we were constantly enjoying ourselves, and a skeleton truth that we never did" (422; chap. 34).

His expectations and new class position bring him nothing but discomfort, instability, and loneliness. Pip is raised in accordance with the lower-class tradition. When social mobility seems to take place, he has to adopt the upper-class manners, attitudes, and lifestyle. He does everything that can help him to achieve his dream. But Pip "always feels like an outsider – an impostor. He doesn't fit comfortably into the higher society into which he has been inducted, nor can he return to the relative innocence of his life at the forge" (Parkinson 127). So Pip gets stuck in a class to which he does not belong, and which he cannot leave. After several years in London, he cannot go back to the forge and live as before. Additionally, Pip is not stable economically. The moment he loses his money he gets back to his earlier place in the forge. The irony that "inheres in the title" (qtd. In Meckier 255) conveys the contrastive ending of what Pip expected from the upper-class. In his article "Great Expectations, 'A Good Name?' ", Meckier points out that the readers probably notice "the relevance of title to tone at various points" (256). Pip's tone is full of regret and repentance, and his expectations turn out to be illusory and hollow. These expectations vanish at the end and leave him sick in bed and also in debt.

*Great Gatsby* is also a novel that revolves around the story of an upstart. In the novel, Nick Carraway narrates the story of his neighbor, Jay Gatsby. Gatsby is a filthy rich upstart who seeks upward mobility for the sake of his lover, Daisy Buchanan. Gatsby goes back to New York, and he becomes well-known for the extravagant parties he throws at his mansion every weekend. The novel represents the limits of upward social mobility and the myth of the American Dream as it appears very clearly in

Gatsby's case. Gatsby stands for the phenomenon of the aristocracy of money that Thomas Mann referred to in his novel *Confessions of Felix Krull*. Gatsby, the nouveau riche, crosses the economic boundaries but not the social ones, and the differences between him and Tom are illustrated in so many ways. In his essay "Possessions in *The Great Gatsby*", Scott Donaldson draws on Veblen's work *The Theory of the Leisure Class* in which Veblen provides an overview of what distinguishes the upper-class. In Gatsby's case, Gatsby succeeds in advancing his economic status. But that is not enough to make him an upper-class person because the upper-class inherits his/her status along with his/her money. Donaldson states that "only those who inherited money could live a life of leisure naturally and comfortably, for they inherited gentility along with their wealth, and 'with the inheritance of gentility goes the inheritance of obligatory leisure'" (202). Nick Carraway is an example of an individual who inherits status but not money. According to Donaldson, "Nick comes from a genteel background, but the family money has evaporated and he must find a socially approved occupation—the bond business—to support himself. Gatsby has all the money he could possibly need, and ostentatiously presents it for public view, but has not acquired the manners and social stature that comes with inherited wealth" (202-3).

The place of residence in the novel also reveals some social differences. Weir points out that "In West Egg live families of 'new money,' many of whom are social climbers. Many tried to purchase there entrée into society, but most lack the breeding to be taken seriously by the old money elite of East Egg" (331). Gatsby lives in West Egg, and he sends invitations to the upper-class. They accept the invitations and enjoy his

parties. At the same time, no one of his guests knows who Gatsby is, or where he comes from. Apparently, they don't bother to know, and his parties become like a rumor mill on his origin, his job, and the source of his money. In his article "'What's in a Name, Old Sport?': Kipling's *The Story of the Gadsbys* as a Possible Source for Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*", James Plath explores the similarities between *The Great Gatsby* and Kipling's *The Story of the Gadsbys*. One of the similarities that Plath points out is the setting. He quotes Kipling's "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet" arguing that this is also applicable to the West Egg and the East Egg in *The Great Gatsby* where families of the old money and the new money shall never be the same.

