

Tribhuvan University

Burden of Culture in Thomas Hardy's Novel *The Return of the Native*

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Letter of Recommendation

Ashok Majgayna has completed his thesis entitled "Burden of Culture in Thomas Hardy's The Return of the Native" under my supervision. He carried out his research from April 2010 to Nov 2011. I hereby recommend his Thesis to be submitted for Viva Voice.

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This Thesis entitled "Burden of Culture in Thomas Hardy's The Return of the Native" Submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, by Ashok Majgayna, has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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Ashok Majgayna

Abstract

The Return of the Native by Thomas Hardy explores the domination of female characters in the Victorian male dominated culture. Culture has presented as an ever ending vicious circle of burden for female characters. Whatever efforts they showed to emancipate themselves it becomes impossible for them. Cultural burden on the form of patriarchal norms and values have pushed them to the depth of exploitation. Nature is woman, culture as man. So culture is beyond the freedom and gender equality. Eustacia cannot escape from the vicious circle of culture constructed by Victorian male consciousness.

Throughout the novel, there is search for economic, social, and cultural emancipation of women. The then Victorian male dominated society has been obstacle for them. But they can make free from such domination if there is female bonding and share their problems in the cordial manner. The prejudices and biasness come not from the males but from the females. Here, too, they should be able to penetrate such bias and create conducive environment to settle the problems. The assimilation with the situation and blending hand in hand in difficulties is the way for them to stand up on their own feet.

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Chapter I

Protagonist's Inability to Assimilate with Heath Dwellers

This research analyzes Thomas Hardy's novel, *The Return of the Native*, from the perspective of radical feminism. The thesis aims to analyze the novel from the perspective of feminism and show how Eustacia Vye is suppressed by traditional male dominated Victorian culture which obstructs the freedom and gender equality. During the time of Victorian age, women were suppressed by males using culture, as a "certain people activities especially certain moral and intellectual activities". (qtd. in langboum) By analyzing the narratives of the novel related with Eustacia is full of humiliation which is based on male dominated patriarchy.

Radical feminist like Showalter demands an expression of female sexuality in literature which will burst through the bonds of male logic with a poetic power that defines the tyranny of logocentric meaning. Besides sexual oppression, a radical feminist often views other forms of power, for example, unequal power relation within capitalism as derive from patriarchy. They think that at least sex is the primary oppression. Radical feminist writing aims to counter woman's supposedly natural, biological, inferiority and subordination within patriarchal society by asserting their at least equal status in relation to man.

The whole narratives are guided by the ongoing issues of heath folk and its overall impact. In this proposed research, it will be analyzed how? And why Eustacia has been behaved by her friends and relatives and what is the cause of her humiliation? The researcher's emphasis would be given to the problems and issues of female characters by limiting himself on the text of his thesis. By means of language, power and existing religion the research means "Christianity" had intolerably undermined to female characters who unwittingly taken parts in the celebration of

Christmas. The existing environment was not completely in favour of the female characters [t]hat's why they could not live happily and comfortably. According to the novel, Mrs. Yeobright, mother of Clym, dies because of not being able to comprehend the ongoing environment.

Thomas Hardy's novel, *The Return of the Native*, takes place entirely in the surrounding of Egdon Heath and becomes symbolic of the doom of man. The description the "heath" is loaded with a philosophy inspired by its somber, elemental, grandeur, its gloomy vastness in which every living thing seems to be swallowed up in the depth of the centuries. The narrative begins on the evening of Guy Fawkes Night as Diggory Venn drives slowly across heath, carrying a hidden passenger in the back of his van, Thomasin Yeobright. When darkness falls, the country folks light bonfires on the surrounding hills.

This study raises the issues of oppression and exploitation based on Hardy's novel. Hardy tries to explore the female self by analyzing the rustic setting and traditional folk culture which is more liberal than so-called modern male dominated Victorian white culture. He tries to link his story with folk life and folk love relationships and justifies that by giving the example of rustic activities of his surroundings. The novel points out the theme of feminism because female characters effort in the novel to get equal right and position with male counterpart. The theory of feminism also raises the same issue. Radical feminism emerged from these feminist movements and includes general theories about the origins of inequality, and in some cases about the social construction of sex and gender in a variety of disciplines. Feminist activists have campaigned for women's rights, such as in contract, property, marriage, divorce, and remarriage while promoting woman's rights to bodily integrity and autonomy. They have sternly opposed domestic violence, sexual harassment and

sexual assault. Politically they are excluded, economically, they are suppressed and dominated in the name of patriarchates even though they are the product of the same society. Such exclusion is as if it is their birth right. In the novel, Eustacia Vye has been ostriched from the society whereby she meets the untimely death.

In the novel [E]ustacia faces many problems in her life although she maintains her positions and resists male ideology.

Judith Fetterly, *The Resisting Reader*, resists the author's intentions and design in order by a "revisionary rereading" to bring light and to counter the covert sexual biases written into a literary work (51).

In the novel, Eustacia boldly presents her and explores her space by using female sexuality. The main goal of this study is to analyze the novel from the prospective of radical feminism and show how she is suppressed by traditional male dominated Victorian culture. Hardy presents 'woman' as subordinate characters in the novel and compares them as the sources of entertainment of male. But, yet, Hardy touches some issues of feminism which subverts male ideology and explores the female self.

The researcher has taken adequate excerpts from the text in order to substantiate the hypothesis so that the thesis would not be a complied documentation of unrealeated and irrelevant theories.

Victorian society was traditional society which almost kept woman in a strict manner. The body of the woman was seen as pure and clean. A woman was not encouraged to wear any kind of cosmetics or clothing that wore by male. And some believe that this was because a woman's body was considered to be the property of her husband. When Eustacia agrees to join her hands with 'Charley', he felt the

emotional satisfaction and the lad smiled and began: 'Here come, a Turkish knight, Who learnt in Turkish, land of fight' (104).

The fall of woman deeply relies on her own manner, but she was permitted to scrutinize the person of a native son who had left home before her advent upon the scene. And woman had to understand what position to follow. Wrong decision might be her fall or decay. The same happened in the novel. If Eustacia had realized her position on her maner, she might have not faced demise in her short time.

The cruelty of the nature has problematized the female in the manner of domination. The dominating nature prevails everywhere in the novel. "One of the male characters Charley' who is male wants to join hands with her (101). It indicates that the then Victorian male dominated culture has propensity to get emotional satisfaction even if touching female body indeed. So far as the motives actuating, Hardy's stories are not motives of rural life, they turn on the conflicts between rural circumstances and the aspirations of rural individuals towards a more refined existence. In the novel, too, Eustacia meets the same situation for yearning the colour and luxury of life in Paris. She could not adjust the life in the Egdon Heath from where she had brought up. Not being able to understand the gravity of circumstances, any person has to face such unexpected outcomes.

Love relationship between Clym and Eustacia could not flourish as it had to be. There stood a mountain as, a shape of human body to break out into pieces and make success of love relation, was as hard as chewing stone. Mrs, Yeobright, though woman, had very orthodoxy towards her son's marriage with the girl, Eustacia. Mrs Yeobright objects, Clym quarrels with her, later. She quarrels with Eustacia as well. Her behavior and resisting way is very similar with the Victorian ideology of feminism. There is an absolute humantype, the masculine. Woman has overies, a

uterus. This peculiarities imprison her in her subjectivity. Man thinks that woman as imperfect man, incidental being. Humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him. Simone de Beauvoir says in her book, woman is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her. He is subject, he is the absolute, she is, 'other', (4-5). Eustacia's behavior is similar with De Beauvoir ideology because she presents herself as an independent woman and resists the male dominated patriarchy. She again says, *The Second Sex*, a wide ranging critique of the cultural identification of women as merely the negative object or 'other', to man as the dominating 'subject' who is assumed to represent humanity in general (93).

Such prejudices towards woman has been named as if it is their inborn punishment. The trivialization of woman does not make suffer to man. Language of patriarchy has really underestimated the women, therefore, language is the prime instrument to spoil them in the existing environment. Hence, Kate Millett, "*Sexual Politics* 'politics' signifies the mechanism that express and enforce the relations of a power in society. She analyses many western social arrangements and institutions as covert ways of manipulating power so as to establish and perpetuate the dominance of man and the sub ordinance of women" (93). Power is exercised in the society by male subjugating women, the ways of suppression may be either overt or covert or as the case may be. Millett is powerful, however, in critique of patriarchy who considers 'politics', an institution, a branch, a mechanical through which power is employed in the society. Simone De Beauvoir put, "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman [...] it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature [...] which is described as feminine." By this cultural process, masculine in our society has come to be widely identified as active, dominating adventurous, rational, creative; the feminine, by

systematic opposition to such traits has come to identified as passive, timid, emotional and conventional.

