

GEORGE ELIOT AND EMANCIPATION,

A TURKISH VIEW.

BY

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To

my brother,

DR. IHSAN DOGRAMACI.

MAULSTON
EXTRA STRONG

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Introduction.	1
CHAPTER I. George Eliot in her Period.	8
CHAPTER II. <u>Adam Bede.</u>	30
CHAPTER III. <u>The Mill on the Floss.</u>	61
CHAPTER IV. <u>Middlemarch.</u>	89
CHAPTER V. <u>Romola and Felix Holt.</u>	110
CHAPTER VI. Hüseyin Rahmi in his Period.	149
CHAPTER VII. The Inferior Position of Women.	161
CHAPTER VIII. Education and Illiteracy.	173
CHAPTER IX. Economic Situation.	191
CHAPTER X. Marriage.	205
CHAPTER XI. Polygamy and Divorce.	221
Conclusion.	240
APPENDIX I. The Problem of <u>Büyü.</u>	256
APPENDIX II. Blind Westernization.	272
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	1

INTRODUCTION.

'Tis also very pleasant to observe how tenderly he ¹ and all his brethren voyage-writers lament the miserable confinement of the Turkish ladies, who are perhaps more free than any ladies in the universe, and are the only women in the world that lead a life of uninterrupted pleasure exempt from cares; their whole time being spent in visiting, bathing, or the agreeable amusement of spending money, and inventing new fashions. A husband would be thought mad that exacted any degree of economy from his wife, whose expenses are no way limited but by her own fancy. 'Tis his business to get money, and hers to spend it: and this noble prerogative extends itself to the very meanest of the sex. Here is a fellow that carries embroidered handkerchiefs upon his back to sell. And as miserable a figure as you may suppose such a mean dealer, yet I'll assure you his wife scorns to wear anything less than cloth of gold; has her ermine furs and a very handsome set of jewels for her head. 'Tis true they have no places but the bagnios, and these can only be seen by their own sex; however that is a diversion they take great pleasure in. 2

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1. Aaron Hill travelled to Constantinople at the age of fifteen and was received with kindness by his relative, Lord Paget, at that time the British Ambassador to the Port. He returned to England in 1703 in the suite and soon afterwards published his Account of Turkey in folio, a very crude and juvenile performance. He lived, however, to write Zara and Merope, tragedies, which had considerable success on the English stage.
 2. The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Edited by Her Great Grandson, Lord Wharnccliffe. Her letter to the Countess of Bristol, Vol. II, p. 45.

Upon the whole I look upon the Turkish women as the only free people in the empire: the very divan pays respect to them; and the Grand-Signior himself, when a pasha is executed, never violates the privileges of the harem (or women's apartment), which remains unsearched and entire to the widow. They are queens of their slaves, whom the husband has no permission so much as to look upon, except it be an old woman or two that his lady chooses. 'Tis true their law permits them four wives; but there is no instance of a man of quality that makes use of this liberty, or of a woman of rank that would suffer it.

When a husband happens to be inconstant (as those things will happen), he keeps his mistress in a house apart, and visits her as privately as he can; just as it is with you. Amongst all the great men here, I only know the Tefterdar (i.e. treasurer) that keeps a number of she slaves for his own use (that is, on his own side of the house for a slave once given to serve a lady is entirely at her disposal), and he is spoken of as a libertine, or what we should call a rake, and his wife won't see him, though she continues to live in his house. 1

* * *

I know you'll expect I should say something particular of the slaves; and you will imagine me half a Turk when I don't speak of it with the same horror other Christians have done before me. But I cannot forbear applauding the humanity of the Turks to these creatures; they are never ill used; and their slavery is, in my opinion, no worse than servitude all over the world. 'Tis true they have no wages; but they give them yearly clothes to a higher value than our

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1. Ibid., Her letter to the Countess of Mar, Adrianople (Edirne), 1717. Vol. I, p. 374.

salaries to our ordinary servants. But you'll object, that men buy women with an eye to evil. In my opinion they are bought and sold as publicly and as infamously in all our Christian great cities. 1

* * *

These are reflections written by George Eliot's ancestor, the Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, wife of the British Ambassador to Turkey in 1717, about a hundred years before George Eliot was born. To the Western mind, they appear like an extract from some fantastic fairy tale, but I, who have heard very similar accounts from my grandmother, when a small child, accounts which resembled the Arabian Nights which Lady Mary also mentions,² can confirm their closeness to the actual truth. My grandmother would compare this "golden time" as she called it, in a tone of reproachful regret, with the conditions of women in modern Turkey. She was truly appalled at the "westernization" of the modern Turkish women. Those changes in our status which go by the name of emancipation she described as, under the name of modern civilization, "turning

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1. Ibid., Her letter to the Countess of Bristol. Vol. II, p. 41.
 2. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 27.

women into men, and depriving them of all their natural status which adds to their femininity".

Her criticism of westernization recalls to mind Hüseyin Rahmi, a Turkish novelist of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, who in many ways stands on an equal footing with George Eliot. His contribution to women's emancipation is no less than hers, and was made in a similar manner, that of teaching through characterization, in a series of novels exceeding seventy in number. Both, also, drew their material from life as they saw it, in a society which each knew thoroughly. Hüseyin Rahmi, however, is writing of a society different in its culture, traditions and customs from that of George Eliot. His ardent patriotism makes him part company with her in his ridicule of westernization and his condemnation of what he calls the "aping of the Westerner". To make the effect stronger he emphasizes the characteristics of his own people, which he vindicates in contrast with the sickly imitation of foreign customs, and shows clearly the harm caused by this blind and slavish imitation. But while George Eliot's rôle in the emancipation of women is the continuation of a slow

and protracted contribution by men of letters such as Steele,¹ Addison,² Swift,³ then Richardson,⁴ and Johnson,⁵ and scholars such as More, Erasmus⁶

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1. In "The Tatler", chiefly in the delightful papers where Mrs. Jenny Distaff, Bickerstaff's half-sister, is the editor, Steele began by attacking the hypocrisy, the frivolity, the idleness and immorality of the modish life of the day and placed before his readers the example of the virtuous, sincere, home-keeping woman.
 2. Addison took up the tale as part of his policy to "bring philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges; to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and in coffee-houses". "The Spectator", X.
 3. Swift deplored the vanity, the lack of education in women. "It is a little hard that not one gentleman's daughter in a thousand should be brought up to read or understand her own national tongue or judge of the easiest books that are written in it." Jonathan Swift, Works, (1825 edition), Vol. I, p. 233.
 4. Richardson was a much more thorough champion of the education of women than any of his predecessors. He, also, did not forget that the virtuous woman "seeketh wool and flax and worketh willingly with her hands", but he was a more ardent supporter than the previous writers of the systematic education of the sex. He wrote to Mrs. Chapone letting her know how eager he was to "whet", to "stimulate ladies, to show what they are able to do and how fit they are to be intellectual as well as domestic companions to men of the best sense. The men are hastening apace, dwindling into index, into commonplace, into dictionary learning. The ladies in time will tell them what is in the works themselves - only taking care, as I hope, not to neglect their domestic duties...." Samuel Richardson, Letters, ed. Barbauld (1804), Vol. VI, p. 122.
 5. Johnsonian Miscellanies, ed. G. Birbeck Hill, 1897.
 6. William Boyd, History of Western Education, "The Broadening of Humanism".

and Vives,¹ Hüseyin Rahmi's work, arising from the sudden, quick and great transition in the status of women in Turkey is amongst the first which contributed to this subject in Turkish letters. His concept of emancipation, therefore, differs in its details from that of George Eliot, but both agree on the necessity for social, educational and economic emancipation.

Accordingly, I intend to treat this study from four standpoints:

(a) That of George Eliot herself, her views and beliefs about women, their duty and position in the society in which they live, as it is reflected in her novels;

(b) That of George Eliot's contemporary Turkish woman, of which my own grandmother may be taken as a fairly good representative, as she might have viewed George Eliot's female characters;

(c) That of Hüseyin Rahmi, a man of letters from a country which, as reflected in his novels, was completely different from that of George Eliot;

(d) Lastly, that of the writer, whose own impressions are those of a Turkish woman of the mid-twentieth century, brought up in modern Turkey,

1. Ibid.

which, while retaining many of its traditions and customs, is mainly European in outlook and way of life.

The analysis thus provided by these varying shades of opinion would help towards a clearer perception of the nineteenth century English woman, as portrayed in the novels of George Eliot and as seen through oriental eyes.

CHAPTER I.GEORGE ELIOT IN HER PERIOD.

The period of George Eliot's life (1819-1880) forms one of the most interesting studies in the history of the emancipation of women in England. A great many changes, political, religious and above all economic, affecting as they did, every aspect of life in the period - and not least the status of women - made this period particularly remarkable.

There can be no serious doubt that these changes had their origin in the historical forces which were beginning to operate at the beginning of the century and which we can venture to isolate.

Of integral importance is the French Revolution which chiefly expressed its ideals in nineteenth century England by means of much "propagandist" literature and by the formation of many societies, literary, political, philosophical and so on, remarkable for their energy and aggressiveness. Following on the French Revolution came the conservative reaction in England, a movement which led to

the imposition of censorship and to pressure over free opinion. Again, there is the religious movement, the Evangelical Revival,¹ and, not least, the Industrial Revolution itself, bringing mechanization of industry, more rapid means of communication, and rapid enrichment to certain classes as well as poverty to others.

These forces, then, set up a "chain of reactions" which extended throughout nineteenth century English society. The first link in the chain, the first "reactor", is undoubtedly the triumph of the middle classes whose firmly held standards and ideals provided the basic material for the preoccupation of the intellects of the age.

It is little wonder, therefore, that we find writers, economists, educationalists and sociologists absorbed by the problems attached to the status of middle-class women. Autobiographies,² biographies,³ memoirs,⁴ journals and books⁵

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1. See C.S.Dudley, An Analysis of the System of the Bible Society.
 2. Elizabeth Sewell, Autobiography. Annie Besant, Autobiography.
 3. C.W.Smith, Life of Florence Nightingale.
 4. J.E.Butler, Memoir of John Greg.
 5. C.W.Cunnington, Feminine Attitudes in the Nineteenth Century. Thomas Gisborne, Duties of the Female Sex. C.S.Peel, A Hundred Wonderful Years, 1820-1920.

written on the subject give us revealing accounts of the unsatisfactory position held by women then. A few extracts from various impressions of the status of the 'lady' of the time, and from demands for a reform in the status, may help towards a better understanding of the position women were in.

A lady, to be such, must be a mere lady, and nothing else;

wrote Margareta Greg in her diary, in 1853.

She must not work for profit, or engage in any occupation that money can command, lest she invade the rights of the working classes, who live by their labour. Men in want of employment have pressed their way into nearly all the shopping and retail business that in my early years were managed in whole, or in part, by women. The conventional barrier that pronounces it ungentle to be behind a counter, or serving the public in any mercantile capacity, is greatly extended. The same in household economy. Servants must be up to their offices, which is very well, but ladies, dismissed from the dairy; the confectionary, the store room, the still room, the poultry yard, the kitchen garden, and the orchard, have hardly yet found themselves a sphere equally useful and important in the pursuits of trade and art to which to apply their too abundant leisure. 1

1. J.E. Butler, op. cit., p. 326.

The demand for a higher education as a basis for economic independence is expressed in the following extract.

It is only necessary to contrast the vigorous life of the eighteenth century business woman, travelling about the country in her own interests, with the sheltered existence of the Victorian woman, to realize how much the latter had lost in initiative and independence by being protected from all real contact with life. To contemporaries, however, the new independence of working women was an even more striking contrast. Individual women among the middle classes were awakening to a consciousness of their position, and the importance of the economic emancipation of working women was at once manifested in its influence on better class women and their demands for a wider sphere and the right to individual independence.....

With the desire on their part for social and economic freedom came first, in the mid-nineteenth century, the demand for higher education and training, and secondly, the agitation for the re-admission of women to industry and the professions. 1

Again,

A demand for employment has led naturally to a demand for improved education fitting women for employment, and that again has led naturally also to a demand on the part of many thoughtful women for a share in making those laws and those social regulations which have, while made exclusively by men,

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1. I. Pinchbeck, Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution, pp. 315-316.

resulted in leaving women at a disadvantage at every turn. 1

John Stuart Mill, one of the advocates of women's suffrage expressed his views on the subject thus: "Hardly any decent educated occupation, save one, is open to them. They are either governesses or nothing." 2 Later one comes across J.W. Adamson who tells us that:

The demand for a great advance in the education of women, which was so marked in the 'seventies' and early 'eighties' was a phase of the question then known as 'Women's Rights'. This feminist movement began in the United States of America and spread to this country about 1840, but it made little progress here until the extension of the Parliamentary franchise was mooted. In origin the English movement was economic. The disparity in the numbers of the two sexes and the instability of fortune experienced by many families during the first half of the century caused an increase in the number of women who were in whole or in part self-supporting. This state of things was in contradiction of middle class tradition and sentiment; but economic facts could not be gainsaid. Out of a total population of eighteen millions in 1851 three and a half millions of women were working for a subsistence, of whom five-sevenths were unmarried. Within the next ten years the number of self-supporting women exceeded 20 per cent of the

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1. C.Kingsley, Women and Politics, reprinted, 1869, from "Macmillan's Magazine", by the London National Society for Woman Suffrage.
 2. John Stuart Mill, speech in the House of Commons, May 20, 1867.

total population, which numbered twenty millions. The middle class prejudice against the paid employment of women, their inferior education and the disabilities under which they suffered before the law, all tended to lower the rate of remuneration for women's work. In the language of a contemporary pamphlet, women had 'the hardest drudgery and scanty pay'. The remedy proposed was better education, the vote and equality before the law. 1

This emphasis on education could also be heard from Rosalie Glynn Grylls, who says:

It was the Restoration which lowered the standard and it was difficult to raise it again in spite of the protests of advanced thinkers like Defoe or of Steele and Addison and the pretensions of the 'blue-stockings', though Mrs. Montagu must be given the credit for having in 1775 proposed to found and endow a college for women but let the project drop when Mrs. Barbauld, a 'best-selling' novelist of reactionary opinions, refused the post of superintendent.....

The tremendous upheaval of the French Revolution which raised this question of women's, with other rights delayed reform in the event for the reaction against its doctrines and the depression following the Napoleonic wars played into the hands of the reactionaries in every field. This is not to say that there were not during these periods women of high intellectual attainments, force of character, and creative genius, who were independent of them; women like Elizabeth Fry; Hannah More; Harriet Martineau, for instance, or the writers Fanny Burney, Jane Austen, and the Brontës.

1. J.W. Adamson, English Education, 1789-1902. pp. 323, 324.

There were some good schools.....and there were some good governesses.....as Mary Wollestonecraft..... But Mary Wollestonecraft and school teachers like the Brontës or, later, Maurice's own sisters, were exceptions as they would have been exceptions in any profession at any time: it is by the general standard that we must judge. 1

Through these various extracts one is able to form a vivid picture of the status of middle-class women, especially when one knows that until the Act of Married Women's Property² in 1870, women before and after their marriage were completely dependent on men. To this class George Eliot herself belonged; yet she was radically different in her outlook, her religious and social behaviour from the majority who so strictly and faithfully tried to confine themselves to the artificial social laws and limitations set around them under such terms as "sense of propriety",³ "feminine virtue",⁴ "modesty",⁵ and "ladylike".⁶

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1. Rosalie Glynn Grylls, Queen's College, 1848-1948, "Existing Education for Women", pp. 11-12.
 2. Public General Statutes, 1870, vic. 33 and 34. "The Act of Married Women's Property".
 3. Maria Edgeworth, Practical Education.
 4. Ibid.
 5. Hannah More, Coelebs in Search of a Wife.
 6. C.W.Cunnington, op. cit.

Her rebellious attitude towards the religion of her father and her rejection of the doctrines of Christianity may surprise us when we go through her novels and find how she appreciates the importance of religion in human life, and how Christianity gives her the basic inspiration directing all her works, and leads her to make of her novels a plea for human solidarity.¹ The explanation comes when we remember the ethical idealism Christianity taught her in her Anglican home at Griff,² at the Evangelical school of Miss Wallington,³ and at the strongly Calvinistic institution of the Misses Franklin at Coventry.⁴ The profound influence of this early religious education never left her subconscious mind despite her later outward break with her religion. Her eager response to the view that good works are the sign of a vivid faith may be learned from this extract which, at

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1. "Religion in the Novels of George Eliot". Journal of English and Germanic Philology, Vol. 53, 1954.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Joan Bennett, George Eliot. Her Mind and Art, p. 5.
 4. Rosalie Glynn Grylls, op. cit., p. 11.

the same time, shows her affectionate and ardent disposition.

Miss Lewis's evangelical views demanded action. Before the age of twelve, Mary Anne was teaching a Sunday school class; a little later she was devoting herself to clothing societies and other relief work organisation. ¹

At the same time she was beginning to make the acquaintance of those great classics of Christian literature, to the indelible effects of which her novels, letters and journals bear testimony. ²

Her intensely serious intellectual mind, her relish for literary and philosophical studies, together with her love for learning led her to agree to carry on Sara Sophia Hennell's translation of Strauss's creed-wrecking Life of Jesus, although, if we are to judge from her letters to Sara (Jan. 1844-1846), she had been suffering throughout this period from a continuous headache, which impeded her heavily in her arduous struggle with German and Greek grammar. ³ Sara's letter to Mr. Charles

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1. Blanche Colton Williams, George Eliot, p. 32.
 2. "Religion in the Novels of George Eliot", Journal of English and Germanic Philology, Vol. 53, 1954.
 3. Gordon S. Haight, ed., The George Eliot Letters, Vol. I.

Christian Hennell is evidence of the high reputation for efficiency which George Eliot enjoyed even then. Sara says:

Your proposition to deliver up the Strauss to Mary Anne has been very cordially received, and I am sure will be a great benefit. I think she will do it admirably..... I have been very much pleased with some specimens she has shown me. 1

By the publication of Charles Hennell's Inquiry Concerning the Origin of Christianity, George Eliot was led to abandon her early Evangelicalism. But it was not till after a few years that her scepticism became pronounced, and a period of active denial followed a period of uncertainty. The process which was started by the Hennells and Brays, was completed when her religious scepticism and scientific rationalism brought her into contact with George Henry Lewes and Herbert Spencer. However, judging from the various characters in her novels, we find her presenting every manifestation of Christianity which sets its ethics in a favourable light, as she herself owed her own ethics

1. Ibid., p. 171. Sara's letter to Mrs. Charles Christian Hennell, Jan. 1844.

to Christianity and knew that she did.¹ Together with this ethical sympathy, her marked tendency to cherish the past and hallow it in memory makes her hold fast to Christianity, as is suggested by the following quotation:

All the great religions of the world, historically considered, are rightly the objects of deep reverence and sympathy - they are the record of spiritual struggles, which are the types of our own. This is to me pre-eminently true of Hebrewism and Christianity, on which my own youth was nourished. And in this sense, I have no antagonisms towards any religious belief, but a strong outflow of sympathy. Every community met to worship the Highest Good (which is understood to be expressed by God) carries me along in its main current; and if there were not reasons against my following such an inclination I should go to church or chapel constantly for the sake of the delightful emotions of fellowship which come over me in religious assemblies - the very nature of such assemblies being the recognition of a binding belief or spiritual law, which is to lift us into willing obedience and save us from the slavery of unregulated passion or impulse. 2

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1. "My soul heartily responds to your rejoicing that society is attaining a more perfect idea and exhibition of Paul's exhortation - 'Let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus'." J.W. Cross, George Eliot's Life as Related in Her Letters and Journals, Vol. I, p. 118; quoted from Journal of English and Germanic Philology, Vol. 53, 1954.
 2. Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 155-156; quoted from Journal of English and Germanic Philology, Vol. 53, 1954, "Religion in the Novels of George Eliot".

Therefore she believes that

The best minds that accept Christianity as a divinely inspired system, believe that the great end of the Gospel is not merely the saving but the educating of men's souls, the creating within them of holy dispositions, the subduing of egoistical pretensions, and the perpetual enhancing of the desire that the will of God - a will synonymous with goodness and truth - may be done on earth. 1

Another point to wonder at is George Eliot's disregard in her private life of the traditional laws of marriage, while her journals and her novels maintain the sanctity of the marital union. After the death of her father (May 31, 1849) she went on a journey to Geneva. George Eliot had acquired a somewhat larger view of life than the conventional one. She was no longer satisfied with the quite intelligent, though rather limited circle at Coventry where she used to pay occasional visits to her friends the Brays, who showed her warm welcome and even wanted her to live with them for a considerable period. Her desire to break forth into the larger world now she had no domestic duties to restrain her, made her decide to move permanently to London. She got in touch with the editor

1. George Eliot, Essays and Leaves from a Note-Book, p. 151.

of the "Westminster Review", Mr. Chapman, who had published her Strauss, and inquired about the boarding house kept by Mr. and Mrs. Chapman in the Strand. This event could be considered as a turning-point in her life because, while living in this house, she not only concentrated on writing her reviews and articles for the "Westminster Review" and helping Mr. Chapman in the publication of a catalogue raisonné of philosophic literature, but she also met the intellectual circle which had a permanent influence on her thoughts and life. Chapman's house in the Strand became famous as the centre of a literary coterie. Here there came from time to time Thackeray, Dickens, Carlyle, Lewes, Thornton Hunt, Spencer, Francis Newman, Froude, Emerson, Harriet Martineau, Mrs. Gaskell, Sir David Brewster, W.R. Greg, Forster and Louis Blanc - a galaxy of mid-Victorian talent.¹ George Eliot ultimately mingled with this literary world, discarding the old conventionalities of rural and provincial town life just as she had discarded the religious views which now seemed to her effete. As her encounter and friendship with this literary

1. Elizabeth S. Haldane, George Eliot and her Times, p. 69.

circle brought her into even closer contact with the free opinions and philosophy of these thinkers, so also it influenced her behaviour in her private life. Her friendship with George Henry Lewes, starting with mutual intellectual admiration, brought them closer to each other and hence also to mutual liking and understanding. Her translation of Feuerbach's Essence of Christianity at this period brought her nearer to Lewes. When he fell ill, she undertook some of his work and this led to a still closer relationship with him. Since Lewes was already married but living with his three children in separation from his wife, they were not able to marry. This situation would have been easily solved today by his divorcing his wife. But it was not until 1858 that in England marriage could be dissolved without a special Act of Parliament.

A husband petitioning for such an Act was required first to sue for a separation, and to bring an action for damages against the seducer of his wife. 1

Therefore divorce was only possible for the rich.

1. Ibid., p. 93.

When the law was changed, Lewes had put himself out of court by his union with another, and at this time it was impossible for him to face the necessary steps. However as there was no objection on either side to this full independence of social behaviour, it was only conventional society which looked at it with horror, considering it wholly wrong to defy the law of the land as well as of the church. This reaction of society certainly was, to the last, a real trial to George Eliot. Even her Coventry associates interpreted her action as a gross violation of social morality. To one with a sensitive nature such as hers, one who valued so highly the confidence of her friends, this exclusion must have been a serious cross. Yet her course of action was determined entirely by her own deliberate choice and, far from being embittered by its results, she was inspired by her own action, fully convinced of its rightness. Her marriage was a true one in all but legal form. She was faithful to all its social obligations, and there is abundant evidence in her letters and her biographies that she was a most faithful wife to Lewes, and a devoted mother to the three children of his previous marriage.

Long afterwards, a second marriage giving her a legal name was performed in the most orthodox and conventional manner possible. Throughout her works George Eliot never scorns marriage. On the contrary, she raises it to the exalted position of the most sacred of all human relationships, a sacrament, not of the church, but of the sublime fellowship of humanity. In all her books it is reflected as a holy, pure, binding tie, and a sacred obligation.

With these sad experiences lying in the background of her life, she found it only natural to build around the characters of her heroines stories reflecting her own childhood and young womanhood. Each heroine reflects some facet of the author's many-sided personality. When we study the heroines of her major novels, Adam Bede, The Mill on the Floss and Middlemarch, we realize in each, the similarities of character and situation to those of their author. This similarity at the same time supports her belief that

.....art is the nearest thing to life,
it is a mode of amplifying experience and
extending our contact with our fellow men

beyond the bounds of our personal lot. All the more sacred is the task of the artist when he attempts to portray the life of the people. Falsification here is more pernicious than in the more artificial aspects of life. It is not so serious that we should have false ideas about evanescent fashions - about manners and conversations of beaux and duchesses; but it is serious that our sympathy with the perennial joys and struggles, the toil, the tragedy, and the humour of the life of our more heavily-laden fellow men should be perverted and turned toward a false object instead of a true one. 1

If "art is the nearest thing to life", what is the purpose then in the art of prose or fiction? Her answer to this question could be found in her Leaves from a Note-Book, under the heading of "Authorship". Here she says:

But the man or woman who publishes writings inevitably assumes the office of teacher or influencer of public opinion. Let him protest as he will that he seeks only to amuse, and has no intention to do more than while away an hour of leisure or weariness - 'the idle singer of an idle hour' - he can no more escape influencing the moral taste and with it the action of the intelligence, than a setter of fashions of furniture and dress can fill the shops with his designs and leave the garniture of the persons and houses unaffected by his industry.

Then to teach is the paramount purpose in author-

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1. George Eliot, article in the Westminster Review on "Natural History of German Life: Reihl", 1856.

ship. There is no place for art for art's sake or for the passing of a leisure hour, in George Eliot's sober theory.¹ Her didactic purpose in fact showed itself long before she had started writing fiction. In a letter to Sara Hennell she says,

I believe 'Live and teach' should be a proverb as well as 'Live and learn'. We must teach either for good or evil: and if we use our inward light as the Quaker tells us, always taking care to feed and trim it well, our teaching in the end must be for good. 2

Her emphasis on teaching could also be seen twenty years later in her letter to Frederic Harrison, written when her fame as a novelist had been established:

I think aesthetic teaching is the highest form of all teaching, because it deals with life in its highest complexity. But if it ceases to be purely aesthetic - if it lapses anywhere from the picture to the diagram - it becomes the most offensive thing of all teaching. 3

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1. "The Purpose in George Eliot's Art", Anglia, Vol. 54, 1930.
 2. Gordon S. Haight, op. cit., George Eliot's to Sara Hennell, Nov. 27, 1847, Vol. I, p. 242.
 2. Quoted from "The Purpose in George Eliot's Art", Anglia, Vol. 54, 1930.

So she wished to instruct and be of benefit to others. She found a fulfilment of this wish in writing novels, supported and encouraged by her husband, Lewes, who always insisted that she possessed

....."wit, description and philosophy"; but doubted her dramatic ability until his reading of the death scene of Milly in The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton when he became convinced that she had this qualification too. 1

Her method, in carrying out this teaching of the truth about life was achieved firstly through the general truth or truths embodied in the theme of the story itself, secondly through the more specific truths or moral teachings or philosophical digressions which are thrown into the narrative as 'asides'.² Her characters are her main means of ensuring the inevitable action and consequently of teaching the power of deeds for good or for evil; and the characters are inextricably interwoven with the plots to accomplish her didactic

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1. J.W.Cross, George Eliot's Life, ed. Harper, Vol. I, p. 298; quoted from Journal of English and Germanic Philology, Vol. 53, 1954.
 2. "The Purpose in George Eliot's Art", Anglia, Vol. 54, 1930.

purpose. All these fundamental traits of her art co-operated to secure a success for her first story - a success that encouraged her the more to produce later her major novels based on stories from her own life. She realized rightly that through novels she could appeal to a much wider public than by erudite articles in magazines. One finds, therefore, especially in her next three novels, Adam Bede, The Mill on the Floss and Middlemarch, that George Eliot has a tremendous eagerness to teach and influence public opinion by drawing on her own sometimes bitter experience and revealing the suffering of intellectually and spiritually aspiring women. It is as if, in doing so, she were vindicating her conduct with all the troubles it brought her through the collision of her principles and ideas with those conventionally accepted by the majority. However, one realizes that in her later novels, though the didactic purpose is still there, she is not concentrating on the disadvantageous social position of women as before. This may have been due to the development of her own life. She had now settled to a more stable life and the question of the 'emancipation of

women' was taking stronger and more serious shape among other thinkers, educationalists, economists and sociologists alike.

Furthermore, each of her novels is permeated with the historical changes which were taking place in the particular period it describes and which affected the whole life of the nation. The life of the characters is almost always influenced by the impact of these changes on the current of their lives, no matter how slowly, indirectly and in unexpected ways. This evolution again justifies George Eliot's belief that fiction must reflect the "nearest truth to life". Janet's Repentance delineates the gradual permeation of rural life by Evangelicalism, one instance of a general social change: The Mill on the Floss is backed with the expanding prosperity and material progress of the whole nation: Silas Marner reflects the influence of the Industrial Revolution manifested in the factories taking the place of hand-industry: Felix Holt shows how personal experience is determined by the Reform Bills and by the slow shift of population from agriculture to industry.

However, with these general points in mind, let us first examine how George Eliot uses the female characters of the novels, their outstanding social behaviour and their mental and spiritual struggles, to fulfil her aim of appealing for intellectual, social, economic and educational emancipation, and so to prove her point of view. Then let us seek the reaction of her contemporary Turkish woman, as embodied in my grandmother, and see how she interprets the behaviour of these female characters.

CHAPTER II.ADAM BEDE.

At first glance, it may be wondered why we did not start our study of George Eliot's female characters in relation to her purpose and teaching with her first novel, Scenes of Clerical Life. Our choice may seem the more strange in view of the fame, popularity and self-confidence which this work brought its author and the help it gave her in producing her major works later. Moreover, as Lewes said, the fundamental traits of her art are perceptible even in this early novel. The explanation is, however, that George Eliot's attitude in this work is not altogether the same as in her following novels because, as she has recorded, in this first attempt in art 'her hand' was still inexperienced. She has admitted that she did not then know how to manipulate her material.

Our author first appears as an observer, noting her impressions of the humble world which was her chosen subject. The outstanding characteris-

tics of this novel are the great sympathy that she pours forth for humble life and her belief, which recurs in her later novels as well, that woman's natural and true place is in the home, looking after her husband, her children and her household. It will be vain to look for the philosophical teachings which permeate her later novels. For this reason we proceed to her great creation, Adam Bede, her first full-length novel, studying the female characters for the understanding they may bring of George Eliot's teaching.

We can easily perceive how Adam Bede as a whole is permeated with a strong religious faith combined with earnest moral teaching, and how these are successfully shown through two main female characters who are completely contrasted: Dinah Morris and Hetty Sorrel. George Eliot reveals these, not by their actions only, but by what was then a new approach, that of uncovering their inmost secrets, and by analysing the motives and thoughts that at times trouble their lives.¹

Dinah Morris, the central character, is

1. See B. Dobrée, The Victorians and After, p. 91.

introduced to us as a deeply religious Methodist preacher. She is a true example of simplicity, beauty and nobility of soul and absolute truth to nature. After the early loss of her parents she had already as a child become acquainted with all sorts of misery, both bodily and mental, and her innate love for the suffering part of mankind increased daily. Her happiness is the happiness of those around her. To her there was no half-way house: men were lost or saved, and she set herself to save the sinner. The beauty of her sermon preached on the Village Green, at the beginning of the book, can never be forgotten. It forms, in fact, a prelude to the high religious life, devotional and practical, which she exemplifies in the rest of the novel. In this sermon Dinah presents the theology of the Incarnation by using such words as the villagers can take to their hearts. It becomes an inspiration both to them and to herself. This beautiful, poetic sermon was written with the heart's-blood of Dinah's creator, ".....with hot tears" as the words surged up in her own mind, as she put it.

The closing words,

Dear friends, brothers and sisters, whom I love as those for whom my Lord has died, believe me, I know what this great blessedness is; and because I know it I want you to have it too. I am poor, like you: I have to get my living with my hands; but no lord nor lady can be so happy as me, if they haven't got the love of God in their souls, 1

forms one of the finest specimens of pleading pathos and yearning compassion to be found in literature.

In *Dinah* one also finds George Eliot's most exquisite tribute to the value of the religion she herself could not accept but which had retained a strong hold on her ideals, her imagination, and her affections. A close, indeed a very close relation between doctrine and deed is seen in *Dinah*. This trait in her is rather unusual, for the benevolent feelings in George Eliot's other religious characters² are felt to be prior to and superior to the creed. *Dinah* throughout her actions shows this relationship in a clearer way.

Regarding herself as called by God to

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1. George Eliot, Adam Bede, Vol. I, p. 43.
 2. As it is with Mr. Irwine (in Adam Bede), Mr. Gilfill (in Scenes of Clerical Life), Mr. Farebrother (in Middlemarch) and so on.

minister to others, to have neither joys nor sorrows of her own, Dinah refuses Seth Bede's proposal of marriage. And thus, proving the altruism of her soul and her renunciation of the pleasures of this world, she answers him:

Seth Bede, I thank you for your love towards me, and if I could think of any man as more than a Christian brother, I think it would be you. But my heart is not free to marry. That is good for other women, and it is a great and a blessed thing to be a wife and mother: but 'as God has distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every man, so let him walk'. God has called me to minister to others, not to have any joys or sorrows of my own, but to rejoice with them that do rejoice and to weep with those that weep. 1

Then she continues:

I seem to have no room in my soul for wants and fears of my own, it has pleased God to fill my heart so full with the wants and sufferings of his people. 2

This unselfishness together with her natural inclination, her kindly disposition to all, and willingness to help anyone in need makes her the first person to whom everyone turns for help. When

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1. George Eliot, Adam Bede, Vol. I, p. 48.
 2. Ibid., p. 49.