Gatsby holds parties in his mansion in an attempt to show his social status and economic wealth. He is "unwilling or unable to comprehend that it is not money alone that matters, but money combined with a secure social position" (Donaldson 194). For upper-class people, they don't need to show off in order to prove their social status because it is their natural status that they already have. So the role of appearances is illusory when it comes to social class, and this is very clear in Guy de Maupassant's short story "The Necklace". The story revolves around the wife of a little clerk in the Ministry of Education, Madame Loisel. In an attempt to please her, her husband gets an invitation to a vey exclusive party where the whole ministry will attend the party. Madame Loisel buys an expensive dress but still needs jewels so she won't look cheap among other rich women in that party. Her husband convinces her to borrow from her rich friend Madame Forestier, so she borrows a superb diamond necklace. After the

party, when they go back home they discover that the necklace is missing. They are obliged to buy a new one for her friend. It costs them thirty six thousand francs to get it. They spend ten years of working hard to pay off the price of that necklace. Towards the end of the story Madame Loisel meets her friend Madame Forestier and informs her about the necklace. The story ends with Madame Forestier answer: “Oh, my poor Mathilde! Mine was an imitation! It was worth five hundred francs at most! ...” (Maupassant 10).

Mathilde believes that she is born to live a luxurious life. She is never satisfied with the middle-class life she has. She is sick at heart knowing that she cannot afford a luxurious life. She always dissatisfied her house and life, and she keeps dreaming of expensive furniture, classical architecture, and delicious meals. She doesn’t recognize that appearances aren’t the main factor that makes the upper-class an upper-class. Madame Forestier is an upper-class woman who doesn’t need to show off in order to assert her social status. She is born into the upper-class and gets a secure social position. Wearing real or a fake diamond necklace won’t affect her social position. She is an upper-class woman and that is how others see and treat her. Unlike Madame Forestier, Mathilde thinks that she should have the most expensive luxuries of life to live like the upper-class. Still, she will always remain and be treated as the wife of the little clerk at the ministry of education. This reoccurs in *Pygmalion*, Eliza tells Higgins that “the difference between a lady and a flower girl is not how she behaves, but how she's treated. I shall always be a flower girl to Professor Higgins, because he always treats me as a flower girl, and always will” (112).

In sum, Gatsby's case shows that the American society is far from being a classless society. Social climbers, like Gatsby, believe in the American dream and seek upward social mobility. Raymond Vince states that "It may be that a sense of loneliness and estrangement, a longing for home, is in some fashion endemic to the American Dream" (95). Gatsby becomes filthy rich, spends money on lavish parties, and his parties are full of upper-class guests. However, all this money doesn't bring him happiness. He doesn't have relationships with people from the class he wishes to join. Through the hosting of parties, Gatsby tries to fill the hollowness of his social life and the emptiness of his house. His guests don't know who he is, and he has never been seen among them. He is admitted into the upper-class society; they accept his invitations but deep inside no one considers him as an equal. He is always mentioned as a nouveau riche with a mysterious past. The poor attendance of his funeral shows the superficiality of the life he has had. Nick, Mr. Gatz and some servants are the only attendants of his funeral. Vince states that "Even in life, Gatsby's possessions seem empty, his identity no more than a hollow construct of others, his family and cultural roots an illusion" (95).

As for Eliza and her father Mr. Doolittle in Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*, both of them express discontent and disillusionment when upward mobility occurs. As for Eliza, she succeeds in learning how to speak English like a duchess, but at the same time her background and social origin are the same. At the beginning, She thinks that the experiment will make her a lady. She spends a lot of effort in learning proper pronunciation, manners, and etiquette. But due to her social background, she faces a

problem in interacting with people from the upper-class. In his article “A Sociological Interpretation of *Pygmalion*”, Beardsmore thinks that “Eliza’s problem at this stage of her development is one of cross-level interference where she has mastered the correct phonological rules of upper-class English but has not yet acquired the sociological rules of appropriate lexis and grammar” (713). When she is tested in Mrs. Higgins’ house, her appearance, manners and pronunciation appear to have changed, but her idiom, vocabulary, and subject matter remain the same. Her social class is manifested through her speeches. Eliza reaches a critical level of confusion where she is unable to understand the mistakes she is making. Higgins considers his experiment successful, whereas Eliza considers herself lost and doesn’t fit anywhere. After the experiment and the tests end, Eliza asks Higgins: “What's to become of me? What's to become of me? . . . What am I fit for? What have you left me fit for? Where am I to go? What am I to do? What's to become of me?” (46). At this point of the play, Eliza feels depressed and looks for balance in her life. She knows that she cannot go back to sell flowers as before, nor can she be totally integrated into Higgins’ social environment. Eventually, she recognizes the huge gap between herself and the upper-class people around her. Eliza tries to manage between the two extremes, she now embodies: upper-class language and manners and her humble origin and the attitudes she was brought up to uphold.