So far as the theoretical methodology is concerned, the thesis has underpinned by the discourse of female and sexuality. Along with this concepts, the intensive reading of the novel itself has become the core point of the thesis. It has also comprised the related ideas from newspaper articles, internet, library references etc, in course of preparing the textual analysis. The researcher has consulted the scholars like professors and lectures and guided by their intellects and experiences indeed. He has applied those theoretical concepts to systematize and materialize the fragmentary evidences of resistance.

Hardy called Eustacia 'self-alienation', a chronic and even a preconscious impulse to self-destruction is no invention of modern psychology; it has existed since the dawn of mind and origins of guilt. Therefore, it is relevant to quote "why should I not die, if I wish? "She said tremulously. I have made a bad bargain with life" (278).

The inevitability of the then culture which badly destroyed Eustacia, the feeling of remorse and repentance vacillate about the surrounding of her. She so deeply ran into moral quicksand from where she never came up. It could not let her live peacefully and harmoniously. She has herself dug a hole into which she is trying to go in. The researcher means to say that inability to balance between rural and urban circumstances. It is also right of individual to fulfill the intensity of desire whether it is painful or happy ending.

The question of self and the voice of self-dignity of female is gravely questioned. To bring the contended meaning here, various means of material will be utilized, the isolation, the dejection from the society and Victorian male dominated

patriarchal norms and values have been the main root causes of downfall of female characters.

The inevitability of ignorance towards the nature adds negative impacts on women. The values and self-dignity were seriously critiqued throughout the research. The norms and values created by patriarchal system are actually hindrances for the progress to woman. Inherently, they are the same as males are but the then existing system forbade them do, according to their desires and wishes.

This thesis supports the call for the “cultural co-existence” and “peaceful living” in the line of the text, *The Return of the Native*.

Since the publication of this novel many writers and critic have been written on this novel. Hands Timothy is one of them argues about the characterization of the novel and says:

The Return of the Native raised some eyebrows when it first appeared as a serial in Victorian Britain. Although he intended to structure the novel into five books, thus mirroring the classical tragic format, Hardy submitted to the tastes of the serial-reading public sufficiently to tack on a happy ending for Diggory Venn and Thomasin in a sixth Book, *Aftercourses*. In Hardy’s original conception, Venn retains his weird reddleman’s character, while Thomasin lives out her days as a widow.

(87)

Above lines highlight the characterization of the novel which is almost similar with the serial which presents events in chronological way. In the same line, Norman Page discusses on the setting of the novel and writes.

“This novel opens with sweeping view of the Egdon heath countryside, providing descriptions of the landscape and some sense of its history” (375). He

focuses on the historical context of writing novel which captures the scene of Victorian England.

Mark, Asquith is one of the critics of Hardy writes on themetical approach of this Hardy's writing and claims, "Underlying these modern themes, however, is a classical sense of tragedy: Hardy scrupulously observes the three unities of time, place, and action and suggests that the struggles of those trying to escape their destinies will only hasten their destruction" (231). Sara A Malton discusses on the role of female characters in the novel and asserts:

In the view, Eustacia dies because she has internalized the community's values to the extent that, unable to escape Egdon without confirming her status as a fallen woman, she chooses suicide. She thereby ends her sorrows while at the same time by drowning in the weir like any woman instead of floating, witchlike she proves her essential innocence to the community. (21)

Certain cultural conscious creates circumstances which made Eustacia to die. She is ready to die but not to accept the slavery and humiliation created by the society.

Egdon is fleeting sentiment, half-meant, and Paris is the heaven she dreams of. Her fury at his enforced occupation of fruze-cutting is pretty and absurd. He hopes she would make a good matron in a boarding- school. Although equals is grandeur of personality, Clym and Eustacia are as dissimilar as marble and molten gold, and their attempt at unionis bound to lead to the tragedy of divergent aims.

She is driven to flee from clym on account of her hatred of Egdon her disappointment at the collapse of her hopes of being taken to Paris, her fury at her husband's humble occupation of furze - cutting and the quarrel between her and her husband due to the death of Clym's mother.

Here, in the novel, Charles Darwin's 'survival of the fittest', is applicable who penetrates the heart of the Egdon Heath goes in favour of it, changes the life according to its situation, makes life comfortable and easy going but who is against it, faces the ultimate destination of human being, death. Eustacia faces the same who could not assimilate with the heath dwellers and could not share her sorrows and pains with them. She says that "she is fed of life. She feels of depression of life. She curses of life" (120). This is the outcome of her inability to interact with the heath dwellers which leads to her demise.

Chapter II

Representation of Female Resistance in Thomas Hardy's Novel *The Return of the Native*

Female characters are suppressed by the male dominated culture in Hardy's novel *The Return of the Native*. The objectives of this thesis is to analyze the novel from the perspective of radical feminism and show how Vye is suppressed by traditional male dominated Victorian culture which obstructs the freedom and gender equality.

Feminism is an awareness of women's oppression and exploitation in society, at the work place and the family, and conscious action to change this situation. Feminism is an awareness of patriarchal control, exploitation and oppression at the material and ideological levels of women's labour, fertility and sexuality, in the family, at the place of work and in society in general, and conscious action by women and men to transform the present situation. It is also massive complaint against patriarchal stereotype. Feminism is, according to *Kamala Bhasin and Nighat Said Khan*:

A doctrine advocating social and political rights for women, equal to those of men. It is also the body of knowledge, thought and theory that feminist scholars thinkers writers have created to challenge patriarchal knowledge and ideology ... Feminism is also a discursive process, a process of producing meaning, of subverting representation of gender and creating new representation of womanhood, of identify and the collective self. (5)

Women were searching their space in culture and they had had effort to come out from the boundary of culture which is guided by patriarchal ideology. Victorian male

culture did not agree with freedom of women. Hardy focuses on the same subject matter of writing such as love, marriage, divorce, remarriage etc.

Love and sex became the primary element of the novel which presents in the conflicting scenario of pastoral life of England, “Conflicting senses of love, fear and shame reduced Eustacia to a state of the utmost uneasiness. To escape was her great and immediate desire. The other mummies appeared to be in hurry to leave; and murmuring to the lad who sat next to her” (120). The desire of love appears in the novel through murmuring of Eustacia which has determined on the personal genius of a person. Victorian morality of love creates problem in their life that appears in the novel through the references of pastoral culture. In this regard, she states:

“Her grandfather was in bed at this hour, for she so frequently walked upon the hills on moonlight nights, he took no notice of her comings and goings and enjoying himself in this own way, left her to do likewise. A more important subject that of getting indoors now engrossed her. (122)

When Clym and Eustacia met at the first time, both of them were in their youthful age. But Eustacia looked rather worried because she intended to get rid of life. Such a life that could not fruit in her life. They converse in jolly manner and Clym becomes able to win her heart and invited her in his house. He further says that she is safe in his house. As he spoke, she could not help warming with an inner life. And she flung back the ribbons from her face. The following lines hint that there was no object to obstruct her from making love for her grandfather was busy in his sleeping. The time situation also favoured her. She could do anything whatever she wished in her own way. She was curious to be engrossed in. She was so engrossed in feelings that she forgot noticing her grandfather. Clym’s words enchoed her.

In this novel, Hardy embodies the idea that we live in an indifferent universe. He also implies that the universe can be hostile, but he does not use this novel as a vehicle to remind us that “it’s a jungle out there” (210). Critics usually refer to Hardy’s themes as fatalistic a view of life that shows human actions being controlled by an impersonal force, perhaps called Destiny or Fate, which is independent of both humanity and its gods. The indifference of the universe, therefore, really describes what we see as we look about us or, perhaps, all that said we are created in God’s image, it may also be argued that we create gods in our own images. The dilemma implied here is, of course, as old as humanity and perpetually without final answer, though historically there have been many attempted answers. Here at least was intangible landscape far reaching proofs productive of genuine satisfaction. The untamable, is hanaselish thing that ego on now was it always had been. Civilization was its enemy and ever since the beginning of vegetation its soil had worn the same antique born dress.

Hardy as a nature-lover, but the nature here is hostile to Eustacia. The universe as nature, the suffering and pain inborn within the nature. If she had positively assimilated with the nature, she would have lived comfortably there. The researcher's point here is that nature begets the sorrow to her. She is also part of nature of universe. The creature created by nature is tormented and hopeless to life. Therefore, universe/nature is the source of suffering to woman.

