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To Examine How Human Relationships Involving Unselfish Love Are Essential to Transforming Individuals

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Abstract

The present study focused mainly on certain thematic concerns, especially in a feministic perspective in the select novels of George Eliot. But in fact, It is assumed by looking at these themes, one can perhaps get a new perspective on her strengths. Some of Eliot's women characters like Hetty or Dinah, Mirah or Esther Lyon do fail completely but more interesting are the cases in which the presentation of a woman character fails only partially, where the sentiment, the idealism, the reliance on stereotype comes only after what has seemed to be a whole new appreciation of feminine experience. As a result, this study focused on key concepts including "Sympathy and Love," "Autobiography," "Human Companionship and Unselfish Love," "Moral and Spiritual Autonomy," and "Moral Will and Personal Destiny." It is clear that George Eliot handled each of these thematic facets well. Numerous renowned writers, including Henry James, D. H. Lawrence, and James Joyce, were impacted by her writings in their fiction. The development of women who behave differently from the stereotypical female patterns those readers have grown to expect is one of George Eliot's greatest literary accomplishments. It is terrible that she is unable to implement this strategy, but that in no way justifies throwing away the works. The images of Maggie drowning, Dorothea getting married, and Gwendolen getting ready for marriage may never provide much insight, but what comes before each resignation-the struggles against or entanglement in the patriarchal values system-will endure for a very long time as examples of great and significant fiction. She portrays both male and female characters with tenderness while illustrating how human friendship is bound by moral will and spiritual liberty leading to personal destinies as unavoidable phases, but she is especially concerned to expose and reform the suffering of enslaved women. Many times, she explains how the ideas she discusses-like selfless love-come from her own experience and that some of her autobiographical components came from her own life. She also says that her exceptional insight came primarily from her own experience and thinking.

Keywords: Moral, Spiritual, Liberty, Marriage, Experience

1. Introduction

From a feminist standpoint, this study focuses on the main themes found in a few of Eliot's novels, including "Sympathy and Love in Adam Bede," "Human Companionship through Unselfish Love in Silas Marner," "From dependency and subjugation to moral and spiritual autonomy," and various autobiographical elements from "The Mill on the Floss." Romola demonstrates how the main characters' themes of subjection, moral independence, and spiritual autonomy are related. The primary theme of Middlemarch is "Moral Will and Personal Destinies," which refers to the main characters' moral will and personal

destinies. In the novels chosen for this study, George Eliot skillfully addressed each of the thematic issues.

One of the best-known Victorian novelists is George Eliot. She was born in 1819, the year Queen Victoria was born, and during her early years she experienced the Reform Bill and industrial revolutions. Her creations exemplify Victorian mood and reflect these social activities. As Tim Dolin correctly notes, she was one of the greatest chroniclers of modern experience and the sensibility it generated, which contributes to her significance as a novelist. Eliot was influenced by nineteenth-century philosophy and science, including those of Spinoza,

Feuerbach, Comte, Huxley, Darwin, Bain, Herbert Spencer, and her lifelong boyfriend, George Henry Lewes, after she converted from Evangelicalism to agnosticism through her relationship with the Brays. Her writings profoundly reflect her extensive understanding of philosophy and science.

One of the most important Victorian novelists is still referred to by his name, George Eliot. She depicts her home nation as "fat central England" in her semi-autobiographical sketch. She makes references to the impact of her childhood in the country, which seems to still have resonance in her mature, well-educated mind.

George Eliot was alive at this turbulent time. According to George Willis Cooke, she is a product of her era, just as Lessing, Goethe, Wordsworth, and Byron were; she has a voice to express its meaning and purpose and a trumpet cry to guide it. Many literary historians and critics rank her among the best novelists with the ability to describe things precisely. Her life was nearly as fascinating and alluring as her books.

The Victorian era, so named in honor of Queen Victoria, who ruled from 1837 to 1901, includes George Eliot's life and literary output from 1819 to 1880. In addition to being prosperous and peaceful in terms of the economy and industry, this period was also rich and productive in terms of literature and writings, and the rising popularity of novels inspired well-known authors like Charles Dickens, Oscar Wilde, and the Bronte sisters. George Eliot was undoubtedly one of the most well-liked.

By repeatedly putting herself in the role of a primary heroine, Eliot combined the author's presence with psychological examination of her characters. Characters are shown more so than the plot, and a person is compared to society and its norms. The author's own opinions are conveyed through the use of personal attitudes and experiences in the portrayal of the main female characters. Eliot helps her readers embrace moral principles as well as intellectual growth and pursuit. As a woman, a writer, and a philosopher, her works capture a range of issues of her time as well as the internal conflicts her characters face.

