

## **FORGIVEABLE AND FORMIDABLE FEMALE: A THEMATIC ANALYSIS IN THOMAS HARDY'S THE TRUMPET MAJOR AND THE MAYOR OF CASTERBRIDGE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The topic has taken up for the study *Forgiveable and Formidable Female* – The thematic analysis of Thomas Hardy's *The Trumpet – Major* (1880), and *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), to analyze the emerging of self-conscious women both in Tragedy and in the Comedy.

**KEYWORDS:** Feminism, *Forgiveable and Formidable Female*, Self-Conscious Women, Victorian Background

### **INTRODUCTION**

Feminism has opened a new scope of interpretation and understand in the light of which literary texts of the past, are being reinterpreted to suit the feminist purpose. It is really ironic to note that it was the male British writer who were experimented in exposing the patriarchal prejudice of our culture, following him feminist critics have subjected the novels of the old writers, where the heroines suffer the pressure of patriarchy. In order to illustrate it the novels taken to analyze are Thomas Hardy's *The Trumpet- Major* (1880) and *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886).

Both the novels belong to different, contradict concept the earlier novel is a comedy and next is tragedy, both the novels are about the thematic aspect in the social, economical, psychological aspect of the age which constitutes the writer to portray this type of view in the comic, tragic novels. Both the novels deals with conventional and unconventional. Conventional in a way of how they are treated in the society, their way of life in the society. As a weaker sex of the class how their psychological prespect is portrayed in the social is clear scrutinized by the writer. Though the writer belong to the Patriarchal Society portrays the emergences of *Forgiveable and Formidable* character in the novels. To study in detail is the aim of this topic.

### **Victorian Background**

Victoria, the daughter of the duke of kent and Princess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg, was born in 1819. Victoria became queen at the age of eighteen. She impressed the members of Parliament with her grace and self-assurance. At the age of seven to sixteen, Victoria read 150 works in various fields; without attending to any University. In 1840, Victoria insisted on marrying her first cousin, a German named Albert. When Albert died on 1861, Victoria went on to deep mourning. Victoria's limited involvement on political affairs helped to turn Britain on the modern monarchy. Queen from 1837 to 1901, the longest reign of any British monarchy

- **Growth of Industrial Revolution**

Britian's sudden increase on price and rapid expansion on hands encouraged great belief that future will be happy and bright. Profiting from its early industrial revolution, Britain became the World leader on manufacturing factory goods.

Factory towns grew on to large cities. Banks, retail shops and business expanded. These changes in turn changed the growth of two important classes, the industrial working class and a modern middle class people are able to lead better life because of the low cost and large variety of factory goods.

Economic and military power helped Britain to acquire new colonies on far-flung parts of the globe. Victorian people could quite literally boast that “The Sun never sets on British Empire”( Prentice Hall Literature, p.763).

The practice of child labour had played an important role on the Industrial Revolution. Royal Commission established by Whig government in 183 permitted children to work for twelve hours per day. The vast majority of women devoted themselves to home-making and the bearing and rearing of large families, and a few were engaged on gainful employment.

- **The Crimean War**

The Victorian age were generally peaceful. Only one major European War, Britain fought was called “The Crimean War”.

- **Theory**

Other Victorians turned to science for answers. The Theory of Evolution proposed by Charles Darwin (1809 – 82), *On the Origin of Species*.

## **FORGIVEABLE FEMALE**

This chapter highlights the story of Anne and Martha Garland shows how they are affected by the patriarchal dominance over the so called weaker sex. Further it shows how men and women flung to the emotions, sentimentally affected, but the female “forgives” and gives the chance for the protagonist to redeem their mistakes done earlier and ends with a happy note.

Needless to say Hardy’s most obvious ability to create a natural impressive ideas which measures a man of no age and limitless attainments, Hardy measures the dramatic concepts of the obstructions being described with an architectural monument with an traditional look to the start of the chapter with a five substitute gratification of the Wessex life which is implemented on highlighted in *The Trumpet-Major*. Hardy seems to be mythical in all aspects of his works. Unlike Tragedy or Comedy he portrays his vision of life as a myth.

In the novel, Anne is going to Derriman’s house to read and show the newspaper instead of her mother. In addition, Festus Derriman, the Squire’s son, wants Anne for his wife, although he seeks her more to attain his vanity than because he loves Anne. Anne very often disturbed by Festus Derriman, when she was reading the newspaper noticed Festus standing behind the door and she moved out and she felt the person to be Trumpet-Major Loveday. When she was confessing this to her mother she encouraged her love affair with Festus and not the Trumpet-Major. Once Anne attended the party, while returning she was late and joined with John Loveday. John and Anne were waiting near the door as old Mr. Derriman come home. Festus sarcastically comments about John Loveday was his enemy he has tempted her away with him! Thus Anne was in a distress mood went to the garden when John tried to talk her.