In this regard, Mrs. Yeobright says:

After replying to the old man’s greeting he showed no inclination to continue in talk, although they still walked side by side, for the elder traveler seemed to desire company. There were no sounds but that of the booming wind upon the stretch of tawny herbage around them, the

crackling wheels, the tread of the men, and footsteps of the two shaggy ponies which drew the van. They were small, Hardy animals, of a breed between Galloway and Examoor, and were known as 'heath croppers' here. (9)

The scenario of pastoral life reflects the traditionalism of Victorian England where there is no space of women. They are compared with animals which are ready for cultural performance. Hardy presents unhealthy relationship between man and woman on the periphery of culture. In this regard, she states, "Not long after this faint cry sounded from the interior. The Riddle man hastens to the back, looked in and came again" (12). In cultural performance, there found certain uncertainty which she mentions:

"you have a child there my man?

No, sir I have a woman.

The deuce you have! Why did she cry out ?

Oh, she has fallen asleep, and not being used to travelling, she's

Uneasy, and keeps dreaming.' (39)

Female figure is represented as the commodity which fulfills male's desire. During the time of festival, men project women as an inherently demure creature and men as powerful and virile so that latter can achieve transcendence. Women's role is determine to fulfill desire of man that Hardy presents in the novel by giving the references of pastoral life of England. In this regard, he says, "[Y]oung women? Yes, a young woman that would have interested me forty years ago. Perhaps she's your wife?" (14). Beauty and youth appear as the main turning point of the novel which Hardy presents on the background of pastoral life and situation of women. The myth is a mirage into which man makes his purposeful valuations. Simone De Beauvoir

realizes the bondage obstructing a woman's free path so it is difficult for them to accept their status as autonomous individuals and other women's destiny. Yet Beauvoir believes when men realize the situation, women will be a full human being. The concept of folk appears in the novel by analyzing the performances of women. In this regard, she says:

And how about the new married folks down there at the Quiet Women Inn? The other enquired, pointing towards a dim light in the direction of the distant highway, but considerably apart from where the riddle man was at that moment resting. What's are the rights of matter about'em ? You ought to know, being an understanding man. (16)

J.A. Froude in his *The Remises of Faith* says, "Marriage was a lifelong working partnership with clearly defined roles for husband and wife and clear standards as to what a good husband and good wife were like of the same class" (69-70). Here, Froude clearly says that relation between husband and wife will remain healthy and cooperative if they belong to the same class. It shows that marriage in different classes will be considered unhealthy relation. Such marriage is supposed to bring family tension and create problems in Victorian society because of either male's superiority or female hypocrisy. In the novel, the riddle between man and woman reflects through the performance of folk dance which happens as the cultural activities of village of England. By using myth and ritual, Hardy provokes the right of women. In this context, it is relevant to quote the following lines:

Ah! Now, you'd hardly believe it, but I don't care for gay weddings, said Timothy Fairway, his eyes again travelling round. I hardly blame Thomasin Yeobright and neighbor Wildeve for doing it quiet, if I must

own it. A wedding at home means five and six hundred reels by the hour and they do a man's legs no good when he's over forty. (19)

Marriage between two different sexes should decide on their own way. In the following lines, it is said that weeding should be performed earnestly. There must not be the encroachment of hanky-panky and the repercussion of Mrs. Yeobright's consciousness of a superiority disturb the weeding. She has rather controlling on the basis of social status. The manner of Mrs. Yeobright reflects the domination on every aspects of life. Men in Victorian society are represented as the dominant sex and women are portrayed as the weaker sex. Hence, the relationship between Wildeve and Thomasin could not grow up smoothly because of their ego tussle thinking that Wildeve earns the money from outside which Thomasin spends not caring its worth. In this regard, it is undoubt to quote: "Thomasin, how long are you going to stay at the Inn? Now that all this money has come to your husband. Wildeve blamed her as an extravagant lady" (259).

Victorian concept of love and marriage appears as the tools of encouragement of women. Hardy uses same techniques to present life of women which female writers of his age use to write. The life style of Yeobright is fallen on confusion of modernity and tradition. In this regard, she says, "Wildeve is older than Thomasin Yeobright by good-few summers. A pretty maid too she is. A young woman with a home must be a fool to tear her smoke for a man like that" (20). Young women of Hardy's time living in rural area enjoy in smoking which empowered them because male dominated culture discourages women to smoke. It is taken as the symbol of freedom in Europe. In this regard, she says, "Well, that's that we'll do, said'll Fairway. We'll give them a song, and it please the lord. What's the good of Thomasin's cousin Clym a coming home after the deed's done? He should have come afore, if so be he wanted to stop it,

and marry her himself” (24). Married life of Mrs. Yeobright reflects the love relationship of Victorian women which is controversial in itself. In this regard, she says, “She first reached Wildeve’s patch, as it was called, a plot of land redeemed from the heath, and after long and laborious years brought into cultivation” (31). Pastoral life of England based on the rumors that have been based on culture. Undoubtedly, the then Victorian patriarchal norms and values had stern attitude towards women, they had darkened their life within the four walls of the room. They had awefully dominated and pushed their active roles to merely looking after their husbands and preparing food for them just to make them happy by siding away own wishes and desires. Feminism is a “struggle against the hardship and neglect, imposed upon women: "Patriarchy continually exerts forces that undermine women’s self confidence and assertiveness, then points to the absence of these qualities as proof that woman are naturally, and therefore correctly, self-effacing and submissive" (Tyson 85).

Therefore, in the novel, Eustacia opposes the norms and values of the Egdon Heath which impels her not to cross the bottom line. If so done, she may herself be tormented with. But she presents as a strong lady and have guts to face any punishment. The patriarchal values and norms cannot do anything her. Moreover, she has internalized that nowadays to escape from the hell like Egdon heath, merely, to radicalize herself. She is not in the mood to accept such discriminatory manner only being females. And she questions “why not men”? What environment it is!

In this regard, Mrs. Yeobright says, “The lips frequently parted, with a murmur of words. She seemed to belong rightly to a madrigal-to require viewing through rhyme and harmony” (32). The song which song on the occasion of cultivation empowers women to search her identity. The space of women is wide in

traditional culture which Thomasin Yeobright searches in the novel. In this regard, she says, “He discerned the young girl’s from in the passage, and said, ‘Thomasin, then, has reached home. How could you leave me in that way, darling? And turning to Mrs. Yeobright: it was useless to argue with her. She would go and go alone” (36). The physical beauty of Thomasin indicates that the value of physical beauty in Victorian time which has been taken as valuable sources of cultural performances. Thomasin’s physical beauty is related with the folk activities of pastoral life of England. In this context, it is relevant to quote this, “Thomasin’s large eyes had flown from the face of one to the face of the other during this discussion, and she now said anxiously, will you allow me, aunt to talk it over alone with Damon for five minutes? Will you Damon?” (37). Here too, permission is required for Thomasin to talk with Damon with whom she is going to marry. A kind of patriarchal domination is prevailing. In this context Lois Tyson States”, feminist Criticism examines the ways in which literature and other cultural productions reinforce or undermine the economic, political, social and psychological oppressions of women” (81). Myth of Christian and local myth appear once at a time to define the role of women living in pastoral area of England. In this regard, Mrs. Yeobright states:

At the grandfather’s heels now came the rest of the group, which included Fairway, Christian, Sam the turf cutter. Humphrey and a dozen others. All smiles upon Wildevve, and upon his tables and chairs likewise, from a general sense of friendliness towards the articles as well as towards their owner. (39)

In *The Return of the Native* Hardy powerfully exploits this bifocal ‘According to *Cambridge International Dictionary of English*, defines as glasses with lenses that are divided into two parts. The upper half is for looking far away and the lower half is for

looking at things that are near' perspective. At a time he is implicated deeply in these characters lives elsewhere he adopts more. He views his characters from without and these multiple ways of seeing result in a novel which is complex, challenging but potentially confusing. There is sometimes a discrepancy between the images created by Hardy and the emotions evoked by his characters, for they are acting into plots-one of their own devising and one of uncontrollable, impersonal forces. Similarly, there is tension between the past and present, and between the vast abstraction of the heath and claustrophobic intensity of the Yeobrights' relationships. Yet despite moments of uncertainty and instability, *The Return of the Native*, represents the powerful culmination of Hardy's exploration of the 'Wessex theme' and the first detailed examination of the cosmic history which would dominate his later novels. Eustacia and Clym are typical of Hardy's subsequent tragic heroes: she possesses their self destructive nature and pathos, Clym suffers their guilt and self accusation. However, the centre of tragic authority in *The Return of the Native* remains ambiguous. Hardy vacillates between sympathy and criticism, as when accounting for Clym's decision to Yeobright's local peculiarity was that in striving at high thinking he still cleaved to plain living-way, wild and meager living in many respects and brotherliness.