The study also looks at the similarities between Eliot and her heroines, the relationships between the male and female characters in the books, and the female characters' displays of masculinity. The study also looks at the evidence that George Eliot and her main heroines are compared to the typical feminine symbols of their time and would rather be viewed from a different angle, one that emphasizes intellectual prowess and ability over beauty and feminine pastimes. Eliot's fascination with philosophy, her fervent pursuit of moral principles, and her desire for intellectual stimulation are evident in both her heroines and herself. The study primarily emphasizes how a person's identity interacts with and influences society and social norms. In contrast to her contemporaries, George Eliot highlights the feminist, ethical, and social concerns of her time. She is not interested in light hearted stories that depict the difficult circumstances faced by women during the Victorian era; instead, she writes about serious subjects like female education and female recognition. Her moral convictions and criticism of the state of women during her time are evident in both her life and each of her works. Eliot and her heroes transcend boundaries, develop their intellectual and emotional selves, and send a message to all women. Their goal respects the

patriarchy while incorporating female evolution.

The typical 21st-century woman can be described as an autonomous person who is capable of choosing her own path in life. She can decide whether to focus her life on developing her own career or caring for her family and home; she can marry a man of any class at a young age, remain single without being viewed as a spinster, or even take on the role of family breadwinner while her husband stays at home to take care of the kids and household chores. In contrast, the average Victorian woman did not have this kind of autonomy over her own life. In actuality, belonging to a particular class at birth dictated practically every aspect of life.

2. Objectives of the study

1. The study of Silas Marner: Human Companionship through Unselfish Love," was to examine how human relationships involving unselfish love are essential to transforming individuals.
2. The study of Romola: From dependency and subjugation to moral and spiritual autonomy, demonstrates how the novel's main characters relate to the concepts of spiritual autonomy, moral freedom, and subjugation.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 ADAM BEDE: Moral problems in the major characters

In her book Adam Bede, George Eliot explores the impact of love on five major individuals and the terrible outcomes that result when that love is thwarted by class prejudice and foolishness. The novel opens with a third-person omniscient narrator recounting the slow walking pace of village life. Adam Bede works as a carpenter at a successful woodworking business with his brother Seth. Adam, the shop foreman and older brother, is twenty-five years old. He is tall, attractive, gifted, and has a sharp mind. He has developed feelings for Hetty Sorrel, a tenant farmer's orphaned 17-year-old niece. The 20-year-old heir to the estate that includes Hayslope, Arthur Donnithorne, then turns his attention to Hetty. In the meantime, Seth makes an effort to win over Dinah Morris, Hetty's cousin, who is so inspired by her Methodist faith that she starts preaching in the village green of Hayslope. Each of these characters experiences heartbreak at the book's finale, and some of them end up in public disgrace and personal destruction. Since the movement's inception, criticism of the Victorian novel and feminist criticism have been closely associated; in fact, it frequently appears that they have a natural affinity for one another, in part due to the Victorian novel's focus on domestic life, marriage, and female sexuality, as well as the relevance of "the woman question" in Victorian society. By rereading canonical novels and reevaluating the roles of female characters in them, uncovering and reevaluating noncanonical novels and authors, and challenging the established canon's meaning as a hierarchy based on patriarchal values, the investigation of these and related issues constituted-and continues to constitute-a vast and ongoing project. It also entails a new understanding of women's roles and feminine authority both inside and outside the home, in ways that are now consistent with Michel Foucault's revision of the repressive hypothesis, as

well as reevaluations of important characters and ideas in Victorian fiction and Victorian life, in ways that are consistent with the new historicist project.

George Eliot's first full-length book, *Adam Bede*, was based on her early recollections. Despite a lengthy history of social exclusion and familial rejection, the commitment was maintained. This novel's thirty-nine-year-old author, George Eliot, actually lived with George Henry Lewes, who was already married and had kids. When Marian eventually told her only brother Isaac about their connection in May 1857, he renounced her and never saw her again, although he did send official congratulations on her marriage to John Cross 23 years later, following Lewes's passing. Additionally, he blocked communication between her and her two sisters. She had nearly become permanently estranged from her father at the age of twenty-two in early 1842, so this was not the first family breakup. She declined to go to church with him after losing her trust in Christianity. However, the Lewes relationship had more significant social repercussions after she started living with him in public in July 1854. Her subsequent success as a novelist only gradually overcame the years of social rejection and rejection she had to endure.

