

THE THEME OF FEMINISM IN WARD'S NOVELS

Suzana Ibraimi Memeti

University of Tetovo, Tetovo, North Macedonia, suzana.ibraimi@unite.edu.mk

Fatbardha Doko

University of Tetovo, Tetovo, North Macedonia, fatbardha.doko@unite.edu.mk

Abstract: Many authors in English literature have written extensively on the subject of feminism and the place of women in society. Since women lacked their fundamental rights, they had to speak up. They took action to formalize the suffragette movement in 1860, but this effort failed in 1867 when Mill's amendment was introduced to enlarge the Reform Act and grant women more rights. British farmers were able to gain admission to universities in the 1860s. The freedom of women to vote, as well as their rights to education and further education, were the main concerns at the time. The diversity of interests in the protection of women's rights is worth emphasizing. As in the cases of Frances P. Cobbe (1822–1904) and Margaret Oliphant (1828–97), they demanded this time to participate in national legislative processes, guarantee cultural and professional equality, and create discussions to uphold their rights. This reflective essay examines the feminism and women's issues generally raised in Mary Augusta Ward's work, which is about the fate of women and their rights in general.

Keywords: Women, Suffragette, Ward, and feminism.

1. INTRODUCTION

The majority of Mrs. Humphrey Ward's (1851–1920) novels center on love and marriage. She writes, "The main topic is love, and women have supported this topic." In "Appeal," the author examines how the dogma and the polarized parts of society affect women's roles and fate in the nation. Naturally, this view of the sexual mistress persisted throughout her life, and in essence, Mrs. Ward's position in 1890 was not all that different from Mrs. Ellis' stance in 1840. However, Ward was a good observer of changing ideas, and reading her novels requires you to analyze changes in women's lifestyles and goals. The marriage must be able to achieve the woman's new objectives while adhering to the conditions of the duke of the roots and the traditional roots. "Marsela" (1894) and "Sir George Tressady" (Sir George Tressady) (1896) follow the actions of the beautiful, clever, and philanthropic Marcela, who grows up in turmoil and decides to eradicate poverty and injustice.

The novel "Marcella" begins at Brookshire in order to be likened to Dorothea's issues in George Eliot's work "Middlemarch." Mrs. Ward, on the other hand, pushed her heroine out of that country and allowed her to live in the city, albeit in poverty. Marcella, who works hard, becomes a nurse in the East End, and the author illustrates the expanded horizons of women during this time period in this way. Mrs. Ward, like her mid-century predecessors, was an opponent and protester of poverty, letting us know that leading independent lives or becoming political activists will not alleviate problems. Marcella marries Aldous Raeburn, a traditional aristocrat with paternalistic cultural beliefs, and becomes his wife. This is also her long-term objective. Her impact on her husband, however, is relatively restricted: he remains within a constrained aesthetic and emotional framework.

As for Dorothea of George Elliot, it was known that she was Ladislav's equal and even superior in knowledge, but without the man's moral and intellectual character she felt that she would not be able to develop. However, Raeburn had created principles and values of goodness before he met Marcella. She had some other political and moral views. She wanted to encourage her husband by respecting his values. She wanted to show kindness to him and admire her husband, to become an image of a beloved wife, to prove to him that she appreciated the fact that he kept her portrait in the inside pocket of his jacket. Her youth and attractiveness are valuable qualities of a lady that should not be wasted or trampled upon. "Was this her new career?" Raeburn had asked when he encountered Marcella in a violent and obscene scene in the East End. Or perhaps her zeal? Twenty-three! In the bloom of youth and allure! It was a dreadful, meaningless, and unforgivable loss to wither and shatter in the midst of cruelty" (ch. 10).

The novel concludes with Marcella's complete surrender: she has relinquished all of her rights, including the ability to detest herself. Marcella asks the Prince piously, as if she were a kid seeking pardon from Raeburn, and both Raeburn and the Prince respond the same way: "Don't worry: my hopes are like yours, let me be a man and you be what you are." "Can a man forget the hand that set him free, the voice that recreated him?" asks Reburn. Please suggest a better word, my wife!"

"It is evident that Marcella's life is completely subordinated to her husband's life in the novel "Sir George Tressad," where the Raeburn's family, Lord and Lady Maxwell are opponents of the character's career and marriage: "She could speak better and to think better; But, after all, if the truth is to be told, then they would be supported by Maxwell's thoughts and arguments."