There will not be a mistake if the researcher takes the two main characters' self destroying manner here to notice. The rustic characters in the novel think that they are soundly living for they have adopted the nature. Moreover, they live according to the cycles of the nature. But these two characters are unable to assimilate with the Egdon dwellers. Eustacia possesses the self-destructive nature by isolating from them. She lacks the level of coordination with other characters. They think her as a "strange"/ "witch". Clym has also been overwhelmed with guilt and self-accusation. Unwittingly, he witnessed the death of lovely mother because of not

paying attention while she had gone to meet him at his house. She frequently knocked at the door but nobody came back to receive her response. While returning from his house, on the way she was bitterly bitten by a snake and consequently died. But later, Clym realized that it was his mistake not to care his mother.

Patriarchal ideology excluded, marginalized and trivializes the women and their potentialities. Feminist writing includes feminist voices against the subordination that prevents women from realizing their independent identity. Feminist writing tries to wipe out the ideological oppression of women by men in this respect, M.H. Abrams states:

The various feminisms, (however) shared certain assumptions and concepts that underline the diverse ways that individual critics explore the factor of sexual difference and privilege in the productions the form and content, the reception and the critical analysis and evaluation of works of literature. (89)

He thinks, all kinds of feminism aim to explore female self in society and in literature as well. Feminist believes, “western society is pervasively patriarchal” (93). Thus, for Abrams, despite the variances on the perception along with the various philosophical standpoints, feminism, all in all, agree in the issue of subjugation, subordination, suppression and exploitation done from the patriarchal autonomy marginalizing the role of female as the other with triviality.

The novel carries the theme of Victorian ideology which is controversial in the causes of women issues. As similar this novel is also controversial in that issue because of Hardy’s position which is not clear. Love and life have been presented in this novel on the perspective of male ideology. In this regard, she states,

The handkerchief which had hooded her head was now a little thrown back, her face being somewhat elevated. A profile was visible against the dull monochrome of cloud around her and it was as though side shadows from the features of Sappho (46).

Taking handkerchief is a symbol of love and freedom because handkerchief had taken as the symbol of love during the time of Victorian England. In this regard, she said, “And Eustacia again strolled away from the fire, but this time not towards Rainbarrow. She skirted the bank and went around to the wicket before the house, where she stood motionless, looking at the scene” (50). Eustacia wears colorful dress which empowers herself as a free woman of her age. In this regard, Hardy says “Eustacia Vye was the raw material of a divinity. On Olympus she would have done well with a little preparation. She had the passions and instincts which make a model, goddess, that is, those which make to quite model women” (55). In exploring women’s space as self, it is said that the origin of revolting voice against patriarchal ideology goes to 18th century female critics Mary Wollstonecraft. As she asserts in *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*:

There are many follies in some degree, peculiar to women: sins against reason of ‘commission’ as well as omission: but all flowing from ignorance of prejudice, I shall only point out such as appear to be particularly injurious to their moral character and adverting on them. I wish especially to prove that the weakness of mind and body which men have endeavored, impelled by various motive to perpetuate and prevents their discharging the peculiar duty of their sex: for when weakness of body will not permit them to suckle their children, and

weakness of mind makes them spit their tempers is women in a natural state. (396)

Marywollstone Craft appeals to understand the essence of the discrimination and realize the potential abilities of women. She blames men as the most responsible factor for women's backwardness. She advocates the repressed condition of women because of the lack of sufficient training and neglecting tendency of the society in educational sectors. Women don't have less potentiality than men. She claims that women should be free to use their own abilities so as to receive as much as opportunities in politics and education as men have been doing.

Pastoral life of England represents 'freedom' which is less discriminative than [u]rban life. It focuses on native culture where woman's space is wider than in city life. Feminist ideology hunts Hardy which presents in the novel through the narratives of Mrs. Eustacia, "An environment which would have made a contented woman a poet, a suffering woman a devotee, a pious woman a psalmist, even a giddy woman thoughtful, made a rebellious woman saturnine" (59). She presents herself as pious woman who is like a poet or singer who sings a song on freedom and equality. In this regard, she says, "My low spirits begin at the very idea. Don't you offer me tame, love, or a way you go!" (60). Concept of virtue and goodness is based on gender relation which Hardy presents on the veil of culture and its original values. In this regard, she clears that, "I wish Thomasin were not such a confoundedly good little woman," said Wildeve, so that I could be faithful to you without injuring a worthy person. It is [I] who am the sinner after all; I am not worth, the little finger of either of you" (69). Victorian concept of love and beauty reflects in the novel from the prospective of culture which encourage rural women and empower them to search their identity. In this regard, Eustacia states:

She seemed to feel, after a bare look at Diggory Venn, that the man had come on a strange errand, and that he was not so mean as she had thought him; for her close approach did not cause him to writhe uneasily, or shift his feet, or show any of those little signs which escape an ingenuous rustic at the advent of the uncommon in womankind. (74)

We find critical blow upon patriarchal structure of the society in women voices raised by Virginia Woolf in her writing. Her, *A Room of One's Own* points out women's rage against men which is an outcome of man's subordination and understimulation of women that brings misunderstanding between two sexes. "She advocates, she must shut herself up in a room in the country to write, and been torn as under by bitterness and scruples perhaps though her husband was of the kindest, and their married life perfection" (819). Woolf's writing asserts that women do not have sufficient space to use their own independent competence, rather, women are captured by creating false notion that they are not capable of exploring something remarkable in the society. In *A Room of One's Own*, the "Room" refers freedom of women's identity which women lack. Women don't have a room to express their own feelings rather they are captured in the 'concentration camp'. Woolf advocates radical changes that erase suppressed value of the society regarding women in the past "shaped by men" (817). She imagines the society which exists being of primary and secondary creature.

In this regard, Yeobright states:

She put on her bonnet, and leaving the house, descended the hill on the side towards Blooms-End, where she walked slowly along the valley for a distance of a mile and half. This brought her to a spot in which the green bottom of the dale began to widen, the furze bushes to recede

yet further from the path on side, till they were diminished to an isolated one here and there by the increasing fertility of the soil. (92)

Above lines clear the location of her place which is difficult to travel from one place to another. This encourages her to be equal with male partner. The description shows the comparison between the life of women in urban and rural area. In this regard, she says:

Ah! You think, "That weak girl how is she going to get a man to marry her when she choose? But let me tell you one thing, aunt: Mr. Wildeve is not a profligate man, any more than I am an improper woman. He has an unfortunate manner, and doesn't try to make people like him if they don't wish to do it of their own accord. (94)

Wildeve, preoccupied with Eustacia Vye, an exotically beautiful young woman living with her grandfather in a lonely house on Egdon Heath. Eustacia is a black-haired, queenly woman who grew up in Budmouth, a fashionable seaside resort. But after the death of her mother, her father started to drink. Because of excessive drinking, Eustacia's father also died. The demise of parents, she was left to the care of her grandfather who had chosen to settle down on Egdon Heath. Eustacia hated the change from Budmouth to Egdon, and She felt like one banished; but here she was forced to live. In this regard, she states:

Here come I Saint George, the valiant man,
With marked sward and sear in hand,
Who fought the dragon and brought him to the slaughter,
And by this won fair Sabra, the king of Egypt's daughter;
What mortal man would dare to stand.
Before me with my sward in hand? (102)

Feminist writing covers a broader scope and embraces variety of aspects in relation of humanity. Despite the fact that its primary focus is on the issue of women. Several dimensions have been shown ranging from liberal attitude and the demand equal rights for the sexes to the radical ones voicing out the extreme ideology that tends to theoretically turn the patriarchy up and down. Some thinkers have adopted liberal feminism and some radical one. While alongside those other feminist thinkers have developed with their affiliation to certain theoretical backgrounds, they include political feminism, Marxist feminism, post structuralist feminism etc. yet their aim too calls for women's own identity in society.

Radical feminist like Showalter demands an expression of female sexuality in literature which will burst through the bonds of male logic with a poetic power that defines the tyranny of logocentric meaning. Besides sexual oppression, a radical feminist often views other forms of power, for example, unequal power relation within capitalism as derive from patriarchy. They think that at least sex is the primary oppression. Radical feminist writing aims to counter women's supposedly natural, biological, inferiority and subordination within patriarchal society by asserting their at least equal status in relation to man.