When Times critic Carroll (2013) asserted that there could be no misunderstanding regarding *Adam Bede*, George Eliot's literary reputation was confirmed. It is a highly regarded book, and the author immediately becomes a master of the craft (Carroll, 77). *The Mill on the Floss* is an attempt to restore continuity with her early life and her country history, and *Adam Bede* enjoys the scenes. She had always been loyal to Wordsworth's poetry and had come to believe with him. Habits and connections that she developed unconsciously as a result of her first surroundings served as the foundation for her subsequent personality. It was at that familiar hearth where the rug pattern and the huge and fire irons were first concepts that feelings and moral obligations first appeared, rather than as abstract systems. The firmness and extension of matter were the only things that could be criticized. *Adam Bede*, a story that was developing at the time and included accretory details about where and how. Their dialect, food and drink, clothes, headgear, homes, furniture, crockery, tools, livestock, pets, modes of transportation, and various methods of measuring and reacting to time. These meticulously documented material particularities of their diurnal world define the conditions and values of the characters' lives.

Wordsworth had done a great deal to foster an environment in which the lives of marginalized and unimportant people could be respected and accepted as suitable themes of serious literature aimed at the educated, a generation before George Eliot. He didn't contribute much to the body of knowledge regarding community life, and his most memorable figures are solitaries. "All those cheap common things which are the precious necessities of life," as George Crabbe (1812) ^[12] claimed (Crabbe, 24).

Because she was influenced by Thomas Hardy, Dickens, Charles Kingsley, and Elizabeth Gaskell, her presentation focused primarily on rural societies. Prior to *Adam Bede*, there were no fictional studies of English provincial life, and nothing could compare to Sir Walter Scott's accomplishment of recreating the lives of Scott's peasants. They had recently exposed the reading public to the everyday conditions of

industrial urban masses. George Eliot was deeply influenced by Scott's work, and during her adolescent years of austere Evangelicalism, he was the only novelist she could (unreservedly) approve of. In fact, the central situation of *The Heart of Midlothian* is similar to that of *Adam Bede*.

Her personal perspective on Christianity had changed significantly, especially in its Evangelical and Non-Conformist forms. After her deconversion in her twenties, Eliot (1855) ^[15] penned a paper for "The Westminster Review" titled "Evangelical teaching: Dr. Cumming," which still reflects her prior angry reaction away from it. This was a scathing critique of the scriptures, but it was also a narrow and intolerable focus that limited God's favor to the chosen sect and replaced altruistic motivations with egoistic ones. Cumming rarely depicts good deeds as the spontaneous overflow of a soul field with divine love, instead emphasizing them as a sign of justifying faith and as endeavors to be accomplished to the glory of God.

Characters of this kind can be encountered in contemporary novels. Along with Strauss and Feuerbach, George Eliot reconsidered her stance and came to acknowledge not just the continuing significance of Christianity as a historical, sociological, and what it would today refer to as anthropological phenomenon. its significance as a myth and its strength as a symbol source. "Starts to appear, but a shadow of individual minds agreement seems unattainable between intellects, and they turned to the truth of feeling as the only universal bond of union," she wrote in 1843. The incarnate son of God, Jesus, is a real person in this context. He personified and projected humanity's best self, which is essentially the compassionate love that unites spouses or parents and children and extends beyond them to strangers and Samaritans. Therefore, Eliot was able to write in 1859, "I have no longer any antagonism towards any faith in which human sorrow and human longing for purity have expressed themselves. I have not returned to Dogmatic Christianity, but I see in it the highest expression of religious sentiment that has yet found its place in the history of mankind, and I have the profoundest interest in the inward life of all sincere Christians in all ages." Rosemary, 104

Dinah Morris Methodism had stood for Christianity's Hebraic roots. A conservative and preindustrial community uses the main stream Anglicanism of the Hayslopeans to express its ongoing sense of its own past and to articulate its relationships with others. It also serves as a source of symbols, customs, rituals, ceremonies, and prescribed forms of utterance. Though everyone, including the author, depends on the presence or memory of familiar objects for their ongoing existence, her characters' values and beliefs are a body of concrete practice rather than a generalizable discursively formulable theology. In addition to her religious beliefs, Hayslope's philosophy of realism, and her fascination with the era known as natural history, she is also linked to George Eliot (1954). In the meaning of the words used in "The Natural History of German Life, Inspired by Her Readings of Two Books Wilhelm Heinrich von Riehl," one of her most significant scenes. The narrator's stylization was picturesque (Eliot, p. 76). The current novel is replete with pastoral elements that align with a notion of realism that draws from both Victorian scientism and romantic humanism. It hides an even greater ideological divide

between the narrator and the character by taking use of the historical, cultural, and intellectual differences between them. The fact that the narrator shares the sentiments without agreeing with the ideas is concealed by narratorial sympathy for Adam's views that religion is something other than doctrines and ideas. In a more literalistic sense, it would be feasible. In this scenario, Adam experiences a baptism of suffering by himself in an open room, which is followed by a meal of bread and wine with a close friend. Nevertheless, these are Feuerbachian sacraments that have been secularized.