Ironically, Mrs. Ward represented the subjection of women to men in her novels, but as a businesswoman and political participant in real life, no one put forth more effort than she did. Given that she exerted more effort on behalf of women's rights than Margaret Oliphant did, these two disparate standards between the heroine and the author stand out more clearly in her instance. The notion that marriage is necessary for women and that once married, women do not need to prevail more and more for other things, while in the journalism of a bygone era Margaret Oliphant might still criticise people who disobeyed the rules of convention, is rejected in her work. Critic Livs says that Margaret Oliphant's conception of the heroine was never conventional: "*The women she admires are astute, efficient, vital, dignified, practical, superior, and resourceful as they are intelligent, efficient, vital, dignified, practical, superior, and resourceful—but they are also magnanimous and quite tolerant when they encounter ordinary human flaws and weaknesses, which they frequently regard as tools to achieve the goal.*" The most original of all is Oliphant's heroine, who works in conditions nearly unheard of in Victorian novels other than "Jane Eyre" and "The Cottage" (The Autobiography of Mrs. Oliphant, introduction, p. 28).

Oliphant's novels reflect an opinion of hers which she displayed when she compared herself to Charlotte Brontë: "I don't suppose my powers are equal to hers, — my work, to myself, looks perfectly pale and colorless beside hers, — but yet I have had far more experience, and, I think, a fuller conception of life. I have learned to take, perhaps, more a man's view of mortal affairs, — to feel that the love between men and women, the marrying and giving in marriage, occupy, in fact, so small a portion of either existence or thought. When I die, I know what people will say of me. They will say that I did my duty with a kind of steadiness, not knowing how I have groaned under the rod." (The Atlantic, October 1899 Issue).

Her later novel "Hester" (1883) is to some extent an elaboration and completion of the novel "Miss Marjoribanks". It is a story about a brave young woman and her relationship with an older woman. However, in the novel "Miss Marjoribanks" the old woman is mad and lost, while in the novel "Hester" she is a successful and admired banker.

"Miss Vernon" was a great and gracious Queen of kindness and freedom, but she was also tenacious. As she grew older, she rose to become the most powerful person in Redborough. People talked about him in the same way they used to talk about any popular man, only by name. They said Catherine Vernon "did this" or "did that." When they wanted something, they went straight to Catherine. Her name was written on her door, along with the following address: Catherine Street, Catherine Square, no number (chapter 2).

She was, of course, unmarried, and despite her maturity, she was never alone. However, with the adoption of Hester as her daughter rather than her son "Edward," the narrative takes on a new dimension. Although the ending is heartbreaking, Edward was no longer alive, and Hester's future remained unknown. This novel has a more optimistic ending than most contemporary female writers' novels.

This issue, in general, has concerned women writers for almost the entire century. According to them, a single woman is capable of having a dignified public life and power, while marriage should not be preferred over other values. In this case, women should learn from each other and encourage each other with friendship and love:

"Oh, Catherine Vernon!" she exclaimed, "we're in trouble!" We didn't love one other, but believe me, I'm sorry, I'm sorry - I sincerely apologize."

Catherine remained silent. The impact was massive, terrifying, and crushing. She couldn't respond or show that she heard him, despite hearing him agitated and strained. Hester caressed Catherine's arm numerous times before resting her head on her arm and sobbing softly, as if on her mother's breast. There was a huge silence in the room; in this tiny group appeared the mother, who had veiled her face from the light, concealing her anguish and anxiety from the world and the sky, with her daughter by her side, who was her biggest support. The torrent of tears in this scenario conveyed a picture of sad anguish (chapter 40).

2. CONCLUSION

Finally, the novel "Hester" shares certain similarities with Harriet Martino's "Derbruk" in that it takes place in a provincial setting, in a local milieu replete with fine details of everyday life. This novel is a study of a small group of people and their interactions in a community that depends on them and holds them accountable. "Hester" has more in common with a Victorian bourgeois love story. It differs from "Derbruk" in that it focuses on the evolution of women's consciousness and position throughout the forty years that separate these two works. Women continue to be the moral arbiters of the novel in "Hester," but their influence is less than it was in Martino's time.

Hester cannot please Edward with her compassion and love for him, thus it is Catherine's responsibility to save the bank and all others who rely on her employment, rather than relying on men's assistance indirectly. The belief that early female writers had in marriage, the monogamous conjugal idealism of sex that G. Young thought was typical of the Victorian period, is expressed in "Hester" as a wish and an ideal, or perhaps an unrealized goal. When women are in a difficult situation, they must rely not just on their traditional abilities of tolerance, endurance, and generosity to others, but also on their modern abilities of independence and work.

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