It is with the Millet's *Sexual Politics*, modern feminist writing began and in the earlier phase the emphasis was often political in the sense that the writers were

experiencing anger of injustices and were engaged in raising women's political awareness of their oppression by man.

Issue of morality appears with liberation of women which Sabra and George love relation stand on the middle of the issue of feminism, in this regard, she further clears that:

He already showed that thought is a dress of flesh, and indirectly bore evidence that ideal physical beauty is incompatible with emotional development and full recognition of the coil of things. Mental luminousness must be fed with the oil of life, even though there is already a physical need for it, and the pitiful sight of two demands on one supply was just showing itself here. (115)

The narration shows that traditional treatment method has used as the main source of encouragement of rural women which challenges male dominated treatment method. By analyzing common events of rural England, Hardy searches the voice of women in nineteenth century England. In this regard, he further clears the circumstances,

Now since Egdon was populated with heath croppers and furze cutters rather than with sheep and shepherds, and the downs where most of the latter were to be found lay some to the north, some to the west of Egdon, his reason for camping a about there like. Israel in Zin was not apparent. (123)

At this point, Wildeve reappears; he has unexpectedly inherited a large sum of money, and is now in a better position to fulfill Eustacia's hopes. In this regard, she argues:

Eustacia looked at the lonely man. Wildeve had told her at their last meeting that venn had been thrust forward by Mrs. Yeobright as one ready and anxious to take his place as Thomasin's betrothed. His figure

was perfect, his face young and well outlined, his eye bright, his intelligence keen and his position one which he could readily better if he chose. (123)

While Eustacia and Wildeve are talking, Mrs. Yeobright knocks at the door; she has decided to pay a courtesy call in the hopes of healing the estrangement between herself and her son. Eustacia looks out at her and then, in some alarm, ushers her visitor out the back door. She hears Clym calling to his mother and, thinking his mother's knocking has awakened him, remains in the garden for a few moments. At this situation Mrs. Yeobright states, "She saw a painfully well known figure serpentine upwards by one of the little paths which led to the top where she stood. Owing to the necessary windings of his course, his back was at present towards them" (124). These circumstances highlight domestic scenario of pastoral life of the England where women search their identities by resisting patriarchy.

The feminist thinkers like Julia Kristeva and Helen Cixious question the assumption that feminist can only be seen from the point of view of phallic culture. In patriarchy, women are projected as the 'other', subordinate being. Men perceive themselves as self and women as other. Men assume that they (male) are the defining and dominating 'subject' who represent humanity in general. Eustacia is guided by the same ideology which appears in European writing. In this regard, she states, "Eustacia looked curiously at the singular man who spoke thus. What a strange sort of love, to be entirely free from that quality of selfishness, which is frequently the chief constituent of the passion, and sometimes its only one !" (126). Love relationship between male and female guided by physical factors such as property, beauty, luck etc., Hardy presents these factors which create problem on gender relationship, "She had not been gone from Blooms-End more than half an hour when Yeobright cause by

the mid from the other, the other direction entered the house” (124). Feminist ideology appears in the novel through the base structure. In this regard, Wilfred L. Guerien in *A Hand Book of Critical Approaches to Literature* mention: “French feminist who follow Lacan, particularly, Helen Cixious purpose a utopian place, a primeral female space which is free of symbolic order of sex roles. Otherness and law of the father and in which the self is still linked with what Cixious calls the voice of the mother” (204).

French feminism disrupts the unities of western discourse pointing to its silences. It is the deconstruction of male centered thinking and takes language as the medium of women’s oppression. In her famous essay, *The Laugh of Medusa*, Cixious, calls for women to put their ‘bodies’ into their writing. She says, “A woman’s body with its thousand and one thresholds of order ..., will make the old single grooved mother tongue never berate with more then one language Sheldon” (151). This statement amplifies a call for independence and necessity of rejecting the male way of writing.

Feminist Ideology appears in the novel through the base structure which embraces Marxism and aims to dissent capitalism for the establishment of equality between man and woman queering the status quo of patriarchal autonomy in terms of socio-cultural tents which equates women as best structure putting man as superstructure in the hierarchy of society. *Karl Marx* points out that 'consciousness' is the product of being which is determined by the socio-economic condition of the society. And Marxist feminist thinker found unequal distribution of capital as the main factor of undervaluation of women’s position in the society. And Marxist feminism can be used to help us understand “How economic forces have been manipulated by patriarchal law and costumes to keep woman economically,

politically and socially oppressed as an underclass” (Tyson 93). In this regard, it is appropriate to quote: “Money belongs to me not you, said Willdeve to Thmasin” (126). Because of money, the quarrel between them increases unexpectedly, they get nothing as Thomasin has got nothing from Damon Wildeve who has wandering eyes and an appetite for women.

She states, “It is useless to say that’, his mother answered with an impatient look of sorrow. You don’t know how bad it has been here with us all these weeks, Clym. You don’t know what a mortification anything of that sort is to a woman. You don’t know the sleepless nights we’ve had in this house” (134). Mrs. Yeobright, turns out, saw Eustacia looking out the window at her, she also say Clym’s gear by the door, and so knew they were both at home which raises question on that issues:

She is melancholy, then? Enquired Cylm.

She mopes about by herself and don’t mix in with the people.

Is she a young lady inclined for adventures?

Not to my knowledge.

Does not join in with the lads in their games to get some sort of

Excitement in this lonely place. (150)

Certain causes and consequences create problems on the life of Eustacia and Hardy controversially presents and creates confusion on reader, although his direction is clear on feminism. In this regard, he states:

She saw his meaning and whispered in a low, full accent of eager assurance, don’t mistake me, Clym: though I should like Paris, I love you for yourself alone. To be your wife and live in Paris would be heaven to me: but I would rather live with you in a hermitage here than not be yours at all. (167)

Love relation develops in triangular way which is similar with other female writers writings. In this circumstances, a woman loved by two men at last, she uses her sense and challenges the decision of male relatives. By presenting this events, Hardy shows the sympathy toward female characters although he could not be free from jealousy of patriarchy. In this context, it is relevant to quote these lines:

Three antagonistic growth had to be alive: his mother's trust in him, his plan for becoming a teacher and Eustacia's happiness. His fervid nature could not afford to relinquish one of these, though two of the three were as many as he could hope to preserve. Though his love was as chaste as that of Petrarch for his Laura, it had made fetters of what previously was only a difficulty. (168)

Eustacia's happiness is based on fantasy which is similar with dream. She has unfulfilled desire of marrying with Clym. It is her only intention to get rid of Egdon heath which is equal to her as hell. "Dream! Dream,! If there had been any system left to be invented they would have found it out at the universities long before this time" (169). Yeobright family faces the problems in their life which is based on domesticated problems based on property, love, marriage and kinship relation, "Believe me you are almost exasperating said Yeobright vehemently. And this vary day I had intended to arrange a meeting between you: "But you give me no peace you try to thwart my wishes in everything" (170).

Yeobright family relationship indicates the new wave of feminism which resists traditional patriarchal system of love and marriage practices run in the Victorian time of England. In this regard, he asserts:

Ah-your mind runs off to the philosophical side of it. Well, these sad and hopeless obstacles are welcome in one sense, for they enable us to

look with indifference upon the cruel stairs the Fate loves to indulge in.

I have heard of people who upon coming suddenly into happiness,
have died from anxiety lest they should not live to enjoy it. (173)

Patriarchal society gives all power to the male and weaknesses to the female. In patriarchal social structure, men were taken as rational, active and superior beings whereas women were regarded as inferior, passive and kind. Such type of discrimination compelled women to accept sexual abuses and harassment as well as subordination as natural without objection.

In certain foundation love relationship between Eustacia Vye and her lover Damon Wildeve reflects feministic fantasy which is guided by patriarchy. In this regard, she says, “He kissed her cheek, and departed in great misery, which was several hours in lessening itself to a controllable level. The position had been such that nothing more could be said without, in the first place, breaking down barrier and that was not to be done” (177).