Adaa's father is drowned, she is the "angel" who runs to console the widowed mother with the tender words which win her over, jealous and critical though she is of younger women. When Dinah says:

I love the Stonyshire side; I shouldn't like to set my face towards the countries where they're rich in corn and cattle, and the ground so level and easy to tread; and to turn my back on the hills where the poor people have to live such a hard life, and the men spend their days in the mines away from the sunlight. It's very blessed on a bleak cold day, when the sky is hanging dark over the hill, to feel the love of God in one's soul, and carry it to the lonely, bare, stone houses where there is nothing else to give comfort, 1

her aim in life is perceived.

When disaster overtakes Hetty, she consoles her aunt, Mrs. Poyser, with the same effect as she had upon Lisbeth Bede. By her frequent visits to the sick and sorrow-stricken she has gained so good an experience in the treatment of affected souls that even minds very hardened and shrivelled through want, ignorance and guilt, cannot resist her. Her creator tells us that,

From her girlhood upwards she had had

1. Ibid., p. 178.

experience among the sick and the mourning.and had gained the subtlest perception of the mode in which they could best be touched, and softened into willingness to receive words of spiritual consolation or warning. As Dinah expressed it, 'She was never left to herself, but it was always given her when to keep silence and when to speak'. 1

This is especially seen in her attitude towards her cousin, Hetty Sorrel, who has murdered her child and, though facts speak strongly against her, denies it. Dinah's gentle and prudent words, overflowing with love and tenderness, become the key to the unhappy girl's heart.

Hetty, you are shutting up your soul against him, by trying to hide the truth. God's love and mercy can overcome all things - our ignorance, and weakness, and all the burthen of our past wickedness - all things but our wilful sin; sin that we cling to, and will not give up. You believe in my love and pity for you, Hetty; but if you had not let me come near you, if you wouldn't have looked at me or spoken to me, you'd have shut me out from helping you: I couldn't have made you feel my love; I couldn't have told you what I have felt for you. Don't shut God's love out in that way, by clinging to sin..... He can't bless you while you have one falsehood in your soul; his pardoning mercy can't reach you until you open your heart to him, and say, "I have done this great wickedness; O God, save me, make me

1. Ibid., p. 168.

pure from sin.....' 1

Hetty pours forth the confession of her crime. "I did do it, Dinah . . . I buried it in the wood . . . the little baby - and it cried..... I heard it cry . . . ever such a way off . . . all night....." ² and Dinah pacifies her bewildered mind and directs her thoughts towards God. Dinah is deeply and thoroughly convinced and has a full assurance that all is not lost even if Hetty must suffer the extreme punishment. This assurance is so sublimely strong that she feels capable of conveying it to the poor, miserable girl herself. Sin is worse than death, love is stronger than either, is the divine teaching of every word and action of hers, from the moment she appears at the prison door until the terrible hour when she clasps Hetty in her arms within sight of the scaffold.

So far Dinah has known only charitable love, that kind of love which is hardly to be distinguished from religious feeling. But gradually she comes to know also human love towards a man,

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1. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 244.
 2. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 247.

and hence a hard struggle between inclination and duty, or what she considers to be her duty. "It is a temptation that I must resist," she thinks, "lest the love of the creatures should become like a mist in my soul, shutting out the heavenly light." Yet soon she becomes aware of her error.

It is the Divine Will. My soul is so knit to yours that it is but a divided life I live without you. And this moment, now you are with me, and I feel that our hearts are filled with the same love, I have a fulness of strength to hear and do our heavenly Father's Will, that I had lost before. 1

She becomes Adam's wife and spreads over the circle of his family that pure joy and happiness which can spring forth only from unselfishness of soul.

In this marriage one may perceive George Eliot's strong conviction that a single woman could not find satisfaction in her solitary life, and that she felt bound to find a husband for one who had renounced the world as truly as any nun. When she says:

What greater thing is there for two human souls, than to feel that they are joined for life - to strengthen each other in

1. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 369.

all labour, to minister to each other in all pain, to be one with each other in silent unspeakable memories at the moment of the last parting?

she gives, indeed, most vivid evidence of her strongly elevated conception of the sacred word "marriage".

Yet for all George Eliot's skill in delineating this fine and admirable woman - "too good and too holy", as Seth Bede puts it, for this world - there is a greater purpose behind it. We have evidence enough from George Eliot's own life of her strong belief that, so long as a woman's vocation was a true one, suited to her own nature, she might pursue it on an equal footing with a man. Dinah's success and influence in the villages where she preached, in face of so much opposition to Methodist women preachers, is an expression of George Eliot's belief in woman's ability and right to perform any kind of task, not least those which call for sympathy and insight into the things of the spirit. Having proved this through the character of Dinah, George Eliot goes on to show that for all this, woman's natural place is in the home as a wife and mother. It is thus, to make Dinah's life perfect, that she finally bestows upon her the love

of a husband and family, by her marriage to Adam.

A last word to be said for Dinah is that she embodies George Eliot's conviction that a pure woman, living in true and simple relationship to surrounding persons or things is free of fashion and stands above the stupid, inelastic laws of conventionalism.

On the whole, the Western world regarded this noble, kind-hearted, altruistic and self-confident young Methodist preacher with appreciation and admiration for her devoted performance of these humane actions which her strong religious faith inspired. But the reaction of the contemporary Turkish world would have been nothing short of shocked bewilderment at those 'unladylike' and possibly 'ungodly' actions of Dinah. In that society, woman had come to acquire the status of the "Queen of the House". Within the four walls of the house, her word was law to the servants and other members of the family including the husband, who was often dubbed 'henpecked' in view of his almost servile submission to the dictates of his wife. Her pleasantly exercised and lovingly accepted supremacy was complete. Strangely enough, these accusations of

male submissiveness came entirely from the female members of the family, thus indicating the limits to which the contemporary Turkish ladies were willing to allow freedom of social action to their sex. In view of the peculiar nature of the female rôle in life, and the scores of odd chores closely related to the vitally important functions associated with the propagation of the human species, the Eastern wisdom, by way of a fair division of labour between man and woman, allocated the home and its management to the woman. Einstein - an intellectual giant of the twentieth century whose contribution to science marks a new era in the advancement of human progress - did not hesitate to endorse the wisdom of the East when he observed that a woman's true place was the home and a wife with outside interests, even though scientific, was bound to be a failure.¹ The contemporary Turkish woman seemed to take this piece of solid wisdom to heart, especially when her religion also endorsed it. No wonder, therefore, that she found all new ideas that were extraneous to the sacred domain of the four walls of the home repugnant and sacrilegious. She found complete con-

1. See Ela Sen, Wives of Famous Men.

tentment and a deep happiness in the performance of homely chores and in bringing up as many children as possible.¹ Her home meant to her everything that life could promise and the familiar curse in the East, 'May your home be broken and wrecked', is probably the worst and the most horrible curse ever invoked by an Eastern tongue. She had become so used to her traditional ways of living that the 'new approach', which necessitated her coming out of the four walls of the house, was indeed a threat to the security and happiness implicit in the word "home".

Bearing this in mind, let us see how my grandmother, representing the contemporary Turkish woman, would react to Dinah's behaviour.

"It is indeed a great comfort to see that there still exist women devoted to their religion, who will undertake the holy duty of teaching it in

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1. "They have a notion, that whenever a woman leaves off bringing forth children, it is because she is too old for that business, whatever her face says to the contrary.Without exaggeration all the women of my acquaintance have twelve or thirteen children; and the old ones boast of having had five-and-twenty or thirty a-piece, and are respected according to the number they have produced." The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; letter to Mr. Thistlethwayte, Pera of Constantinople, Vol. II, p. 14, Jan. 4, O.S., 1715-16.

all its details, especially such pretty women as this, with her soothing and peace-inspiring face. The story she tells Mr. Irwine of how she began to preach¹ is touching and praiseworthy. Yet I cannot understand - indeed, I am almost terrified at - her daring in travelling about without chaperon or attendants! Can she have thought seriously of the dangers a woman is exposed to when travelling alone? Can she have considered propriety so little? Moreover, a devout and good person, as she certainly is, should not have violated the established codes of modesty and decency. I can't see why Dinah didn't marry Seth Bede and have a family, and later on, when she was forty or forty-five, take up the occupation of a Molla.² It was her aunt's duty to see

1. George Eliot, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 132-133.

2. In the old Turkey, girls did not attend school. It was considered sufficient for them to know the Koran well enough for the purposes of prayer. So the daughters of a family were put, according to their social status, under the charge of the family Molla, a middle-aged woman who taught them a few pages of Koran each day. She received no salary or tuition fee, but was sent products of the farms and gardens belonging to the family. Consequently her position was economically dependent on that of the family to which she was attached. Once she decided that her pupil had reached a standard of perfection in reading the Koran, the family would hold a series of parties and invite their female relatives, friends and acquaintances to the ceremony of 'Khatim Al-Koran', something like the graduation ceremony of a girl finishing her studies nowadays.

that she did so, instead of allowing her to be the object of so much rumour and gossip by travelling from village to village to do her preaching, injuring the reputation of a good family like theirs.

Ah! I know Mrs. Poyser tried hard to persuade Dinah to live with them,¹ but she should have used her husband's influence. No girl could ever oppose the head of the family.² He, in his turn, instead of stopping her from preaching, encourages her to go on with it.³ Also what I fail to understand is why, of all people, a young girl with a sweet face and a persuasive voice should have undertaken this mission. Was there no man left in the land, or was it that she knew more than the learned clergy? And she travelled alone from place to place! May God have mercy on us! This girl must have been either mad or completely brainless to have gone forward in the wide world and exposed herself to the innumerable and unmentionable dangers! If she

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1. George Eliot, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 112 and Vol. II, p. 283.
 2. In the old days in Turkey, whereas in all matters concerning household management the control was exercised by the Mother, the Father was the ultimate authority in weighty matters of far-reaching importance, such as family name or reputation.
 3. George Eliot, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 291.

were my daughter I would sooner see her dead, than doing this type of 'noble work' under such 'noble conditions' in such a 'noble way'. All the same, I'm glad she came to her senses at last, and gave up preaching and got married. I sincerely hope she returned to the teaching of her religion as a proper Molla when she reached the proper age, under proper conditions."

A complete contrast to the altruistic Dinah, who suppresses all claims of self-gratification, and devotes herself entirely to the welfare of others, is her cousin, Hetty Sorrel.

Hetty is a true picture of egoism. Yet her selfishness is delineated with a remarkable, lofty toleration. Perhaps the author's personal experience of human misery and suffering had taught her this lesson of life. Therefore she contemplates the faults of men with kindness and her condemnation of evil is tempered by the consciousness of her own frailty.

George Eliot introduces the beautiful little sinner, Hetty, to us with a relentless yet sympathetic touch. It seems that she herself, like Mrs. Poyser, though perfectly aware of all the shal-

lowness of Hetty's nature, cannot help continually taking sidelong glances at the girl's charms and being fascinated by them in spite of herself. Having secured our sympathy for the lovely girl, George Eliot begins to develop her character, sure that, once in love with her minor heroine, we shall never judge her too harshly. Such a preparation is necessary, for Hetty is an egoist in the strictest sense of the word. She has no evil intentions, she bears malice against no one, and has no apparent leaning towards what is depraved and vicious. Yet she loves only herself, Hetty Sorrel, very well indeed, and knows only one law, the gratification of her vanity and pleasure-craving nature. She belongs to those

.....plants that have hardly any roots: you may tear them from their native nook of rock or wall, and just lay them over your ornamental flowerpot, and they blossom none the worse. Hetty could have cast all her past life behind her, and never cared to be reminded of it again. 1

Her pleasures are worldly, and her fondness of the fineries of this world is infinite.

1. George Eliot, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 230.

Hetty's dreams were all luxuries: to sit in a carpeted parlour, and always wear white stockings; to have some large beautiful earrings such as were all the fashion; to have Nottingham lace round the top of her gown, and something to make her handkerchief smell nice, like Miss Lydia Donnithorne's when she drew it out at church; and not to be obliged to get up early or be scolded by anybody. 1

Hetty had a limited appreciation of any other motive for action than the pleasure of Hetty Sorrel.

It was wonderful how little she seemed to care about waiting on her uncle, who had been a good father to her: she hardly ever remembered to reach him his pipe at the right time without being told, unless a visitor happened to be there, who would have a better opportunity of seeing her as she walked across the hearth. Hetty did not understand how anybody could be very fond of middle-aged people. And as for those tiresome children, Marty and Tommy and Tatty, they had been the very nuisance of her life - as bad as buzzing insects that will come teasing you on a hot day when you want to be quiet. 2

She refuses to see any distinction between right and wrong except as they visibly affect the present enjoyment of Hetty Sorrel. She intends just to please herself and not to mind what anyone else says. She is, indeed, a great contrast to Dinah, especially when we see each girl in her bedroom: Hetty in

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1. Ibid., p. 147.
 2. Ibid., p. 231.

all her finery before her looking-glass, Dinah praying and meditating; and also when the latter goes to Hetty's room before going to bed. The author comments:

What a strange contrast the two figures made! Visible enough that in that mingled twilight and moonlight. Hetty, her cheeks flushed and her eyes glistening from her imaginary drama, her beautiful neck and arms bare, her hair hanging in a curly tangle down her back, and the baubles in her ears. Dinah covered with her long white dress, her pale face full of subdued emotion, almost like a lovely corpse into which the soul has returned charged with sublimer secrets and a sublimer love. 1

Dinah, trying to be helpful as usual, tells Hetty with her sweet kindness to come to her in time of trouble. Hetty avoids any unwelcome thoughts and says, "Don't talk to me so, Dinah. Why do you come to frighten me? I've never done anything to you. Why can't you let me be?"² Indeed no evil consequences of her action ever occur to her when she reads Arthur's letter telling her about his departure. She is only sorry.

For her poisonous delights had spoiled

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1. Ibid., p. 238.
 2. Ibid., p. 241.

for ever all the little joys that had once made the sweetness of her life - the new frock ready for Treddleston fair, the party at Mr. Britton's at Braxton wake, the beaux that she would say 'No' to for a long while, and the prospect of the wedding that was to come at last when she would have a silk gown and a great many clothes all at once. These things were all flat and dreary to her now: everything would be weariness and she would carry about for ever a hopeless thirst and longing. 1

This poor little creature breaks the great dumb rules of Nature, which give no kindly warnings when one is breaking them. She does not realize that retribution will fall like an avalanche on her and crush her utterly, until it is too late to do anything about it. Can we look at this feeble creature wandering in search of her betrayer without sympathising with her? There was only one way for this tragic object to go; all her little vanities and egotism had disappeared and she was a rudderless barque in a cold, cruel sea.

Poor wandering Hetty, with the rounded childish face, and the hard unloving despairing soul looking out of it - with the narrow heart and narrow thoughts, no room in them for any sorrows but her own, and tasting that sorrow with the more intense bitterness! My heart bleeds for her as I see her toiling along on her weary feet, or seated in a cart,

1. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 69.

with her eyes fixed vacantly on the road before her, never thinking or caring whither it tends, till hunger comes and makes her desire that a village may be near.

What will be the end? - the end of her objectless wandering, apart from all love, caring for human beings only through her pride, clinging to life only as the hunted wounded brute clings to it? 1

Yet as if all the miseries she has been through in her remorse and lonely wandering are not enough for her as a punishment, she strives to destroy the unforeseen consequences of first fault by a second. She looks back at the temptation and finds it insufficient, not worth its results. The selfish indulgence which brought her to this position makes her keenly miserable in it. She wants to be comfortable; she wants to be well thought of; she wants to be married to a man who is fond of her; she wants, in fact, good things which she can only get from other people, and whose price she has already squandered. She would conceal her fault if she could, even now, at the cost of murder, and go on cheating her friends with false coin after the real is spent.

But here again, she cannot succeed. She

1. Ibid., p. 153.

is weak, she has no more strength or self-restraint in times of danger than in times of delight: she is weaving the web of fate more closely about her stumbling feet. The misfortune of this bewildered, most pathetic figure in prison, no longer the bright girl we used to see, calls back our sympathy for her. We wish to be able to say some kind words to the miserable, unhappy girl who is going to begin a new life in exile, a dreary and joyless life, haunted by the remembrance of a stain that cannot be washed away. When she is tried and the judge utters the verdict, "Hetty Sorrel.....and then to be hanged by the neck till you be dead", one cannot but wish that something could stop this heavy punishment of her sin.

It is interesting and enlightening to study the punishment of Hetty in the light of George Eliot's teaching. Until the worst of the tragedy is over, Hetty's inevitable punishment is not influenced at all by the artificial laws of society. She is not driven to her great sin because she is cast away by her friends. They are still ignorant of her first fault when she commits the second. It is the inexorable and merciless



laws of Nature that capture and give her what she deserves. She has not resigned herself to the privation of a system of nature where personal happiness is subordinate and accidental.

Hetty is a reminder of George Eliot's ever present sense of morality, of the ultimate consequences of wickedness, which no sinner can ever escape. On the other hand, her story shows us the author's strong belief in the desirability of female education with a view to enabling women, among other things, to find work and be able to earn their own living in case they should for any reason be branded outcasts. If such an alternative had been open to Hetty, she would in all likelihood never have murdered her child, never have been sent to prison or sentenced to death. The sub-conscious realisation that all the doors of the world were shut in her face was the motive force which drove her to the despair in which she committed her crime. With fuller education, she would have far earlier realized the consequence of her sin in a world which had set for itself certain codes of moral action.

Had Hetty lived in Turkey at that time, her end would have been rather different. As I

recall from my grandmother, pretty girls like Hetty used to be chosen to attend the wives of pashas and Sultans and be put in the harem.¹ But in a case of seduction she would be sent away to a remote village, where no one knew who she was, under the protection of a few chosen people. She would stay there until the birth of her child and then be brought back to the harem. If her relatives by any chance learned of her shame, the nearest male relative revenged himself on the seducer before killing the girl herself.² One reads accounts of this sort of thing in the letters of Lady Mary Montagu.³ My grandmother would certainly have laid the blame for this degrading and shameful situation on the European system of associated living, with opportunities for men and women to see each other at any time without the privacy of harem and selanlik (men's apartment).

On the other hand, while criticising and disapproving of many of Dinah's actions and of Hetty's looseness, my grandmother might look at Mrs.

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1. Ercüment Ekrem, Dünden Hatıralar, Memories of Yesterday, "The Marriage-Broker".
 2. Yeni Mecmua, New Magazine. Refik Ahmed, 13th October, 1918, No. 65, p. 252.
 3. Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 48.

Poyser with admiration and appreciation. Her reflections might be in this tone. "I feel so very relieved and happy to see Mrs. Poyser performing all that is required from a woman. How gratifying it is to look at such a proud, well established, self-respecting family as the Poyser's. Their surroundings, their working day, their home life, their religious observance, and the neighbours' opinion of them, combined with their conservatism in matters of convention, propriety and tradition, all these are undoubtedly fundamentals in the structure of family life. Yet it is Mrs. Poyser's character that provides their foundation. I admire her interest not only in the behaviour of her own children, but also in that of the servant, Molly, whom she reprimands for her impropriety in sitting chatting with half a dozen men.¹ After all, Molly's behaviour might injure the reputation of her respectable family".

"Mrs. Poyser is an excellent aunt both to her own niece, Dinah, and to her husband's niece, Hetty. She does well in trying² to persuade

1. George Eliot, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 108.

2. Ibid., p. 114.

Dinah to give up her preaching.¹ She has my whole-hearted support in that. I can only wish that she had insisted further, and consequently been more successful. I also like her for her way with Hetty, but unfortunately that wanton girl returns all her kindness and goodness by bringing undying shame on her family."

"Mrs. Poyser reminds me of the farmers' wives on the outskirts of our Turkish cities, in her attention to her daily work, and her early rising in order to fulfil its tasks. How wise she is, and how right, to excuse herself from Arthur Donnithorne's twenty-first birthday party, on the grounds that, unlike her surprised host, old Mr. Donnithorne,² and other gentlefolks, she must be prepared for an early start to her daily work in the dairy. Her expression of disapproval, on the way home, of such pleasures, dancing and drinking,³ is just and proper."

"In spite of her interference in her husband's affairs and her ready answers to the squire,⁴

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1. Ibid., p. 112.
 2. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 437.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Ibid., pp. 88-90.

which are hardly proper in a woman, I cannot help esteeming her the more highly the more I know of her."

These reflections serve to recall Milly Barton of Scenes of Clerical Life. My grandmother would certainly be as favourably impressed by her as by Mrs. Poyser. She might begin by exclaiming, "What a fortunate woman Mrs. Barton must be to have six children and another coming!"¹ I admire her in every way, especially in her manner of looking after her children and managing her household on the little money available to her.² Her love for everybody, which is compared to a fountain,³ fascinates me! It is precisely what a true wife and mother should have. Some may object to her shyness and quietness, especially after her marriage,⁴ but I personally think her coyness would considerably add to her charm and beauty, although I think she ought to lose some of her bashfulness with marriage. Yet one cannot but admire her conscientiousness in conducting her household affairs, and her rising up

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1. George Eliot, Scenes of Clerical Life, p. 8.
 2. Ibid., p. 16.
 3. Ibid., p. 30.
 4. Ibid., p. 24.

early in the morning to enable her to carry out her duties better, and sooner than was usual.¹ All the same, I feel constrained to blame her husband for not getting another maid besides the Nanny, to help her in her household management and in caring for the children. In his position, he should have sufficient authority and influence on those around him to obtain some help from his neighbours or parishioners. Whenever any of our friends is without a maid-servant, we should send one of our own to help her."

"The more I learn about Milly Barton, the more I like her. She is undoubtedly right when she assures Mrs. Hackit that she is well fed and has plenty of everything.² In face of her great poverty she does her best, so that the world may think highly of her husband, and of the care and attention which he pays to her and her children."

Here we may ask my grandmother:

- Would you not call this attitude 'pretence' or 'hypocrisy', then?
- Certainly not! This is the most praiseworthy action taken by a devoted wife. Would you like her to condemn her husband

1. Ibid., p. 31.

2. Ibid., p. 70.

and put him to shame in the eyes of the world for their little income, and consequently for their low standard of living?

- But surely there is no need to seek for what does not exist. Or assume things which could easily be overlooked without mention. Mrs. Barton needn't have pretended for the sake of something that wasn't there.
- Yes, but that woman, Mrs. Hackit, with her questioning made Milly answer in that way. And after all what harm could be done by making one's husband respectable and highly thought of in the eyes of the world?

We can only observe silence when we see that this whole idea is to maintain an outward show of respectability to the world. For when my grandmother learns that that unwanted guest, the Countess, arrives, putting so much additional expense on poor Milly, who is struggling to make both ends meet,¹ we find my grandmother admiring her all the more for her patience and her endeavours to be the perfect hostess. We may blame Milly for not being frank in explaining the real financial situation when the Countess's stay extends to six months, whereas originally it was meant to be a week or two. Yet my grandmother, in shocked and horrified tone, would say, "What a dreadful thought! I have never heard

1. Ibid., p. 29.

in my life such a great insult! Milly to go and drive her guest out - God forbid! I couldn't think of anything worse than pushing a guest out of the house. One must never show or in any way convey to a guest that he is unwanted. One must offer food or drink to one's guest even though there is nothing left for oneself. There should be no shortage for guests even though it may spell starvation for the family."

To convey the idea of plenty at the cost of personal suffering is the essence of eastern hospitality and generosity. To the matter-of-fact Western mind such generosity is nothing short of lunacy and any argument supporting such a sacrifice which would result in the economic ruin and suffering of a family in a vain struggle to maintain a false sense of prestige, would be sheer hypocrisy, which punishes the hypocrite from the moment he indulges in it. But my grandmother would shake her head disdainfully and say, "My dear child, there wouldn't be much difference between human beings and beasts if the human beings degraded themselves through selfishness to a level where they grabbed

and quarrelled in their struggle for existence instead of offering help and co-operating with one another towards a better, happier, and contented life. Your modern civilization has its roots firmly planted in selfishness. Friendships exist on a commercial basis rather than on love and regard. This commercialisation of human relations has reduced the modern man to the level of an automaton devoid of the finer feelings of love and sacrifice - the essence of all that is noble and lasting in the world."

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BULLSTON

Extra Strong

CHAPTER III.THE MILL ON THE FLOSS.

My grandmother's merciless criticism of Hetty and her qualified approval of Dinah's behaviour in Adam Bede naturally makes one pause and wonder as to what would be her judgment about Maggie Tulliver in The Mill on the Floss. This query is due particularly to the fact that this very novel is universally accepted as the most autobiographical of George Eliot's novels. With only a few slight variations one can almost see, in Maggie Tulliver, George Eliot herself. In Maggie's sensitiveness, her yearning for knowledge, her aspirations, the sufferings, physical and mental, which result from the clash of her imaginative and poetic soul with her dull prosaic environment, one can see the reflections of her creator's character. Therefore, my grandmother's judgment of Maggie is at the same time a judgment of George Eliot. Whereas from our point, the study of her enables us better to know and understand the acceptance of George Eliot by public opinion, in spite of her many departures

from conventionally approved behaviour. Thus by influencing public opinion through showing the importance of women as individuals, she made a contribution no less than that of Mary Wollestonecraft¹ or Hannah More.²

It is precisely for this reason that a study and assessment of Maggie's character, which so effectively portrays the teachings of George Eliot, is suggested. A comparative study of the contemporary Turkish women's reaction and those of the nineteenth century English women as portrayed by George Eliot, would greatly help to establish a relationship between the trends of development of the feminine thought that determined the place of woman in the social set up at that time in the two countries. In the light of the above study it should be possible to pin down with a reasonable degree of accuracy the salient features of an essentially evolutionary social change in the history of modern civilization.

Maggie Tulliver is the only daughter of the owner of Dorlcote Mill. Her emotional disposi-

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1. Mary Wollestonecraft, The Rights of Women.
 2. Wm. Roberts, Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of Hannah More.

tion with its strong feelings and its great susceptibility is exceptional. Her intellectual endowments are quite in keeping with it. Mr. Tulliver gives the first hint of her cleverness when she is still a nine-year-old girl. He says, "The little one takes after my side, now: she's twice as 'cute as Tom. Too 'cute for a woman."¹ This cleverness combined with earnest yearning for knowledge is satisfied by her great delight: books. Her father, though proud of his daughter's great fondness for reading, thinks that this should not be her business.

She understands what one's talking about so as never was. And you should hear her read - straight off, as if she knowed it all beforehand. And allys at her book! But it's bad - it's bad!..... a woman's no business wi' being so clever; it'll turn to trouble, I doubt. ²

Her attempt to snatch at any floating scraps of learning that may enable her intellectual "wings to expand" is perceivable as early as when she visits Tom in his school. She is more attentive to what Mr. Stelling says than Tom himself, who is considerably less inclined towards book learning than his

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1. George Eliot, The Mill on the Floss, Vol. I, p. 11.
 2. Ibid., p. 20.

sister. Seeing the book-cases in the study, Maggie cannot help exclaiming, "Oh, what books! How I should like to have as many books as that." Then we hear the sister and brother arguing.

"Why you couldn't read one of 'em," said Tom, triumphantly. "They're all Latin."

"No. They aren't," said Maggie. "I can read the back of this.....History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire."

"Well, what does that mean? You don't know," said Tom, wagging his head.

"But I could soon find out," said Maggie scornfully.

"Why, how?"

"I should look inside, and see what it was about." 1

Maggie's short stay in a boarding-school increases her desire for knowledge. Yet her father's bankruptcy deprives her of all means of extending her studies. Only Tom's school-books are left, but Maggie does not mind their dealing with subjects quite foreign to her. She fills "her vacant hours with Latin, geometry, and the forms of the syllogism,....feeling a gleam of triumph now and then that her understanding was quite equal to these peculiarly masculine studies".² She tries to draw

1. Ibid., p. 225.

2. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 29.

honey from Latin grammar, Euclid and Aldrichs, and when she reads Defoe's History of the Devil, her joy is beyond description.

The key-note in Maggie's character is a strong desire to love and to be loved. Hence her continual craving for somebody who should be all to her and to whom she should be everything likewise. Her father and brother are the first persons on whom she concentrates her ardent love. She is her father's favourite; he always takes her side at times when everyone else criticizes her behaviour and even her physical appearance. Tom, however, more practical and realistic, never allows his feelings to rule him. He believes that "he would punish everybody who deserved it: why, he wouldn't have minded being punished himself, if he deserved it; but then, he never did deserve it."¹ Her need of love is "the strongest need in poor Maggie's nature".² Therefore, Tom's idea of punishment, to ignore his sister, is the hardest form of suffering which he can inflict upon her. When she forgets

1. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 53.

2. Ibid., p. 52.

to feed his rabbits and they all die, his answer is to ignore her. Maggie's misery is infinite. She cries and asks Tom for forgiveness and love. "O Tom, please forgive me - I can't bear it - I will always be good - always remember things - do love me - please, dear Tom!"¹

Her vivid imagination and craving to be loved do not help to make her life happier or easier for her. Again after one of those severe arguments with Tom, Maggie bursts into tears.

They were very bitter tears: everybody in the world seemed so hard and unkind to Maggie: there was no indulgence, no fondness, such as she imagined when she fashioned the world afresh in her own thoughts. In books there were people who were always agreeable or tender, and delighted to do things that made one happy, and who did not show their kindness by finding fault. The world outside the books was not a happy one, Maggie felt: it seemed to be a world where people behaved the best to those they did not pretend to love, and that did not belong to them. And if life had no love in it, what else was there for Maggie?²

Her inward soul is in constant conflict with her outward life and she alone has to bear the conse-

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1. Ibid., p. 57.
 2. Ibid., p. 368.

quences.

Maggie.....was a creature full of eager passionate longings for all that was beautiful and glad; thirsty for all knowledge, with an ear straining after dreamy music that died away and would not come near to her; with a blind, unconscious yearning for something that would link together the wonderful impressions of this mysterious life, and give her soul a sense of home in it.

No wonder then, when there is this contrast between the outward and the inward, that painful collisions come of it. 1

The disasters that befall her rise from this trait in her character. Her scientific mind is set to work by her surroundings.

She wanted some explanation of this hard, real life: the unhappy-looking father, seated at the dull breakfast-table, the childish, bewildered mother, the little sordid tasks that filled the hours, or the more oppressive emptiness of weary, joyless leisure; the need of some tender, demonstrative love; the cruel sense that Tom didn't mind what she thought or felt, and that they were no longer playfellows together; the privation of all pleasant things that had come to her more than to others: she wanted some key that would enable her to understand, and, in understanding, endure, the heavy weight that had fallen on her young heart. If she had been taught 'real learning and wisdom, such as great men knew,' she thought she should

1. Ibid., p. 369.

have held the secrets of life; if she had only books, that she might learn for herself what wise men knew! 1

When with advancing years these idols of her life - her father and her brother - saddened and embittered, fail to meet her need for love, she, who cannot live without loving, gives her affections to Philip Wakem, a highly gifted but deformed young man. Philip's father, as the Tullivers think, is the man behind all the miseries they go through. Therefore Maggie's friendship with Philip takes its deep and strong form in secret. After Tom discovers the friendship, with his usual domination he makes Maggie promise not to see or write to Philip without Tom's knowledge. Poor Maggie! Life becomes more and more difficult for her.

With her independent mind, she refuses to live with her aunt Pullet after her father dies. She'd rather get a situation in a school than be dependent on her wealthy relatives. Even Tom reproaches her for taking a situation instead of depending on him. He says:

1. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 28.

Now listen to me, Maggie.....you know I didn't wish you to take a situation. My aunt Pullet was willing to give you a good home, and you might have lived respectably amongst your relations, until I could have provided a home for you with my mother. And that is what I should like to do. I wished my sister to be a lady, and I would always have taken care of you, as my father desired, until you were well married. But your ideas and mine never accord, and you will not give way. 1

Maggie herself at one time tells Philip, "I can't live in dependence - I can't live with my brother - though he is very good to me. He would like to provide for me; but that would be intolerable to me".² Tom, in fact, pours out what were the conventional and accepted rules of those days. But Maggie, like her creator, was far ahead of her time. Hence the continuous misunderstandings and difficulties aroused.