When Festus confessed his love to Anne, she informed to her mother. Thus, Mrs. Garland says don’t be noticed about Festus and you can encourage the love affair with John Loveday. “Captain” Bob returns from the voyage and

presents a parrot to Anne, this is his first sight looking Anne as a grown up girl. Bob says to Mrs. Garland he had brought a lovely shawl to Johnson Matilda who was her lover and going to be a wife very soon.

As Captain Bob urges to Casterbridge and was looking for the Matilda, to his disappointment Matilda was not found there. John entered upstairs in order to speak with Matilda Johnson he saw Matilda in a depressed mood. Matilda was missing from the house, when Bob was searching for her need Anne's help. The way she consoled Bob, as result he felt in love with Anne. Love starts between Anne and Bob. Bob accept Anne due to the situation even though he made his mind ready for the marriage, Matilda has a soft corner in his heart. As Anne was in utter confusion whom to choose. John decided to Marry Anne who always in his dream.

Bob escapes from Overcombe Mill, when he was searching by a Sergeant, a naval officer and file of marines standing before him. Anne helped Bob to come out of his room through ladder, he jumped into garden. Bob was planning to join the victory and got permission. When the victory was taking place, in order to see John she went to the seashore. Bob seems the love between John and Anne. Her thoughts seemed to fly from herself to John. Now Anne was in utter confusion to select Bob or John. Bob says that, when a man is away from the woman he loves more. Festus marries Matilda Johnson. John leaves Overcombe, marching away into the night to die upon a far-off battle field on Spain. Thus The Trumpet Major novel ends in Tragic-Comedy.

## **FORMIDABLE FEMALE**

In The Mayor of Casterbridge, Hardy shows two kinds of love where Susan and Michael Henchard's love was not a happy one, it just led to frustration. The frustration had reached up to the sale of his wife, unlike the other couple in the novel Farfrae and Elizabeth Jane; they have spiritual touch and cordial understanding with such feeling cannot but be happy, they both are really to sacrifice for the happiness of each other. Farfrae goes in search of Henchard, because Elizabeth-Jane wishes to get reconciled with Henchard. Elizabeth-Jane too loves Frafrae from the very depth of her heart. Even after Farfrae's marriage with Lucetta she continues to strive for his welfare and happiness. He never tried to realize their love and reciprocated; but when he realized, it was late in the case of Emma with Florence Emily.

The Mayor of Casterbridge deal with the innermost feelings of woman's mind and Susan broke from ignorance and took the path of knowledge. The novel articulate their own way of employing their vengeance and resist their dominance. Susan employ's her formidable ego, making Henchard to overcome the ignorance and made him to realize that she is a respectable woman. The heroines are victimized by the protagonists, they oscillate the victimizers mind by making them feel restless.

The question arises How far is the ego hurted? And how formidable egos are articulated for both the protagonist and two heroine in order to show the female essence in the novels. At the outset, of the novels under study, the heroine's identity is suppressed by patriarchy. As the novel progresses they realize that the pressure of the dominance try to suppress again. So they decide to resist against their suppressors.

Hardy through his novel The Mayor of Casterbridge (1874), intensely drives how sexual relationship are not, in one way or another, the dominant element. Susan is sold in thle market for five shillings in an unconscious situation. Susan tries hard to make him realize what he is doing but she is already been sold in the market. So she flings back the wedding ring to hgim and goes at the back of the buyer to find a better life. The next morning Henchard, looks in vain for his wife,

realizing himself, severs an oath to avoid strong liquors for the space of twenty one year. After this even Henchard find his way towards Casterbridge, becomes the mayor of Casterbridge. The fact that twenty years passes between the shocking events of the first two chapters. The sin of selling the wife in the market place is considered to be a crime, marrying a lady and to betry her is what Henchard has done.

Micheal Henchard now the mayor of Casterbridge, meets his wife after years and he looks back to his painful past. He had done the sin to his wife by selling her and the child Elizabeth-Jane. He tries to redeem his sin by remarrying her, but destiny teaches him until his death, that his act is to be punished and not pardonable. So he faces blows after blows in his life and Susan silently wins over her vow she had taken during the time of the sale. Thus Henchard forgets his duties as a mankind and the situation forces him to do the evil act of selling his wife. Susan Henchard suppressed by her husband, was treated as a slave. Nineteenth century social life wherever it be, men act superior of matriarchal power. She reunites with her first husband. Susan was made to act as minor role in the novel and the whole story is clustered around her.