She breaks the barriers which appear in the direction of love and family life that compels woman to follow patriarchy. In this context, he argues, “I am going there too, to fetch, Mrs. Wildeve. We can walk together. Wildeve became lost in thought, and a look of inward illumination came into eyes. It was money for his wife that Mrs. Yeobright could not trust him with. Yet, she could trust this fellow, he said himself” (186). Damon Wildeve further expresses his idea in this way:

No doubt, said Wildeve’s. Any person who had known the
circumstance might have perceived that Wildeve was mortified by the
discovery that the matter in transit was money, and not as he had
supposed when at Blooms-End, some fancy nick neck which only
interested the two women themselves Mrs. Yeobright’s refusal implied

that his honour was not considered to be of sufficiently good quality to make him a safe bearer of his wife property. (187)

Marxist compare two sexes as two distinctive classes that are bourgeoisie and proletariat. Friedrich Engel is of opinion that the root cause of women's oppression is the lack of ownership in the private property. As he says:

Husband is bourgeoisie and the wife represents the proletariat class. He also believed that man's control of woman is rooted in fact that he, not she controls the property. Division of labour in the family had regulated the distribution of private property. This division of labour forced the woman to be in the second place. Woman is confined to domestic work. The woman's house work lost its significance compared with man's work in obtaining a livelihood . and the oppression of woman will cause only with the dissolution of the institution of private property. (158)

Distrust between the husband and the wife should be dismantled so far the harmony in the family is necessary. If we see our traditional male centered history that man rules by virtue of power. If women are to be emancipated from their husbands or other males, they must become economically independent to men. Hardy, in the novel, has tried to make equally capable Thomasin by obtaining the money from Mrs. Yeobright if so done, she might overrule her husband, Mr. Wildeve, that essentially be unacceptable for male ego.

The American radical feminist, Shulsmith Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex*, "believed that technology could be employed to free woman from the restraints placed upon them by their biology" (323). In the novel, too, Eustacia readies to die or sacrifice her life for the sake of salvation but not to be underestimated by male gaze.

She seems here as a radical character who boldly sees off her relatives without any hesitation. In this regard, Firestone advocates by employing technology to lift the task of reproduction from women, equality could be achieved” (324).

A mark of otherness is one’s inability to shape one’s psychological, social and cultural identity for Beauvoir as she traces, “In sexuality and Maternity women as subject can claim autonomy; but to be ‘true women’ she must accept herself as the other (1000). Beauvoir accuses men for their belief that transcendence can only be attained by men. Men project women as an inherently demure creature and men as powerful and virile so that latter can achieve transcendence. There is ambivalence in man’s nature toward women for at one hand he calls woman as Muse, Goddess or Beatrice and on the other hand, he associates her with demon, death and cruel step mother beings by phallogocentric social structure. Behavior rejects the otherness of women and gives proper reason for equality. To describe nature of woman has been taken the help of myth which is purely phallogocentric even though it is a mirage into which man makes his purposeful valuations. Finally, Beauvoir realizes the bondage obstructing a woman’s free path so it is difficult for them to accept their status as autonomous individuals and other woman’s destiny. Yet, Beauvoir believes that when men realize the situation, woman will be a full human being, an independent human being.

Raymond Williams in his *Culture and Society* defines culture as a certain peoples activities especially certain moral and intellectual activities. He says [...] culture merges two general responses, first the reorganization of the practical separation of certain moral and intellectual activities from the driven impetus of a new kind of society” (qtd’ in Langbaum 80). William points out that culture is not kind of

rules which has traditional norms and values but it comes practically and is created by a process of activated from society which is created by a current norms and values.

From the above statement, it is clear that culture has two sides of thinking, where both factors have equal significance. But in the novel, *The Return of the Native*, the protagonist, Eustacia, cannot intimate to the cycles of nature whereby tortures and destroys her. Other dwellers of the heath interpret their experiences and relationship with each other interms of folk, customs and beliefs and their unsophisticated faith in omen's, primitive, superstitions and occult-wisdom is illustrated by the satanic imagery which they associate with Eustacia, she had used to think of the heath alone as an 'uncongenial spot' to be in. she also boldly clams that Egdon heath is a hell for her she cannot intimate with heath. Due to her unassimilating nature she meets the death.

At that situation her decision appears as significance. This circumstance empowers the women in decision of love. In this regard, he says, "While he was closing the little horn door a figure rose from behind a neighboring bush and come forward into the lantern light. It is the Riddleman approaching"(190). Wildeve takes everything and expresses his love relationship toward Eustacia who take his love as personal choice. In this regard, he says, "The vehicle came on and passed before him. It was a hired carriage, and behind the coaching were two persons whom he knew well. Where sat Eustacia and Yeobright, the arm of the latter being round her wrist" (195). The spirit of love develops on the heart of feminism which is similar with the idea of Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis, has massively brought gender issues while talking about the formation of the unconscious of a woman. He finds fundamental differences in dream images of men and women and attributes egoist, ambitious dreams to men and erotic dreams to women. As he states, "In young

women the erotic wishes predominate almost exclusively, for their ambition is as a rule absorbed by erotic trends. In young men egoistic and ambitious wishes come to the fore clearly enough alongside of erotic ones” (Adams 713). And he means to say that males have two types of desires: Erotic desires and the ego but females have only the erotic desires. In this points he is discriminating the females and pushing them to the lowest status in society.

In this statement, he presents woman as a libidinous creature. In this regard, he says, “At that time it was to enquire in a friendly spirit if there had been any accidental loss; now it was to ask plainly if Wildeve had privately given her money which had been intended as a scared gift to Clym” (201). Resistance of female ideology appears in the novel with contradictory way, “If you injure me now, you injure yourself you have now suspected me of secretly favoring another man for money!” (201). Same expression help to produce the values of life on it, “You injured me before my marriage, and you have now suspected me of secretly favouring another man for money” (203). A certain consequence creates a situation that encourages women to come out from the round. In this regard, he states, “If you had treated me honorably you would have had him still; Eustacia said, while scalding tears trickled from her eyes. You have brought yourself to folly; you have caused a division which can never be healed” (203). Traditional way of treatment is liberal in itself which encourage women to search their identity. In this context, Eustacia states, “Tribes of emerald green grasshoppers leaped over his feet, falling awkwardly on their backs, heads or hips, like unskillful acrobats as chance might rule; or engaged themselves in noisy flitations under the fern-fronds with silent ones of homely hue” (209). Here, Hardy presents pastoral life which is based on simplicity and resists modernity. There is conflict on modernity and tradition during the time of Hardy that influences falls on

his writing. In this novel also something appears. The manner of hosting is influenced in the same manner which is as follows:

His manner was peculiar, hesitating, and not that of a person come on business or by invitation. He surveyed the house with interest, and then walked round and scanned the outer boundary of the garden, as; one might have done had it been the birthplace of Shakespeare, the prison of Mary Stuart, or the chateau of Hougomont. (230)

History of England is more liberal than the Victorian modernity because pastoral life encourages women and gives freedom of choice but modernity or super ideology like Aristotle always against women. In this regard, Eustacia, states, “Provocation of myth and history help to remember the past which empower women and help to search their identity in their community. During the time they resist the Victorian patriarchal demarcation of love and sex. In this context, it is relevant to quote the following lines, “The marriage is no misfortune in itself”, she retorted with so little petulance. It is simply the accident which has happened since that has been the cause of my ruin. I have certainly got thistles for figs in a wordly sense, but how could I tell what time would bring forth. (233). Exploration of self has been presented in the novel through the narration Eustacia:

Once when I went to Throop Great Pond to catch eels I sat myself looking up at myself and I was frightened and jumped back like [...] if they had only shown signs of meeting my advances half way how well it might have been done!. But there is no chance. Shut out! She must have set him against me. (237)

Above narration shows the self exploration of the narrator who searches his identity on the certain circumstances of life. Conflict between modernity and traditionalism hunt on her idea which reflects on the following lines:

Yeobright walked on amid this quiet scene with a hope that all would soon be well. Three miles on he came to a spot where a soft perfume was wafted across his path and he stood still for a moment to inhale the familiar scent. It was the place at which, four hours earlier, his mother had sat down exhausted on the knoll covered with shepherd's thyme.
(241)

Hardy presents the choice of women which resists the male domination although he is not freed from the legacy of male ideology. He presents women issues in light way of presentation and mock on love and marriage system because he is afraid of male critic of his time. Same things happen in the novel which Yeobright expresses:

Sometimes his condition had been one of utter remorse, unsoftened by a single tear of pure sorrow: and then he writhed as he lay, fevered for more by thought than by physical ills, if I could only get one assurance that she did not die in a belief that I was resentful, he said one day when in this mood, it would be better to think of than a hope of heaven. But that I can't do. (256)

Pain and pleasure appears once at a time that guided them to share the destiny of life although female characters of the novel try to resist male domination by using the choice in life. In this regard, she says, "I Hush! Prey, Clym don't, don't say is! Thomasin affrighted into sobs and tears: while Eustacia, at the other side of the room, thought her pale face remained calm, writhed in her chair. Clym went on without heeding his cousin" (258). The heelding of Clym has been presented as significant of

pastoral life which is liberal for women. In this context, it is relevant to quote the following lines:

He journeyes onward, not quickly or decisively, but in the slow walk of one who has been awakened from a stupefying sleep. It was early afternoon when he reached the valley. The expression of the place, the tone of the hour, were precisely those of many such occasions in days gone by: and these antecedent similarities fostered the illusion that she, who she there no longer, would come out to welcome him. (263)

Journey onward pastoral life creates problem on the life of Eustacia although she found her identity on it. By combination of past and present, new and old, modernity and tradition she feels happy in her life. In this regard, she argues, “You exaggerate fearfully, she said in a faint, weary voice, but I cannot enter into my defiance it is not worth doing. You are nothing to me in future and the past side of story may as well remain untold. I have lost all through you, but I have not complained” (272). Female voice appears in the novel through the pastoral setting of England and activities of people living in rural area of the place. In this regard, little down of the same page she further speaks “You exaggerate fearfully; she said in a faint, weary voice, but I cannot enter into my defense, it is not worth doing. You are nothing to me in future, and the past side of the story may as well remain untold. I have lost all through you, but I have not complained” (272). Hardy could not present women as independent figure because of his male jealousy. He presents her as an exaggerative or more fake than real lady. The images of women in patriarchy are fraught with contradiction: woman is sublime, perfect, and beautiful; she is awful, stupid, and contemptible. Beauvoir discloses the ambivalence of man’s nature towards woman as he calls woman a Muse or Goddess on the one hand while he associates her with demon, death, cruel

stepmother or the other. Woman is the mother of God as well as Traitor of the Garden. As Sheila Ruth claims, "This bifurcation of images is called the Mary/Eve dichotomy: Woman is represented as being at once a manifestation of the divine and an incarnation of evil" (87). The image of fake present her as demon or something else which demoralize women in patriarchal situation.

In the novel Hardy touches the issues of women in controversial manner although there found a sense of feminism. In this regards, it is relevant to quote this lines, "She assented in silence, and lifted her chin. For once at least in her life she was totally oblivious of the charm of her attitude. But he was not, and he turned his eyes aside that he might not tempt to softness" (274). The conversations between Charley and Eustacia shows certain gap in understanding which twist the fact into fiction create romantic environment, "Charley had always regarded Eustacia as Eustacia had regarded Clym when she first beheld him as a romantic and sweet vision, scarcely incarnate" (275). It helps to explore self which empower women in her domestic arena of life. In this regard, it is relevant to quote, "When he had gone, and the dull sounds occasionally reached her ears of his movements in the kitchen, she forgot where she was, and had for a moment to consider by an effort what the sound meant" (276). Domestic environment shows the Victorian confinement of women which hardly allow women to come out from the setting of kitchen. She is the tender young creature man marries and protects as well as the treacherous, manipulative sneak who tricked him into a union he never sought. Explicitly or implicitly, women are represented as having dual nature, of being all that is desirable, fascinating, and wonderful, yet extremely destructive and dangerous. Actually in patriarchy, images of women, like other conceptualizations, have been male created. The stereotypes of women, contradictory and conflicting, are male projections, and as such they must be

understood as outward expression of male attitudes. This dichotomy in the representation of women, therefore, is a strong indication of extreme ambivalence on the part of men. In this regard, she asked question toward him, “Why should I not die if I wish? She said tremulously. I have made a hard bargain with life, and I am weary of it. And now you have hindered my escape, the thought of others’ grief? And that is absent in my case, for not a sigh would follow me!” (276). The grief of women is related with behavior of men that made further clear by the narration of Yeobright. In this regard, she says, “A week passed, Eustacia never going out of the house. Then she walked into the enclosed plot and looked through her grandfather’s spy glass, as she had been in the habit of doing before her marriage” (279). Hardy creates certain sympathy at the end of novel by provoking the nature of women and states:

The lad was in good spirit that day, for the fifth of November had again come round, and he was planning yet another scheme to divert her from her too absorbing thoughts. For two successive years his mistress had seemed to take pleasure in lighting a bonfire on the bank overlooking the valley; but this year she had apparently quite forgotten the day and the customary deed. (280)

Family relationship of Victorian couple had found in problems because of the ongoing movement of ideology which urges everyone to search self. This influences fall on the life of women and they try to explore self among themselves and use sense while on their activities. Same thing happen in the life of Eustacia. In this regard, she says, “Eustacia remained within the bank looking at the fire, intending to go indoors, yet lingering still. Had she not by her situation been inclined to hold in indifference all things honoured of the gods of men she would probably have come away” (281). The new sense of thought appears with combination of ongoing Victorian feminist

movement which hardly present with the concept of nature and freedom. In this regard, it is relevant to quote the following lines:

I ought never to have hunted you out or having done it, I ought to have persisted in retaining you. But of course, I have no right to talk of the now. I will only ask this; can I do anything for you? Is there anything on the face of the earth that a man can do make you happier than you are at present? (283)

Concept of freedom presents from the perspective of male like Rousseau, an apostle of freedom who bewails the fact that men though born free should be in chains everywhere, condemns woman as servile. He argues, "Girls should be early subjected to restraint" (qtd. in Altekari 332). This statement shows that he is not in favour of women's freedom. He further says that women should be educated to please and complement men. He is also of the opinion that women are the playmates of men. Hardy follows the same concept in this novel. In this context, Yeobright speaks, "He had spent the time in working about the premises, sweeping leaves from the gardenpaths cutting dead, stalks from the flower beds and nailing up creepers which had been displaced by the autumn winds" (284). The various concepts of feminism appear in the novel on the plate form of culture which is on clear as well as bias in itself because culture is made by male. In this context, he says:

When a leaf floated to the earth he turned his head, thinking it might be her footfall. A bird searching for worms for worms in the mould of the flower beds sounded like her hand on the latch of the gate and at dusk, when soft, strange ventriloquisms came from holes in the ground, hollow stalks. Curled dead leaves, and other crannies where in breezes

worms, and insects can work their will be fancied that they more

Eustacia standing without and breathing wishes of reconciliation. (284)

The very concept of feminism presents in the novel as the main source of self exploration of women which is not so clear like the gender issues of twenty first century. In this context, she says, “True but I have been tossed to and fro in doubt if I ought after such strong provocation. To see me now. Thomasin, gives you no idea of what I have been, of see what depth I have descended to in these few last days. O, it was a bitter shame to shut out my mother like that! Can I ever forget it, or even agree to see her again?” (286). Victorian over sensation works to determine the gender relation in this novel which Eustacia an Yeobright family faces problems in their life. In this regard, she states, “Fidelity to her husband had that evening induced her to conceal all suspicion that Wildeve’s interest in Eustacia had not ended with his marriage, but she knew nothing positive and thought Clym was her beloved cousin there was one nearer to her still” (287). Sense of love and hate comes once at a time and create a kind of confusion on it, “No I don’t mind waiting I would rather stay here twelve months longer than run any risk with baby. But I don’t like vanishing so in the evening” (288). The combination of self creates problems on it which create mystery on the life style on the characters. In this regard, she states:

I will, she answered triumphantly, ‘When you went out this evening, I thought that as baby was asleep I would see where you were going to so mysteriously without telling me. So I ran out and followed behind you. You topped at the place the road forks, looked round at the bonfires and then said, “Damn it, I’ll go! (288)

There found influences of ongoing moment in the novel which Hardy artistically use in this novel. George Eliot and Emily Bronte worked under the guise of pseudonyms

as they knew that the public would not accept novels by women writers. Jane Austen, Bronte Sisters, Elizabeth Barret Browning and George Eliot ventured to raise their submerged voice to an audible pitch. However, the first dominant woman's voice for the rights of women had come from Mary Wollstonecraft, an English writer and a political commentator, through her *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792). Her book well deserves its rank as the first great feminist work. In this essay, she argues that the educational system of her time deliberately trained women to be frivolous and incapable. She seems to ask female readers to form their self and suggests to them not to be irresponsible towards themselves, their children and society. In this regard, she argues, "Towards evening on the sixth her determination to go away again revived. About four o'clock, she packed up a new the few small articles she had brought in her flight from Alder-worth, and also some belonging to her which had been left: here: the whole formed a bundle not large" (290). A certain scenario reflects the concept of women ideology which had been started in Europe which touches the issues of women living in patriarchal society and urges them to search self. In this context, it is relevant to quote this line "Wondering what had aroused her he remained undecided at the window and was thinking of fetching the letter to slip it under her door, when he heard a slight brushing of garment on the partition dividing his room from the passage" (291).