Maggie's poetic soul has a large place for music. Yet even this art brings her closer to her fate. It is through her great susceptibility to it that she is drawn to Stephen Guest, to whom her cousin Lucy is engaged. She tries hard to ignore Stephen's advances for the sake of her prin-

1. Ibid., p. 195.

2. Ibid., p. 228.

ciples, her attachment to Lucy and to Philip. Yet once again her impulsive disposition comes into play. This impulsiveness provokes many headstrong actions, but when the deed is done, she sees not only the consequences of her imprudence, but also what would have happened had she acted differently. When she was a small girl, she showed this by cutting her hair in revenge for the cruel remarks of her aunts, or by running to the gipsies because Tom was angry with her. But now the situation is far too serious for the consequences to be forgiven, more especially at that period with its high, though artificial, moral codes.

Stephen, however, succeeds in persuading Maggie to go rowing with him. Without realizing how far away the river is carrying them, they have passed beyond the possibility of returning free from blame. Their return will not help to make them blameless in the eyes of society. It is here that the real spiritual struggle, for Maggie, begins. Stephen's plan is to go further away and get married, while Maggie, with her reverence for human bonds and abhorrence of a self-pleasing choice against a dutiful loyalty, insists on going back to

her family and friends. Her guilty conscience haunts her.

She had rent the ties that had given meaning to duty, and had made herself an outlawed soul, with no guide but the wayward choice of her own passion. And where would that lead her? - where had it led her now? She had said she would rather die than fall into that temptation. She felt it now - now that the consequences of such a fall had come before the outward act was completed. There was at least this fruit from all her years of striving after the highest and best - that her soul, though betrayed, beguiled, ensnared, could never deliberately consent to a choice of joy, but of conscious cruelty and hardness; for could she ever cease to see before her Lucy and Philip, with their murdered trust and hopes? Her life with Stephen could have no sacredness: she must for ever sink and wander vaguely, driven by uncertain impulse; for she had let go of the clue of life - that clue which once in the far-off years her young need had clutched so strongly. She had renounced all delights then, before she knew them, before they had come within her reach. Philip had been right when he told her that she knew nothing of renunciation: she had thought it was quiet ecstasy; she saw it face to face now - that sad patient loving strength which holds the clue of life - and saw that the thorns were for ever pressing on its brow. The yesterday, which could never be revoked - if she could have changed it now for any length of inward silent endurance, she would have bowed beneath that cross with a sense of rest. 1

This hard judgment on herself is, in fact, a clear

1. Ibid., pp. 322-323.

example of a self-renunciation in which she found peace and strength. Despite Stephen's strong arguments and good reasons, she refuses to listen to his project which might have brought her happiness. But remembering Maggie's high principles, one can never imagine her stepping consciously on Lucy's or Philip's happiness to build her own enjoyments. At last, after a long and vehement spiritual struggle with Stephen, she returns to St. Ogg's, where she is considered a social outcast not only by society but by the closest person to her; the person who has had the strongest influence on her since her childhood, Tom. He turns her out of his house for the disgrace she has brought on the family by her unpardonable breach of the law of morality. He even refuses to believe her accounts of the deed. He has no longer any tolerance for his sister's continuous shameful actions of which this last forms the climax. Society is not less hard on her. All her world is shut against her. After some more time full of agony, repentance, lamentation and reproachful memories, Maggie faces her end with a remarkable bravery, when she is carried away in the flood. Her last action and thought are directed

towards her brother Tom, to save him. With this noble motive guiding her, when she and her brother are unable to resist the strong hand of nature, manifested in the floating fragments of some wooden machinery which had given way on one of the wharves, Maggie faces her end with Tom. These fragments, rushing with the force of the current on the little boat, gave them their sad end: drowning.

Seeking beyond the autobiographical motive in this work, one can see embodied in the character of Maggie, several teachings which permeate the book. Firstly, George Eliot shows how an innocent life can be destroyed through the infringement, even unintentionally, of rigid conventions and inflexible moral standards, by the exercise of an individual and independent will.

Maggie holds our sympathy throughout the book. We may at times of difficulty and crisis wish that we could make her act otherwise, to avoid the inevitable consequences; but this is only a wish, for we remain fully convinced of her nature and her spiritual needs. To be true to herself she could not act otherwise.

Like her creator, Maggie must act natu-

rally. There is nothing wrong in her unconventional attitudes. Rather she is crushed by the limitations of her artificial surroundings. Had she been differently situated, in surroundings in which she could be understood and appreciated, her strong personality would have led her to develop into a most useful and helpful member of society. Her sympathetic nature, her love for the poor, the weak and the deformed, might have penetrated their inmost secrets and satisfied their need for the affection of which they were deprived. With her enormous appetite for learning, a systematic education suitable to her needs could have made her most able and efficient in the task of bringing education to the illiterate. Her childish attempts at teaching Luke, and later on, the gipsies, while still a child of nine, are evidence of her burning desire to share her knowledge.

A girl of such high intelligence and sensibility, therefore, argues George Eliot, should have her chance to develop her gifts and personality. This can only be done through granting her freedom and recognizing her as an individual.

Furthermore, Maggie shows us that women

are not the brainless creatures of contemporary belief, without aspirations and without important functions in society. The contrast between her and Tom gives the lie to the prevailing belief in the intellectual superiority of men.

How can we be harsh with Maggie for the independence and sincerity of her actions, against the background of her pathetic life, both in her own home and outside it? Can we be harsh with George Eliot herself for acting according to her own progressive views as judged from biographies and her letters?

The individuality of Maggie's character is more vividly emphasised by her creator through her environment, typically Victorian in its strict attachment to convention and traditions, regardless of the drawbacks these may have. She traces the spiritual significance of this environment on her.¹ In spite of exaggerations in conception and behaviour, the Aunts Glegg, Pullet and Deane are all examples of the prosperous middle-class women of the time, in their artificial attitudes and peculiar

1. See Clarence R. Decker, The Victorian Conscience.

ways. The way in which the aunts, the Dodson sisters are introduced to us prepares us for their reactions in different situations.

We know that the

.....Dodsons had always been thought to hold up their heads very high, and no one was surprised the two eldest had married so well - not at an early age, for that was not the practice of the Dodson family. There were particular ways of doing everything in that family: particular ways of bleaching the linen, of making the cowslip wine, curing the hams, and keeping the bottled gooseberries; so that no daughter of that house could be indifferent to the privilege of having been born a Dodson, rather than a Gibson or a Watson. Funerals were always conducted with peculiar propriety in the Dodson family: the hat-bands were never of a blue shade, the gloves never split at the thumb, everybody was a mourner who ought to be, and there were always scarfs for the bearers. When one of the family was in trouble or sickness, all the rest went to visit the unfortunate member, usually at the same time, and did not shrink from uttering the most disagreeable truths that correct family feeling dictated: if the illness or trouble was the sufferer's own fault, it was not in the practice of the Dodson family to shrink from saying so. In short, there was in this family a peculiar tradition as to what was the right thing in household management and social demeanour, and the only bitter circumstance attending this superiority was a painful inability to approve the condiments or the conduct of families ungoverned by the Dodson tradition. A female Dodson, when in 'strange houses', always ate dry bread with her tea, and declined any sort of preserves, having no confidence in the butter, and thinking that the preserves had probably begun to ferment from

want of due sugar and boiling. There were some Dodsons less like the family than others - that was admitted; but in so far as they were 'kin', they were of necessity better than those who were 'no kin'. And it is remarkable that while no individual Dodson was satisfied with any other individual Dodson, each was satisfied, not only with him or her self, but with the Dodsons collectively. 1

We know that in the nineteenth century the wave of a romanticism, which had swept Europe, had penetrated English domestic life, and ordinary wives and mothers were reproducing the behaviour of the heroines of Byron and Chateaubriand. Since a rigid respectability governed their behaviour, their emotions had to be expended on the commonplace events of everyday life. The naughtiness of a child, a misunderstanding between friends, the non-arrival of a letter, called forth tears, explanations, faintness. News of the death of a distant and aged cousin, the engagement to marry of a friend, necessitated smelling salts, a darkened room, a soothing draught. Women prided themselves on being martyrs to their excessive sensibility and "delicacy" was universal.²

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1. George Eliot, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 62-3.
 2. C.W. Smith, Life of Florence Nightingale.

We have a typical manifestation of this when Mrs. Pullet comes to the Tullivers, her manners all constrained to show that some unfortunate thing has happened.

Mrs. Pullet brushed each doorpost with great nicety, about the latitude of her shoulders (at that period a woman was truly ridiculous to an instructed eye if she did not measure a yard and a half across the shoulders), and having done that, sent the muscles of her face in quest of fresh tears as she advanced into the parlour where Mrs. Glegg was seated. 1

The dialogue between her and her sister Mrs. Glegg is a most interesting example of this emotional hypocrisy which prevailed in that society then. Mrs. Glegg said:

"Well, sister, you're late; what's the matter?" rather sharply, as they shook hands.

Mrs. Pullet sat down, lifting up her mantle carefully behind, before she answered, "She's gone," unconsciously using an impressive figure of rhetoric.

"It isn't the glass this time, then," thought Mrs. Tulliver.

"Died the day before yesterday," continued Mrs. Pullet, "an' her legs was as thick as my body," she added, with deep sadness, after a pause. "They'd tapped her no end o' times, and the water - they say you might ha' swum in it, if you'd liked."

1. George Eliot, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 84.

On hearing the name of the person,

"Well, she's no kin o' yours, nor much acquaintance as I've ever heard of," said Mrs. Glegg, who always cried just as much as was proper when anything happened to her own "kin", but not on other occasions.

Then she continues:

"Sophy, I wonder at you, fretting and injuring your health about people as don't belong to you. Your poor father never did so, nor your aunt Francis neither, nor any o' the family as I ever heard of. You couldn't fret no more than this, if we'd heard as our cousin Abbott had died sudden without making his will."

It was not everybody who could afford to cry so much about their neighbours who had left them nothing: but Mrs. Pullet had married a gentleman farmer, and had leisure and money to carry her crying and everything else to the highest pitch of respectability. 1

Mrs. Tulliver, a foolish, simple woman, is an equally good example of this hypocrisy. When the aunts remark on the naughtiness of Maggie in cutting her hair, she, after hearing all her sisters' hard judgments on Maggie's behaviour, cannot help saying, "She's a naughty child, as'll break her mother's heart," 2 with the tears in her eyes.

1. Ibid., pp. 84-86.

2. Ibid.

When Mrs. Pullet shows Mrs. Tulliver her bonnets, and remarks that the latter should remember them after Mrs. Pullet dies, Mrs. Tulliver

.....felt that she ought to be affected, but she was a woman of sparse tears, stout and healthy - she couldn't cry so much as her sister Pullet did, and had often felt her deficiency at funerals. 1

Even to the silliest and most trivial thing, each act of everyday life is performed with a view to public opinion.

Mr. Pullet keeps all his wife's physic-bottles.

"He says it's nothing but right folks should see 'em when I'm gone," said Mrs. Pullet. "They fill two o' the long store-room shelves a'ready - but," she added, beginning to cry a little, "it's well if they ever fill three....." 2

This also represents her selfishness which centres in an exaggerated care for health.

When Mrs. Glegg quarrels with Mr. Tulliver, Mrs. Pullet worries, not for either side's sake, but because "it would look ill in the neighbourhood

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1. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 137.
 2. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 144.

if people should have it in their power to say that there was a quarrel in the family." 1

At the time of the Tullivers' bankruptcy, the aunts' attitude is certainly most peculiar, even, perhaps, to a true Victorian lady. Instead of helping their sister and keeping her household things out of the sale, they argue and consider this selling-up as a disgrace, less because of its causes than because of its result - the workhouse for their sister, Mrs. Tulliver - at least if her sisters were not sufficiently benevolent to save her from it.

What the Dodsons clung to when explaining the attitudes they took up was their "moral notion". But "their moral notions, though held with strong tenacity, seem to have no standard beyond hereditary custom".²

It is interesting to see how Mrs. Pullet reacted when she heard of Maggie's disgraceful action. She

.....could do nothing but shake her head and

1. Ibid., p. 198.

2. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 5.

cry, and wish that cousin Abbott had died, or any number of funerals had happened rather than this, which had never happened before, so that there was no knowing how to act, and Mrs. Pullet could never enter St. Ogg's again, because 'acquaintances' knew of it all.

And Mrs. Glegg

.....only hoped that Mrs. Wooll, or anyone else, would come to her with their false tales about her own niece, and she would know what to say to that ill-advised person 1

It was at such a time with these moral questions in vogue, that Maggie faced her unfortunate lot with such boldness. "She must be very bold and hardened to wish to stay in a parish where she was so much stared at and whispered about." 2

Turning to see the reaction and the judgment of contemporary Turkish society to Maggie's behaviour throughout her life, one finds that it would be no less harsh, indeed rather more so, than that of her aunts and of St. Ogg's society. This conclusion has been reached after listening to the many incidents related by my grandmother. All these incidents deal with the profound importance attached

1. Ibid., pp. 365-6.

2. Ibid., p. 377.

to the morality, purity and chastity of Turkish women. Purity and virtue, my grandmother used to say, are something sacred, not to be joked about. They are the capital, and the whole end of a woman's existence. In fact, it is infinitely interesting to see how meticulous women were about these sacred words. Their whole lives could be judged and shaped by them. Their extremely high sense of morality would not only express itself in their behaviour or feeling towards each other, as in the case of the conventional 'lady' of George Eliot's works, but in their very appearance.

My grandmother would criticize the times after this fashion: "What a time we are living in! Women cut their hair like men, and parade in front of them without 'charshaf and yashmak'! This 'alafiranga' - westernization - has turned woman into a shameless creature devoid of all morality! If a woman wishes to preserve her purity and virtue she must confine herself to her house, to the harem, where no one will see her or hear her voice. I remember that within the house even, we wore shapeless dresses which effectively hid the contours of the body, and our heads were covered with the beautiful-

ly embroidered silk scarves, as it was considered immodest even for men to go bare-headed." Then she would relate with great pride an incident which emphasised their strict sense of virtue and purity. "When we saw that my brother had come to the stage when he should marry, my mother, aunts and myself began to look for a suitable girl for the match. After inquiries and recommendations by many 'kilavuz',¹ we heard of a certain girl. We went to see her. She appeared to be what we wanted, a pretty, tall girl, very timid and quiet. She definitely was very well brought up because throughout our visit, apart from 'Yes, ma'am', she did not utter a word. It was a sign of respect that she wouldn't open her mouth in front of her elders. Her family was one of the best, and well known in Istanbul: rich, noble, and very respectable. Everything was simply perfect. Accordingly we decided to ask for

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1. The kilavuz were professional women who used to go to practically every house in search of suitable 'matches', to recommend them to the families with eligible sons. They were always received with warm welcome and great interest, as a favourable report by a kilavuz was decisive in most cases. Ercüment Ekrem, Dünden Hatıralar, Memories of Yesterday, chapter on "The Marriage-Broker", "Görücü".

her hand officially. So my father and some elderly male relatives and friends gathered to decide the day on which they should go to the girl's male relatives to ask for their permission. It was just then that we heard that this girl had opened the door to a beggar and handed him some food instead of ordering one of her many slaves. We gave her up because, who can tell, if she opened the door to a beggar today and showed her face, she might open it to someone else tomorrow and even talk with him, thus bringing the family into danger of disgrace. We started then to look for a more suitable girl."

This end to the incident need not be attributed to stupidity on the part of my grandmother or her like, as many a love tale of this period would show that there were genuine grounds for such fears inasmuch as lovers had found it a convenient expedient to visit the houses of their beloveds in the guise of a beggar.

With such a concept of morality, virtue and purity, my grandmother's reaction to Maggie's behaviour would be bound to be one of great horror and shock. She might quote our proverb: 'May Satan's ears be pierced by bullets!' This is a wish that

Satan should not hear this instance of deplorable conduct, and accordingly influence other weak-minded people to do the same.

Then she would continue, "I knew that this girl Maggie would one day be an object of lasting disgrace for her family. Her early rebellion, encouraged by her father's attitude towards her, was a portent of this disaster. I am surprised that her father remained unmoved and did not take any notice of the protests and warnings of her respectable aunts and uncles. He should have played the rôle of a man and should have corrected the erratic behaviour of the girl with a firm hand. Pushing Lucy into the pond, running away to the gipsies, her insistence on seeing Philip Wakem even when opposed by her family, are outstanding situations demanding correction. Then for some strange ideas of independence, she takes a situation to earn her own living. Then, to cap it all, she brings on her family the ignominy and disgrace of her running away with Stephen Guest! May God the merciful spare our children from going astray through the evil of Satan! It passes comprehension why Tom, if he is really the courageous and good boy he is said to be, contents

himself with turning her out of his house after this degrading occurrence; he should have killed her to redeem the honour of the family; thus proving to the world that he, at least, was a worthy man and could restore to the family its injured name and reputation. However it is just as well that she was drowned to save the family further troubles. I must add that the irresponsible actions of this girl are the result of getting ideas from reading books. Here, indeed, is an example of the danger which books have in store for a girl."

The aunts, on the other hand, would certainly earn my grandmother's approval by their ever critical attitude towards Maggie. Their concept of propriety in family matters gave the family a sense of satisfaction on a collective basis as Dodsons, even though they remained dissatisfied with one another individually. She would readily agree and even applaud the efforts of the Dodson family in trying to conform with the accepted code of conventional morality, although she would regret that they did not follow the example of their socially equivalent contemporary Turkish girls in marrying at an early age, such as twelve or fourteen. Their attitude

towards their sister Tulliver, after the Tullivers' bankruptcy, might even not seem to her peculiar, as their minds were preoccupied with the sense of disgrace that the family might be faced with if their sister were obliged to go to the workhouse. But at the same time, my grandmother would have expressed her regret that Mrs. Tulliver had no male relative of her own to stand by her in hard times. She would not be so charitably disposed to the uncles Glegg and Pullet, for in her opinion their painstaking efforts in attending to their wives in public would be servile and unmanly. However, she would not be so hard on them as on Maggie.

CHAPTER IV.MIDDLEMARCH.

Whereas in the previous novels, George Eliot's purpose and teachings permeate the stories through the actions and the spiritual struggles of the characters with their environment, in Middlemarch one finds in addition, open statements of the subject and aim of the story. The eloquent preface, clearly indicating the subject, could be summarized in the words of Henry James.

An ardent young girl was to have been the central figure, a young girl framed for a larger moral life than circumstance often affords, yearning for a motive for sustained spiritual effort and only wasting her ardour and soiling her wings against the meanness of opportunity. 1

In the closing paragraph of this fictional masterpiece George Eliot's aim in presenting this story is clearly evident.

Certainly those determining acts of her life were not ideally beautiful. They

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1. Nineteenth Century Fiction, 1953-4, Vol. 8, p. 163. "George Eliot's Middlemarch", reviewed by Henry James.

were the mixed result of young and noble impulse struggling amidst the conditions of an imperfect social state, in which great feelings will often take the aspect of error, and great faith the aspect of illusion. For there is no creature whose inward being is so strong that it is not greatly determined by what lies outside it. A new Theresa will hardly have the opportunity of reforming a conventual life, any more than a new Antigone will spend her heroic piety in daring all for the sake of a brother's burial; the medium in which their ardent deeds took shape is for ever gone. But we insignificant people with our daily words and acts are preparing the lives of many Dorotheas, some of which may present a far sadder sacrifice than that of the Dorothea whose story we know. 1

Therefore George Eliot offers us an obvious example of the cramping effect of social conventions on the individual and shows how they limit energy and diminish the power of service to society. She successfully presents Dorothea Brooke to us as a vivid example of a victim of these restrictions and limitations imposed upon her by her situation in a society which thinks the only purpose of women's existence is to be good mothers and wives within the accepted social conventions. Hence a close study of her character in relation to these influences may enable us to understand how George Eliot achieved her purpose and consequently influenced public opinion.

1. George Eliot, Middlemarch, Vol. III, pp. 464-5.

Dorothea, the niece of Mr. Brooke, a bachelor landowner who is the guardian of herself and her sister Celia, is a young woman of high aspirations. Her blind seekings after a higher type of life than was open to her in her limited sphere, resulted in many disappointments. Her ideals and aspirations were far above those of an average girl of her class. She is presented to us as thirsty for more learning and knowledge. Her ambition is to learn and know more about religion, not for its doctrinal or devotional aspects, but for the sake of its principles which lead to all forms of activity and which have their origin in the commandments of charity and love for one's neighbour.

Dorothea knew many passages of Pascal's Pensées and of Jeremy Taylor by heart, and to her the destinies of mankind, seen by the light of Christianity, made the solitudes of feminine fashion appear an occupation for Bedlam. She could not reconcile the anxieties of a spiritual life involving eternal consequences, with a keen interest in guimp and artificial protrusions of drapery. Her mind was theoretic, and yearned by its nature after some lofty conception of the world which might frankly include the parish of Tipton and her own rule of conduct there; she was enamoured of intensity and greatness, and rash in embracing whatever seemed to her to have those aspects; likely to seek martyrdom, to make retractations, and then to incur

martyrdom after all in a quarter where she had not sought it. 1

Therefore she thinks that

.....the really delightful marriage must be that where your husband was a sort of father, and could teach you even Hebrew, if you wished it. 2

For this reason she looks down upon the country gentleman, Sir James Chettam, and thinks that she would like to marry the judicious Hooker or Milton in his blindness. This intellectual ambition, mistaking pedantry for true learning, makes her marry the pedant Casaubon in whom she sees

.....something beyond the shallows of ladies' school literature: here was a living Bossuet, whose work would reconcile complete knowledge with devoted piety; here was a modern Augustine who united the glories of doctor and saint. 3

When she receives Casaubon's stilted letter of proposal, her joy is beyond everything.

How could it occur to her to examine the letter, to look at it critically as a profession of love? Her whole soul was possessed

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1. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 8.
 2. Ibid., p. 12.
 3. Ibid., p. 33.

by the fact that a fuller life was opening before her: she was a neophyte about to enter on a higher grade of initiation. She was going to have room for the energies which stirred uneasily under the dimness and pressure of her own ignorance and the petty peremptoriness of the world's habits.

Now she would be able to devote herself to large yet definite duties: now she would be allowed to live continually in the light of a mind that she could reverence. This hope was not unmixed with the glow of proud delight - the joyous maiden surprise that she was chosen by the man whom her admiration had chosen. All Dorothea's passion was transfused through a mind struggling towards an ideal life; the radiance of her transfigured girlhood fell on the first object that came within its level. 1

In order to make herself of use to him in his great work on "Comparative Mythology", she was "getting down learned books from the library and reading many things hastily". With this intellectual ambition in mind, Lydgate thinks of Dorothea:

.....she is a good creature - that fine girl - but a little too earnest.....it is troublesome to talk to such women. They are always wanting reasons, yet they are too ignorant to understand the merits of any question, and usually fall back on their moral sense to settle things after their own taste.

The sincerity of Dorothea's aims makes

1. Ibid., p. 62.

her a devoted wife to Casaubon. She does her best to make things comfortable for him, and does all those things which no secretary, however efficient, can do. Yet her husband's work is a failure, and no matter how much she has done, she cannot find satisfaction in it.

We have here a clear statement of George Eliot's view as to the tasks which a woman should undertake. A woman may indeed contribute towards the work of the intellect if only she is born with the capacity for that. Otherwise her true outlet will be in works of philanthropy, calling for sympathy, tenderness, and a sensitive understanding of the sorrow and misery of those in affliction. These are the qualities which give women their unique function in society. It would have been better for Dorothea had she continued with the work she had undertaken before her marriage, among the schools and cottages of her uncle's estate, instead of devoting her life to an ambition which could not be realized.

With her remarkable simplicity, straightforwardness and goodness, and with a nature ardent, heroic, striving towards some lofty conception of

this world which is to be made into a living truth, Dorothea could have been of infinite help to her society. But she, herself, did not know where to use these rare qualities. She, who was "enamoured of intensity and greatness" and "likely to seek martyrdom", became a victim of her misunderstanding of her real vocation.

When Will Ladislaw has shocked her loyalty to Casaubon by some slighting remarks upon his occupation, she reproves him with dignity and pathos. She, who wrestled with herself all through the long, lonely evening, after her husband had rejected, "with unresponsive hardness", her aid and sympathy in his illness and finally went out to meet him as he came upstairs, was a greater woman than she who accepted him at first. She who had found "that belief of her own which comforted her",

.....that by desiring what is perfectly good, even when we don't quite know what it is, and cannot do what we should, we are part of the divine power against evil, widening the skirts of light and making the struggle with darkness narrower.....

was nearer to the light than in the days when her young heart was filled with vague longings for some larger purpose, some vast ideal good.

Combined with these yearnings is her disdain for the small things of life and her readiness to sacrifice material comforts for the attainment of a higher ideal. The will to higher things is not to be restrained by material circumstances. She comes to the highest nobility in her life when she goes to Rosamond Vincey, although she thinks Rosamond has been flirting with Ladislaw, and kisses her, winning her even for a short time to a nobler way of thinking.

Dorothea not only does not mind the lack of small material things, such as her mother's jewellery, secured by her sister Celia for herself, but is ready to sacrifice large property as well for the sake of her principles. When her husband, Casaubon, dies, it is found that he has made the insulting provision in his will that Dorothea shall forfeit the property he leaves her if she marries Ladislaw, his young cousin, who shows great interest in Dorothea. Her sister and brother-in-law, the Chettams, wish to get rid of Ladislaw, as might be expected of certain people of that period, but he remains to help Mr. Brooke in his candidature for Parliament. Eventually Dorothea gives up her

money and social position to marry him. Such attitude and action were unforgivable at that time and became a subject of scandal. The author describes the effect of Dorothea's marriage by saying:

Sir James never ceased to regard Dorothea's second marriage as a mistake; and indeed this remained the tradition concerning it in Middlemarch, where she was spoken of to a younger generation as a fine girl who married a sickly clergyman, old enough to be her father, and in little more than a year after his death gave up her estate to marry his cousin - young enough to have been his son, with no property, and not well-born. Those who had not seen anything of Dorothea usually observed that she could not have been "a nice woman", else she would not have married either the one or the other. 1

George Eliot speaks of the sacredness of marriage, and the renunciation it demands at all times, but especially in periods of difficulty and in critical situations, through her mouthpiece Dorothea who intercedes with Rosamond on Lydgate's behalf. Dorothea says:

Marriage is so unlike everything else. There is something even awful in the nearness it brings. Even if we loved some one else better than - than those we were married to, it would be of no use, I mean, marriage drinks up all our power of giving or getting any

1. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 464.

blessedness in that sort of love. I know it may be very dear - but it murders our marriage - and then the marriage stays with us like a murder and everything else is gone. And then our husband - if he loved and trusted us, and we have not helped him, but made a curse in his life..... 1

It is gratifying to see that Dorothea at last attains happiness among her own family and people. Once more we realize George Eliot's emphasis on the natural duties of woman and on the importance of conforming to, rather than denying them; while at the same time she re-affirms the need for education and for recognition as an individual being, which alone can enable a woman to fulfil those functions in society for which she is destined. Thus we see Dorothea in the light of George Eliot's teaching, which was stimulated and inspired by her own unhappy personal experiences in a society which hampered her with its rigid conventions.

Turning now to look at Dorothea through the eyes of contemporary Turkish society and asking my grandmother how she would see Dorothea, I realize her answer would certainly not be a pleasing one to George Eliot. No doubt she would shake her head

1. Ibid., pp. 404-405.

in shocked surprise and exclaim, "God forbid! May God protect us from the evil influence of Satan!"¹ She might then go on to relate her reaction to Dorothea's "strange and queer" behaviour as shown in the novel, in some such vein as this:

"This girl Dorothea," she might say, "is no doubt a peculiar and abnormal girl. What does it mean that she is so fond of reading and learning? This is a man's sphere, not a woman's. But then it is all her uncle's fault. He should have the authority which rightly belongs to a man, instead of sitting and listening helplessly to his nieces and trying to fulfil their wishes. First of all Dorothea gives up all her mother's jewels to her sister Celia who is a very much wiser and more normal girl. Surely it is sufficient evidence of her foolishness that she refuses the very things which will most adorn and add to her own natural beauty!"

"Her marriage is a more shocking business still! How any girl, supposedly of good family, could so far lower herself is beyond my understanding. What business has she to decide whom

1. This is a quotation from the Koran and is usually used when a disaster or untoward event befalls anyone.

she should marry? It is none of her business; it is for her parents or next of kin to choose a husband for her. As if her unusual behaviour before this were not enough, she refuses a brilliant marriage with Sir James Chettam, a man of wealth who could give her a life of endless pleasure: jewels and ornaments, a house like a palace, clothes of silk embroidered with gold, silver and gems, numerous slaves to attend her - all that is needed to make a wife happy. She wants to marry Casaubon for some fanciful reason such as his great intellectual capacity, a reason that nobody understands but herself. What is even more odd is the way in which Casaubon proposes. Instead of sending his sister or mother, and some female friends of the family to Dorothea's female relatives, he actually writes her a letter! And her happiness on getting the letter is both degrading and shameful - the result of all her learning and reading, of course! And her uncle's attitude is hardly that of a person worthy of being called a man. He does not wholly approve of the marriage, yet makes no attempt to stop it; he, who is supposed to be in place of her father and whose duty it is, therefore - not hers - to

choose her a husband. He should have remembered our proverb that if a girl is left to choose a husband for herself she marries either a drummer or a bagpipe player." ¹

"She marries Casaubon, but is she happy with him? No! Certainly not. If she really has an intellectual ambition as one might call it, why doesn't she then use it to urge her husband to produce some useful work for society and the world as our Safiye Sultan did? ² She neither does this nor does she behave like a normal girl and sit in her home satisfied to make sure that it will always be a pleasure for her husband to look at her. Instead of spending her time reading and learning what is meant only for men, she should have done

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1. In old times in Turkey, these people were considered as from the lowest class, earning their living through playing their instruments at the doors of the rich, especially in the evenings of Ramazan and religious Festivals.
 2. Safiye Sultan had had a tremendous influence on her husband Sultan Murad III, and then on her son, Sultan Mehmet III, in the tenth century, for nearly twenty years. This influence was not only in the political but in the social field. Refik Ahmed, Yeni Mecmua, The New Magazine, 1918, No. 65.

some embroidery or played some sort of music to please her husband and whoever lives with them. Naturally, therefore, she is unhappy, especially when 'the sheep are left to the wolves'. Instead of being put into the harem. Dorothea is left free to meet young men like Ladislaw, and her behaviour becomes even more shameless. She sees this young man often. He cannot be blamed for this, for it is the woman who lowers herself by showing her face and talking to any man who is not her husband or a relative of some kind. Then, once her husband is dead, and has left a will, the provisions of which we all know, she behaves as strangely as ever, and gives up all her riches to marry this penniless Ladislaw. All one can say is that God made all sorts of creatures, silly and stupid like Dorothea, or just the opposite, like her sister Celia. She at least has the intelligence to see that her marriage with Sir James will bring a woman all she yearns for! Yet even she decides for herself that she will marry him, instead of being guided by her uncle's choice. God preserve our children from such disasters!"

As we read of my grandmother's disapprov-

al and reproach for Dorothea and her behaviour, we can at the same time see Rosamond Vincey, the eldest daughter of a Middlemarch manufacturer, gaining her sympathy and affection.

George Eliot's aim in depicting Rosamond is to show the great influence of environment and of parents upon character. Her "rare psychological penetration is lavished upon this veritably mulish domestic flower".¹ Being "a rare compound of beauty, cleverness and amiability", Rosamond is given by her parents a degree of freedom which spoils her and makes of her a selfish rather than a helpful person. Moreover, George Eliot shows how the complete economic dependence of a daughter on her parents can lead to the wreck of a marriage which might have been happy had she but known the limits of expenditure. Through Rosamond's life after her marriage, and her management of her household, one sees this selfishness destroying the noble endeavours and faculties of others, who might have been of immense help to society.

Rosamond's exquisite taste does not al-

1. Nineteenth Century Fiction, 1953-4, Vol. 8, p. 167. "George Eliot's Middlemarch", reviewed by Henry James.

low any of her many admirers to correspond to her ideal of a husband, till a young physician, Tertius Lydgate, settles in Middlemarch. Impressed by Lydgate's being the nephew of a baronet and by his refined manners, she marries him hoping for social advancement with no idea of any higher aim. When considering the subject of her marriage, she reflects, "It always makes a difference, though, to be of good family". Then she

.....felt that she might have been happier if she had not been the daughter of a Middlemarch manufacturer. She disliked anything which reminded her that her mother's father had been an innkeeper. 1

Her dream is now being realized. Captain Lydgate's visit creates enormous pleasure for her.

She was so intensely conscious of having a cousin who was a baronet's son staying in the house, that she imagined the knowledge of what was implied by his presence to be diffused through all other minds; and when she introduced Captain Lydgate to her guests, she had a placid sense that his rank penetrated them as if it had been an odour. The satisfaction was enough for the time to melt away some disappointment in the conditions of marriage with a medical man even of good birth. 2

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1. George Eliot, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 72.
 2. Ibid., p. 73.