Following feminist criticism, George Eliot's female protagonists experienced a significant metamorphosis. In order to show how Eliot's works address progression differently, it will concentrate on female characters. For not "grant[ing] her protagonists nearly so much room to exercise their desire as Eliot herself was able to enjoy," as Nancy Armstrong (1979) [8] puts it (Nancy, p.6). Another example of a feminist assessment of Eliot's female protagonists is George Levine (2001), who remarks, "Has long complained that George Eliot never created a heroine like Marian Evans, that is, a woman who resisted the conventions of society and made a creative and original life for herself, even living out of wedlock with moral confidence in her choice" (Levine, p.7). According to George Eliot, the women's characters' resistance to concentrating on the remarkable is unavoidably frustrated by circumstances. Levine argues that feminism is contextualized in light of Eliot's well-known position on the realistic depiction of characters such to Hetty Sorrel. Although feminists may wish they were, depicting women in her own image would not represent Victorian women as they usually were. The social and political demonization of Victorian women, as exemplified by Hetty Sorrel and Maggie Tulliver, is at the heart of Nina Auerbach's *Woman and the Demon* (1982) [4] and Nancy Armstrong's *Desire and Domestic Fiction* (1987) [2]. According to Auerbach, "their roles as fallen women are the source of their powers." As a mother who is indifferent, Hetty has a strong bond with Nature, who is also indifferent (Auerbach, p. 123). Maggie's fallen nature is fundamental to who and what she is, and her wild nature gives her the strength of a demon. Auerbach contends that Eliot is enabled to relinquish her status as the fallen lady through these individuals.

The political implications of Auerbach's work are furthered by Armstrong's study, which linked the Victorian novel to the growth of the middle class and the new domestic lady. Once more, Maggie assumes the appearance of a demon as retribution for defying established governmental power. The arguments made by Auerbach and Armstrong are fascinating because they provide thorough analyses of how women were portrayed in Victorian literature as a means of revealing societal injustice. I want to tell, but Eliot portrays Hetty's apathy as a deliberate decision that prevents her from engaging with another person, not as a manifestation of her inner powers. For her part, Maggie is a link whose personality, despite not being able to fully mature, allows Eliot to build a bridge between Hetty and Dorothea in the process of becoming conscious. In Eliot's writing, Hetty and Maggie represent developmental phases that reflect the romantic heroine's failure. It is impossible to analyze them

without considering their continuance in Dorothea.

In studies that explain how the Victorian novel supported prevailing ideas about womanhood and gender difference, feminist critique has also come to be associated with Foucauldian criticism and the new historicism. For example, modern Victorian fiction scholars follow Nancy Armstrong's *Desire and Domestic Fiction* (1987) [2] in exploring these questions by reading novels alongside Victorian studies on women's nature, including Sarah Stickney Ellis's *The Women of England*.