Towards the end of the play, Eliza’s father appears at Mrs. Higgins’ house very much changed. He is fashionably dressed and has a lot of money. Doolittle never seeks upward mobility. He is chosen to lecture on moral reforms according Higgins’ jesting recommendations. Doolittle feels unhappy with this change. He blames Higgins for

recommending him for this job. He complains that Higgins has ruined him, destroyed his happiness, and delivered him up “into the hands of middle class morality” (98). Doolittle doesn’t find contentment or happiness in his new social position among the middle-class. He is obliged to follow certain manners and to commit himself to proper morality, which discomforts him and keeps him like a captive in the new class. Doolittle “expresses a darker view of the costs of gentility . . . it is not the money purse that he blames for his dissatisfaction, but the cultural expectations that accompany it” (Porten 80). Doolittle’s case shows how the economic differences between classes are the easiest to cross, and the difficulties lay in the social and cultural ones.

Doolittle doesn’t change at all. He is socially the same. He still reflects his social background. He doesn’t get rid of his previous social ties or habits for the sake of the middle-class satisfaction. He gets married to the woman he loves before his economic advancement. The changes are limited to materialistic differences; he refuses to submit to the middle-class cultural obligations. In an article titled “*Pygmalion* in Conversation with Pierre Bourdieu: A Sociological Perspective”, Doolittle is described after upward mobility occurs as follows:

> “A shift in his economic capital has caused him to move from the society of low-class people to the society of middle-class people. Yet he has his habitus with him. He is still a drunkard with his old habits and ideas. Alfred Doolittle does not like to be a gentleman and prefers to be free in touching others for money instead of giving money to others. He

> thinks that the morality of the middle class is that he has to live for others and not for himself. Eliza has the same feeling. She feels her independence is taken away and protests against her slavery" (Pirnajmuddin and Arani 70).

In Hermann Hesse's novel *Steppenwolf*, Harry Haller, the main character, is a bourgeois intellectual who feels that he is a man of two natures: human and wolfish. Haller tries to compromise between these two natures of himself. In the novel, the bourgeoisie provokes a serious conflict within the main character, an inner conflict that prompts him to condemn the bourgeoisie and at another time to praise it. Haller adores the middle-class' cleanliness, comfort, and order. But at the same time, he condemns its routines, conventions, and morality. He wishes to alienate himself from the middle-class world. For him the middle-class is where the individual always seeks balance. This might be most applicable to the upstarts. They always seek to strike a balance between their lower-class upbringing and their middle-class morality, manners and other cultural obligations.

Almost all the characters who have gone through upward social mobility don't find their ambitions in the new class. They think that upward mobility and becoming a member of the middle or the upper-class will bring them the sought-after happiness that the upper-class already enjoy. But when the change occurs and they start to live among members of the new class, they start to recognize the immaterial differences that stand for class boundaries like their attitudes, manners, and taste. So the upstarts start to

learn new manners and try to submit to the cultural obligations of the new class; Eliza for example, always tries to behave herself and to control her reactions in front of others. However, the influence of the class on the individual is so deep that it cannot be changed overnight. Changing the habitual way of living, thinking, and behaving confuse the upstart and leaves him/her as a captive in the new class, where he/she is obliged to follow certain manners, and moral principles, and to adopt a certain lifestyle. Expressions like discontentment, disillusionment, and displacement are recurrent when describing upstarts.

# Conclusion

Social stratification has been discussed at length by many sociologists. Class differences, class boundaries, and social mobility are approached differently from different points of view. On the one hand, many sociologists have confirmed the possibility of social mobility and have described the ways in which it can be achieved. On the other hand, there are other sociologists and scholars who have delved into the immaterial differences between classes, and have showed the difficulty of crossing these boundaries. This study has been concerned with the latter view; it has aimed to prove that social mobility is very difficult, and may be impossible.