Not having been self-supporting before her marriage, and her expenditure having been directed by her parents, she has no idea of the value of money even after she marries. She squanders what her husband gives her, like a heedless child. Her egoism wrecks Lydgate's usefulness in his profession, through her extravagance and her complete indifference to her part in the management of their affairs. Her selfishness indeed paralyses the noble faculties of her husband. When it gradually appears that the husband cannot afford to support an expensive household, Rosamond will be 'the fine lady' and will not adapt herself to any humbler mode of life. She opposed to her husband a quiet but inflexible obstinacy, before which he was helpless. She believed that it would be unladylike to quarrel, so she never used heated language.

Thinking of helping her husband in a way that will not injure their social status, she meddles in things she has no idea how to deal with.

Her husband suggests that they should let their big house in Middlemarch so that their expenditure will be reduced. Rosamond takes measures that prevent the realization of this suggestion.

Moreover, without Lydgate's knowledge, she writes to his uncle for money, despite her husband's already expressed desire that they should not do so, as he is certain that such an appeal will be fruitless. With her selfish obstinacy she makes life even more difficult for her husband when the latter borrows money from Mr. Bulstrode and becomes unjustly involved in a scandal. Instead of trying to help him she urges him to leave Middlemarch to avoid hearing the unpleasant remarks that were being made; especially when Mrs. Sprague suggests that people must "go and live abroad somewhere. That is what is generally done when there is anything disgraceful in a family". Rosamond is, in fact, just as were Hetty Sorrel and Gwendolen Harleth, one of those characters who bring about their own downfall and the unhappiness of others through the selfish gratification of their own impulses. Although to hurt the feelings of others was beyond their intention, yet the chains of circumstance set in motion by their choice of action and intensified by an "unwillingness to meet their difficulty squarely" was such that they "found themselves entangled in a web that led inevitably to their own disaster

and to that of those closely associated with them".¹

However, George Eliot wants to show that if girls are taught how to be devoted wives, practical and considerate, and how to deal with down-to-earth matters, they perform their natural duty successfully. If Rosamond, with all her accomplishments, had been taught in her upbringing the real meaning of wifely devotion, to make sacrifices without regret when necessary, to think more of other people's happiness and misery instead of concentrating on her own pleasures, then Lydgate, with his qualities, could have rendered tremendous service to humanity. In this way Rosamond would have been the indirect source of at least a part of the welfare of the sick people.

George Eliot blames both parents and society for not implanting useful and proper ideas in a girl's mind so that she might be more helpful and more serviceable. The lesson she gives to her contemporaries by presenting this sad picture of egoism and, as Henry James puts it, this "tragedy based on unpaid butchers' bills, and the urgent need

1. Anglia, 1930, Vol. 54, p. 348. "The Purpose in George Eliot's Art".

for small economies",¹ is stronger than any appeal for the liberty and equality of women with men.

In contrast to George Eliot's disapproval of the attitude of Rosamond and her parents, we have the probable opinion of my grandmother. "Poor Rosamond! that the marriage of a girl of such beauty and endowment should come to such an end! Her parents should have been stricter and more careful than to let her marry Lydgate, who had birth but not wealth. They should have chosen her a wealthy man, one who could have given her every comfort, so that in turn she might have become a precious ornament in her husband's life, adorning his home with her beauty, and being a comfort and happiness to him. People blame her for her extravagance and failure to limit her expenditure, but it is the husband, surely, who is at fault! He might easily have chosen another girl to marry him. A girl of Rosamond's beauty was bound to spend more! It is not as if she were spending it on someone else, she is only trying to make herself the more charming and attractive for the pleasure of his eyes."

1. Nineteenth Century Fiction, 1953-4. Vol. 8, p. 167. "George Eliot's Middlemarch", reviewed by Henry James.

"Nor can I blame her for urging him to leave Middlemarch when she hears of the scandal in which he is, justly or unjustly, involved. It is better to die than to lose prestige and be lowered in the eyes of the world. She acted wisely in returning to her family after the scandal in order to show her disapproval of his shameful action. It is a sad sight to see such a flower wither for lack of the necessary care and attention on the part of its gardener!"

Whatever may be our own reaction to these reflections, this high valuation of the material aspect of marriage together with a virtual disregard of the spiritual, was the general and unquestioned attitude in most parts of the Turkey of those days.

CHAPTER V.FELIX HOLT AND ROMOLA.

It is true that George Eliot's later novels, Silas Marner, Felix Holt and Daniel Deronda, like her others, are all permeated with the same recurring themes: a belief in the necessity of a religious faith as a support, accompanied by a high moral tone; the necessity for renunciation; her belief in marriage as the crown of a woman's life, for which at the same time she is fitted by the feminine gift of sympathy for works of noble philanthropy; and her demand that, in order to fulfil these tasks, alike in the family and in society, a woman must first of all be recognized as an individual and given the right of a higher education which will fit her for them. Yet a remarkable change in the presentation and treatment of these female characters is noticeable.

Certain conflicts emphasized in, for example, the characters of Dinah, Maggie and Dorothea have no counterparts in Eppie of Silas Marner, Mrs. Transome and Esther Lyon of Felix Holt, or Mirah

and Gwendolen Harleth of Daniel Deronda. In these novels there is no dramatisation of those problems from which George Eliot had greatly suffered in her personal life and which she so sincerely and successfully reflected through the heroines of her earlier novels. This change in attitude may, as already suggested, be attributed to the change in her personal life. By the time she came to write Silas Marner and her subsequent novels, her fame as a novelist had been firmly established and had reached its height, and her social position as Mrs. Lewes had been recognized by almost everyone. Her life now became more stable, and she had more self-confidence and reassurance as to her personality and position. Therefore no further grounds for personal vindication were left for reflection through novels. For this reason we suggest taking Felix Holt as an example of the later novels, and studying its two main female characters, Mrs. Transome and Esther Lyon, from the point of view of George Eliot's moral teachings.

Through Mrs. Transome one may read several of these teachings, although she is an entirely different woman in her outlook and ambition from those

we have so far dealt with.

She had that high-born imperious air which would have marked her as an object of hatred and reviling by a revolutionary mob. Her person was too typical of social distinctions to be passed by with indifference by any one; it would have fitted an empress in her own right, who had had to rule in spite of faction, to dare the violation of treaties and dread retributive invasions, to grasp after new territories, to be defiant in desperate circumstances, and to feel a woman's hunger of the heart for ever unsatisfied. 1

Her pride is partly due to her natural egoism, presented as ambition, and partly to her consciousness of her social status. She "had not the feminine tendency to seek influence through pathos; she had been used to rule in virtue of acknowledged superiority".² Consciousness of superiority blinds her to the extent that she refuses to see and accept changes which might have developed in her son Harold's attitude towards her, after his fifteen years in Smyrna. She expects a great deal from him.

In this new acquaintance of theirs she cared especially that her son, who had seen a strange world, should feel that he was to come home to a mother who was to be consulted on all things, and who could supply his lack of

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1. George Eliot, Felix Holt, Vol. I, p. 40.
 2. Ibid., p. 22.

the local experience necessary to an English landholder. Her part in life had been that of the clever sinner, and she was equipped with the views, the reasons, and the habits which belonged to that character: life would have little meaning for her if she were to be gently thrust aside as a harmless elderly woman. 1

Her first disappointment occurs when her son declares that he will not be a Tory candidate.

Mrs. Transome felt something like an electric shock.

"What then?" she said, almost sharply.
"You will not call yourself a Whig?"

"God forbid! I'm a Radical." 2

Even her great love for riches is outpaced by her strongly conservative political view. She regards conversion in politics as being worse than religious conversion.

Here was a distinct confirmation of the vague but strong feeling that her son was a stranger to her. Here was a revelation to which it seemed almost as impossible to adjust her hopes and notions of a dignified life as if her son had said that he had been converted to Mahometanism at Smyrna, and had four wives, instead of one son, shortly to arrive under the care of Dominic. For the moment she had a sickening feeling that it was all of no use that the long-delayed good fortune had come at last - all of no use though the unloved Dur-

1. Ibid., pp. 22-23.

2. Ibid., p. 24.

fey was dead and buried, and though Harold had come home with plenty of money. There were rich Radicals, she was aware, as there were rich Jews and Dissenters, but she had never thought of them as county people. 1

Her conservatism affects not only her political view but even the household management. She hardly changes the style of their furniture or adapts their way of life to the contemporary requirements. She reminds her son, "You must remember you have come back to a family who have old-fashioned notions". Mr. Jermy, the lawyer, discloses this conservatism in her to a great extent when he tells Harold about the condition of his estate.

She objects to changes; she will not have a new style of tenant; she likes the old stock of farmers who milk their own cows, and send their younger daughters out to service: all this makes it difficult to do the best with the estate. I am aware things are not as they ought to be, for, in point of fact, an improved agricultural management is a matter in which I take considerable interest, and the farm which I myself hold on the estate you will see, I think, to be in a superior condition. But Mrs. Transome is a woman of strong feeling and I would urge you, my dear sir, to make the changes which you have, but which I had not the right to insist on, as little painful for her as possible. 2

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1. Ibid.
 2. Ibid., p. 59.

For all these strong traits in Mrs. Transome's character, she is a woman haunted by a fear, a fear which is at some times stronger than at others - the consciousness of her past guilt in breaking the marriage rule - for Harold is not, as is publicly believed, the son of Mr. Transome, but of the lawyer, Jermyn.

If we go back to her earlier days before her marriage, we know that

When she was young she had been thought wonderfully clever and accomplished, and had been rather ambitious of intellectual superiority - had secretly picked out for private reading the lighter parts of dangerous French authors - and in company had been able to talk of Mr. Burke's style, or of Chateaubriand's eloquence - had laughed at the Lyrical Ballads and admired Mr. Southey's Thalaba. She always thought that the dangerous French writers were wicked and that her reading of them was a sin; but many sinful things were agreeable to her, and many things which she did not doubt to be good and true were dull and meaningless. 1

Her sin, once committed, is irrevocable and its punishment, as revealed by George Eliot, is most severe. Proud, selfish and with political ambitions, she has concentrated her aims and happiness on her son and on the estates of which he is to

1. Ibid., pp. 40-41.

assume the charge. When her son, eagerly awaited, returns from abroad, her disappointment is bitter. Not only has he undergone a political conversion, but he has no mind to follow family tradition or the course which his mother had mapped out for him.

Her fear prevails throughout her life as she herself tells her maid Denner, "I have been full of fears all my life - always seeing something or other hanging over me that I couldn't bear to happen".¹ When Jermyrn threatens Mrs. Transome that if she and Harold continue to quarrel, he will disclose who Harold's real father is, the author tells us that

It was this that had always frightened Mrs. Transome: there was a possibility of fierce insolence in this man who was to pass with those nearest to her as her indebted servant, but whose brand she secretly bore. She was as powerless with him as she was with her son.

This woman, who loved rule, dared not speak another word of attempted persuasion. They were both silent, taking the nearest way into the sunshine again. There was a half-formed wish in both their minds - even in the mother's - that Harold Transome had never been born. 2

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1. Ibid., p. 39.
 2. Ibid., p. 175.

This wish on her part is another punishment in the shape of guilty conscience.

In Mrs. Transome's sufferings George Eliot teaches us that no one who has sinned can escape his punishment, and living with a companion little better than a beast, the consciousness of one's own guilt is the worst punishment that can be experienced. The final punishment of this unfortunate woman is her shame that her son knows his real father, and her fear of her deprivation of the estates when the real heiress, Esther, appears as the legal heiress to Transome property.

While Mrs. Transome brings us her creator's message and moral teachings, Esther not only faithfully reflects her aspirations and tendencies, but also embodies the author's lesson of renunciation, giving up riches and the fine life of which she has dreamed, when she is forced to choose between secular wealth or an honest, decent life with a poor man that she loves.

Esther shows also how a woman, when acquiring good education and consequently proving to be an influential individual, could render ser-

vices to her family and society by the practice of what she is able to contribute. In her case, she proves her usefulness by undertaking teaching and helping her family instead of being a burden on them. The conflict between her ideas and those of her conventional society is a good demonstration of the triumph of the new ideas attached to women's efficiency over the rigid and unpractical laws of society in its changing conditions.

Esther, a daughter - or rather foster-daughter - of Rufus Lyon, an Independent minister, is a beautiful and fastidious girl. She has been educated abroad in order to become a governess, and she is greatly fond of the refinements of life. She thinks that

A real fine-lady does not wear clothes that flare in people's eyes, or use importunate scents, or make a noise as she moves: she is something refined and graceful and charming, and never obtrusive. 1

Her sense of independence, as a result of the education she has gained in France, is objected to by the society in which she is placed.

She was not much liked by her father's

1. Ibid., p. 105.

church and congregation. The less serious observed that she had too many airs and graces, and held her head much too high; the stricter sort feared greatly that Mr. Lyon had not been sufficiently careful in placing his daughter among God-fearing people, and that, being led astray by the melancholy vanity of giving her exceptional accomplishments, he had sent her to a French school, and allowed her to take situations where she had contracted notions not only above her own rank, but of too worldly a kind to be safe in any rank. 1

This is, in fact, a genuine reaction of this religious circle to a woman's claim for independence. She, herself, is aware of the claims of this world and of the conditions of life which are hers.

Esther's own mind was not free from a sense of irreconcilableness between the objects of her taste and the conditions of her lot. She knew that Dissenters were looked down upon by those whom she regarded as the most refined classes; her favourite companions, both in France and at an English school where she had been a junior teacher, had thought it quite ridiculous to have a father who was a Dissenting preacher; and when an ardently admiring school-fellow induced her parents to take Esther as a governess to the younger children, all her native tendencies towards luxury, fastidiousness, and scorn of mock gentility, were strengthened by witnessing the habits of a well-born and wealthy family. Yet the position of servitude was irksome to her and she was glad at last to live at home with her father; for though, throughout her girlhood, she had wished to avoid this lot, a little experience had

1. Ibid., p. 110.

taught her to prefer its comparative independence. But she was not contented with her life: she seemed to herself to be surrounded with ignoble, uninteresting conditions, from which there was no issue; for even if she had been unamiable enough to give her father pain deliberately, it would have been no satisfaction to her to go to Treby church, and visibly turn her back on Dissent. It was not religious differences, but social differences, that Esther was concerned about, and her ambitious taste would have been no more gratified in the society of the Waces than in that of the Muscats. The Waces spoke imperfect English and played whist; the Muscats spoke the same dialect and took in the "Evangelical Magazine". Esther liked neither of these amusements. She had one of those exceptional organizations which are quick and sensitive without being in the least morbid; she was alive to the finest shades of manner, to the nicest distinctions of tone and accent; she had a little code of her own about scents and colours, textures and behaviour, by which she secretly condemned or sanctioned all things and persons. And she was well satisfied with herself for her fastidious taste, never doubting that hers was the highest standard. She was proud that the best-born and handsomest girls at school had always said that she might be taken for a born lady. Her own pretty instep, clad in a silk stocking, her little heel, just rising from a kid slipper, her irreproachable nails and delicate wrist, were the objects of delighted consciousness to her; and she felt that it was her superiority which made her unable to use without disgust any but the finest cambric handkerchiefs and freshest gloves. Her money all went in the gratification of these nice tastes, and she saved nothing from her earnings. 1

1. Ibid., pp. 112-114.

When by a curious concatenation of accidents it is discovered that Esther's real father was a certain Bycliffe, and that consequently she herself is now the rightful owner of Transome Court, about which there had been much previous litigation, Harold suggests that in order to keep the estate in their hands, he should marry Esther. Knowing Esther's natural longing for luxury and refined society, her acting the fine lady and visiting fine people, one expects that she would be happy for ever with this sudden prosperity to bring her yearnings to reality. But here comes George Eliot's triumph. Esther lives in the Court with Mrs. Transome and her son for a while, and tastes the life of luxury and refinements. But out of real personal experience she prefers her former life with her so-called father, and a faithful, honest and affectionate lover to the luxuries and social life of Transome Court. She would rather marry the poor watchmaker Felix, and help to support her family with her own earnings in the knowledge that her peace of mind will compensate her for the material gain which she forgoes. Marriage to Harold, with his different views and outlook on life, would

have brought only misery.

Her imaginary mansion had not been inhabited just as Transome Court was; her imaginary fortune had not been attended with circumstances which she was unable to sweep away. She herself, in her Utopia, had never been what she was now - a woman whose heart was divided and oppressed. The first spontaneous offering of her woman's devotion, the first great inspiration of her life, was a sort of vanished ecstasy which had left its wounds. It seemed to her a cruel misfortune of her young life that her best feeling, her most precious dependence, had been called forth just where the conditions were hardest, and that all the easy invitations of circumstance were towards something which that previous consecration of her longing had made a moral descent for her. It was characteristic of her that she scarcely at all entertained the alternative of such a compromise as would have given her the larger portion of the fortune to which she had a legal claim, and yet have satisfied her sympathy by leaving the Transomes in possession of their old home. Her domestication with this family had brought them into the foreground of her imagination; the gradual wooing of Harold had acted on her with a constant immediate influence that predominated over all indefinite prospects; and a solitary elevation to wealth, which out of Utopia she had no notion how she should manage, looked as chill and dreary as the offer of dignities in an unknown country. 1

Once again George Eliot shows that the natural vocation for a woman, which gives perfection to her life is home and marriage. She says:

1. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 285-286.

In the dark ages since Adam's marriage, it has been good for some men to be alone, and for some women also. But Esther was not one of these women: she was intensely of the feminine type, verging neither towards the saint nor the angel. She was 'a fair divided excellence, whose fulness of perfection' must be in marriage. And like all youthful creatures, she felt as if the present conditions of choice were final. It belonged to the freshness of her heart that, having had her emotions strongly stirred by real objects, she never speculated on possible relations yet to come. It seemed to her that she stood at the first and last parting of the ways. And, in one sense, she was under no illusion. It is only in that freshness of our lives that the choice is possible which gives unity to life, and makes the memory a temple where all relics and all votive offerings, all worship and all grateful joy, are an unbroken history sanctified by one religion. 1

The effect of this marriage is shown in the reaction it created.

It was a very simple wedding; but no wedding, even the gayest, ever raised so much interest and debate in Treby Magna. Even very great people, like Sir Maximus and his family went to the church to look at the bride, who had renounced wealth, and chosen to be the wife of a man who said he would always be poor.

Some few shook their heads; could not quite believe it; and thought there was 'more behind'. But the majority of honest Trebians were affected somewhat in

1. Ibid., p. 286.

the same way as happy-looking Mr. Wace was, who observed to his wife, as they walked from under the churchyard chestnuts, "It's wonderful how things go through you - you don't know how I feel somehow as if I believed more in everything that's good".

Mrs. Holt, that day, said she felt herself to be receiving 'some reward', implying that justice certainly had much more in reserve. Little Job Tudge had an entirely new suit, of which he fingered every separate brass button in a way that threatened an arithmetical mania; and Mrs. Holt had out her best tea-trays and put down her carpet again, with the satisfaction of thinking that there would no more be boys coming in all weathers with dirty shoes. 1

In Felix Holt one can also perceive some of the prevailing opinions and customs among conventional women and their society. The planned marriage of Harold to Esther in order to keep the estate in the Transome family has already been discussed. Felix Holt himself expresses his view about women when he tells Esther

If a woman really believes herself to be a lower kind of being, she should place herself in subjection: she should be ruled by the thoughts of her father or husband. If not, let her show her power of choosing something better. You must know that your father's principles are greater and worthier than what guides your life. You have no reason but idle fancy and selfish inclination

1. Ibid., Vol.II, pp. 357-358.

for shirking his teaching and giving your soul up to trifles. 1

Esther, despite her sense of comparative independence, thinks that "A woman must choose meaner things, because only meaner things are offered to her".² The author joins with her and says:

After all, she was a woman and could not make her own lot..... Her lot is made for her by the love she accepts. And Esther began to think that her lot was being made for her by the love that was surrounding her with the influence of a garden on a summer morning. 3

On the other hand, Esther in her renunciation reminds us of Eppie in Silas Marner, through the final choice that both consciously make. In Eppie, too, we see the triumph of George Eliot's principles.

Eppie, Silas's foster-daughter, hardly knows of a higher world than the village circle in which she moves. Her affection for the man who brought her up and whom she calls father, is indeed deep and great. This quiet old man with whom she has lived so long and who has represented

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1. Ibid., p. 84.
 2. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 252.
 3. Ibid.

to her all that is simplest, truest and best in life, has a profound influence on Eppie. This influence is nowhere more strongly shown than in the scene where Godfrey Cass and his wife visit Eppie with the intention of taking her from her home. He now wishes to recognize the daughter of the abandoned first wife who had died frozen in the snow. He draws an attractive picture of the grand life in his home, that Eppie may be enticed away from the poverty of her life with Silas. His offer, however, is like a poison both to Eppie and her foster-father, and here comes George Eliot's victory. From the beginning she has prepared us to know what her heroine would choose. Eppie answers:

Thank you, ma'am - thank you, sir.
 But I can't leave my father, nor own anybody
 nearer than him and I don't want to be a lady
 - thank you all the same.

(Here Eppie dropped another curtsey.)

I couldn't give up the father I've
 been used to. 1

But Godfrey, still dissatisfied with the failure of his first attempt, tries a more forceful approach.

1. George Eliot, Silas Marner, p. 253.

But I've a claim on you, Eppie -
 the strongest of all claims. It's my duty,
 Marner, to own Eppie as my child, and pro-
 vide for her. She's my own child: her
 mother was my wife. I've a natural claim
 on her that must stand before every other. 1

It is here that Eppie's supreme sincerity is proved. She refuses to step out of the lowly life to which her so-called father belongs, in order to possess riches and dwell in grand houses. We have no regrets that she does so and this, in itself, proves that the spirit of the book has prepared us sufficiently for the choice, without lingering regrets for the luxuries and bright society she loses thereby. We do not even think that Eppie behaved nobly; she seems only to have acted naturally in refusing riches: hence the triumph of George Eliot's principles.

Eppie's profound and yet natural simplicity saves her from the humility of surrendering to the actual good things of a sphere above her own. She has proved that her moral position is superior to that of greater people. She has no desire even for outward appearance such as theirs. Her dress, her style of living, the chance of having a well furnished home, do not for a moment embarrass her

1. Ibid., p. 254.

clear mind or suggest a shadow of shame. Why should she feel discomposed because she has not that polish of speech which she could only have obtained by neglecting her actual duties? Why should she blush to be without things which it would be wrong for her to get? She is the right woman in the right place and it would have shown folly, not intelligence, to feel remorseful because she would not prove the right person in another place which was not her own.

However, let us leave aside these characters, moulded according to their creator's aim, and turn to their contemporary society in Turkey, to see how women there, again represented by my grandmother, would regard their behaviour.

Seeking my grandmother's opinion of Mrs. Transome, we should find in it an amazing similarity to Harold's own opinion of his mother. Yet when we are reminded of the considerable time he had spent in Turkey, we can well understand the extent to which Turkish views, customs, ways of life, must have influenced him. Particularly his marriage to an Easterner shows his implicit approval of the status of women in that part of the world. And

this is an indirect reflection of the male sense of superiority to which he could not be an exception.

When he returns to England, his mother upbraids him for marrying a foreigner. He answers:

Would you have had me wait for a consumptive lackadaisical Englishwoman, who would have hung all her relations round my neck? I hate English wives; they want to give their opinion about everything. They interfere with a man's life. I shall not marry again. 1

This would exactly conform to my grandmother's views. She would say: "Once a girl marries, she must always remember that she is an alien to her parents. Now she belongs to her husband and his family, and must adapt herself to their way of life, accepting everything with complete obedience and without objection, as she formerly behaved towards her own parents and brothers. She must invite her own relatives only at the suggestion of her husband. If she did otherwise, it might be thought that they were starving or in need, and she would thus put them in a humiliating position. To assure a dignified and respectable position for their daughter in the husband's family, the girl's family must

1. George Eliot, Felix Holt, Vol. I, p. 26.

regularly send presents in the form of the produce of their farms and gardens to the house of their son-in-law. This keeps the son-in-law obliged, and contributes towards a greater consideration and respect for his wife. Moreover, if he should think of marrying again, he will be more careful if he knows that his wife's family could support their daughter if she were to quarrel with him and leave him. Not that any girl of decent family should dream of quarrelling with her husband and leaving his house. She should, on the contrary, tolerate everything, in fact co-operate to maximize her husband's happiness rather than return to her family as a consequence of his second marriage".

My grandmother would certainly approve of Harold's strict attitude towards his mother's management of their estate, riding about it continually, busying herself with accounts and acting as the head-bailiff of the vacant farms. All these, she would suggest, show the foolish and futile attempts of women to play the rôle of a man. She would, however, appreciate his behaviour as a dutiful son inasmuch as he did not say anything to an-

noy her, but "was only determined to let her understand, as quietly as possible, that she had better cease all interference". Moreover, she would sympathise with Harold for his mother's domineering attitude towards him. "Mrs. Transome," she would say, "must remember that Harold is, after all, a man who has travelled a lot. She must leave him to do what he thinks best. She, herself, should accept his opinion on things. Or, if she thinks so highly of herself and her political views, why doesn't she influence her son in the same way as our Kevsem Sultan did with her son Sultan Ibrahim and then with her grandson Sultan Mouhammed?"¹

My grandmother would definitely think that Harold is a dutiful son when he says:

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1. Ahmed Refik, Kadinlar Saltanati (Rule of Women), Vol. 3. After the death of her son, Sultan Murad IV, in the first part of the eleventh century, Kevsem Sultan pushed her next son, Sultan Ibrahim, to the throne. As she was well known for her great wisdom and judgment, the Saray - the Palace - accepted her interference in matters of government. Later, because of Ibrahim's weak character, endless extravagance, tyranny and feeble mind, she, together with the Grand Signior and the rest of the government, sentenced Ibrahim to death and proclaimed the child Mouhammed as a Sultan.

I will gratify any wish you choose to mention. You shall have a new carriage and pair of bays all to yourself; you shall have the house done up in first-rate style, and I am not thinking of marrying. But let us understand that there shall be no further collision between us on subjects on which I must be master of my own actions. 1

Another touch of the influence of his stay in Turkey on Harold might be seen when he suggests to his mother that in order to keep the Transome estate in the family, he should marry the new heiress, Esther. Although marriages of convenience were in vogue even in England at that time, it is quite reasonable to suspect that Harold's mind had come to accept this way of thinking as normal in view of his long stay in Turkey.

Yet, hard as my grandmother's judgment of Mrs. Transome might be, for behaving like a man and taking care of the estate, instead of sitting in her house and receiving ladies of her own rank, and passing her time as such women do, it would be still harder on Esther Lyon, as the latter's story is unfolded. The idea of a girl's attending a French school would be the first shock to my grandmother. She would say, "Isn't it shocking that

1. George Eliot, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 56.

this girl's father insists on making an idiot of himself by exposing his daughter to the dangers of education, and in a foreign country too! A girl all alone going to a place like France! God forbid! The very idea overwhelms me with a sense of shame that sends cold ripples down my spine. This so-called education in a French school succeeded in nothing but stuffing her head with nonsense that rendered her unfit for her feminine rôle in life. Knowledge is bad for a girl. The more she knows before marriage the less she will be able to adapt herself to the new life she enters. If her mind is unformed, she will naturally accept the views and opinions of her husband, as she ought to do."

"Harold Transome is, by all standards, a perfect man. Yet Esther, proving the dangers of book-learning, refuses to marry him, and prefers the penniless Felix, a watchmaker! All these English girls, Dorothea, Dinah, Maggie, Esther, and like her, Eppie, are peculiar creatures, each in her own way. I have indeed heard from my father that English-women behave like men and make their own decisions, but I never dreamed that they would make decisions of such a delicate nature as choosing their hus-

bands! Esther, whose behaviour is rightly censured by society, is the most foolish of all! - perhaps even more than Eppie who behaves in a similar manner by refusing to go to her wealthy father for the sake of some queer idea of attachment to the old, poor man who brought her up. Esther, likewise, gives up what legally belongs to her, the Transome estate, and then takes a situation as a teacher to support her family! Her husband Felix should feel ashamed and degraded at the very idea of her working!"

"Of course she had no mother to teach her anything of virtue and propriety. All she learned was from those dangerous books. No, I'll never in my life approve of a girl's knowing more than the basic minimum which equips her to say her prayers from the Koran."

Before ending the discussion of George Eliot's various female characters in the light of her moral teachings, we should note one in the series, more prominent than the rest, who bears perhaps the finest testimony to renunciation with a view to a nobler purpose in life: Romola.

We can appreciate the importance of Ro-

romola in regard to George Eliot's teachings if we isolate her from externals of time and place in the novel - Florence in the late fifteenth century - and concentrate on the moral conceptions of her creator which she embodies.

Romola, in fact, reminds us of Dorothea, Maggie, and hence of George Eliot in her combination of intellectual power, emancipation, inherent piety and hunger for exaltation. Having been brought up in a learned seclusion from the interests of actual life, Romola knows neither heart-breaking sorrow nor overflowing joy and happiness; she is completely ignorant of everything outside the books of her father, a blind scholar. Her noble, unselfish nature is well illustrated in her conversation with her father. She says,

.....father, it is a great gift of the gods to be born with a hatred and contempt of all injustice and meanness. Yours is a higher lot, never to have lied and truckled, than to have shared honours won by dishonour. There is strength in scorn, as there was in the martial fury by which men became insensible to wounds. 1

Her devotion to her father and her altru-

1. George Eliot, Romola, Vol. I, p. 85.

istic nature are best realized when she says to him,

.....I will study diligently.....I will become as learned as Cassandra Fedele: I will try and be as useful to you as if I had been a boy, and then perhaps some great scholar will want to marry me, and will not mind about a dowry; and he will like to come and live with you, and he will be to you in place of my brotherand you will not be sorry that I was a daughter. 1

Through this unselfishness, together with the sequestered life she has led, she mistakes Tito Melema, a young Greek, for a true scholar and hence, as Dorothea did, she cherishes for him the great love and esteem which results in their marriage. Her immense love for Tito makes Romola, so proud and self-controlled to everyone else, simple and unreserved before him. Her devotion, on the other hand, to her father and his wishes is extreme. Consequently her love arises for anyone who shows respect to any of her father's feelings and wishes. She tells Tito that her godfather Bernardo

.....is prejudiced and narrow, but yet he is very noble. He has often said that it is folly in my father to want to keep his library apart, that it may bear his name; yet he would try to get my father's wish carried out. That seems to me very great and noble - that power of respecting a feeling which

1. Ibid., pp. 81-82.

he does not share or understand. 1

Therefore when Romola sees that

Tito had even been the means of strengthening the hope in Bardo's mind that he might before his death receive the longed-for security concerning his library; that it should not be transferred to a body of monks, and be called by the name of a monastery; but that it should remain for ever the Bardi Library, for the use of Florentines, 2

she tells Bernardo,

Tito has always known that my life is bound up with my father's, and he is better to my father than I am: he delights in making him happy. 3

Moreover, she tells Tito, "You have crowned my poor life." 4 But when Tito says to Romola, "You are always right, except in thinking too well of me," we wish that Romola could immediately see the utmost truth of this. It is not until their marriage, after a short happiness that Romola becomes aware of the baseness in Tito's character. Her faith and confidence in Tito is completely shaken

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1. Ibid., p. 276.
 2. Ibid., p. 291
 3. Ibid., p. 292.
 4. Ibid., p. 305.

when he touches upon the disposal of her father's library. The fulfilment of her father's lifelong ambition for his library, that it should bear his name, was a sacramental obligation for Romola. And now Tito's suggestion that they should leave Florence and deliver the library somewhere where it could be preserved in a better condition comes as a shock to Romola. She answers him,

.....it was a trust. He trusted me, he trusted you, Tito. I did not expect you to feel anything else about it - to feel as I do - But I did expect you to feel that. 1

We can clearly see the effect of Tito's revelation on Romola in the following passage.

Romola was still too thoroughly under the painful pressure of the new revelation Tito was making of himself, for her resistance to find any strong vent. As that fluent talk fell on her ears there was a rising contempt within her, which only made her more conscious of her bruised, despairing love, her love for the Tito she had married and believed in. Her nature, possessed with the energies of strong emotion, recoiled from this hopelessly shallow readiness which professed to appropriate the widest sympathies and had no pulse for the nearest. 2

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1. Ibid., p. 435.
 2. Ibid., p. 436.

It is after this incident that continuous disappointments flow over her. Her individual and separate life dies when her husband reveals his treachery to her and surreptitiously parts her from her dead father's library. But this death is only to herself and to Tito; she rises again for humanity. She says,

You talk of substantial good, Tito! Are faithfulness, and love, and sweet grateful memories, no good? Is it no good that we should keep our silent promises on which others build because they believe in our love and truth? Is it no good that a just life should be justly honoured? Or, is it good that we should harden our hearts against all the wants and hopes of those who have depended on us? What good can belong to men who have such souls? To talk cleverly, perhaps, and find soft couches for themselves, and live and die with their base selves as their best companions. 1

Her joy for which she once was thirsty has died.

She could never join hands with gladness again, but only with those whom it was in the hard nature of gladness to forget. Romola had lost her belief in the happiness she had once thirsted for; it was a hateful, smiling, soft-handed thing with a narrow, selfish heart. 2

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1. Ibid.
 2. Ibid., Vol. II, p.41.