By presenting her female characters in this manner, Eliot aimed to emphasize a desire to reroute and reverse the romance narrative's idealized direction, in addition to showing the practical repercussions of deviating from social conventions. By presenting Eliot's women as the opposite of romance novel heroines shown in a progressive growth of social consciousness, my study expands on the affirmative feminism tendency, which includes that of Dorothea Barrett and Susan Fraiman. A more positive analysis of Eliot's depiction of the female characters was provided by Dorothea Barrett in 1989. Barrett ascribes a sexual urge and desire to "Eliot's women," which serves as the mechanism for their subjugation (Barret, 175). It is obvious that Eliot wanted to use subservience and conquering sexual desire as a strategy for opposing masculine dominance. She contends that Eliot never sought to provide suitable partners for the female characters, in contradiction to Virginia Woolf's assertion. According to a consideration of Eliot's handling of her vocation and sensitivities, they provide a suitable conclusion or answer to her potentialities. In Susan Fraiman's *Unbecoming Women*, Eliot's work is also envisioned more favorably within the Bildungsroman framework, where the male protagonist is chronicled in his educational errors while attempting to atone for one sin by selecting his wife, friends, and life's work. In her book *Adam Bede*, she makes the opposite claim about how development works: "They are largely what other people, what the world, will make of them." Formal education is rarely attained by the average girl. Her spouse serves as her tutor, and as apprenticeship devolves into a marriage-binding procedure, the heroine is left a lifelong novice rather than a master (Eliot, 1992). According to Fraiman, the *Adam Bede*'s portrayal of masculine development reverses this development in reference to female characters, making it impossible for a woman to advance due to a process of splintering and misunderstanding within the genre. Because none of the female characters in *Adam Bede*'s, *Silas Marner*'s, or *Romala*'s novels are ever elevated above stereotype to the point where there is a question of deviance from realism, the equivocal presentation of the female personality does not occur in any of their works. Hetty is a distractingly beautiful but conceited and self-centered young girl who has tempted the weak Arthur Donnithrone and deceived the moral *Adan Bede*. Her lonesome wandering is genuinely pitiful, but that is the only time in her story that she receives any significant or generous sympathy. No effort is made to comprehend the extent to which Hetty herself might be a victim. As Kate Millet notes, her sex and class will frequently promote in a young country girl regrettably realistic views regarding love and sexual relationships:

“The young middle-class women could be frightened into social and sexual conformity with the spectres of governessing, factory work or prostitution. And the less favoured female is left only to dream of becoming a “lady”, the single improvement to her situation she is permitted to conceive of, the hope of acquiring social and economic status through attracting the sexual patronization of the male. When the only freedom is a gilded voluptuousness attainable through the largeness of someone who owns and controls everything there is little incentive to struggle for personal fulfilment or liberation.” (Eliot, 1992)

In addition, Hetty feels powerful because of the continuous compliments she receives due to her exceptional attractiveness. To the best of her knowledge, there is some truth to her desire of "Becoming a Lady." It is challenging to criticize Hetty as Eliot does unless she may be supposed to have a very keen understanding of both the class and the patriarchal system. Rather than being cruel, Hetty is always more pathetic.

The primary representative female protagonist in Eliot's *Adam Bede* was Hetty Sorrel. *Adam Bede* tells the complete tale of the suffering and, finally, the most accomplished female lead. The protagonists' reference to modern society is among their extremely common circumstances. By depicting female characters, the image of modern society provides a clearer picture of women in this day. The novel's most striking feature is how Victorian society is portrayed in relation to the female protagonist.

4. Conclusion

The current study primarily examined a few themes, particularly from a feminist standpoint, in a few of George Eliot's works, including *Adam Bede*, *The Mill on the Floss*, *Silas Marner*, *Romola*, and *Middlemarch*. However, it is believed that by examining these topics, one could be able to gain a fresh understanding of her strong points. Some of Eliot's female characters, such as Hetty, Dinah, Mirah, or Esther Lyon, truly fall short, but what's more intriguing are the instances where the portrayal of a female character only partially fails; the sentiment, idealism, and dependence on stereotypes only appear after what appears to be a completely new understanding of the feminine experience. Provides a summary of the Victorian novel in relation to George Eliot's and her contemporaries' writings. The goal of this study was to present an introduction that examined the biographical, sociological, and historical aspects of Eliot. The chapter also highlighted a number of themes that are frequently found in both George Eliot's fictional works and Victorian novels. "Adam Bede: Sympathy and Love" explored some of the novel's recurring themes. Through the country dialect and idiom of the lower classes, Eliot also captivates readers of "Amos Barton" and establishes herself as a writer of humor, tragedy, and social realism. Adam learns to tolerate weakness through suffering as self-deception has tragic results for Hetty, a dairy girl, and Arthur, a young squire. But unlike in the last tale, *Adam Bede* focuses it on Mrs. Poyser, the master of the vibrant maxim, and distances the storyteller. Nevertheless, Eliot breaks off the story to teach the reader the aesthetic principles of reality. Eliot drew inspiration for her narrative

from an incident that her Methodist aunt Samuel had told her when she was a girl. Samuel had visited a young lady in prison who was facing execution for the murder of her child and had forced her to make a penitential confession after others had failed to do so.

Despite not being an outspoken feminist, George Eliot was well aware that both men and women yearn for a way to engage with the world. She was also aware of how almost impossible that accomplishment was, considering their fragmented education, lack of economic power, and social pressure to fit the stereotype of the helpless, meek, and uninformed coquette. She conveys this understanding and the strain that most women experience, whether consciously or unconsciously, in a large portion of her literary works.

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