The study pursued an analytical approach in an attempt to scrutinize several cases of upward social mobility in selected English and American literary works. Different representations of upward social mobility were examined to show how upward social mobility is mainly a change in appearance and economics rather than a change in the individuals themselves. It was shown how several representations of social climbers' experiences have almost the same outcomes when upward social mobility seems to occur. Bourdieu's notions of cultural capital and habitus were helpful in investigating how the immaterial differences are impermeable. The study looked at how upstart characters face difficulties when they are admitted into the upper-class, and that at this stage in their experience they start to recognize the cultural differences that distinguish their new class from the former one. The study showed that whatever the upstarts do to

conceal their social background, they cannot change their social affiliation to which they are attached from birth.

Through a detailed analysis of the several cases of apparent upward social mobility, it has been found out that both classes understand the concept of class within their own domain. Characters from the lower-class think of class boundaries in terms of appearances, money, and education, whereas upper-class characters think of class as a social inheritance that is rooted in history and tradition. The upstarts start to recognize such differences after upward mobility seems to occur. The upstarts start to understand that money, appearances, and even a high degree in education won't make them comfortable in the upper-class. For example, Pip tries very hard to conceal his social origin and to cut his social ties with members from the lower-class, but when he moves to London and meets Buntly Drmummle he recognizes that money and appearances won't make of him "a genuine gentleman". The study also looked at how the social milieu has a significant role in shaping the individual's attitudes, taste, and manners. So when the upstarts are introduced to the upper-class, they cannot change their habitual way of thinking, reacting, and understanding other social stimuli around them. For example, in *Pygmalion,* Eliza looks, speaks, and behaves like a duchess, but her spontaneous reactions and what she says reflect her humble social origin. Furthermore, the study has analyzed the representations of the upstarts' life after the assumed rise in the world. It has been found out that all of the characters examined, who aspire to rise socially, do not have their expectations fulfilled in the new social milieu, and that upward social mobility has its costs. They establish fewer social ties, and they are obliged to

submit to the upper-class manners and attitudes. The upstarts don't find the happiness sought after among the upper-class, and their dream of becoming aristocrats doesn't come true. The aristocrats themselves have more in common with other aristocrats around the world than they have with people from other classes in their societies. The upstarts may be admitted into the upper-class but they are not accepted as aristocrats at all. In addition to these examined phases of upwards social mobility, the study has shown that the apparent upward social mobility doesn't weaken the affiliations the characters have with their class. For example, in Doolittle's case, his enormous economic capital doesn't affect his intensive class affiliations. This is also true of Petkoff, whose apparent upward mobility doesn't exceed appearances and some adopted manners. His humble class identity is still the same and he is still affiliated to his social origin and background.

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# الحراك الاجتماعي في أعمال أدبية مختارة

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## الملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة حالات متعددة من الحراك الاجتماعي(Social Mobility) من الدرجة الدنيا إلى الطبقة العليا في نصوص أدبية مختارة إنجليزية وأمريكية. وهي محاولة لدراسة وتحليل هذه الظاهرة الاجتماعية المتناولة في أعمال أدبية عدة. تعرض الدراسة حالات مختلفة من الحراك الاجتماعي في النصوص الأدبية المختارة، وتسلط الضوء على تجارب هذه الشخصيات عند انتقالهم إلى بيئة اجتماعية جديدة.

الهدف الأساسي لهذه الدراسة هو دحض إمكانية الحراك الاجتماعي، و تعليل شدة صعوبتها إن وجدت. وتبيِّن الصعوبات التي يواجهها الأفراد عند الانتقال من طبقة إلى أخرى. ويتم ذلك من خلال تحليل حالات مختلفة، ودراستها عن كثب لتكشف لنا أن التغيير في حياة الأفراد هو في جوهره تغيير ظاهري ومادي فقط. تتخذ الدراسة نهجا تحليليا في بحث الحراك الاجتماعي في الأعمال الأدبية التالي: آمال عظيمة (*Great Expectations* ) للكاتب تشارلز ديكنز، وغاتسبي العظيم(*The Great Gatsby*) للكاتب فرنسيس سكوب فيتزجيرالد، وبيجماليون ( *Pygmalion* ) و الرجل والسلاح (*Arms and the Man*) للكاتب جورج برنارد شو.