Even her self-controlled spirit leaped up in wild rebellion against her fate. Joy was dead. Why should she stay by its grave; she should go away; she would hide herself; she would not remain to have her old hopes mocked by the constant and degrading presence of Tito. "Her life could not be happy any more, but it must not, could not be ignoble." And she writes to him, "My love for you is dead," and goes out in the grey dawn to face the world alone. But as she rests under the cypress tree outside the walls of Florence, Savonarola comes to her, speaks to her, and looks into her face with that wondrous gaze in which "simple human fellowship expressed itself as a strongly felt bond". She is to go back, he tells her: she is not to fly from her sorrow and her debt; "The debt of a Florentine woman; the debt of a wife....." ¹ Emphasising the bond of marriage, he says to her,

I know enough, my daughter; my mind has been so far illuminated concerning you, that I know enough. You are not happy in your married life; but I am not a confessor, and I seek to know nothing that should be reserved for the seal of confession. I have a divine warrant to stop you, which does not depend on such knowledge. You were warned

1. Ibid., p. 102.

by a message from heaven, delivered in my presence - you were warned before marriage, when you might still have lawfully chosen to be free from the marriage-bond. But you chose the bond; and in wilfully breaking it - I speak to you as a pagan, if the holy mystery of matrimony is not sacred to you - you are breaking a pledge. Of what wrongs will you complain, my daughter, when you yourself are committing one of the greatest wrongs a woman and a citizen can be guilty of - withdrawing in secrecy and disguise from a pledge which you have given in the face of God and your fellow-men? Of what wrongs will you complain, when you yourself are breaking the simplest law that lies at the foundation of the trust which binds man to man - faithfulness to the spoken word?
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Through these words one can easily perceive the importance George Eliot attached to the bond of marriage in its social and religious form, even though love has lost its place as one of the fundamental bases in the marriage bond. Romola, no matter how unhappy she is in her marriage, is to go back to her husband only for the sake of this bond. In fact one wonders how far this emphasising by George Eliot of the bond of marriage was compatible with her own conduct when she disregarded the social law of marriage in her personal life. However, Savonarola's words provide concrete evidence to show how

1. Ibid., p. 103.

very deeply George Eliot thought of marriage. Savonarola, furthermore, pointing to the crucifix which Romola's dead brother had given her, seals his words

There, my daughter, is the image of a Supreme Offering, made by Supreme Love, because the need of man was great..... Conform your life to that image, my daughter, make your sorrow an offering: and when the fire of Divine charity burns within you, and you behold the need of your fellow-men by the light of that flame, you will not call your offering great. 1

Here one can see that every word which Savonarola utters as a Christian, as a Catholic, as a priest, expresses George Eliot's convictions. It was in the strength of those words that Romola laid down herself: she rose up and retraced her steps to her home. "She was going to thread life by a new clue." Both her hands, now emptied alike of joy and sorrow, are ready for lifting the heavy burdens of that vast family of brothers and sisters who could never let her be lonely again. When we find her two years later, at the time of the pestilence, in the streets of Florence, when "there was hardly a turn at which she was not greeted with looks of

1. Ibid., p. 106.

appeal or of friendliness," she had ceased to think of happiness at all; the one end of her life seemed to her "to be the diminishing of sorrow". The grandeur of her noble soul was not comprehended even by Savonarola when she pleaded in vain with him to rescue her godfather Bernardo. Deceived at every turn by Tito, disappointed in Savonarola and left alone by the death of Bernardo, she enters into one of those black spaces, the gloom of which is proportionate to the depth and height of the soul that suffers in them.

Romola felt even the springs of her once active pity drying up, and leaving her to barren egoistic complaining. Had not she had her sorrows too? And few had cared for her, while she had cared for many. She had done enough; she had striven after the impossible, and was weary of this stifling crowded life. 1

She leaves Florence, and eight days afterwards she stands on the shore of the Mediterranean. The temptation to sail away on that blue sea comes over her. She buys the old fisherman's boat, and as night comes on she drifts away into the darkness. The cry of the little suffering child calls her back to life. The people dead, and dying of the

1. Ibid., p. 323.

pestilence, whom she tends and who believe that the Madonna herself has come to their aid, as she moves about with the little brown motherless baby in her arms, are among situations all serving to illustrate her noble nature and huge sympathy for the sorrow-stricken.

At the outset of the novel, one might think that a spirit of renunciation was revealed in Romola's devotion to her blind father and in her deprivation of all the more usual joys of youth. Renunciation, too, would appear to be revealed in obedience to Tito and in her oft-repeated statements that she would give up anything for her husband's sake. Yet, when she is disappointed in his faithlessness to her father's memory, she decides to run away. Although never put into action, this decision reveals a hidden selfishness in seeking her own happiness and leaving the people who need her help. It is only when the years have passed and she has gained experience of the duties required of her for her fellow-men that she renounces all earthly happiness and says,

It was mere baseness in me to desire

death. If everything else is doubtful, this suffering that I can help is certain; if the glory of the Cross is an illusion, the sorrow is only the truer. While the strength is in my arm I will stretch it out to the fainting; while the light visits my eyes they shall seek the forsaken. 1

It is not necessary now that any priest should urge her to go back to her home. She had shaken herself free from all earthly support. She no longer needs a human hand to lift her up or to point to the highest. The eternal voice had spoken to her own heart, she is face to face with the Infinite. She has come "out of darkness into light, through the shadows". Again she goes back to Florence, but already "she has lost her crown" by her escape from Florence and her husband, although their marriage in their final days together bore nothing more than the formal bond, as Tito himself was a faithless husband. She goes back to Florence but her husband is dead and Savonarola is confessing under torture. Her elevated soul bids her stay by him in the hour of his death.

The climax of her renunciation is best perceived when she draws Tito's children into her

1. Ibid., p. 413.

arms.

She never for a moment told herself that it was heroism or exalted charity in her to seek these beings; she needed something that she was bound specially to care for; she yearned to clasp the children and to make them love her. This at least would be some sweet result, for others as well as herself, from all her past sorrow. 1

Thus we see that the doctrine of renunciation, which has been presented again and again in George Eliot's other novels, forms the central theme in Romola. Romola renounces selfishness for the sake of humanity. This life of devotion to humanity is, to George Eliot, the true interpretation of the Christian doctrine of self-sacrifice. In fact, George Eliot's identification of the altruistic impulse to live for others with the Christian doctrine of the Cross is nowhere as obvious as in Romola. Moreover there are several examples supporting her great belief in the importance and irrevocability of actions, and her emphasis on the degeneration that follows from acts committed with selfish motives. Romola painstakingly warns Lillo, the child of Tessa and Tito, in the epilogue to

1. Ibid., p. 420.

Romola, not to follow the footsteps of his father when he grows up because his father took the easiest path which led to destruction. She says:

There was a man to whom I was very near, so that I could see a great deal of his life, who made almost every one very fond of him, for he was young and clever and beautiful, and his manners to all were gentle and kind. I believe when I first knew him he never thought of anything cruel or base. But because he tried to slip away from everything that was unpleasant, and cared for nothing else so much as his own safety, he came at last to commit some of the basest deeds - such as make men infamous. He denied his father and left him to misery; he betrayed every trust that was reposed in him, that he might keep himself safe and get rich and prosperous. Yet calamity overtook him. 1

Perhaps George Eliot's emphasis on the consequent disasters of acts committed with selfish motives

.....accounts for the weighty sense of gloom and depression that marks the greater part of her work, a depression arising from a portrayal of the disastrous effects that overtake a wrongdoing which frequently has its inception in some seemingly harmless although selfish trait. 2

However, once more we are witness of George Eliot's elevated moral teachings carried out through her

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1. Ibid., p. 446.
 2. Anglia, Vol. 54, 1930. "The Purpose in George Eliot's Art."

mouthpieces.

We have studied George Eliot's gallery of various female characters, and heard my grandmother's verdict on them. As we have seen above, her attitude, that of an elderly woman whose life had been contentedly spent largely within the confines of the home, and whose range of knowledge and education were limited to what she had inherited from a centuries-old Turkish culture, was revealed in characteristic outbursts of indignation at the behaviour of some of the feminine characters and in a frank and wholehearted acceptance of her own position in Turkish society. It may now be wondered whether the views my grandmother expresses are genuinely representative of the views of Turkish women of her time. To this end an appraisal of the progressive and unconventional contemporary Turkish woman's views as represented in the novels of Hüseyin Rahmi would greatly help to complete the picture which has thus far been painted with orthodox colours and traditional brushes.

CHAPTER VI.

HÜSEYİN RAHMI IN HIS PERIOD.

However interesting we may find the age in which George Eliot wrote, we cannot but find yet further interest in the age of Hüseyin Rahmi; for, while both writers throw light on the process of the emancipation of women in their respective countries, in Turkey, through Byzantine influence, women were traditionally considered to be inferior to men.

The various history and travel books of the nineteenth century¹ reveal a very full picture of their conditions of life at that time. But as their position, prior to their emancipation when the Republic was declared in 1923, will be considered from various standpoints in the following chapters, we may leave this matter on one side for the present. Yet we must not disregard the fact

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1. For example, Enver Ziya Karal, Osmanlı Tarihi: History of the Ottomans, Vol. VI: Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, Türk İnkılâp Tarihi: History of the Turkish Revolution, Vol. II, part IV, pp. 441-2, 448-452: C. White, Three Years in Constantinople.

that towards the end of the nineteenth century, owing to the penetration of Western ideas into Ottoman society the status of women began in some measure to improve.¹ It became fashionable to allow them a certain amount of education, and a number of cultured women of letters appeared. In 1908 with the Second Constitution - İkinci Meşrutiyet - their education was considered "necessary", and a group of women tried to enter the Parliament building as observers.² The reaction to this venture was reported in the foreign press.³ Although the initial step towards recognition of their status was in 1916, when their position with regard to marriage, polygamy and divorce was seriously discussed in the Parliament,⁴ no vital remedy was produced to save them from their inferior status. Their problem, however, was discussed, among other

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1. See Ziyaeddin Fahri Fındıkoğlu, Tanzimatta Aile ve Kadın Telakkisinde Tebeddul: The Change in the Concept of Women and Family in the Reformation, p. 648.
 2. See La Turquie, January 1908 edition.
 3. See Ahmed İhsan, Matbuat Hatirasi: Memories of the Press, p. 27.
 4. H. Ziya Ülgen, Ziya Gökalp ve Yazilari; Ziya Gökalp and his Writings, p. 129.

social problems, in some periodicals of the time ¹ and their position was compared disadvantageously with that of women in European society.

However, in the first World War, disregarding every artificial social law set around them from the ancient past, Turkish women played their part, and in Turkey's War of Independence (1919-23) they founded their own units and even took part in the fighting.

From the earliest days of the Republic the rights of women were established as part of the social revolution. But the change could not, of course, be immediate and the constitution which was adopted in 1924 did not give women the right to vote. In 1926, however, the Holy Law was replaced by the Civil Code which prohibited polygamy, made divorce a matter for the law courts, and gave women the right to demand divorce equally with men. Marriage became a civil ceremony, women were allowed to become legal guardians and were given equal

1. For example, Terraki Mecmuası, 1869, Nos. 5, 13; Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete, "Kadin Terbiyesi" "Education of Women", 1899; Namik Kemal, "Aile Makalesi", "An Article on Family", İbret Gazetesi, 1877, No. 56.

rights of property tenure and independence of inheritance, as well as equal pay for equal work. Their political rights came before long in a programme of reform which allowed women themselves and public opinion in general to become adjusted to the immense changes it involved. In 1930 women secured the right to vote and to be candidates in municipal elections. In 1935 they secured full political rights in national elections.

In view of the apparent suddenness with which they ultimately received full emancipation and recognition of their status, it must be noted that the seeds of this tremendous change had been sown almost a century earlier with the "Tanzimat" - Reformation - of 1839, of which the aim was to make vital and essential reforms in the whole country, taking the West as a model.

The "Reformation", or Westernization movement in Turkey, was in fact initiated by Selim III (1789-1808) and fostered by Mahmud II (1808-1839) and his son, Abdülmecit (1839-1861). In the beginning the movement affected external matters only, modifying the machinery of the administration and revolutionizing titles and costumes, as a result of

political and commercial relations and greater facilities of communication with Western states.¹ Gradually its influence penetrated the thick walls of the Sultans' palaces, the konaks and yalis of all classes. The change in household objects and furniture in accordance with European styles was perceived and recorded by C.White.

In proportion as intercourse with Europeans extends, fashions and customs vary, so that an important change is rapidly taking place in the furniture of houses. Thus, in those of wealthy persons, chairs, sofas, tables, consoles, mirrors, wardrobes, chandeliers and a variety of western essentials may be seen. Indeed, the Sultan's private day-apartments, at Tcherghan and Beshiktash, are furnished more in the European than Oriental style. Fireplaces or stoves alone are wanting to give them the appearance of the most commodious French or German saloons. The middling classes are also making some progress..... 2

European fashions of dressing, manners and customs, received warm welcome, from Turkish women especially, who for centuries had lived modestly between the four walls of their houses.³ They

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1. Enver Ziya Karal, op. cit., Vol. VI, pp. 214, 279.
 2. C. White, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 174-5.
 3. Enver Ziya Karal, op. cit., Vol. VI, p. 279.

began to imitate the European women in their outlook and ways. This imitation had first started among men and only later affected the world of women in harems.

However, the Tanzimat leaders, Ziya Gökalp says,

.....recognized that to save the Empire from its external foes, reforms had to be introduced in the military organization, judicial system, economic structure and methods of education. But they never tried to make clear to themselves what should be taken from the national tradition. One of the most serious deficiencies was that they did not fully understand Western civilization. Most of them derived their knowledge of it from their intercourse with the Levantine population of the Beyoğlu (Pera) quarter of Constantinople. They therefore imitated mainly the external, and often inferior aspects of European civilization, without penetrating to its philosophical and scientific foundations. In the economic field they introduced a number of new fashions in dress, food, building, furnishings and other articles of consumption, but did not adopt Western methods of production. The result was that the traditional crafts decayed without even the nucleus of a modern industry being formed. 1

Such an intercourse, too, naturally gave rise amongst intelligent Turks to a desire to form

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1. U. Heyd, The Foundations of Turkish Nationalism, p. 75.

some acquaintance with a civilization which enabled its possessors to achieve such brilliant success in so many different directions. This desire in its turn led the Turkish educated class to undertake the study of the French language as the key to the new treasure house of knowledge.¹ In the same way as the writers of their periods in Europe, they made use of the newly acquired freedom of thought and expression in order to try out the rational approach to every subject. Being teachers of the masses, this modern intelligentsia undertook to deal with a great number of different subjects, translating and popularizing the ideas of the West.² At the same time, they took care to expose the ridiculous contemporary aping of the West, which showed itself mainly in the social field.

To this class belongs Hüseyin Rahmi, fighting with his pen for the fundamental social reform which his ever observant eyes saw to be the necessary cure for the disease destroying the life of the

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1. E. J. W. Gibb, A History of Ottoman Poetry, Vol. V, pp. 4-5.
 2. U. Heyd, op. cit., p. 75.

nation.¹ He saw that the ultimate roots of this disease lay in the position of women, with all the personal limitations and restrictions with which they were hedged about, and which deprived them of the fundamental spiritual freedom already enjoyed by Western women.

One perceives that, at the time when Hüseyin Rahmi wrote his first novel in 1886, the emancipation of women was something thought of only by a few intellectuals such as Namik Kemal, Ahmed Mithat and their kind. The special characteristic of his novels is, therefore, his consideration and advocacy of the social, economic, and educational emancipation of women, long before this was achieved.

Perhaps what Theodor Menzel wrote about him in 1927 will bring a fuller picture of the position he holds in Turkish literature. Theodor Menzel says that Hüseyin Rahmi is

.....a notable representative of the modern school of Turkish Literature, one of the most widely read if not the most popular

1. N. Berkes, "Hüseyin Rahminin Sosyal Görüşleri", "The Social Views of Hüseyin Rahmi". Journal of Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi, (1945), Vol. III, p. 1.

Turkish writer of the present day. He owes his eminence to his remarkable sketches of the life of the populace which he reproduces in masterly fashion, in vivid colours, in lifelike snapshots which reflect the whole freshness and artlessness of the surroundings. In his work there is a certain connection with the popular art of the storytellers (meddah), and their masterly skill in imitating the real, rough everyday life of the people, which Rahmi was the first to introduce into Turkish literature. His scenes from everyday life reproduce the vernacular and form a regular mine for linguistic and ethnographic research with their idioms, the exact wording and meaning of which seems sometimes even to escape the author himself and which will be sought in vain anywhere else. In striking contrast with this natural, realistic style, which assures Rahmi an abiding importance, is his other style, supposed to be distinguished and professing to be cultured, which is a hybrid of the language of journalism and the intolerably involved Turkish official language, the notorious bab-i-ali üslubu, and lowers him to the most ordinary mediocrity. In his novels one cannot help receiving the impression of seeing before one's eyes a collection of splendid pictures with a very poor explanatory text.

In spite of his polemical theorizing of recent years, Rahmi does not take his work as an author very seriously. His easily won reputation prevented a strenuous, profitable development of his talent and a thorough and artistic working up of his usually licentious themes. The construction of the plot almost always leaves everything to be desired. The plots are too obvious and awkwardly developed. The endeavour to be didactic in the secondary episodes not infrequently destroys the artistic effect of the scenes borrowed from the life of the people.

Rahmi, who had studied French models, professes to be a realist, although he condemns Zola as too extreme. His humour, his choice of subject and his method have earned him the not inappropriate name of "the Turkish Paul de Kock". 1

If we consider the introduction to his work Son Arzu - The Final Wish - in the light of these remarks, a clearer perception of his concept of the word "art" begins to emerge. Like George Eliot, he believes that art should strive as nearly as possible to represent the truth. Yet while he tries to draw examples from life which are in perfect accord and "true to Nature", he departs from his conception of "art" whenever the desire arises to be didactic through the actions, feelings or spiritual struggles of his characters. This goes some way towards explaining the exaggeration of many of the characters in his novels, and the tendency to conceal their defects.²

Having recognized this, we are now in a position to examine these characters. The immense bulk of his work, consisting of over seventy novels,

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1. Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol. II, E-K, p. 376.
 2. See The Journal of Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi, 1945, Vol. III, Huseyin Rahminin Romancılığı, "Huseyin Rahmi as a Novelist", Pertev N. Bortav.

precludes our studying each novel separately as we did in the case of George Eliot. We shall, therefore, confine ourselves to a study of those female characters, together with a few men, who are most suitable for our purpose, and most in accord with the recurrent themes of all his work; the educational, economic and social emancipation of women. What we must emphasize is that, although the problems which he treated were similar to those dealt with by George Eliot, they differed greatly in detail from those expressed in her novels. This difference naturally stems from the contrasting traditions, customs, social concepts, and above all, religions of the two countries. For the same reason, in addition to the topics common to both writers, Hüseyin Rahmi deals with two other fundamental problems which have no parallels in the society of which George Eliot wrote. They are those of Büyü¹ and Blind Westernization.

We shall in this way become acquainted with his masterly sketches of various types of characters who yet stand out as individuals, and with

1. This word has no equivalent in English. It includes the practice of sorcery, black magic and faith healing, and the use of charms.

his views on the contemporary status of women. One must not be surprised to find in his novels some educated, unconventional and progressively-minded women, used as foils to the more conservative, of whom my grandmother may be considered a fairly typical example. Through such contrast he could emphasize his point and reveal more clearly the advantageous and disadvantageous qualities of the two types. It must, further, be borne in mind that such progressive women formed only a small fraction of the contemporary female population. When they appear, therefore, they do so for a purpose of their author's, and should not be considered as representative of Turkish womanhood of that time. Another point to be remembered is that while Hüseyin Rahmi successfully diagnoses the causes of the inferior position of women, the remedy he suggests is not so clear-cut and specific. This is particularly noticeable when he deals with the subject of 'blind Westernization'.

CHAPTER VII.INFERIOR POSITION OF WOMEN.

With his keen eyes, Hüseyin Rahmi distinguished the fundamental causes of the inferior position of women out of his own experience, by visiting all kinds of Turkish families in different quarters and places.¹ The evil consequences of their restricted lives were not, however, limited to women but touched the whole life of the nation, since women as the mothers of families held responsibilities in the education of citizens. He therefore attacked this important subject in no uncertain way by an outright appraisal of the multifarious ways in which women were maltreated. Perhaps it will not be out of place if a few representative extracts from Rahmi's novels are quoted here for clarity of exposition and better perception of the general status of women. We may then examine separately the themes already mentioned, by means of which he portrayed and analysed the implications of the prevalent practices, and through which his

1. Refik Ahmed Sevengil, Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar.

teachings emerge.

Hüseyin Rahmi creates educated and enlightened female characters, aware of their inferior position to men, and of their inequality. The educated girl, Feriha, complaining in her letter to Irfan Bey of the status of women, says:

.....In our country whenever a woman tries to be liberal in her behaviour, all eyes turn to her censoriously and suspiciously..... This is because women are considered to be created merely to please men! 1

Then, later, she says:

.....Our customs deprive us of many things, but Nature does not. It bestows on us active minds, nerves and muscles . . . these we must use. 2

One can find an open, clear cry for equality between men and women and a recognition of women's individuality in The Pursuit of Desire. Seza, again an educated woman, fully aware of the disadvantageous and unfavourable position of women, says to her husband concerning the accusation of disloyalty which he makes against her best friend, Ayn-i-Nur:

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1. Hüseyin Rahmi, Kuyruklu Yıldız Altında Bir İzdivac: Marriage under the Meteor, p. 176.
 2. Ibid., p. 179.

In our country men have a great many privileges as far as this (matter of marriage) is concerned. First, a man is allowed to marry as many women as he likes. Secondly, whenever he is tired of his wife he pays her dowry and divorces her by saying, 'Let your will be in your hand'..... If he finds any drawbacks in divorcing her, he leaves her bound to him and, himself, marries several others. Fourthly, he gets as many odalisques, mistresses and so on.....under various names as his wealth allows him..... Sixthly, there is no limit to the privileges men have over women. If it is the woman who forms an illegal relationship of the heart, then see the catastrophe! What a disaster! If this unlucky woman can not keep her crime as a secret, she has no longer anywhere to turn in this life..... She must die..... She must be killed..... This black stain must be covered with sand..... Do you understand now, Sir? 1

Then she says:

The conditions are changing every daythe contemporary free thoughts, the outcome of civilization, are growing and increasing in strength and penetrating into the old rotten minds and turning them upside down just like strong storms affecting old towns This cause of equality and independence will take even more terrific shape among our small daughters when they grow up 2

Later, Seza asks her husband,

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1. Hüseyin Rahmi, *Sevda Peşinde: The Pursuit of Desire*, p. 39.
 2. Ibid., pp. 39-40.

If a man commits the same crime as a woman, what will his punishment be? Nothing..... Because a man can stop all gossip by marrying whomsoever he loves as his second or third wife.....

whereas

.....women in such cases must die..... Even the laws permit husbands to kill their wives if they are found in illegal relationship with men..... 1

Inequality in the exercise of this right is also admitted by a man like Sermet Bey. He says:

Despite my extreme love for my wife, I have deceived her several times since our marriage. Perhaps she herself has guessed several of these disloyalties..... But I am fully convinced that she has never thought of such a wild and crazy action of revenge as to kill me. I was sure, but then I had to encourage myself and remember that after all she is a woman and I am a man. For such a common crime she can never kill me, but I should have to kill her. Our forebears have made such a law..... To act against it is lowness, crime. 2

We hear him saying, ".....in regard to cases of crime between husband and wife, the husband's honour requires the death of the wife, her lover and then the husband himself." 3

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1. Ibid., p. 41.
 2. Ibid., p. 85.
 3. Ibid., p. 87.

This statement reminds one of Lady Mary Montagu's letter, written about a century before Hüseyin Rahmi started to write, in which she mentions the same solution to a wife's disloyalty.¹ Sermet Bey, arguing with his wife Seza about the great shame and dishonour that women bring on their husbands by being disloyal to them and deceiving them in such a mean way as did Ayn-i-Nur, says, ".....whereas men would never go so far in similar situations". To this Seza answers:

Yes, it is true. Because women and men do not hold the same social rights. If any such disloyalty is brought against a man, no action need be taken against him. But, is it the same with women? If anything like this is heard about a woman, the world turns upside down..... 2

Nebahat, in When Women are as Men, states another argument for equality with men. In outlook, an educated, modern woman, she believes that when women begin to earn their living they can contribute to the family budget. Thus men will no longer have grounds for their superiority, their dominance in

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1. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Letters and Works. Her letter to the Countess of Bristol. Vol. II, p. 48.
 2. Hüseyin Rahmi, op. cit., p. 174.

exercising complete control of the family finance. Therefore there must be full equality.¹

Hüseyin Rahmi, through his mouthpiece in The Pained Smile, describes the great struggle for the emancipation of women in the Western world, and shows the complete contrast in the attitude of Turkish women.² Thus he stimulates these women to awaken and claim their rights as individuals. Now and then he puts forward a few statements and questions to show the drawbacks in the attitudes adopted by certain people on the important question of the liberation of women. Kenan Bey, theoretically a champion of women and their cause, is an idealistic young man who wants to see men and women working hand in hand and co-operating for the welfare of the country. But when the time comes to materialize his ideal, his actions directly contradict his imaginations.³ Here Hüseyin Rahmi stops and reflects:

How could the Turks progress if everyone was like Kenan, who sees progress and ad-

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1. Hüseyin Rahmi, Kadin Erkeklesince: When Women are as Men, pp. 73-74.
 2. Ibid., Tebessum-i-Elem: The Pained Smile, p. 220.
 3. Ibid., p. 230.

vancement in theory only, without any serious attempt or great exertion to put those theories into practice? His entire concentration is on his own pleasure and interest. 1

Then we hear a complaint about the prevailing inequality in Turkish society. Faika says, "In this country men are forgiven for their rakishness but women never are; and moreover, their infidelity and extravagance are regarded as a black stain which can only be cleaned by divorce." 2
Then Vaslat talks of the unlimited privileges that men enjoy in Turkey but which women never do.

In this country, a man can marry as many as he likes besides his first wife. He may have odalisques and mistresses..... There is no limit to this. No one interferes in his pleasure. Why then should your wife, Ragiba Hanım, be annoyed if you do what is commonly done by your countrymen - what has been accepted by the wives of all these men? 3

In The Final Wish, Hüseyin Rahmi sets forth these questions.

It is all very well that women must behave themselves: but why mustn't men do the same? Are the disasters, which face human beings because of the dishonesty of

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1. Ibid., p. 232.
 2. Ibid., p. 302.
 3. Ibid., p. 311.

men, less important than those caused by women? If a man does not obey a certain rule, by what authority does he ask a woman to obey that rule?

Will there ever be happiness in a marriage not based on equality? 1

An interesting conversation in The Witch, between Naşit Efendi and his wife Şükriye Hanım, throws a clearer light on this "inequality" of the two sexes, besides showing the extent to which men indulged themselves, in their superiority over women.

- Naşit Bey: Firstly you are a woman and I am a man..... Secondly, you are a wife and I am a husband.
- Şükriye Hanım: Yes. Thirdly?
- Naşit Bey: I am the ruler and you are the ruled.
- Şükriye Hanım: How funny!
- Naşit Bey: Don't fret. This is what our law says.
- Şükriye Hanım: Doesn't the present law give anything to women?
- Naşit Bey: Yes; only a few superficial things, if I may say so. But the foundation of a family is in the hands of men.
- Şükriye Hanım: Can I not get rid of you, if I want that?

1. Ibid., Son Arzu: The Final Wish, p. 77.

- Naşit Bey: Yes, but if I leave you, you will be under your father's jurisdiction. If you have no father, then you are subject to your brother. Or, you will even be subject to your son, whom you yourself have brought up.
- Şükriye Hanım: But I hear that we have many religious rights!
- Naşit Bey: Let people say so..... Listen, let me name one of the rights that men enjoy above those of your sex, and then compare the rest.
- Şükriye Hanım: Well, what is it?
- Naşit Bey: After you had married me, could you marry another man at the same time? As for me - yes, I am allowed to marry as many as I want.
- Şükriye Hanım: All right, all right, I am convinced that we are subject to men....1

The assumption that men are at perfect liberty to marry as often as they wish was derived, mistakenly, from a statement in the Koran that a man may marry up to four women on condition that he treats them justly and equally.² Many men ignored these significant words "justly and equally" as it

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1. Ibid., Cadi: The Witch, pp. 181-2.
 2. The Koran, chapter of "The Women". "If ye fear that ye may not act with equity in regard to the orphans, marry such of the women as seem good to you, double or treble or fourfold - but if ye fear that ye may not be fair, then one (only)...." The Qur'an, Vol. I, p. 69, tr. Richard Bell.

suited their purposes.

Society forgives a man who has an equal share or responsibility in a crime committed by a woman. Lamia is strictly punished by her society, which considers her an outcast and refuses to accept her because of her relationship with Behcet Bey, who is forgiven on the ground that he is a man! ¹ Even her parents reject her firmly.

An interesting conversation regarding drinks and the privilege men hold over women in their use, is presented in How my Mother-in-Law Went Mad.

- I drink, but my mother with her old age must not drink.
- Funny..... If drinking is bad, why should there be this distinction according to whether it is men who drink or women? After all, this distinction makes it neither better nor worse.
- Yes, yes; but we must remember that if women are seen drinking, the shame and the sacrilege are increased.
- Nonsense. Although you are younger than I am, your mind has the old, rotten conceptions! Up to now, we have been used to consider women as inferior creatures to ourselves, and to

1. Hüseyin Rahmi, Tutusmuş Gönüller: The Burning Hearts, pp. 270, 470.

assume that whatever was forbidden for them was allowed to us by God's decree. But never now..... 1

All these extracts indicate the unfavourable and rigid conditions which broadened the gulf between men and women, putting women in such an inferior position, and these came into existence only after the capture of Constantinople, through the adoption of the Byzantine customs.² Hüseyin Rahmi, by reflecting them through true and sincere pictures to his contemporary society, strongly opposed them in order to secure for women a position suitable to their nature and duty, and to restore them the freedom and emancipation they had enjoyed centuries before.³

Accordingly we intend to study this "Inequality" in the various aspects which Hüseyin Rahmi examined and exposed, and a few of the aspects of "blind Westernization" which affected the world of women. The latter, however, together

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1. Ibid., Kaynanam Nasıl Kudurdu? How my Mother-in-Law Went Mad, p. 50.
 2. Ercument Ekrem, Memories of Yesterday, "The Baths of Women" (Kadınlar Hamamı).
 3. Ziya Gökalp, Türkcülüğün Esasları: The Foundations of Turkism, p. 155.

with the problem of Büyü will be treated in appendices as they have no counterparts in the society of George Eliot's time.

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CHAPTER VIII.EDUCATION AND ILLITERACY.

Hüseyin Rahmi, like the social reformers, considered that at the foundation of progress in the nation's life, as the corner stone of the building, women needed their share in education that they might render good and useful service to their country, a service which could be obtained only when women understood their own potentialities and their duty towards society and their country, and, not least, to their families.

The first school for girls was opened in 1858 in Istanbul and was called "Kız Rüstiyesi" - "Girls' School". The aim of this new venture was published in the contemporary government papers as follows:

Women should be educated in the same way as men with a view to enabling them to help and comfort their husbands on whose shoulders rests the responsibility of earning the family's living. Moreover, education will greatly help women towards a better understanding of religious and secular considerations, and encourage them to obey their husbands, to refrain from going against their wishes and, above all, will protect

their honour. 1

As it is apparent from this official statement, which regards the aim of women's education solely as a further contribution to male welfare, the scope of female education was extremely narrow. It was commonly and by custom considered improper and 'infra dig.' for well-bred girls to attend these schools. Therefore the number of their pupils was very small indeed.² The moneyed classes, to endow their daughters with a little reading and writing for religious purposes, and to facilitate their marriages to equally wealthy men, provided private tutors for these purposes. The overwhelming majority of women were illiterate.

Hüseyin Rahmi had thoroughly studied their situation and knew the contribution which educated women might make towards the solution of the many social problems which characterized the nation's life. In his works, he contrasts two points of view - that of the young generation of women, curious and eager for learning, and that of the old,

1. Enver Ziya Karal, History of the Ottomans, Vol. VI, p. 172.

2. Ibid.

with its traditionalist beliefs, strongly disapproving, and prepared to stand out against all change. He presents the case for both sides, and states the probable results if the views of either side were carried to their logical conclusions, giving his vote for such education for women as will save them from the unfortunate, sometimes sad and unhappy, situations into which they and their families might fall.

The mother-in-law in The Divorced assumes that education turns women into unbearable creatures as well as into "infectious worms", so ultimately and inevitably she brings about misunderstandings and causes troubles.¹ She shouts at her daughter-in-law scornfully on seeing her reading.