Henchard reaching Casterbridge, becomes the mayor of the place within few years. During his visit with public, Susan reaches Casterbridge and sees Henchard as a man with more luxuries Henchard after the sale of his wife, is presently having an illicit relation with Lucetta Templeman. Henchard do not stop their load of crime, it still continues. Susan hopes to have a better life with Newson but the shadow of poverty chases her, it didn't leave her to lead a peaceful life. After many years she returns back with her young daughter Elizabeth. Jane in search of her first husband. Susan was determined by the creator's to fight against her fate. Henchard meets Farfrae and makes friend with him; his passion reaches out to reason as it were, tells Farfrae his past with Susan and Lucetta. Henchard at the Zenith of his career, receives a letter from Susan and immediately he sends five guineas through Elizabeth-Jane. Henchard meets her and feels that for all her sufferings he is the root cause. The spirityal man inside him starts to feel for his wife. When Susan finally reappears, Henchard solidly and conscientiously remarries her to atone for the crime he had done to his innocent wife.

Though Susan had gone with her buyer and lived with him for many years but still she had loved only Henchard, as a result she returns to her first husband. Henchard also feels guilty for his ill treatment of his wife. In The Mayor of Casterbridge, Henchard acts honourably, when Lucetta reappears, though long tempted to revenge himself on Farfrae through her. When the furmity woman reappears, he publicly acknowledges his guilt. Forsaken by Farfrae for not accompanying him in the business, blasted by the disclosure that, Elizaneth-Jane is not his daughter and deprived of the love and loyalty of Lucetta, humiliated by the revelation of the furmity woman and ruined in a trade war with his old Scottish ideas, crushed by the public rebuke on the occasion of the Royal visit; later rejected by the daughter whose affection had consoled him in defeat, Henchard is reduced in the end to the starkest of death.

Henchard throws all burdens of his business on the young manager Farfrae's growing popularity worries him a bit and he tries to grab matters against Farfrae, but it is too late and he resigns in favour of Farfrae so far as business is concerned. Henchard projects the personality of a man who on the one hand is firmly determined to do things and on the other hand is a bundle of impulses. Henchard's remarriage was a reparatory act of his own but even nature's violence against him goes on unabated till he reaches the point from where he had begun amidst insults.

Then blows after blows follow; Lucetta marries Farfrae, invites Elizabeth-Jane to live with her, captain Newson returns and many other events to his misfortunes and gloom.

Newson reappears and tells Elizabeth-Jane how Henchard had cheated him. Now again Elizabeth develops hatred towards Henchard. Henchard intends to go right away from Casterbridge but love for Elizabeth-Jane pulls him back, he carries with him the cast-off belongings of Elizabeth-Jane in the shape of gloves, shoes, a scrap of her handwriting and in his pocket he carried a curl of her hair. Still Henchard with his proud superiority waived good-bye to her and leaves the scene with a promise never to disturb her again. After a few days she found a cage as the wedding gift and a token of repentance brought by the 'self-aliented' man.

Elizabeth and Farfrae fo in search of her father. Though Abel Whittle they came to know the death of Henchard. His wise chases Henchard until his death not allowing him to redeem the sin. Though Henchard is having relationship with Lucetta, his inner conscience has the thirst for his wife Susan and his fatherly love searches the daughter, by selling his wife and child she feels the world is full of darkness and hell. Finally female ego will not at any cost accept the meek domination and they will not bend to the patriarchal society.

## CONCLUSIONS

Martha Garland, Susan Henchard parenthetically, suffers the implication of the society and consciously fights the push backs of the society in all aspects keeping in the mind the gratification they paid themselves to the society. Hardy highlight the females in both the novel one to the tragic core to revenge them by Susan and her daughter Elizabeth-Jane, Martha Garland and Anne who was portrayed to the core to forgive the 'animal-self' of patriarchy to show the difference to changing power from male chauvinism to the tender, tigress female who never bends for the domination but forgives the mistake and gives chance to redeem the sin in the hands of the nature.

Both the novels, view the suffering of the female with great maturity and sympathy. After exploring their psychological impulse of Susan and Martha Garland we proceed to examine the isolated egos and its origin in an investigation of the individual and the society. Susan and Martha Garland emerged out, leaving behind their independence, humiliation and insult to be better position in the world. Their anger, helplessness vengeance is used as a weapon to rebel against their suppresser. In the views of the society and repels may be considered a success in the comedy and failure in the Tragedy. According to them, they (female) considered the emerging life in the true vision of life.

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