A philosophy called, 'Social Darwinism', which was quite fashionable at that time, although Darwin did not sanction it, taught that human society illustrated the scientific principle of 'the survival of the fittest'; in other words, "the weak and incompetent" were unsuccessful in life while the strong and clever naturally got to the top.

Protagonist, Eustacia, becomes the spokesperson for the individual rights and freedom first. So, she becomes the prey in the claw of predatory, patriarchal authority. A conscious and awakened person like Eustacia becomes ready to sacrifice all but never kneels down before the corrupt cultural authority.

Actually, female bonding is necessary in maintaining harmony and cordial environment in the society. Gender bonding refers to the relationships and friendships between male and female. In the novel, when Eustacia was in great intention to watch the arrival of Clym from Paris to celebrate the Christmas festival at the very hour, she was not allowed to present there. But, Charley gave her words to cooperate her to fulfill her desires to look him. How he helped her that he gave his dress to her and in turn she provided him some money, It means that both of them were very happy in fulfilling their desires. The researcher also finds, in the novel, were similarities between female characters. In heart, they are very helpful and understand each other's pain and sorrow. But the then system strongly forbade them to do so. Mrs. Yeobright, mother of Clym, opposes the marriage of Eustacia with her son, Clym at the beginning of the novel but after realization of her unproductive argument feels sorrow of her behavior towards Eustacia. Therefore, she goes to Alderworth, temporary first home of Clym and his wife Eustacia, for reconciliation with Eustacia. She accepts her as her daughter in-law.

Although the death takes place of Damon Wildeve. He dies of in the name of protection of Eustacia, but his attempt could not succeed. Here, also, we find gender bonding between Thomasin and Reddeman, a dairy businessman. He, although not his wife, accepts Thomsin, heartily. Reddeman tormented by the manners of Thomasin's aunt Mrs. Yeobright. Actually patriarchal norms and values had been the

burden for females. They had been against dogmas which could obstruct female from any progressive works. The rustic characters however, exhibit conducive atmosphere.

In Victorian period, there is some aroma of woman's effort for equal rights. The oppressed women fought for independence. In "A Doll's House" and the "Yellow Wallpaper" authors want to convey the message of oppressed women who try to commit an act of independence. During the end of "The Yellow Wall Paper", John's act of passing out create a reversal of character making him wake being. Similarly, in 'A Doll's House,' Nora's leaving of her family symbolizes Nora as the strong dominant character and Torvald the weaker sex. In this regard, Gleadle says:" One of the strongest undercurrents of this time was the position of woman. Before women were able to band together and counter their subordination in society, they could easily be defined.

The female bonding is every-where in the novel. Certain situations creat such condition that there is space for the reconciliation with the previous antagonistic elements. Although Clym is initially opposed to his cousin's Thomasin to marry Diggory Venn. Yet subsequently he too reconciles himself to her desire. When Mrs. Yepbright is in distress because of her rift with Clym, Thomasin speaks words of comport and good cheer to her aunt, assuring her that things will turn out well. When Clym is in a grief-stricken condition after his quarrel with Eustacia, Thomasin urges him to make up the quarrel. When she herself is in distress because Wildeve is planning to elope with Eustacia, she goes to Clym's house in the rain to seek help because she knows that she depends upon him. She shows her sincerity and her genuine affection and wins our esteem. Therefore, gender bonding is one of the tools which balances the characters.

In short, the novel reflects the overall idea of Victorian time when women searched their identity by using myth, history and culture. Hardy also influences by same wave of thought and presents women's issues by taking the help of culture and nature. The concept of gender appears on the foregrounding of radical feminism although he is not clear on the issues. The concept of patriarchy, as one of the parts of culture presents as burden and he urges to join in the nature. Male dominated patriarchal culture has inherently taken as burden for women living in his age.

The notion of 'Patriarchy' as used by Millet and Firestone suggests a universal domination with no historical origins or variations.

Along with Millett and Judith Fetterly, Elaine Showalter questioned cultural, sexual and psychological stereotypes about women. The focus upon the silencing and oppression of women's gave way to deeper interrogation of what a history of women's oppression meant.

Patriarchy is thus, by definition, sexist which means it promotes the belief that women are innately inferior to men. Patriarchy objectifies both "bad girls" and "good girls". Patriarchy treats women like objectives: Like objects, women exist, according to patriarchy to be used without consideration of their own perspectives feelings, or opinions.

Feminists have long puzzled over the problem of getting beyond patriarchal programming and have offered many different solutions. Mary Wollstonecraft resisted patriarchal ideology in 1792 when she wrote *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, as Virginia Woolf resisted patriarchal ideology in 1929 when she wrote *A Room of One's Own*, as Simone de Beauvoir resisted patriarchal ideology in 1949 when she wrote *The Second Sex* and feminist theorists continue to resist it today. Women are oppressed by patriarchy economically, politically, socially and psychologically:

Patriarchal ideology is the primary means by which they are kept so. Materialist feminism examines the patriarchal traditions and institutions that control the material and economic conditions by which society oppresses women, for example, patriarchal beliefs about the difference between men and women and the laws and customs that govern marriage and motherhood. In a patriarchal society, Beauvoir observes, men are considered essential objects, while women are considered contingent objects.

III. Conclusion

Title of thesis, Burden of Culture in Thomas Hardy's novel, *The Return of the Native*, presents the suppression of female characters by traditional male dominated Victorian culture which obstructs the freedom and gender equality. The novel also suggests that women are native because they are natural and men are not because they are made. Culture is formed by someone. Hence, female characters suffer from the exploitation and domination from the society which is constructed by male.

Eustacia, the main character of the novel faces many problems in her life and she searches the solution but she could not find it in the domain of male dominated society. Though she is a product of the same society yet she is excluded and been made as an unwanted creature. She fights against patriarchal values and norms to get rid of that society. Problems are created due to the ongoing Victorian male dominated culture because love relation could not go far because of Victorian values life.

Religious customs, marriage, love, property, divorce and remarriage have been talked in a serious manner. The rustic characters in the novel live comfortably and happily because they understand the value of cycle of nature. They behave as the nature. Therefore, they do not have any trouble but Eustacia's, a fashionable lady, hates the Egdon Heath and regards it as "cross" and "shame". She does not know to change, according to nature. Hence, she becomes the victim of culture and she is awefully victimized.

Hardy's writings reflect the demand of people by narrativizing the rural voice which is more liberal than modern value and more sensitive for woman right. It is as her "cross", as her "shame"; and as the potential cause of her death.

The Return of the Native reveals Hardy's interest in traditional rural culture and folklore which become burden for Eustacia because she is totally alien to it and

can not adjust herself with other festivals and ritules. Significantly, there is a communal dance around the Maypole, a pagan celebration of summer and fertility, other characters enjoy it by participation in it but Eustacia is unwilling towards such activities. She does not heed about it at all. She is only hunted by the arrival of Clym who, she thinks, a dream boy, also is coming to celebrate the Christmas and also takes part in the wedding ceremony of his cousin Thomasin Yeobright. Eustacia has desire of meeting with Clym.

On the other hand, other characters take her as 'witch' and 'stranger' in the Egdon heath. She also becomes the victim of effigy. According to the novel, Susan has a child and suddenly becomes sick. She blames Eustacia that she has bad eye to her baby. Susan takes her as a witch and to get rid of her, she burns her effigy which becomes intolerable for Eustacia. Such manners are shown insidiously and become hard to tolerate for Eustacia.

Diggory Venn does the same. His generation is in extinct but he changes his job to diary farmer. He sells milk and earns money which is the determining factor for human being. He easily assimilates with heath dwellers. He marries a widow, Thomasin Yeobright and lives happily. Hardy intimates that those who live according to the cycles of nature will find peace and contentment, free from the ambition, guilt and moral confusion which tortures and destroys modern man and modern woman. Here, I mean to say that by patiently accepting the inevitable, Diggory Venn and Thomasin illustrate a way of life that makes living endurable even when faced with the worst contingencies. Their union is not merely emblematic but represents 'inevitable movement onward'. And who opposes the inevitability surely meets the death. The death is merely the redemption of exploitation. The same happened to Eustacia who does not easily accept the certainty of such situation. She feels defeated

by the heath and it is her inability to interact with the heath dwellers which leads to her death.

Hardy raises the issue of women and love on the periphery of Victorian male dominated culture. Yeobright family is not so liberal in woman freedom. In short, the novel mildly touches the issues of woman and satire on the ongoing modernity of England.

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