What! At it again? Are you reading a book? Before doing this, you should see the deplorable mess your room is in! No one would believe that that room belongs to a woman! They would take it for a reading-room! One finds all the books and papers which are published in Istanbul here! In our golden times young women used to have their looms; nowadays they have their library, ink and pen! We used to weave clothes,

1. Hüseyin Rahmi, Mutallaka: The Divorced, pp. 12-13.

you read novels! Only the other day you were arguing with your husband about the spelling of a certain word. He insisted that it was wrong. In the end you had a bet of a gift of two liras' worth. Then you looked in a book, I don't remember what it is called, perhaps a dictionary or I don't know what. You were the winner. It was just then that I got frightened of your mischief. If you were so clever, why did you ever get married? You should have taken a job. (1) Ah! Now I know why my friends and acquaintances warned me not to choose an educated woman to marry my son. They were right to tell me that such girls will have the upper hand of all of us! All they foretold has proved true, word for word . . . 2

Listening to this attack on women who are fond of reading, one cannot but recall Mr. Tulliver's attitude towards the desire for learning of women in general and Maggie in particular.³ In solving these tense troubles between Akile and Mâil, Hüseyin Rahmi shows how useful it is at least to be able to do a little reading and writing. Akile, through her letters, could clearly and effectively convey her thoughts, express her feelings about the whole cause of misunderstanding between herself and the mother-in-law, and so ask for reconciliation

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1. For women to take work was regarded as an insult to the older generation.
 2. Hüseyin Rahmi, The Divorced, pp. 12-13.
 3. George Eliot, The Mill on the Floss, Vol. I, p. 20.

with her husband after suggesting a successful way of bringing her mother-in-law round.¹ If Akile had been unable to write or read, she might have persuaded her husband to be reconciled with her, but she definitely could not have expressed herself in such an excellently influential way! Her reasons and judgments are all those of a very well-grounded young woman. Here, Hüseyin Rahmi also proves that women are not the "mentally deficient" creatures they were commonly thought to be.² This family might have been ruined if Akile had not lit upon the solution of finding a husband for her mother-in-law, so that she, herself, returning to her own husband and child could lead a happy and contented life.

In Iffet, Hüseyin Rahmi touches on one of the vital problems of his time: the problem of an educated young woman in an environment which has no value of any kind for women as individuals or for their education. This problem bears a resemblance to that of Maggie Tulliver. Iffet, an ex-

1. Hüseyin Rahmi, op. cit., p. 44.

2. Necmettin Sadik, Hayat: Life, Vol. 1, No. 10, p. 184.

tremely beautiful young woman of twenty, has been left to take care of her sick mother and young brother of eleven, after the death of their father and the burning of their house.¹ The good education she has received in a French school makes this intelligent,² curious-minded girl susceptible to every item of knowledge. This true, scientific attitude towards knowledge helps her in understanding her mother's illness and so in co-operating with the physician to support and cure her spiritually as well as physically.³ Her knowledge of French, Arabic, Persian, geography and mathematics⁴ renders her perfectly fitted to teach these to her younger brother.⁵ Her analytic and scientific mind⁶ encourages her to write a more suitable book for the purpose of teaching him.⁷ All these accomplishments are good insofar as they enable Iffet to be useful, to share her wide knowledge and to bring peace and consolation to her unfortunate mother, pacifying her understandingly and gently.

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1. Hüseyin Rahmi, Iffet (i.e. purity), p. 25.
 2. Ibid., p. 50.
 3. Ibid., p. 49.
 4. Ibid., p. 48.
 5. Ibid., pp. 86-87.
 6. Ibid., p. 170.
 7. Ibid., p. 87.

On the other hand, Hüseyin Rahmi contemplates the use of such an education in an environment which has no appreciation or value for such girls. This education, instead of being a source of welfare and a means of earning a living, as it was, for example, with Esther Lyon in Felix Holt, turns back on Iffet when she finds herself among tough, harsh and prosaic realities that bind women hand and foot with their rigid, inelastic social codes and values. Iffet cannot find work while such laws are hung round the necks of women! She, as a young girl, rightly thought, "I wonder whom my father thought of marrying me to, when he was so particular about my education?"¹ Perhaps she might better have thought, "I wonder if my father knew of all the disadvantages such meticulous care might bring me, through our unfavourable and rigid social values for women? . . ."

Hüseyin Rahmi himself says:

The parents are responsible for the disasters that befall their children! Because they are unable to choose for their children a suitable education which will

1. Ibid., p. 176.

be useful in the kind of life they will
lead . . . 1

This clearly illustrates Hüseyin Rahmi's belief that education was not merely a matter of reading and writing, language and science. A child's education could only be decided on in relation to the probable nature of the life awaiting her, and her own capabilities and endowments. Otherwise, the results would be as tragic as in the case of İffet, who found her exceptional education, owing to the existing circumstances, useless to her.

When reading Şöhret's story in Coincidence, one is reminded of Hetty Sorrel in Adam Bede. A rich, aristocratic man, with the false hope of marrying Şöhret, seduces her, then leaves her alone with her guilt, which could never be forgiven by a society so extremely conservative, especially in matters regarding the purity, chastity and innocence of a girl. Not sufficiently well educated to become a governess or to take any other work on the same level which society would approve, she had no alternative but the usual fate of fallen women.²

1. Ibid., p. 176.

2. Ibid., Tesadüf: Coincidence, p. 125.

If she had had any education, Hüseyin Rahmi presumes, Şöhret might have been a useful member of society instead of ruining happily married families, and creating constant conflicts and misunderstandings between husbands and wives, mothers and fathers, and friends.

In Marriage under the Meteor, we are shown the necessity of education for women in order to found a successfully happy family which may form an important unit in the structure of society. When İrfan Bey reflects that his elder brother's marriage is unsuccessful because, among other reasons, of the lack of education on his wife's side,¹ we understand the important rôle education plays in making married life happy and easy. Feriha, an unusually well-educated and open-minded young woman, constantly complains of the limitations which hamper women in Turkey, and which afford them no opportunity to use their "active minds, nerves and muscles . . ." ² Moreover, she is extremely unhappy because she is not allowed to write articles in papers and so prove that women are not "mentally

1. Ibid., Marriage under the Meteor, pp. 47-48.

2. Ibid., p. 179.

deficient". But such a wish could only be fulfilled when a girl was married and if her husband did not object.¹ Therefore, what is the purpose of education, Hüseyin Rahmi asks, if it is not to be used in some way?² Feriha, still with a complaining and crying attitude, says, "They allow me no opportunity to use the capital of my education...."³

In this story, Hüseyin Rahmi makes it obvious that educated girls by gaining experience, even if only from books, could use what they had learned in the choice of their husbands as, for example, Feriha does. He also shows that if such girls as Feriha are allowed and encouraged to make use of their education either by writing articles or by taking suitable work, particularly of a kind which would help to enlighten other women, a great many social troubles and diseases which are the outcome of illiteracy could be avoided.

The Pained Smile provides us with another example of the sufferings an educated girl goes through because of her conflicts with the low con-

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1. Ibid., p. 130.
 2. Ibid., p. 135.
 3. Ibid..

temporary valuation and inferior status of women. Thus deplorable conditions arise from the common belief for the existence of women in this world: to provide a materialistically happy life for men in their houses as wives, daughters and mothers. Ragiba is an example of the refined young lady with a school education, a knowledge of languages and social etiquette, with her 'alafranga' outlook and dresses, her mademoiselle de compagnie, plus her father's wealth.¹ Yet she is unhappy! All these "qualifications" make it difficult for her to choose a husband for herself under the 'arranged marriages' system.² If she had not had all these acquirements, she wouldn't have been so particular about the spiritual qualities of her future husband and so, like the majority of girls at that time, she might have been resigned to God's wish in giving her a husband and thus could have happily and satisfactorily settled down.³ Hüseyin Rahmi shows that such girls as Ragiba and Feriha should not sit passively complaining of the conditions in which they live. They must take active steps. To make the appeal strong-

1. Ibid., The Pained Smile, p. 214.

2. Ibid., p. 210.

3. Ibid.

er, he brings examples from the Western world showing the contrasting attitude with which women there fought for their rights.¹ Education must awaken in them the desire to be individually recognized with all their rights.

In The Final Wish, we hear what was then commonly the "good reason" parents gave for not allowing their daughters to read and write. We hear that

Feyzullah Efendi has a national conservatism. He didn't want to leave Nuriyeydan illiterate but he was equally afraid of bringing her up with an entire 'alafraŋga' education . . . 2

He thought that once she knew how to write, she would start writing love-letters.³ Therefore Feyzullah Efendi thinks that

.....before giving a girl a pen and a piece of paper to write, she must be morally and ethically well equipped in order to be protected from dangers. 4

He believed in the strict supervision of her educa-

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1. Ibid., p. 220.
 2. Ibid., The Final Wish, p. 25.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Ibid., pp. 25-26.

tion. So he sent her to school, but never without a lala¹ or a chaperon. As her grandfather, he performed his duty of supervision so well that he "always searched Nuriyezdán's school-bag and chose the proper books that she should read outside her study books".² But Hüseyin Rahmi, with an ironical smile, wonders if this strict control was of any use. Nuriyezdán exchanges love stories with her friends³ and learns what these books are meant to teach. The grandfather's point of view is that

.....it is sufficient for women to know the meaning, the loftiness and the holiness of the words purity and innocence and no more. 4

These must be what a girl should learn from school. Vicdan, Nuriyezdán's closest friend, answers, ".... Sir, but one could learn the meaning of these words through reading!" He replies:

Your mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers didn't learn their meaning by

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1. There is no English equivalent to the Turkish lala, who is a male slave or man-servant to whom the care of a child is given, in short a kind of male nursery-governess.
 2. Hüseyin Rahmi, The Final Wish, p. 26.
 3. Ibid., p. 29.
 4. Ibid., p. 90.

reading! And their advancement did not come through learning! They were very much more valuable and precious even than our present scholar women..... The world is full of men philosophers..... There is no need for a woman to be a judge, she must be a wife. You don't know what you will be, neither do you understand what Nature has assigned to you. I haven't sent my granddaughter to school to become a poetess, an eminently brilliant authoress, or to object to our Islamic resignation before God..... 1

As reflected through the grandfather, this argument puts us in a position to see what the old generation understood and expected from the word "education": whereas Nuriyezdán, with the advantages of reading and writing, and a rather skilled hand in transcribing love-letters, could understand the man she loved. But owing to the hard social rules, Ragib Şeyda's mother refuses to accept Nuriyezdán as her daughter-in-law because of the love-letters she has written to her son. Such a thing could never be forgiven - a shameful and degrading action, lowering a girl and depriving her of her prestige.² This, in itself, is a tragic situation; yet on the other hand, a good lesson and example to parents, to open their eyes to the realities of the day, and to natural incidents in the

1. Ibid., p. 91.

2. Ibid., pp. 164-168.

lives of human beings. To act against them so ridiculously means disastrous consequences, as in Nuriyezdán's case. Therefore education must be used to lessen misunderstanding, to exchange ideas on a sound basis and so to lead to 'happy endings'.

A similar attitude towards the education of girls is expressed in the lamenting reproach of Lamia's father to his wife in The Burning Hearts.

He regretfully says:

I haven't shown any strictness in Lamia's education. I allowed her to learn languages and whatever I thought might be useful from contemporary science. Today I am faced with results which I had never expected or thought of . . . How wrongly our daughter has understood what she has studied! I thought that by education she would learn and understand the real social position of women! Her honour, duty, and her chastity! But no. It seems we have allowed her to learn writing in order to write love-letters which injure her purity. We have put a telephone in the house so that she has love-conversations with rakes! Madam.....what is your daughter writing? What is she reading? With whom is she conversing for hours on the 'phone? Where does she go in such peculiar attire, and whenever she likes? Do you know anything about all this? What kind of mother are you . . .? 1

With this strongly put point of view, one

1. Ibid., The Burning Hearts, p. 127.

is able to realize how seriously and regretfully the old generation considered aspects of life that are nowadays taken for granted. Also it shows what education could do to a girl brought up amongst people with such strict and conservative values. It is an extremely important factor in making anyone, not least a woman, a recognized individual, as was manifest in Lamia, and also in Maggie Tulliver, Dorothea Brooke, Esther Lyon and their like.

In his work The Mistress, Hüseyin Rahmi, among many other teachings, shows with lifelike examples the necessity of equality in education. If the husband only is educated, and the wife so illiterate as not to be able to distinguish the alphabetic letters, the result will be ultimate unhappiness, constant conflicts, and then the neglect of the wife by her husband, as happened in the case of Saffet Hanim. Her husband, Hâmi Bey, though unintelligent and dull, has changed in his outlook tremendously because he has been to Paris for four years. Therefore what he asks from his "illiterate, too-fat and dull" wife is not fulfilled by

what he finds in marriage.¹ He turns his back on his wife and gets himself a French mistress who satisfies him.² The result is the unhappiness that encourages Saffet Hanım, too, to deceive her husband.

Thus the family bond is loosened and everyone concentrates on his or her own pleasure without trying to discover the reasons of the family crises. If Saffet Hanım had been educated, then in practical experience, she could have averted the root-cause of this family misunderstanding.

The roots of all social diseases of the time, Hüseyin Rahmi shows, lie in illiteracy and in entire dependence on men. The extracts also indicate his sense of the importance of a correct and useful education for women, not necessarily as a means of qualifying them for work, but in order to enlarge the horizons of their minds, so as to help them to understand troubles and conflicts and to solve family problems. This emphasis recalls George Eliot's insistence on the same point in the case of Rosamond Vincey. At the same time, should

1. Ibid., Metres: The Mistress, p. 13.
 2. Ibid., p. 280.

the need arise, education will be of advantage to a girl seeking a post.

One must not be misled into thinking that Hüseyin Rahmi demanded an education in accordance with the contemporary values, and the current conservatism and restrictions on feminine freedom. For he was above all a critic of the social system. He wanted, first and foremost, social reforms, giving women their due status in society. This would lead to a creative, useful and helpful education. Only then could success, progress and happiness be attained.

CHAPTER IX.ECONOMIC SITUATION.

Just as Hüseyin Rahmi found equality in education to be vital, he also saw the necessity for equality of opportunity to make use of that education. We have seen the tragic fate of educated girls, unable to practise what they have learned, or in constant collision with an environment where their needs and difficulties are not understood. The family system with its long-inherited concept of male superiority added to the sufferings of such girls.

As the husband and father was recognised as the head of the family, he was responsible for all its affairs, not least the management of its economy.¹ Women, whether wives or mothers, daughters or sisters, were almost entirely dependent on men, especially as regards finance. It was commonly accepted, as Lady Mary Montagu testifies,²

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1. Enver Ziya Karal, History of the Ottomans, Vol. VI, p. 172.
 2. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu: Letters and Works, Vol. II, p. 46.

that in her time men earned simply in order that their wives might spend. If we consider this idea today, it appears peculiar, not to say exotic. Yet when one remembers the social position of Turkish women at that time, one realizes how natural it was for men to monopolize all authority in the family kingdom. Even the religious law of inheritance stipulated that a female inheritor should receive only half of the portion due to the male.¹ This law had prevailed through centuries, and thus, together with the superior rights it granted men with regard to marriage and divorce, it kept women in an inferior position.² There were no opportunities for earning open to women, except as governesses or as teachers in private families, and this only towards the end of the nineteenth century. Women, therefore, when left alone in the world, had no means of earning their living. It was the duty of the father, husband or brother to take such women under their protection and support them financially.

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1. The Koran, "Women". "The male receives the portion of two females." The Qur'an, Vol. I, p. 69, tr. Richard Bell.
 2. U. Heyd, The Foundations of Turkish Nationalism, p. 95.

This was so much the rule that the male's duty to look after his close female relatives was taken for granted. We find a similar concept behind Tom Tulliver's attitude after his father's bankruptcy and death. As far as the strong family ties and affection brought about by such conscious and voluntary dependence were concerned, this was all well and good. In fact, one even reads admiring accounts of these strong family ties. C. White says:

Nowhere are the ties of blood and reciprocal affection between parents and children, brothers and sisters, more intensely felt, or more faithfully maintained. Amidst the many contradictions and caprices that mark the Turkish character, those of defying the precepts of nature and bursting the bonds of filial or fraternal attachment are not included. Devotion of children to parents, and mutual solicitude for the welfare of brothers and sisters, are not to be surpassed. 1

These characteristics are doubtless praiseworthy, but no account is taken of those women who were left alone without any male relative to afford them financial support, a position especially deplorable when the woman had received no inheritance whatsoever.

1. C. White, Three Years in Constantinople, Vol. II, p. 234.

Fear of desertion by their husbands, or that their fathers or brothers might die before them, evoked such an inferiority complex in women that they were willing to resort to any means to please their husbands rather than face the prospect of divorce, the frequency of which was a sign of its easy fulfilment.¹ It was usual for women to prefer polygamy to divorce. Indeed, quite apart from the scandal and the gossip among relatives and friends as to the reasons for the divorce, the divorced wife might well be left to starve.

One might ask "What of the divorced wife's own parents?" But, divorce being considered the worst kind of shame which a girl might bring on her family, it was usual for the parents to receive her reluctantly.

Altogether, religious and social laws and conventions combined to place women in a dependent and inferior position in society compared with their high status in ancient or contemporary Turkish society.² Hüseyin Rahmi, therefore, in advocating equality in education, made no separation between

1. U. Heyd, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

education and economic opportunity. Economic opportunity was to be achieved in two ways, by a sweeping reform in the law of inheritance, that it might be suited to contemporary requirements, and by the creation of opportunities for women to earn their own living if necessary.

Before all this, he demands the formation of philanthropic societies and institutions as an immediate remedy for the position of those women who were left alone to struggle for their living and whose place, usually, in face of existing restrictions and rigid conventions, was among the fallen women. This being achieved, his next demand was for an equality in economic matters through which women, instead of being a potential source of evil, might become useful and helpful human beings. In order to set his noble message before the public, to reveal the frightful and horrible results of the existing economic dependence of women and the opportunities denied them, Hüseyin Rahmi once more drew from society examples of catastrophic effects, even on women of education, who suffered more perhaps than women whose minds and spirits had not been quickened by learning to a sense of their own

disadvantages. Iffet is a clear example of the tragedy of an educated and extremely beautiful girl, who has been left to support her mother and younger brother after the death of her father. When their inheritance has been spent, Iffet's struggle to earn her living within an unkind, monstrous environment is indeed heart-breaking. Her burden is not only the financial difficulties which she faces and their results. Hers is a spiritual problem. Her society does not understand or appreciate her extreme sensitivity, intelligence and kind-heartedness; and it was not common for a woman to be so accomplished intellectually as Iffet. This was hardly to be thought of, let alone appreciated.

With her thorough and sound knowledge of languages,¹ science and the arts, Iffet could have been a most productive, useful and beneficial member of society. Had she been living with all the rights and advantages we enjoy in present-day Turkey, Iffet might have found enviable work as an interpreter, secretary, school teacher² or a social worker, to name only a few of the opportunities

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1. Hüseyin Rahmi, Iffet, p. 48.
 2. Ibid., pp. 86-87.

open to one with such qualifications. Her earnings could have been equal with those of men undertaking similar work. Her ability, understanding, intelligence,¹ sincerity and honesty would have made her a most suitable person to undertake philanthropic work for those in need of such kindness and affection as she showed to her sick mother and younger brother; as Dinah Morris comforted and restored the afflicted, so might Iffet have done. But what opportunities did she have with all the ties and limits then set around women? Who would take care of or pay attention to her inner conflicts and troubles, the outcome of her strong principles and high valuation of her purity, innocence, chastity and honour? These qualities, as Hüseyin Rahmi always emphasises in his characters, are the national inheritance of Turkish women.² These are the capital of a Turkish girl, without which she is not worthy of being called a Turk. She must, as always, fight for the triumph of these

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1. Ibid., p. 50.
 2. Mediha Berkes, "Hüseyin Rahmi Romanlarında Aile ve Kadın"; "Women and Family in the Novels of Hüseyin Rahmi." Journal of Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi, Vol. III, p. 19.

principles. Having no other way to earn her living and look after the two people for whom she is responsible, Iffet starts embroidering day and night.¹ But this work does not meet the cost of their living, especially when the amount spent on medicine increases enormously. By what means can she earn more? There is only one alternative, the common recourse of illiterate, weak-principled, weak-willed, and helpless girls, whenever a misfortune befell them. That was to go among the fallen women! Yet, Iffet, with her exceptionally strong will, supported by ethical teachings and principles implanted in her soul since childhood, defies all the temptations to be the mistress of a certain wealthy man, Nermi.² She prefers to die, rather than sell her purity. The ardent and tempting letters which Nermi sends her have no success in persuading Iffet to change her principles.³ When she has read one of his letters full of attractive proposals, she cannot help saying,

What sweet lies! These common words

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1. Hüseyin Rahmi, op. cit., p. 69.
 2. Ibid., p. 215.
 3. Ibid., pp. 230-232.

must have been written hundreds of times to seduce helpless, innocent women! In most cases these words prove successful in fulfilling their aim, though! 1

Her resistance at one point becomes weaker when her mother's illness takes its hardest and most grievous form. She wants to buy medicine immediately to save her mother. With this in mind, she accepts Nermi's proposal. But her guilt troubles her conscience, her strong moral and ethical principles revive within her and as a result of this conflict she falls ill. Yet, though not fallen in reality, she thinks that she has actually fallen, and so a constant self-reproach haunts her.² The long and vehement argument, the struggle for Iffet's high principles, her lofty sense of the holiness of chastity, lead her to death where she finds eternal calm and peacefulness. This incident recalls the spiritual conflict undergone by Maggie Tulliver after she had gone rowing with Stephen Guest.

In the character of Iffet, Hüseyin Rahmi has successfully presented the great necessity for reform of the existing economic situation. He

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1. Ibid., p. 233.
 2. Ibid., pp. 228, 237.

shows that women are, after all, human beings and individuals, who must be recognized and accorded their rightful place in society, as well as the right to make use of the education they have received. There must be opportunities and facilities which would enable and encourage them to exercise their knowledge and their abilities to the fullest degree. What, he asks, is the use of an education which cannot be turned to account when necessary?

Above all, women such as Iffet might make an invaluable contribution to the welfare of their country, raising the standard of living by their honesty, sincerity and loyalty to their work. Apart from this, there was a clear demand for institutions and social organisations which would take care of young children and sick women who were hopelessly abandoned, or, otherwise, their hard struggle for a living must prove in most cases to be fruitless.

On the other hand, Hüseyin Rahmi equally successfully presents the tragedy of the woman who falls because of necessity. Şöhret, in Coincidence, being an illiterate and rather weak-principled girl,

cannot bear the insults and shame with which her monstrous husband upbraids her for the crime of which she is accused. Şöhret had to face the result of her seduction alone; the other party to it had disappeared. Being a woman, she could not hide its fruit and so was an outcast by the social laws of propriety and chastity. The husband she marries constantly reminds her of her guilt not only by his words, but by beating her as well. She chooses, therefore, the same fate as that of all unfortunate girls.¹ If Şöhret could have found decent work to earn her living, society could have saved her and avoided the disastrous consequences which she brought about. Hüseyin Rahmi says:

If there were jobs open to women, she might have taken one and earned her living despite her illiteracy.it is necessity, ignorance, or wild monstrous treatment by husbands, which lead to such disasters. 2

By the same reason of economic inequality, the doors to respectable work were closed to women, and so the number of women who faced the same ultimate fate as Şöhret, increased. Once again, one

1. Ibid., Tesadüf: Coincidence, p. 125.
2. Ibid., p. 126.

sees the necessity for social institutions, which, if given a chance to work profitably and fruitfully, would rescue lonely and socially outcast and consequently destitute women, and fit them for suitable occupations which would enable them to render a service to their nation, instead of leaving them to be a source of evil.

It was not only girls such as these two who faced disaster because of the unfavourable economic position women were in then. There were equally unfortunate cases within marriage, and through divorce. The economic superiority of men had always played a big part in marriages arranged by parents against the wills of their daughters, as was the case with Ayn-i-Nur and Nezihi Bey,¹ Şahinde and Refi Bey,² Cazibe and Hasan Ferruh Efendi.³ Other disasters could also have been avoided if wives, relying on their own income and depending on their own ability to earn their living by finding respectable occupations, could have asked for divorce as Saffet Hanım in The Mistress.

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1. Ibid., The Pursuit of Desire.
 2. Ibid., Hazân Bülbülü: The Autumn Nightingale.
 3. Ibid., Cehennemlik: The Hell-Bound.

To support his case with more vivid pictures, Hüseyin Rahmi brings us examples to show how advantageous it is for women to be financially independent. In The Burning Hearts, for example, if Lamia had had no education and no opportunity to earn her living by taking a job in a factory,¹ she might have fallen to the same level as, perhaps, Şöhret. Her family rejected her because of her love-affair with Behcet Bey, while he returned to his wife² as if he had had no share in the crime he had committed with Lamia.³ Her brother, Sururi, knowing and seeing this shame brought on the family, means to kill Lamia to save the family honour.⁴ But the independent young woman with her free thoughts does not give him the chance to fulfil this wish. Here is not the only part in this crime. Why should the other part be forgiven?⁵ Why should she be punished on the ground that she is a woman? She goes off and earns her living and thus saves her family and consequently her society from a great many disasters that might have come about if she had

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1. Ibid., The Burning Hearts, p. 397.
 2. Ibid., p. 271.
 3. Ibid., pp. 270, 470.
 4. Ibid., pp. 381-383.
 5. Ibid., pp. 270, 470.

been in a completely dependent position.

Women could be of great help, too, to the family budget if they had opportunities to use their abilities for money as in the case of Nebahat in When Women are as Men.

Hüseyin Rahmi uses all these examples to establish the necessity of economic independence for women, not simply as a source of income, but to foster a feeling of confidence and assurance of their ability to face life by themselves in its sad as well as in its brighter aspects - a feeling which leads them to realize their own importance in society. Once they believe in their high and vital position, the inferiority complex from which they have hitherto suffered, will turn to self-assurance and a belief in the tremendous contribution which they can make towards their country's welfare and advancement.

CHAPTER X.MARRIAGE:ARRANGED MARRIAGES; MARRIAGES OF WEALTH;GREAT DIFFERENCES IN AGE.

The majority of Osmanlis - Ottomans - attach so much importance to the early marriage of their children, that they sometimes discuss and arrange these matters before the birth of the destined spouses. Mothers, whose sons have scarcely attained their fifteenth year, can neither sleep nor eat, until the latter are suitably disposed of; and the same anxiety is felt by those who have marriageable daughters. This is the natural result of the retired life led by Turkish women.....

Supposing that arrangements have not been previously made between friends or connexions for the union of their children, and that no suitable person has been pointed out as a wife, the mother of a marriageable youth concerts with her husband, and sallies forth in search of a partner for her son, accompanied by some female friend or adroit slave. In order to attain her object, she attends public baths, where she cautiously examines the persons of young girls, and inquires into their fortunes, position, and expectations. If she fails there, she makes crafty inquiries among the gossips of different quarters, and causes her slaves to form acquaintance with those of houses where eligible matches may be found. In short, she spares no pains to obtain indirect information or personal knowledge of those young women whose position justifies further proceedings.

Sometimes, indeed, mothers carry their

artifices so far, that they avail themselves of sundry pretexts to obtain access into houses. Thus, at one time, they feign sudden illness, and, rapping at doors, earnestly request permission to repose. At other times, they beg leave to enter a house in order to say their prayers, their own abode or a mosque being too distant for them to arrive for this duty within the canonical period. It is by these and other artifices that they are enabled to obtain a sight of young ladies, and to examine appearances, whilst their slaves or companions are busily engaged in obtaining information from servants..... 1

To the Western mind, this account of arranged marriages in Turkey, appears like a fantastic tale. The more one thinks of marriage, one of the most significant events in life, the more difficult it becomes to conceive that such a matter should be thought of, arranged and prepared for, by any person other than the parties to the marriage themselves. Yet, in the light of Turkish social history of the time, one finds such a harmonious intermingling of social causes as to make such a marriage system not only natural, but inevitable. Ercüment Ekrem tells us that, before the capture of Constantinople, Turkish women possessed a unique freedom in the choice of husbands. It was only

1. C. White, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 197-199.

with the coming of the conquerors, with their acquired Byzantine customs, that women fell into an inferior and servile position.¹ The Sultans, backed by their officials, and followed by laymen, set up harems, originally intended only for slaves. Thus began the imprisonment of women in the konaks, from which they only issued concealed under thick veils, with an escort of servants, chaperons, and "lalas". Under such a system it was only natural that marriages should be arranged with recourse to such artifices as C.White describes. Sons and daughters remained as completely subject to the arrangements of their mothers, their aunts and other friends as they were to the decrees of fate.

As always, Hüseyin Rahmi set about his criticism and demands for change by fastening on the weaknesses of the existing system. The two features to which he was most strongly opposed were, first, marriages arranged for the sole purpose of financial gain, and secondly, the marriage of young girls, despite their opposition, to old men. Indeed, such marriages formed the rule rather than

1. Ercüment Ekrem, Memories of Yesterday, "Görücü: The Marriage-broker."

the exception.

An excellent example of this arranged-marriage custom is in Coincidence, when both Saibe's and Mail's parents consider a suitable match for their children.¹ When Saibe is, though indirectly, asked about her opinion of the husband she would like to marry, she answers, "Is a girl's opinion considered in such a thing? It is up to the parents to choose a suitable husband!"² Although we know that her parents have already decided on this subject, her mother, when the father wonders whether Saibe is informed of the arrangements, answers in surprise:

So long as you and I are alive, is the girl's opinion of any importance? You know our proverb which says that if you leave a girl to make her own choice of a husband she marries a bag-piper.....³

Thus every necessary and usual step is taken and the marriage follows. But, is it a happy marriage? Yes, in the first year or two. After that disasters come. Having no right to divorce, as she had no right in choosing her husband, Saibe is obliged to bear all the miseries of misunderstandings, dif-

1. Hüseyin Rahmi, Coincidence, pp. 86-88.

2. Ibid., p. 84.

3. Ibid., p. 81.

ferences of taste and opinion with her husband, who neglects her. So comes the tragic end.

Hüseyin Rahmi wants to tell us that if Saibe had had a genuine part in choosing her life-companion as she herself wanted, but could not declare in the face of the strict authority of her parents, an authority which had become a part of their life, she could have perhaps refused Mail, or could have accepted him after reaching that mutual understanding and love which are of the main foundations of successful marriages. In presenting her story, Hüseyin Rahmi teaches parents not to interfere to such an extent in decisions as delicate as marriage. If Mail himself had had his own choice, he might have chosen a woman whom he loved, not one whom his parents found suitable. Yet, one may ask, "Would this have been possible when women were kept inside the solid walls of the harems, and were so faithfully wrapped in their carsafs and veils when out of doors? As Sir James Porter remarks:

Some carry that custom (veiling the face) to such an extreme of delicacy, that, when they feed their poultry, if there be cocks among them, they will not appear without veils. 1

1. C. White, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 197.

What was necessary here, then, Hüseyin Rahmi shows, was the liberation of women, not only in the matter of choice, but in their whole way of life.

One of the fundamental steps in this custom of arranged marriages is the "Görücü".

The young man's mother attires herself in her holyday garments and, accompanied by the grandmother, if alive, proceeds in great ceremony, called "Geureddiy", to see and propose in form for the girl's hand. 1

In Marriage under the Meteor, Irfan Bey's mother complains of the modern Feriha who met them before her mother when they came to see her according to "görücü" system. She says:

It is our custom when a chair is put in the middle of the room that the girl in question comes with coffee and sits in that very chair until the visitors finish their coffee. Then she leaves the room..... This is the görücülük that I know of..... May God preserve us! We've never seen such a thing . . . a girl coming and meeting the görücüs before her mother. 2

Irfan Bey, modern in his theories and outlook, is

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1. Ibid., pp. 199.
 2. Hüseyin Rahmi, Marriage under the Meteor, pp. 270-271.

against this system. He writes to Feriha:

I won't send görücü according to our custom. Because my mother's choice does not accord with, and is not a correct criterion of mine. She might like what I don't and vice versa. Because our tastes, outlooks and judgment vary greatly. 1

In The Pursuit of Desire, Seza throws a stronger light on what Hüseyin Rahmi wants to show the parents. Speaking of the future of Ayn-i-Nur's marriage, foreshadowed in the great differences between her taste and that of her husband, and in the lack of mutual love and understanding, she says:

Our old way of marriage takes no consideration of the girl's opinion; parents choose a husband and then tell their daughter that they are marrying her to such and such a person and everything is finished. Is it right to leave everything entirely in the parents' hands without asking the opinion of the girl? Wouldn't it be just if the daughter's inclination towards her future husband were taken into account? Poor Ayn-i-Nur! With her exceptional beauty, which I dare say is unique in the whole of Istanbul, they married her to the clumsy Nezihi Bey! What does he have to offer her in return for her great beauty? A few farms . . . This rare beauty has been made a sacrifice to those farms . . . You know that her father died and her mother's sole ambition was to marry her daughter to a rich man. Thus this marriage was brought about. She

1. Ibid.

never returned her husband's great love for her, because she loved someone else, whom she was not allowed to marry. What happened in the end? Of course, this tragedy . . . 1

Here is a clear picture of an arranged marriage, an everyday occurrence in Turkish life, with results often little different from those of Ayn-i-Nur's case: suicide. If she had been married to the man she loved, as were Esther Lyon, Eppie, Dinah Morris and Mary Garth, this catastrophe could have been avoided. But for the sake of his wealth, her mother married her to Nezihi Bey. Women are not, after all, mere senseless, brainless creatures. Why shouldn't Ayn-i-Nur's inclination and opinion have been taken into account? Why should she have had to resort to sobbing and complaining to show her disapproval of that "chosen husband"? ² Yet, did anyone listen to her cry? In her letter to Seza, Ayn-i-Nur describes the whole state of affairs.

.....my mother has sold me to this man. I always consider my mother as a slave-trader, my husband as a slave-buyer and myself a slave. This selling and buying business was the com-

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1. Ibid., The Pursuit of Desire, p. 102.
 2. Ibid., p. 122.

mencement of all my subsequent disasters..... 1

Evidently this sort of marriage solely for wealth leads in most cases to nothing but the unhappiness which dogged the lives of Ayn-i-Nur and Nezihi Bey.

We meet a counterpart of Ayn-i-Nur in Ragiba who faces the same problem of a marriage arranged by her parents. Being an educated girl with accomplishments, Ragiba refuses to be seen by "görücü".² She tells her mother, "Maman, je ne suis pas une bête à vendre!"³ In fact, as we look at it nowadays, this was the real position of women at that time, to be sold and bought simply for the material pleasures that marriage might bring rather than the more important spiritual values.

In The Autumn Nightingale, one is faced with an even more tragic situation, commonly occurring then. Old men, relying on their extreme wealth, do not refrain from marrying girls young enough to be their grand-daughters. Refi Bey, a man of seventy, wants to marry the beautiful and young, but poor Şahinde of twenty. The girl her-

1. Ibid., p. 167.

2. Ibid., The Fained Smile, p. 210.

3. Ibid..

self is in love with Nuri Bey, a young, but not a wealthy man. Her aunt, with her materialistic values, tells Nuri Bey:

.....love is a minor thing in marriage.
Wealth is the thing. Youth, good looks
and love are all temporary . . . The on-
ly thing which brings happiness is money. 1

Without giving any consideration to Şahinde's opinion² and her constant effort to oppose this scheme,³ the aunt marries her to the old but wealthy man. Şahinde's own impression is justly related to her lover:

Şahinde: My aunt wants to find a source of wealth through me after she has spent all that my uncle had. She found a woman-guide and asked her to look for a husband for me. The most essential qualification required was for him to be wealthy, regardless of whether he is blind, lame or old. So this guide found this husband, and then they started to prepare for the wedding.

Nuri Bey: Isn't it necessary that they should first ask your opinion?

Şahinde: No . . . I am an orphan brought up by them. How should they ask my opinion? Whatever my aunt thinks fit must be ful-

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1. Ibid., The Autumn Nightingale, pp. 120-122
 2. Ibid., p. 123.
 3. Ibid., p. 143.

filled. They are not marrying me
but selling me like a slave. 1

This conversation is enlightening on the point that not all girls are blind to the disadvantages of their position. But before the tyranny and extreme authority of their parents and benefactors, especially with such commonly accepted and rigid laws, they have no alternative but submission to the "chosen fate". Yet the end might be a lesson in itself to those "dictators". Although surrounded with every worldly comfort then available, Şahinde is indeed miserable for the lack of love and affection in her married life. When, therefore, she encounters her husband's son-in-law, she cannot resist his offer to fill the gap in her life. She accepts his love. When her old husband discovers her love affair, he is stricken to death.

This tyranny of decision does not apply only to the young women. Fikriye Hanım, a widow with a child, finds herself under the dictatorship of her aunt when she wants to express her opinion about her second marriage. Her aunt tells her angrily:

1. Ibid., p. 81.

Thank Heaven, your uncle and I are alive to make inquiries about the future husband. How could you have any say in the matter? My goodness! What a time we are living in . . . This young generation is hopeless. They decide for themselves without even consulting their guardian. Out of politeness we asked your opinion. But you abused it . . . I'm sorry! We have made a mistake . . . Now, go to your room. I'll have a confidential talk with this guide. 1

In The Governess, in order to punish the Kâhya Edâ for her report of the unpleasant news of the corruption in the house, Dehri Efendi drives her out and marries her husband to a girl from the harem. Such tyranny was the great privilege in the hands of the masters.

In The Final Wish, despite their mutual love already expressed through the interchange of letters, Nuriyezdân and Namik Bey are not married to each other. The former's mother and grandfather impose on her a marriage with the wealthy Ragib Şeyda Bey, a man she does not love.² To please his mother who strongly disapproves of Nuriyezdân, on the ground of her unladylike and 'free'

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1. Ibid., Cadi: The Witch, pp. 23-24.
 2. Ibid., The Final Wish, p. 194.

outlook (shown by the writing of love-letters to her son), Namik Bey does not marry her, but a girl chosen by his mother.¹ The result of this arranged marriage is that Nuriyezdán falls ill and eventually, to escape her unhappy life, commits suicide.²

Hüseyin Rahmi does not only reveal this tragic end to parents. At the same time he wants to show men in general how they themselves must decide instead of relying on their parents' choice. Namik Semai should have married Nuriyezdán in the face of his mother's disapproval and proved that such marriages could succeed; as Maggie, instead of submitting to Tom's wish, should have held her ground and married Philip. Instead, together with his mother, Namik Semai is the cause of Nuriyezdán's death. His mother would have eventually consented, as happens in When Women are as Men. Ali Süreyya marries Nebahat despite his mother's objections.³ But at last his mother approves.

The difference in age between a married couple showed its results again in The Hell-Bound. The old, wealthy, but psychologically rather un-

1. Ibid., p. 180.

2. Ibid., p. 213.

3. Ibid., When Women are as Men, p. 51

stable Hassan Ferruh marries the beautiful young Cazibe Hanım of twenty-two. Their life is indeed a "hell" with all love on one side.¹ Cazibe finds satisfaction in love with her step-daughter's son, Muzaffer. On the other hand, Hasan Bey's own daughter Ferhunde Hanım deceives her old husband with their adopted son, who is expected to marry their daughter.² All this dishonesty, disloyalty to the lofty and holy bond of marriage is due to one simple cause: the great difference in age between the couples and the consequent difference in outlook and taste. If this was considered beforehand, no social diseases of this kind would come about.³ The shameful and degrading consequence which ruined this entire family is instructive in itself.⁴

Another illustration of the same problem is presented in Toraman. The wealthy Şuayip Efendi, over fifty-five, marries the young and beautiful Binnaz of eighteen. The price which, this time the husband pays is his constant restlessness of

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1. Ibid., The Hell-Bound, p. 117.
 2. Ibid., pp. 352-353.
 3. Ibid., p. 357.
 4. Ibid., p. 479.

mind and his unending hesitation and suspicion of the relationship between his young wife and his son Toraman.¹

All these examples, taken together, show the drawbacks of the existing customs of marriage with the over-emphasis on the material side and no attachment to the spiritual side at all.

The younger generation, with their free ways of thinking, must make a move to change this social law and teach the older, with their belief that girls are to be sold,² that they are completely mistaken and that "selling is suitable for animals, as it implies trade, and also because animals' opinion is not asked when they are sold . . ." ³

Whereas, women are human beings, capable of performing a great many things to add to the welfare of humanity. Why, then, should they be ignored and considered a "brainless lot", especially in such matters as marriage?

It is for this purpose, too, that Hüseyin Rahmi advocates the education of women; so that they may know in what ways they should judge

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1. Ibid., Toraman, p. 114.
 2. Ibid., The Burning Hearts, p. 40.
 3. Ibid., p. 42.

their future husbands and form a happy life together. He makes this even more obvious in The Living Skeleton through the doctor, who says:

Marriage is not like renting a house. This is something to be founded on love, understanding. What effect does the marriage-contract have when misunderstanding and coldness between the couple come about? The most important thing is the mutual understanding before marriage. There are plenty of examples of marriages for beauty, wealth and for many other reasons . . . Is there any everlasting thing in the world? After marriage, these reasons lose their old power and attractiveness. Hopes and passions get satisfaction and what is left between the couple is the bond of conscience, humanity and sincerity. This is the aim of marriage. 1

This aim, in fact, reminds us of George Eliot's lofty concept of the marriage-bond as a social and a spiritual tie.

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1. Ibid., Dirilen Iskelet: The Living Skeleton,
p. 249.

CHAPTER XI.POLYGAMY AND DIVORCE.

At first glance one might wonder whether this two-fold topic has any parallel in the works of George Eliot. But a little consideration shows that although George Eliot could not write of the subject in the same terms as Hüseyin Rahmi, indications of her attitude towards polygamy are implicit in her work, while her view of divorce is clearly evident through her belief in the sanctity of marriage as expressed for example in the cases of Romola and Rosamond Vincey. Yet judging from her personal life, when Mrs. Lewes left her husband and George Eliot could not marry Lewes because of the difficulty of getting a divorce, we may suppose that in certain circumstances she would actually have approved of divorce.

Where Hüseyin Rahmi uses black and white, George Eliot paints in grey, a difference of treatment accounted for by the difference of religion in the two societies. Whereas in Turkey, polygamy and divorce were legal, and freely practised, in

England, polygamy - if it may be so called - could be practised only with concealment, as we have seen from the cases of Arthur Donnithorne and Jermin the lawyer, for instance.

It is obvious that Hüseyin Rahmi devoted as much serious thought to the problem of polygamy as to those others we have so far discussed. Through his experiences as he mingled with all sections of Turkish society ¹ he was able to portray faithful examples of the drawbacks of polygamy and the resulting effects both in the family circle and in society as a whole.

Since polygamy was then recognized by religion as one of the rights of a man, it was a law to be followed. When dealing with the problem in his novels, Hüseyin Rahmi makes quite clear his conviction that the system, and the privilege which it placed in the hands of men, should be greatly altered. He had noted abuses and misunderstandings of this privilege; he had seen it practised indiscriminately and on mere whim; he had seen it used by husbands as a threat against wives who

1. Refik Ahmed Sevengil, Hüseyin Rahmi.

would not comply with their wishes.

It was not always the husband's pleasure upon which polygamy depended, for a wife might urge her husband to another marriage as a security against her own divorce and loss of social status if she should show hostility to his will. This was the unfortunate but not unnatural result of woman's dependent status, and especially of her financial dependence. Once she had left her parents' house she was subject to the will and the authority of her husband. Her social and financial position depended on her ability to please her husband. It was consequently her aim, by an obedience unknown nowadays, to satisfy his every wish.

In Hüseyin Rahmi's novels, we see the use of polygamy as a threat, not only by the husband, but by the mother-in-law. In The Divorced, the mother-in-law says vindictively to her daughter-in-law:

What will you do if he marries again?
After all God has allowed him four wives at
a time! We can afford to look after not

only four, but even ten wives..... 1

This threat would certainly induce an unconscious uncertainty in the wife as to whether another woman would share her husband with her.

The early married happiness of Mail and Saibe in Coincidence is only blurred when another woman comes on the scene. The sorceress, Hoca Nefise, who is a faith-healer at the same time, warns Saibe.

My poor girl, my simple Saibe!
Open your eyes..... It is of no importance
that your husband has rented a house for his
mistress..... He'll marry her - it's only
a matter of days.

"In face of this horrible information Saibe's tears came like a flood....." ² Her husband, when Saibe accuses him of keeping a mistress in a private house, says threateningly, "Yes..... who has the right to stop me from marrying several others besides you?" ³ Eventually Mail married Şöhret, his fallen mistress. Saibe could do nothing but accept this fait accompli. But the con-

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1. Hüseyin Rahmi, The Divorced, p. 15.
 2. Ibid., Coincidence, p. 198.
 3. Ibid., p. 215.

sequence was the death of Saibe, the decent, highly sensitive, gentle and quiet woman, who could not bear the shock of sharing her husband with a competitor more beautiful than herself. It is indeed an instructive example to show how men with this authority in their hands could cause trouble in the family leading to a tragic end. Even if Mail had not been permitted to marry a second wife when already married to Saibe, he would still, by the existing law, have been able to divorce her in order to marry his mistress. This shows that the need for change in Turkish society was deeper and more fundamental even than the customs of polygamy.

When we come to The Grateful One, we find the polygamy question being suggested from the first wife's side. Talât Hanim, who loves and almost worships her husband, suggests to him that he should marry their maid, Neriman. Nihad-Bey, having offered his sensual love to the pure, honest Neriman and having been firmly rejected, proposes to marry her legally.¹ Standing secretly outside

1. Ibid., Nimet-sinas: The Grateful One, pp. 214-216.

the door, listening to her husband's confession of his love to the exceedingly beautiful Neriman, and to his proposal, Talât Hanim knows that "her life, disaster, happiness or family destruction all depend on one word from Neriman."¹ Moreover, there is his promise that if Neriman insists, he is prepared to divorce Talât Hanim, though they have two children.² One can easily imagine Talât Hanim's predicament and feelings in face of these bitter facts. Any other girl than the honest, sincere, grateful and appreciative Neriman, would perhaps have accepted this "attractive proposal", offering her a life far better than that she had as a maid. But this sensible girl refuses his offer and says that one day he might treat her in the same way and play the same trick with another girl.³ A girl can never be sure with such men who, for the sake of their own pleasure never consider their family ties or responsibilities. She refuses him so strongly that he gets ill. Talât Hanim, adoring her husband, in order to save him from death and to secure

1. Ibid., p. 214.

2. Ibid., p. 217.

3. Ibid., p. 270.

her own position comes to Neriman and says, "Dear Neriman! I would like you to become my husband's second wife . . ." ¹

Indeed this is a most peculiar offer to come from a woman! If it were not for the sacrifice that both Talât Hanım and Neriman showed, this family with two children would have faced a prospect no happier or easier than most of such cases which end tragically.

A statement in The Pursuit of Desire by Seza to her husband shows clearly to what extent men enjoyed superiority over women. She says,

If a man sees any drawbacks in divorcing his wife, he marries several others as well.....besides those he gets under different names: odalisques, mistresses.....as many as his wealth allows him. ²

Her statement perfectly expresses the reality. ³

A statement in The Witch made by Naşit Bey confirms Seza's point of view of the privilege men hold over women. He says to his wife, "Even when you are married to me, I can marry as many as I want . . ." ⁴

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1. Ibid., p. 266.
 2. Ibid., The Pursuit of Desire, p. 39.
 3. Ercument Ekrem, Memories of Yesterday.
 4. Hüseyin Rahmi, The Witch, p. 182.

Polygamy was, therefore, the strong destructive hammer of a happily started family life. Hüseyin Rahmi, by showing all these drawbacks and evils of polygamy, opened the eyes and awakened the minds of the public. All these sad instances of the effects of polygamy clearly illustrate the points of the teaching of Hüseyin Rahmi. At the same time he displays his observation and insight into such disasters, and admirable courage in advocating a change in the system.

On the other hand there existed several reasons which made polygamy necessary as a purely social safeguard. In a society where women were extremely dependent on men from a financial point of view, those girls who were left alone and unmarried after the deaths of their parents and male relatives, were dependent on the existing system for life itself. Material considerations took precedence over the spiritual. A woman of those days was prepared to endure all spiritual griefs, if she were conscious that such griefs could exist, rather than to die. So economic necessity made polygamy useful.

Furthermore, since men wanted to have children, male children especially, to preserve the family name and inheritance, they not infrequently took a second wife if the first proved sterile. This was the more usual course among men who loved their wives and preferred not to hurt them by divorcing them.

Again, especially in the case of sultans and men of substance, the commonest solution to an illicit entanglement was for the man to marry the girl and add her to his harem.¹

In sum, each social problem was in some way linked up with the others. At the root of them all lay the common conception of the physical and mental inferiority of women to men,² and the economic dependence which sprang from it. Hüseyin Rahmi proclaimed this cause everywhere in his writings - the necessity of recognising women as individuals, of a change in their social status which would fit them for a nobler part in life, and of emancipation from the rigid artificial laws created by men.

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1. Ercüment Ekrem, op. cit..
 2. Necmettin Sadik, Kadınlar Erkekleşiyor mu? Are Women as Men?, p. 184. Hayat Mecmuası: Life.

Divorce.

Hüseyin Rahmi attacked so forcefully the social evils which he believed to be destroying the life of the nation that we are not at all surprised to find him facing with earnestness the problem of divorce. His attitude, recurring time after time in his novels, is that of a highly informed critic towards a problem with dangerous potentialities. He did not argue that divorce should not exist. On the contrary certain situations in his novels indicate that he regarded it as a necessity in certain cases where family difficulties could only be solved by separation.

He argued, rather, for a sweeping reform of the divorce law. As the law existed at that time, in accordance with religion, only men possessed full rights to divorce their marriage partners, in the presence of two witnesses.¹ The sacred family unit could be broken up simply by pronouncing the words "Let your will be in your hand".

1. The Koran. Chapter on "Divorce". "...call as witnesses two persons of probity from amongst you, and set up the testimony for Allah." The Qur'an, Vol. II, p. 587, tr. Richard Bell.

Many men grossly abused this privilege and did not hesitate to use it as a threat to their wives - to remind them of their inferiority to men, to keep them in their control and power, and to fulfil their own wishes and purposes when their wives were reluctant to obey orders.

Furthermore, with his keen and observant mind and ever-vigilant eyes, Hüseyin Rahmi could not but perceive the dangers and drawbacks of the contemporary loose interpretation of the divorce laws, and of the unjustifiable and over-frequent recourse to this practice by men. Rightly, he decided that the social status of women, governed as it was by such unfavourable social laws, was in great need of reformation.

This reformation could be realized only by the recognition of women as important individuals in the structure of the family, a recognition which must of necessity be accompanied by emancipation and the attainment of equality with men. Yet, if woman was to be given her natural rights, she must be trained to exercise them. The result of the lack of such training is shown in Hüseyin Rahmi's later novels.

His novels abound with statements by his mouthpieces to show the great privileges that men had through being the sole party to enjoy the right of divorce. Edibe Hanım, the dejected wife, disgusted by her husband's dishonesty and low character, complains to Azize Hanım about the illegal pregnancy and miscarriage of Zarafet and Rabia:

What could I say? May God punish them all..... This bad luck was what fate had in store for me..... It happened that I was thrown in this house to live under one roof with these shameless people..... Any shameful thing which happens to them means that we are partners in bearing that dishonourable deed and stain..... What could I do? Is there any solution? I can't divorce my husband and say "Let your will be in your hands," and leave the house..... 1

In The Living Skeleton, we come across this sentence from the young girl Bânû:

It is enough for the husband and wife to be strangers to each other when the husband says, "You, woman, I left you!" All the examples of divorce I have seen are like this..... 2

Another example of the ease with which men could

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1. Hüseyin Rahmi, Şipsevdi: The Susceptible, p. 382.
 2. Ibid., The Living Skeleton, p. 249.

divorce their wives and of how it entirely depended on their wish can be seen in Marriage under the Meteor, when Feriha Hanım says:

If you get along with your wife, so much the better..... But in case you can't, you could say "Let your will be in your hand" and so everything is finished. As you said, divorce is as much a right as marrying is..... 1

Akile's lamenting and despairing letter to her husband explains how in one second all the strong ties of marriage could be broken by one sentence from the husband. She writes:

Do you remember the day when you left me? I shall never forget that blackest day of my life, that day of ill-luck for me..... when you told me "You are free!": when in one second you pronounced that horrible sentence which deprives a woman of all her love, all will, happiness, and all her hopes..... I fell in a corner, fainting. 2

Miserably unhappy and wretched, she shows how their happy life was destroyed by this "terrible sentence". Immediately after her divorce, Akile's mother-in-law, pleased at having separated her son from his wife, tells Akile:

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1. Ibid., Marriage under the Meteor, p. 296.
 2. Ibid., The Divorced, p. 6.

I can never allow an unengaged woman to see or be seen by a man..... You, listen carefully! My son is no longer your husband! He is a complete stranger to you!

Akile answers, "How could I be a stranger to the man with whom I have spent four whole years of my life? And what about our beloved child?" The mother-in-law asks, horrified, "Do you mean to say that you dare to come against the divorce law?" Akile answers, "As he divorced me by uttering one word, he could also marry me by uttering another word." ¹ So easy it was for men to divorce and marry! Could they ever enjoy an easier and more powerful privilege than this complete authority?

In Coincidence, Mail openly tells his wife, Saibe, "As marriage is performed with one word, it can also be dissolved by one word." ² In fact, when one studies the happy early years of this couple, one is almost astonished at the great change which comes over the husband in his attitude towards his wife. He cannot, now, bear to see her, he cannot bear to listen to her or chat with her. All because of his dishonest affaire with Şöhret. The

1. Ibid., pp. 8-9.

2. Ibid., Coincidence, p. 231.

relationship of husband and wife is loosened to the extent that Mail refrains from divorcing his wife, not because that is not easy for him; it is his fear of the parents on both sides that hinders him from doing so.

One might think that the tragic consequences which eventually befell this happy family could have been avoided, even partly, if Saibe had been independent in the full meaning of the word. In that case, being a recognized individual, she might have had sufficient self-confidence to depend on herself entirely and choose a new way of life. If she had had the right to divorce her husband, perhaps she would have done so without torturing her sensitive nature. But being tied to her husband's will, and being dominated by him just as her mother, grandmother and great-grandmother were, she never even thought of attaining such a right to use against his authority.

The Grateful One provides us with another clear example of how husbands could enjoy this right whenever they liked, regardless of the disastrous consequences that might follow. The only thing

that mattered to them when exercising this privilege was doubtless to fulfil their personal hopes. Nihad Bey, failing to form a liaison with the honest and pure Neriman, a maid, suggests that he is prepared to divorce his wife and leave his children in order to marry her if Neriman insists on that.¹

Seza also reveals the lightness with which divorce is practised. She says that the husband "by only saying to his wife, 'Let your will be in your hands', could divorce and drive her out of doors".² He is free to the extent that this privilege can be his safeguard whenever and wherever he wishes. At times this privilege is thought of even before marriage. Şuayip Efendi, a man of fifty-five, wants to marry Binnaz, a girl of eighteen, the pretty daughter of a well-known fallen woman. The difference in their ages gives him no hesitation at all. He reflects, "I marry Binnaz and reach my hope; if this marriage does not prove to be suitable in other respects, then I leave her. Thank God! Our lofty religion allows us to do that."³ Şuayip Efendi's aim, undoubtedly, is

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1. Ibid., The Grateful One, pp. 214-217.
 2. Ibid., The Pursuit of Desire, p. 39.
 3. Ibid., Toraman, p. 57.

solely to attain all the secular pleasures he is looking for. If he does not reach his aim, then is there anything easier for men than to divorce their wives ¹ and get rid of them? "Divorce in fact was easier than marriage." ² Undoubtedly this statement is not expressed only for the sake of comparison. There must be a loftier motive for it. To break up a family, to destroy a holy union in life, is so ridiculously and easily practised. Certainly this is not a small matter, easily overlooked, and about which little can be done. Serious steps must be taken to prevent and avoid the catastrophes and disasters that follow the fulfilment of a man's wish, expressed perhaps in a moment of anger or bad temper.

Since there was no limit to the right of divorce, the man could marry as many as four women at one time and divorce as many of his wives as he wished. After Nihad Bey's first wife dies, we learn that "he married six more times but each marriage ended with a divorce". ³ By presenting these sincere, true examples of the abuse made of

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1. C. White, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 197.
 2. Hüseyin Rahmi, The Autumn Nightingale, p. 157.
 3. Ibid., The Witch, p. 36.

the privilege by men, Hüseyin Rahmi successfully shows the drawbacks of the contemporary divorce system. Yet while he urges equality in the use of this right, if it should be at all necessary, he draws attention to the great danger of giving this equality without education as a foundation for it. With the overwhelmingly prevailing illiteracy, especially among women, equality could bring still more harm. We can best see this view explained in his story, Hürmüz Hanim Divorces her Husband. Illiterate as she is, Hürmüz Hanim misunderstands a piece of news in a local paper and concludes that women have acquired the right to obtain a divorce as easily as men. She and other similarly illiterate women take boundless joy in this and seek the slightest excuses in order to exercise this right. Their attitude towards their husbands changes and becomes completely spiteful: "Now it is you who are at our mercy!" They all use this right at the earliest opportunity they find. Yet in the end they discover their misunderstanding: women have not been given such a right as yet. Their disappointment is intense. Hüseyin Rahmi, while

relating this, says:

Divorce could be as easily practised by women as by men for trivial reasons once they had the right. There must be stricter laws to avoid such family ruin. 1

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1. Hüseyin Rahmi, Kadınlar Vaizi: The Women's Preacher, pp. 94-95.

CONCLUSION.

We have now come to the end of our study of the process, and the problems, of women's emancipation. We chose to survey it through the work of two novelists who, through their writings, played a considerable part in advancing that emancipation in their respective countries. Both sought to educate the public and to influence social feeling towards the adoption of a more humane and reasonable attitude to certain customs which tended to condemn the women of their time to a position of perpetual dependence on men, even at the cost of self-respect and human dignity.

Yet, as we compare the two societies shown to us in the works of our two novelists, we see that while there were fundamental similarities in their refusal to recognize women as individuals and in considering them inferior to men, the conditions, and consequently the problems, within the two countries, differed both in quality and degree.

Turkish women endured sufferings, limitations and restrictions unknown to the world of

George Eliot. Their position can be gathered from the various history-books of the period, from the probable opinions of my grandmother as a representative Turkish woman of the time, and from the novels of Hüseyin Rahmi. From our present-day point of view we can regard these Turkish women as the helpless victims of rigid social laws which prevented them from enjoying the privileges which at that time were held to be the prerogatives of men only. As we have seen, the entire current of their lives was shaped, through their dependence on men, according to the wishes of the masculine world. Lack of systematic education, widespread illiteracy, with all its attendant evils, their inferior economic position, all tended to prevent women from developing their latent powers and from making any individual contribution to the needs of society. Such regulations and conventions kept women in a position no better than that of mere chattels in the masculine abode. It was these that Hüseyin Rahmi fought against and sought to abolish. The spiritual struggles of Hüseyin Rahmi's women characters can all be traced directly to the conventional

acceptance of the inferiority of women, by which any attempt to leave the sacred abode, the home, in order to become acquainted with the outside world, was considered an offence against religion. The result was, in many cases, tragedy. In his various pictures of Turkish women, one can perceive how their status was affected by historical, social, religious and perhaps political pressures.

Turning to English society and George Eliot's female characters, we find a like unrest. Yet how different in detail are their problems from those of Turkish women! The limitations which surrounded Turkish women were material and external; the struggles and sufferings which made the lives of George Eliot's heroines pathetic and at times unbearable to contemplate, were spiritual and intellectual. Just as the social position, behaviour, and outlook of Englishwomen appeared "shocking", "terrifying" and "daring" to the average Turkish woman as represented by my grandmother, the rigidly confined life of Turkish women would have appeared "strange" and "intolerable" to their English contemporaries. Why then, as they were not hedged about with the external limitations and

regulations which deprived Turkish women of their freedom, did they find their position so unsatisfactory? Why were they dissatisfied with conditions in which they were fortunate compared with their Turkish contemporaries? I believe that the answer can be found through observation of our present status in Turkey.

Women are no longer deprived of legal rights or social privileges. We are put on a complete equality with men and with our English contemporaries. As can be judged from the legal rights accorded us by the constitution, we enjoy exactly the same amount of freedom in all things. Yet in our actual lives, we are still dissatisfied. It is true that with the declaration of the Republic we made a sudden break with old values and concepts which kept women in an inferior status. But our customs and traditions, with the old sentiment of close family relationship, still dominate our family life and thus lead us to regard the family as a widely-constituted unit. In this we still resemble George Eliot's women characters, who were moulded by family ties. This attitude of hers is contrary to that of the modern novelists who con-

sider their characters entirely as individuals. Civil laws cannot undo the strong and close family bonds which have always played a considerable part in Eastern life. Consequently, we have now two distinct generations. The younger generation are being brought up in schools which teach them to develop as independent individuals and useful citizens, seeking to achieve universal aims for the welfare of humanity. The older generation give their whole-hearted approval to the idea of national progress and the contribution of women, equally with that of men, to the national well-being; yet at the same time they hold that their opinions, as elder members of the family, must be not only consulted, but accepted. The new independent and individualistic attitude, taken along with a strong belief in the obligations of family relationship and a deep respect for the opinions of elders produces a conflict in the minds of many of the more intellectual women. This clash between two almost equally balanced forces leads to a sense of isolation for intellectual women, with problems arising for them which are more or less similar to those of Dorothea, Maggie, and perhaps Dinah Morris.

After the death of her first husband, Casaubon, Dorothea undergoes a severe spiritual crisis, which she faces with remarkable bravery. This struggle is the conflict between accepted convention, in accordance with which she should have given up Ladislaw to preserve her material wealth, and her own strong individuality, which led her to follow the counsels of her own heart without regard to the strictures of society. The interference of her relatives in their attempts to dissuade her from a second marriage finds many parallels in our Turkish society, whether, as in Dorothea's case, on material grounds, or for retaining one's social position or for the sake of the family name.

Turning to Maggie, we find that she reflects in many ways a dilemma of intellectual Turkish women, stemming from their consciousness of the importance of the family as a social unit. Allowing for the element of caricature in the characters of Maggie's aunts, we can recognize a similarity between the Dodson sisters and those elder members of Turkish families who consider it their duty to offer gratuitous advice to their relatives, and their right to see that advice acted upon. Inter-

ference like this, extending to quite personal matters, led to a conflict in the minds of Turkish women between their personal inclinations and beliefs, and their sense of the respect due to the ideas and counsels of their elders. Again, Maggie is prevented from marrying Philip Wakem just as many a Turkish woman faced a similar struggle because the man whom she loved, himself innocent, was connected by blood to one who had done her family a wrong.

The parallel to Dinah Morris is to be found among those present-day Turkish women who travel around the villages in an attempt to bring enlightenment to the peasant women, whose resistance to the new concepts of individuality, equality and independence is all the greater because, of necessity, their whole life has been spent on the land, working together with their husbands and sons in the fields. They are convinced that work of the intellect is not for them and that it is none of their business to go beyond the bounds which Nature has set for women's work - the upbringing of children and their part in the cultivation of the family's fields. Reasoning is a man's duty, and

his privilege.

It should not be inferred from this that illiteracy is as widespread among the peasants of today as it was, even among townspeople, in the nineteenth century. The Turkish peasants have always been noted for the co-operation between men and women in matters of day-to-day existence. According to present-day law, primary education is compulsory in every part of the country. Every Turk has at least this minimum of education. Custom and tradition, however, combine to arouse opposition to women who do what is considered to be man's work, public-speaking, acting as lawyers, or seeking government offices. Many ambitious women, therefore, face similar opposition to that met with by Dinah, in a village community.

These examples show how Turkish society, with its strong sense of tradition and convention, contains, like English nineteenth-century society, many women whose ideals run counter to custom and tradition, and who must struggle or remain patient in face of their environment. We should not make the mistake of thinking that this happens in every Turkish family. In many families, despite attach-

ment to long-inherited customs and traditions, the children are free to do as they think right, although the parents retain the subconscious wish that their opinion should be consulted and obeyed. Even where tradition is more rigid, no conflict may arise, because the women of the family are not of a highly intellectual type.

The problems which beset Hüseyin Rahmi's women have, however, been steadily disappearing. The tragi-comic superficial aping of the manners and outlook of Western civilization ¹ has become a thing of the past as the country has established its own combination of Western social manners with the fine Eastern tradition of human relationship. The problems of "Büyü" ² which formerly ruled the lives of the majority of Turkish women have receded since, with the rising standard of education, büyü has largely lost its value and popularity. The nineteenth-century economic problems, arising out of divorce and polygamy, have, thanks to our Republic, completely disappeared.

Thus far, we have considered this process

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1. See Appendix II.
 2. See Appendix I.

of emancipation from three of the four standpoints selected at the outset of our study,¹ those of our two novelists and our representative of Turkish traditionalism. The fourth, that of the writer, remains to be briefly outlined.

Having seen in my own country many real-life Dorotheas, Maggies, Esther Lyons and the like, I wondered if there were still any of their kind in the England of today. Therefore I made a special effort to get to know as many English women as possible. The conclusions at which I arrived, after travelling in various parts of Britain and through living in large communities of women students, were in most cases rather unpleasant for me, less because I was critical of the social concepts and behaviour of the women I met - as was the case in my grandmother's attitude towards George Eliot's women - than because I fear that we in Turkey must eventually pass through the stage which our English counterparts have reached today.

It would not be right for me to general-

1. Introduction, p. 6.

ize on the views of English women from the outlook of English students, although I have met many. I shall therefore confine myself to comparing the attitude of these with that of Turkish women students.

What strikes one most is the difference in the concept of family relationship. In Britain, for economic reasons, the family means only the group composed of parents and children, but in Turkey the family unit is much larger, extending to grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and even more distant relatives. Consequently the English girl regards herself as responsible only to her parents, and not always even to them, as, at twenty-one, she is in law completely free. This legal concept of her "independence" and "freedom" has seemed to me most strikingly characteristic of the English woman. By taking her independence too seriously, she develops such an individualistic personality and outlook that, unconsciously, she ignores the opportunity for the development of these qualities which only a woman can possess. I should have liked that George Eliot could have seen the length to which her successors carry the concept of "individuality",

and then to see how she herself would have reacted towards it.

It is not, I think, narrow-mindedness which prompts me to dislike the almost mannish independence of English women. I believe that woman is the complement of, not the inferior to, man, and that each must enjoy complete independence within the limits which nature has appointed for them. Equality with men does not mean imitating them or attempting to play a man's part in society. Tenderness and gentleness are, of necessity, feminine qualities, and the work which women should do should include such as George Eliot likes her women to perform, works of philanthropy, calling for affection and the finer feminine feelings. It is true that the requirements of present-day life and its economic circumstances make it necessary for women to earn their own living and to struggle with life. It is therefore natural that they should demand in all things the same treatment as men. Yet my view, which will not be pleasing to my English friends, is that man must of necessity be master of the home, though certainly not to the extent that woman is

his servant, or a chattel for his welfare and comfort. On the contrary, she should be "Queen of the House" of which he is the King, but these rôles are complementary, not competitive. In a concept of the complementary existence of man and woman, the two may be likened to a single organism which can live and function happily and perfectly only through the mutual co-operation of its parts; a strife between the parts can lead to nothing but the destruction of the two-fold body.

As a result of these observations of contemporary English women, I feel that one day, we in Turkey, in spite of a concept of family relationship far stronger even than that of the England of George Eliot, and in spite of the will to make sacrifices for any member of the family without regret or expectation of reward, will, as a consequence of our Western social behaviour, become sooner or later like the Englishwomen of today.

I have reached this conclusion through an analogy with what has gone before. We have seen three stages of development: first, that of Turkish women of the nineteenth century, which had no counterpart in its contemporary English society;

secondly that of English women of the nineteenth century, with its counterpart in the Turkish society of today; thirdly, the "fully emancipated" Englishwoman of the twentieth century. Just as the counterparts of Turkish women of today were to be found in nineteenth century English society, so it seems probable that in the next stage of development in Turkey, women will resemble the present-day Englishwomen. I fear that, owing to economic and material pressure we too, when we reach this stage, will lose our fine tradition of the closeness of family ties.

Yet I wonder if the study of George Eliot and those like her, who preached to the public the necessity of recognizing the individuality of women, can help us to avoid the changes inherent in the adoption of the English concept of "independence" and "freedom". Can we in Turkey penetrate beneath the surface of George Eliot's teaching to the philosophical basis on which her concept of woman's individuality is built? Is it possible for us to combine this lofty concept with our fine Eastern tradition of family relationship and thus escape the adoption of "independence" in the English sense

of the word? If we avoid the mistake, common enough in the fields of science and religion, of fastening on the practical application without penetrating to the philosophical sources and inmost visions which inspire it, we may be able to do so. With this hope, we might look forward to not becoming "independent" in the English sense. Whether such a hope is justified, or whether the only possible "freedom" for women lies in the direction followed out by Western women, only the future will reveal.

At all events, our study tempts us to venture a further conclusion; women will always be dissatisfied with their position, whether or not such dissatisfaction depends on their legal status. Certainly the complete emancipation of women is not simply a legal question. Judging from all the evidence and the examples which we have seen, we feel bound to conclude that no definite limit can be set to the process of emancipation for women. It is a process of mental and spiritual evolution. Having passed through any given stage, one finds fresh cause for dissatisfaction in the newly achieved position. This cause removed, we move on to

another stage, and so on, throughout time, albeit with different values and through new and varying forms. Yet the forms that we shall see will be shaped by the conceptions and values of women themselves.

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APPENDIX I.THE PROBLEM OF BÜYÜ.

Illiteracy created one of the greatest social diseases prevalent in Turkey at that time; namely the Superstition and Büyü which played an almost incredible part in the lives of Turkish women.¹ Their whole-hearted belief in the power and influence of Büyü and its consequences made them the slaves of those who practised it - and who were known as Hocas - to such an extent that they frequently allowed their whole course of life to be decided by such people. Although the Hocas also practised the art of healing,² their main function lay in the handling of marriage problems, in the marrying-off of spinsters, in helping parents in the arrangement of marriages, in imposing states of mind and heart on certain people, and in removing similar effects of magic from others. Superstition, likewise, filled the lives of women, who were most prone to it, with hesitations which would have

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1. Ercüment Ekrem, Memories of Yesterday, Chapter on Üfürükçüler; "Faith Healers".
 2. Ibid..

been ridiculous had they not been intolerable.

Hüseyin Rahmi studied this deeply-rooted social disease and considered its causes and its consequences, and fought it in his usual manner. Once more he drew examples from real-life situations and reflected them with remarkable sincerity and regard for truth.

His illustrations, taken alone, without arguments for and against, are sufficient to show the falsity of such beliefs. The tragic results of büyü and the cunning tricks which the Hocas employed in order to bleed their simple and often innocent patrons, are in themselves ample evidence of charlatanry.

But he is not content simply to tell a story revealing the tragic consequences of such utter trust in the power of büyü for family life and the lives of all who follow the Hoca's advice. By contrasting various characters, Hüseyin Rahmi makes his own opinions clear. He relates, first of all, the steps which the Hocas took to swindle their patients, thereby revealing how little their art was founded on science or knowledge of any sort. Yet we cannot deny the Hocas the mastery of what

we today should call the "psychological approach". Out of their great experience, they had developed sharp eyes, keen to understand the character and the social background of each new patron, and could accordingly decide on the best method by which to treat a patient to their own advantage.

In The Mistress, seeing how her husband's mistress, Parnas, has extreme power in holding Hâmi Bey (her husband), Saffet Hanım cannot refrain from confiding her suspicions and worries to Dudu, her femme de chambre. She says, "That woman Parnas must be practising büyü. Otherwise no man could be so strongly tied to a woman as Hâmi is to her."¹

In The Crystal Heart we hear this conversation.

- Watch your steps, Sema: you might not be able to marry Muhlis.
- Why not? Or is there anyone practising büyü on us? 2

This in fact shows that büyü was rooted in Sema's mind to such an extent that she thought of it immediately as a cause which might stop her marrying

1. Hüseyin Rahmi, The Mistress, p. 285.
 2. Ibid., Billûr Kalb: The Crystal Heart, p. 492.

Muhlis.

Büyü was at times practised to part a woman from the man she loved. The following conversation between Vehibe and her husband regarding the serious, though ridiculous, love affair between her mother, over sixty, and a young man of twenty-six, reveals Vehibe's strong belief in the power of büyü to part these two. The husband asks, "Why are we supposed to see this Hoca?" His wife answers, "We want to practise a very strong büyü to part my mother from Vassaf." ¹

In the directions that Hoca Nefise gives to Saibe Hanim as to what to do so that the effect of the büyü on Mail, her husband, will be fruitful, one can see how it was practised.

Hoca Nefise says,

Saibe Hanim, my daughter, now listen to me. I am undertaking this business. I shall save Mail from the love of that woman. But you must do whatever I tell you. I shall give you small pieces of blue paper. Soak them in water and find an excuse to make your husband drink of this very water when he comes home in the evenings. (Returning the vest to Saibe.) When he changes

1. Ibid., How My Mother-in-Law Went Mad, p. 57.

his vest, give him this one to put on. There is no difficulty in doing any of these things. Now come and sit in front of me, let me read something in your face too. (After reading for ten minutes in Saibe's face, she blessed her with her breath three times, then made her drink some blessed water.) May health and goodness come upon you, my daughter . . . Now go, look at the sky through the window. Tonight you'll feel much better, your trouble will grow less . . . 1

Other forms of büyü are mentioned in The Susceptible, when Şipsevdi's wife recites all the possible means she tried, including büyü, in order to recover his good sense.

I have tried every possible thing on earth to bring you to your senses. I brought you water to drink from Paşmaki Şerif; (2) I brought you a piece of stone from Merkez Efendi; (3) I gave your underwear to be read. . . . I sewed the muska (4) I got from the büyücü-Hoca between your jacket and its lining. . . . I took decanters of water to the Hindiler Tekkesi (5) to be read. . . . and made you drink of it; but still you didn't come to your senses. Azize Hanım has given me nefes. (6) Every night I made you drink of its water, still there was no effect on you . . . Many, many other things I practised, but nothing was

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1. Ibid., Coincidence, p. 200.
 - 2; 3. These are places in Istanbul.
 4. Muska is a piece of paper bearing sentences according to the purposes it will be used for. These sentences are written by Hocas.
 5. One of the Tekkes, which are places where people (usually men) gathered at nights and practised religious rites.
 6. Nefes is again something like muska.

useful or helpful to you. 1

In The Divorced, the mother-in-law tells her daughter-in-law, "I don't know what kind of büyü you have tried on my son to make him so taciturn and almost dumb." 2 All these examples show how deeply a full conviction of the power of büyü had penetrated into the minds of women.

Hüseyin Rahmi also shows how a fear of divorce and separation combined with their illiteracy and extreme dependence on men to give this belief its contemporary strength. Being almost entirely helpless and under the full authority of men, women could find no means of keeping their husbands attached to them after learning of their relationships with mistresses. They resort to büyü as a cure and solution. In the work Coincidence, one finds one of the finest illustrations ever written of the power of büyü, with its causes and evil effects.

Illiteracy drives Gülsüm to employ büyü on her husband through Hoca Nefise. Gülsüm sus-

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1. Hüseyin Rahmi, Sipsevdi: The Susceptible, p. 445.
 2. Ibid., The Divorced, pp. 12-13.

pects her husband on the ground that he has written pamphlets to declare his love to another woman. Although the pamphlets are in her possession, she cannot read them. Eventually she hurries to Hoca Nefise, who is equally illiterate but successful at concealing the fact. Hoca Nefise confirms Gülsüm's suspicion, and in order to drag money out of her, asks her to pay a certain amount so that she can give a special invitation to her "fairies and djinnns" to consult them about a solution. Gülsüm uses every means, even robbing her mother, to provide the wanted amount of money for the party. We hear of no solution at all of this problem by Hoca Nefise. What one constantly hears of is the need for more money to please the fairies, for them to supply good information and advice. Finally, after all the troubles, and the sleepless nights poor Gülsüm goes through to supply Hoca Nefise with the required amount of money, one learns of the false accusation and the groundless suspicions Gülsüm has held against her husband. Had Gülsüm been able to read she need not have gone to such a socially and morally dangerous woman as Hoca Nefise to ask her to read the pamphlets. She herself could

have read them and found the truth, thus saving herself spiritual as well as material troubles.¹

Hoca Nefise, with her great success in swindling, her great cunning in making people believe in her büyü, is also a bringer of destruction on happy families. By a strange trick of fate, both Saibe and Şöhret go to Hoca Nefise: the first, to make her husband, Mail, who has begun greatly to neglect her and their child, come back to her; Şöhret, to make her lover, Mail, who through fear of his parents will not divorce Saibe, leave his home and wife entirely and marry her. Saibe unconsciously encourages Hoca Nefise to go on with her groundless, useless art by saying, "I am sorry to give you all this trouble, but I have no value for money. I will sacrifice whatever I possess, only to have my husband brought back to me, with all our old love and understanding."² Hoca Nefise employs the knowledge she gets from each of these in order to inflame the other.³ Both women believe in Hoca Nefise's art and knowledge of büyü, especially when she relates incidents and facts

1. Ibid., Coincidence, pp. 19-56.

2. Ibid., p. 197.

3. Ibid..

which only the person closest to Mail could be expected to know. Their utter confidence in Hoca Nefise makes them give her generously whatever she asks. Hoca Nefise in her turn, to make the most profitable use of these two women, continues to treat their problems for months and months. Instead of helping the wife by separating the husband from his mistress, she enlarges the gulf of misunderstanding between them. At the same time, instead of helping Şöhret by influencing Mail to divorce his wife, Hoca Nefise leads Şöhret to say to Mail things which make him even more afraid to do so.¹

At last, after all the tragic consequences have come about: the marriage of Mail with the unfaithful and disloyal Şöhret; the evil effect of this marriage on his first wife Saibe and her resulting serious illness and death; his parents' ever reproachful attitude towards his marriage to a fallen woman such as Şöhret, who deceives him by her conduct with other men, Mail is forever haunted by a consciousness of guilt which in some way reminds one of Arthur Donnithorne's

1. Ibid., p. 195.

sense of guilt in face of his crime with Hetty Sorrel. Moreover, all Mail's wealth is squandered on Şöhret. No doubt the great responsibility for these disasters rests on Hoca Nefise. Having nothing in mind beyond getting as much money as possible from her victims, she never refrains from creating or widening discord between a happy couple or in happy families.

By presenting the story of this 'büyücü', Hoca Nefise, so openly and frankly with full details about her art, Hüseyin Rahmi teaches the public that büyücüs, as exemplified by Hoca Nefise bring to society harm rather than benefit. The discovery of her false "art" is indeed related in a most interesting and successful way. Saibe, Şöhret, Gülsüm, Mail and the rest, who have all been affected in some way, meet, by a not unlikely coincidence, in Hoca Nefise's house. There they all learn the sad truth as to how this Hoca has made use of them as a source of wealth.¹ But by then it is too late to take any step to make up for all the devastation she has brought about.

1. Ibid., pp. 270-280.

If Saibe had been a better educated and more independent woman with all the rights we now enjoy, she could have judged, reasoned, and thus made her own efforts to efface the cause of misunderstanding between herself and Mail: she would not have resorted to a büyücü with her assumed power, to solve her marriage problems, she would not have believed in the effect of this "art" at all, and thus would have been spared all the spiritual conflicts she went through, as well as the difficulties she faced in providing the required money for Hoca Nefise. Above all, she could have used her own art to tie her husband to herself by understanding his tastes, outlook, moods and states of mind on different occasions. She would have had a complete self-confidence which could have stimulated her to face whatever difficulties and problems she met with a self-assurance and will that would not have failed to solve her difficulties.

At times one comes across men who try certain forms of büyü in order to win or influence a certain woman. Reyhan Bey writes to his friend, Müştak Bey, "I have got several love-potions from different "büyücüs" so that the Mademoiselle will

like and approve of me." 1

In addition to being called upon to solve misunderstandings between married couples, to arrange or destroy marriages, to keep certain men strongly attached to their mistresses, and to prevent certain events from coming to pass, Hocas were also resorted to for help in extinguishing the influence of love-potions.

Saffet Hanım thinks that, by practising büyü on her husband, Parnas is enabled to keep him attached to her. So she tells her femme-de-chambre, Dudu,

I have had recommended to me a very powerful Hoca living in Nuriösmaniye. Tomorrow let's go there and ask him to destroy the effect of Parnas's love-potion . . . I don't care how much he asks me to pay. 2

We hear of another attempt at the same thing through Hasna Hanım when she bewails her husband's indifference to her.

His eyes can no more see me! Somebody must have tried büyü on my husband to make him like this towards me . . . If anyone knows of a powerful Hoca, let me know

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1. Ibid., The Mistress, p. 120.
 2. Ibid., p. 265.

it, to destroy the effect of what's being practised on him. 1

Just as büyü occupied a large place in the life of Turkish women, then, other kinds of superstition were also common. The novel, The Witch, is built entirely on superstition. "When the first wife of Naşit Bey died, a black cat had run over the coffin, so the dead had turned into a witch...."² "Then Naşit Bey married again: this witch suffocated the wife....his next six wives were all divorced lest the witch should suffocate them too."³ His third wife, Şükriye Hanim, did not believe the rumours about the witch - that she supplied her own children plentifully with various kinds of food,⁴ and that she suffocated the second wife.⁵ But when one day Şükriye Hanim opened a locked drawer which had no other key than the one in her possession, she found that all the jewellery belonging to the witch had disappeared, and a letter in the very handwriting of the witch lay there instead. It read:

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1. Ibid., Toraman, p. 37.
 2. Ibid., The Witch, p. 33.
 3. Ibid., p. 36.
 4. Ibid., p. 66.
 5. Ibid., p. 77.

Necessity obliges me to take these jewels belonging to my children. I shall return them after a time. Isn't this sufficient to warn those who don't believe in incarnation?

The signature:
The dead wife of Naşit Bey.
Emine Binnaz. 1

After a great fuss about the witch, the superstition is proved to be groundless. A secret passage is found between the roof of Naşit Bey's house and another belonging to a painter, whose mother, a sculptress, was an extremely close friend of Emine Binnaz. By making a mask with an extraordinary resemblance to Emine's face and wearing it, she has spread all the rumours in the neighbourhood about the witch, and all the consequent fear created by her malicious doings. As for the second wife, she apparently died suddenly from a heart attack. Thus it is proved that Naşit Bey's house is not haunted, and there is no trace of any witch. In showing this, Hüseyin Rahmi tried to prove that a great many superstitions are held without any foundation.

All these examples successfully illustrate the harm wrought through illiteracy. If these

1. Ibid., p. 114.

women had not had such a blind trust in büyü and superstition, they would not have submitted to financial exploitation by women who exerted a subtle psychological influence upon them. With a little education, their attitude would have been very different. For one thing they would never have thought of referring problems so delicate as those of marriage to women so obviously illiterate; for another, they would not have believed in the power of potions to rouse feelings of love or hatred.

Considering these examples one wonders what George Eliot would have thought about "büyü" and how she would have treated such a mine of subjects. Her treatment of illiteracy offers illustrations similar to those of Hüseyin Rahmi and it is possible she might have used the same method as he did; that of building up life-like characters and showing their harmful influence, and its consequences to their victims. Yet judging from her treatment of character, there might perhaps have been a difference in her way of introducing these examples to her readers. She would have given a more "psychological analysis" of the victims, and

devoted space also to the spiritual struggle of the "Büyücüs". She would have shown them punished more by their own guilty consciences than by the laws of society.

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APPENDIX II.BLIND WESTERNIZATION.

Hüseyin Rahmi was not only critical of the traditional fabric of Turkish society that condemned the woman to a position bordering on slavery; he was almost contemptuous of the trend towards aping the West blindly in every sphere of life, regardless of the fitness of the adopted ways in Turkish life.

The reaction of the women's world towards the Westernizing movement could not but encourage him to carry on his fight for a real and basic reform in the status of women. He set about this by painting, again in all its details, a faithful picture of the absurd imitation of the West by the superficially Europeanized Turkish snobs of his day, or "Züppe", as they were called. Thus he demonstrated the great harm which such people could bring to society. Then, he exposed the abnormal phenomenon of blind Westernization on the part of the Turkish women who in some ways surpassed men in their indiscriminating reactions to Western in-

fluence - although these were largely due to the fundamental disadvantages of their position, already mentioned.

Hüseyin Rahmi showed the conflict between the younger generation with their devotion to new ways and Western ideas, and the old, with their strict adherence to Turkish custom,¹ and their condemnation on religious grounds of everything 'alafranga', as they believed it sacrilege to imitate the customs of non-Moslem people. In order to demonstrate this successfully, Hüseyin Rahmi chose to depict the life of the great konaks - the old Turkish mansions - revealing the hidden corruption infecting the older generation even while it opposed the younger,² and holding up to ridicule the blind imitation of the West of those who disapproved, albeit rightly, of the old, rotten ideas. Having done this, he returned to the finer qualities of the national tradition, and invited his people to hold fast to that which was good in national life, always insisting that in order to

1. M. Berkes, "Hüseyin Rahminin Romanlarında Kadın ve Aile: Women and Family in the Novels of Hüseyin Rahmi." Journal of Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi, Vol. III, pp. 19-20.

2. Ibid..

progress, his people must strive to understand the sound scientific and philosophical basis of Western civilization.

In his incomparable work, The Handsome One, one is given valuable information about the absurd yet understandable follies of a real "Zuppe" - Şöhret Bey - anxious to be called 'alafranga'. His whole aim is concentrated on his outward appearance and his (tragi-comic) way of walking along the fashionable centre, Beyoglu, in Istanbul,¹ as walking in such places was greatly in vogue.² Moreover, thinking of how Europeans walk side by side in the streets, Şöhret, unable to find a Turkish 'alafranga' woman, forms a relationship with Madame Potiche. Studying Şöhret's tremendous fondness for Westernization, in contrast with his entire ignorance of its deeper values, Mme. Potiche encourages his superficial imitation of Western behaviour to drag more money out of him. She suggests that to complete their entire European look, a dog must accompany them in their walks. Moreover, she takes the responsibility of providing such a dog and gets

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1. Hüseyin Rahmi, Şik: The Handsome One, p. 21.
 2. Ercüment Ekrem, Memories of Yesterday.
"Şehzade Başı".

hold of an aged, dirty, shabby dog from the street. She dresses it so oddly with a red cap that when they begin their 'memorable' walks in those fashionable quarters of Istanbul, everyone surrounds them with ironical compliments and remarks.¹ The account of how Şöhret learned dancing is indeed a remarkable piece of comic observation.² The emptiness of his pretensions is further revealed by the pathetic figure he makes in trying to discuss French literature with some Frenchmen in the Tavern. Equipped with some bogus names of French writers supplied by his malicious acquaintances, he sings the praises of a non-existent French writer, and supports his eulogy with some nonsensically childish quotations from his "works". The Frenchmen, being in good humour, encourage him to give more information about his 'French writer', laughing at his expense while he revels blissfully in his knowledge of Western literature.³ His whole occupation is to look after his Western attire, his stick and monocle, his Mme. Potiche, and the dog! By

1. Hüseyin Rahmi, op. cit., pp. 23, 24, 33.

2. Ibid., p. 162.

3. Ibid., pp. 116-123.

exposing this pathetic, yet not unsympathetic figure, Hüseyin Rahmi, indeed, successfully presents the excesses such people fall into, thinking of progress and civilization in terms of clothes and outlandish manners, while remaining a drag on a nation with a genuine demand for progress in every field.

In the person of Mademoiselle Anjel in The Governess, Hüseyin Rahmi shows how everything related in one way or other to the West had 'a great market'¹ in Turkey, regardless of the quality of the import. Belonging to one of the lowest classes of fallen women in France, Mlle. Anjel finds Turkey with the great zeal of its people to ape the West, the very place to sell her Western outlook at the highest price. Her entrance to the very conservative family of Dehri Efendi as a "governess" to his children is through sheer chance. Taking her for a well-educated French woman, Dehri Efendi trusts her to teach his four children the French language, French ways, etiquettes and manners, in a word to bring them up as 'alafrangas'!

1. Hüseyin Rahmi, Mürebbiye: The Governess, pp. 11-12.

In the same yali, the old generation with their strict attachment to their conventions and traditions, are horrified at the new ways brought into the family through Mlle. Anjel. The old Kâhya,¹ Edâ, is frightened at the quaint attitudes the children learn from their governess. In a lamenting and regretful tone she says:

How ridiculous! How like puppets these children are when they say 'Bonjurna' to me! In the mornings it is bonjurna, in the evenings sonjurna, and when handing or taking anything, Merci! Their father, the Efendi, almost faints with horror when he sees his children take these funny poses, and hears them say these ridiculous words instead of standing straight in our own way with crossed hands on their chest before their father, and then bowing to kiss the edge of his clothes. 2

A similar change in Turkish etiquette regarding the signs of respect traditionally shown to elders, male or female, affected the kissing of hands which was the proper and required manner of salutation. In The Susceptible,

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1. Kâhya is usually an elderly woman who manages the household affairs, including finance, inspecting the servants and their daily work, a sort of steward.
 2. Huseyin Rahmi, The Governess, p. 87.

Thinking that Meftun was going to kiss his twisted hand, Kasim Efendi stretched his hand towards Meftun's nose. But Meftun, to confirm his kind wishes, shook the hand several times strongly in the Western fashion then let it go. 1

"Bowing" has also come from the West; "Dudu made this stranger walk and walk until they came in front of Saffet Hanim and then bowed before her." 2 Again, "These poor people, thinking themselves in a salon in the presence of respectable people, bow-
ed with great respect." 3 Also, "After putting down the address, he returned the card with a bow." 4

Western table manners also found ready access to Turkish domestic life. It was the custom to eat with hands, but Meftun ".....gave a fork and a knife to his grandmother, mother, and aunt, despite their complaints, loathing and unwillingness." 5 Then according to 'alafranga',

.....one must sit very gently and properly on the chair, open the napkin and put it on the knee, not hanging it on one's collar, as this is most impolite. 6

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1. Ibid., The Susceptible, p. 307.
 2. Ibid., The Mistress, p. 237.
 3. Ibid., Eskiya Ininde: In the Den of Rakes, p. 158.
 4. Ibid., The Crystal Heart, p. 439.
 5. Ibid., The Susceptible, p. 56.
 6. Ibid., p. 95.

One must not fill his mouth either while eating or drinking and must not utter noises. 1

These are examples of the influence of Western manners less severely censured by Hüseyin Rahmi than were others. In The Governess, for example, his strong criticism of the high valuation of everything Western is clear in the way he presents the corruption affecting the conservative family of Dehri Efendi, known for its great attachment to tradition. Himself noted for his dictatorship, conservatism, strictness and bad temper, especially in matters regarding propriety and family honour,² Dehri Efendi does not scruple to have an affair with Mlle. Anjel. He punishes the Kâhya, Edâ, for her discovery of the governess's relationship with the bachelors of the house, Sadri Bey, Amca Bey and Şem'-i. Yet he himself leads the corruption - which is later disclosed with great scandal when he is found in the wardrobe of the governess.

In presenting this ridiculous story,

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1. Ibid., p. 97.
 2. Ibid., The Governess, p. 114.

Hüseyin Rahmi effectually shows how easily people may arrive at superficial conceptions of Western life, while failing to understand its essence. In spite of his tyranny and strictness in family matters, Dehri Efendi is snared by the fashion for employing a French governess and fails to assure himself that she is suitably qualified. Despite his care for the family name and honour, his prestige falls to zero when he is found together with Anjel. The fashion indeed of employing a French governess had become so widespread and popular, that in most cases it did more harm than good to the family unit, hence to the whole of the nation. Hüseyin Rahmi shows that it was not as Dehri Efendi thought, simply the manners and language which must be learned, but the principles behind its modes of life and thought.

In The Susceptible, one finds a couple deciding for themselves, upon marriage, in defiance of the old system of marriages arranged through the görücü (marriage broker): ".....because it was heard that in the West the marrying couple first decided between themselves and only then ask-

ed the opinion of their parents." ¹ Under the old system the betrothed pair were not allowed to see each other before their wedding day. But with the influence of the West, they arrange all their preparations themselves, as in How My Mother-in-Law Went Mad. ² The honeymoon had never been known in Turkey. Western influence showed itself in that too. In The Living Skeleton, one sees the shocked reaction to the departure of a 'honeymoon couple': "It was so terrible, no laughing matter indeed, that within a week of their wedding they left for Switzerland for their honeymoon." ³

The old generation is frightened of the 'alafranga'.

Feyzullah Efendi had a national conservatism. He didn't want to leave NuriyeZ-dan illiterate, but at the same time he was afraid of bringing her up completely with 'alafranga' education. ⁴

But then, ".....the young men nowadays don't want to marry illiterate, clumsy girls." ⁵ Therefore

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1. Ibid., The Susceptible, p. 242.
 2. Ibid., How My Mother-in-Law Went Mad, p. 165.
 3. Ibid., The Living Skeleton, p. 277.
 4. Ibid., The Final Wish, p. 25.
 5. Ibid., p. 26.

he decides to educate her but under a strict supervision. In this example Hüseyn Rahmi succeeds in showing the misunderstanding of the word 'alafranga' by the old, for they certainly did think that education must transform girls into 'alafrangas'. The grandfather, for the sake of finding a good match for Nuriyezdán, allows her a frill of education. His concept is at fault. Education, it is true, will give a girl accomplishments, but these should not avail only to find a husband for her. People must learn that education should not be acquired for merely egoistic purposes. Nuriyezdán and her like must be well-educated and enlightened, with a sound Western knowledge of science and philosophy, to be useful to their country. It is this universal aim that should be borne in mind when Western education is in question, rather than the fear that 'alafranga' education will lead a girl to dangers.

A comment on another superficial concept of the word 'Westernization' shows itself in The Crystal Heart. Thinking that civilization lies in appearance, Turkish women, without sufficient instruction, slavishly imitate the Westerners in

their dresses and in attending public gatherings.

Until recently the Turkish women used to hear of balls, receptions and dances. Whereas now with their décolletée dresses, they choose their partners for the dances and write them in their cards. 1

A comparison in The Living Skeleton shows how Turkish women bade fair to outpace even the Western woman in her own ways.

Our girls nowadays resemble them (the Western women) completely in their behaviour and fashions. Is there any difference between the two? They uncover their heads, arms, chests, legs..... Is there anywhere that has not been uncovered? . . . They not only imitate the Western women but even exceed them.....they dance in balls..... Men and women swim together..... Nothing is left to be considered shameful. 2

Another misconception is shown in When Women are as Men. Hearing that civilization implies equality and independence, Nebahat thinks that so long as she is economically independent, her husband must share with her in the household management, looking after the child, as she herself is contributing to the family budget. This is, she thinks,

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1. Ibid., The Crystal Heart, p. 89.
 2. Ibid., The Living Skeleton, p. 240.

civilization.¹ But the price she pays for her blind misinterpretation is the death of the child, through her own neglect on the ground that the father should take care of it.

Women are by Nature assigned, Hüseyin Rahmi shows, as George Eliot did too, to look after their homes and children, but not in the slavish way to which Turkish women were accustomed. They must have their position and receive individual recognition in every aspect of life so that their endeavour in bringing up children will be fruitful. If women think that emancipation and civilization mean the sharing of every task, as did Nebahat for example, then the result will be as disastrous as would be the death of the child.

Another sad phenomenon of the same trend is seen in The Women of the Tavern. Drinking had for long been a fashion among men.³ But women started to drink only when they gained liberty to do so as a sign of "Westernization", and especially when they began to attend mixed gatherings. In

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1. Ibid., Kadin Erkeklesince: When Women are as Men, pp. 73, 88, 93.
 2. Ibid., p. 97.
 3. Ibid., Coincidence; The Pursuit of Desire; Toraman.

this novel, Hüseyin Rahmi shows the deplorably pathetic position into which women in the Tavern fall as a consequence of their excessive drinking. Their behaviour (for which the Turkish women have always been praised and esteemed) becomes entirely different. They acquire those horrible ways of talking as if they were almost shouting, and of laughing carelessly without regard to where they are. Their excuse was that "women are Westernized": therefore they are free to do anything, anywhere,¹ until the police come to tell them they are arrested for being a nuisance, and that what is meant by civilization is not this anarchy.² These are, in fact, Hüseyin Rahmi's words.

In all these examples he reveals the false conception of Western civilization then current. People believed that by practising the manners or customs of the West they became 'alafranga' or advanced. This belief was fundamentally wrong. What civilization meant was not to be like Şöhret, Dehri or Nebahat, but to penetrate to the core of Western philosophy and learning, and to draw from

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1. Ibid., Meyhanede Kadınlar: Women of the Tavern, pp. 41-42.
 2. Ibid., p. 51.

that the lessons which only then should be put into practice in daily life.

Moreover, Hüseyin Rahmi applauds those of his own national customs and traditions which bestow a noble bearing on women, with grace and dignity worthy of their race.¹ But he makes a regrettable omission in not mentioning these much-appreciated Turkish traditions specifically, in a clear-cut way, and the same may be said regarding the positive aspects of Western civilization; while he loses no opportunity of burlesquing the blind imitation of Western customs, and of exposing the evil and destructive Turkish customs and traditions by parading them in the nude, singly and collectively.

This stress on the exposition of what is negative in the customs of the two societies, with an equal negligence of their positive values, leaves the reader rather befogged and perhaps in a frustrated frame of mind. Rahmi, without giving vivid expression to what he thinks so desirable, expects the reader to be already familiar with the traditional sense of morality in human behaviour. Not-

1. Ibid., p. 44.

withstanding these shortcomings, one cannot help appreciating the contribution he has made by giving a violent jolt to the complacency with which the secondary position of women in Turkey had come to be regarded; and an equally drastic and merciless assessment of the pseudo-Westernization of those Turkish women who in their endeavour to emulate their Western counterparts, emerge as a ridiculous combination of East and West - as an Eastern painting that has lost its charm as a result of blind retouching carried out with brushes borrowed from the Western paint-box.

In fact, such 'blind action' on the part of Turkish women recalls Dorothea Brooke's 'blind' attempts at learning and her devotion to an 'unworthy' scholar; Rosamond Vincey's 'blind' attempts at solving her marriage problem; and Mrs. Transome's 'blind' efforts to keep her son and their estate under her thumb. All these, as in the case of the Turkish women, resulted in nothing but disappointment.

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