

Declaration

I hereby attest that all the ideas contained and developed in this thesis are mine. All the sources and references are faithfully acknowledged and are provided at the end of each chapter of the present work.

Hatem

Acknowledgements

Though it is a Herculean task, writing a PhD thesis turns out to be easy when one is supervised by wonderful people like late Professor Bensaou Hamid, the internationally acclaimed critic Professor Penelope Ann Boumelha and the academician, and already acclaimed poet and novelist Dr Lynda Chouiten. They have been advisee, kind, friendly and trusting. Being part of the life of these three generous persons is one of the happy dividends of my research. I will never be able to thank them enough. This thesis would not have seen light without the valuable contribution of many other people such as Michelle Devereux, Dr John Suganthi from the University of Birmingham, my hostess in Birmingham Barbara Santocka, Dr Tracy Hayes from the Open University provided me with very useful documents, Professor Richard Nemesvari and Professor Kari Weil scanned and sent me chapters of their books, and Professor Philip Mallet sent me a book he had edited before its public release. Last but not least, I am very thankful to the members of the panel of examiners, namely Dr Kaced Assia, Dr Douifi Mohammed, Dr Gada Nadia, and Dr Boutouchent Fadhila for having accepted to devote their precious time to read and examine, and correct my thesis. Special thanks go to my wife and children who have been very patient with me throughout my journey to post-graduation.

In memory of Professor Bensaou Hamid

To my children, my wife Hiba again,

To my friend Barbara Santocka

Abstract

This thesis is no more than a tiny drop in the ocean of Hardy studies dealing with gender. Leaving the beaten path of studies devoted to the traditional binary opposition male female, this research explores a third, intermediate, and medial gender otherwise known as androgyny. It examines the presence/ absence of androgyny in the Hardy protagonists of selected novels, namely the major novels *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *Jude the Obscure* (1895), *The Return of the Native* (1878) and the minor ones *The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876) and *A Laodicean* (1881) , and exposes the outcomes of the presence/absence of androgyny to highlight the Hardy sexual politics which consists in delineating characters who are neither male nor female, but both so the argument and hypothesis of this research goes.

For the theoretical framework, the research draws on a variety of theories subsumed under the major bearings which is Queer Theory in its Butlerian orientation, i.e., performance theory. The other theories which have proved to be equally relevant are the theory of androgyny as put forward by Virginia Woolf, and Sandra Bem plus the theory of tragedy. The research reveals that some of the Hardy protagonists, namely Gabriel Oak, Ethelberta Petherwin and Paula Power who are androgynous cope well with the different situations they face and get along the gender trouble some of them endure. Some others such as Eustacia Vye, Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead become tragic characters because of their androgynicity while Michael Henchard ends tragically because of lack of androgyny. This research aims to provide evidence as to Hardy's recourse to androgyny to get around the ruthless Victorian sexual politics that had room for two categories of gender. It also targets to highlight the cruciality of androgyny in the psychological well-being of the characters under discussion. This research thus seeks to reestablish Thomas Hardy as a writer who is ahead of his time in terms of conception of issues such as gender.

نبذة مختصرة

هذه الأطروحة ليست أكثر من نقطة صغيرة في محيط دراسات هارديان التي تتناول الجنس. ترك المسار الضرب للدراسات المكرسة للذكور التقليدي للمعارضة الثنائية ، يستكشف هذا البحث نوعًا ثالثًا ومتوسطًا وسطيًا يُعرف أيضًا باسم androgyny. يدرس وجود / غياب الأندروجيني في أبطال هارديان في الروايات المختارة ، وبالتحديد الروايات الكبرى بعيدًا عن حشد مدينغ (1874) ، عمدة كاستيربريدج (1886) ، جود الغامض (1895) ، عودة السكان الأصليين (1878) والفاصرون (1876 The Hand of Ethelberta و 1881 A Laodicean) ، ويكشف عن نتائج وجود / غياب androgyny لتسليط الضوء على السياسة الجنسية هارديان التي تتكون من تحديد الشخصيات التي ليست من الذكور أو الإناث ، ولكن على حد سواء هكذا تذهب حجة وفرضية هذا البحث.

بالنسبة للإطار النظري ، يعتمد البحث على مجموعة متنوعة من النظريات المصنفة تحت المحامل الرئيسية وهي نظرية Queer في توجهها Butlerian ، أي نظرية الأداء. النظريات الأخرى التي أثبتت أنها ذات صلة متساوية هي نظرية أنثوية النساء كما طرحتها فرجينيا وولف وساندرا بيم بالإضافة إلى نظرية المأساة. يكشف البحث أن بعض أبطال هارديان ، وهم غابرييل أوك ، وإثيلبرتا بيتروين ، وباولا باور الذين هم مختنون يتعاملون بشكل جيد مع المواقف المختلفة التي يواجهونها ويتعاملون مع المشاكل الجنسية التي يعاني منها بعضهم. البعض الآخر مثل Eustacia Vye و Jude Fawley و Sue Bridehead أصبحوا شخصيات مأساوية بسبب أنثويتهم بينما ينتهي مايكل Henchard بشكل مأساوي بسبب نقص أنثوي. يهدف هذا البحث إلى تقديم دليل على لجوء هاردي إلى androgyny للالتفاف على السياسة الجنسية الفيكتورية القاسية التي كان لها مجال لفئتين من الجنسين. كما يهدف إلى تسليط الضوء على أهمية الجنس الأنثوي في الرفاه النفسي للشخصيات قيد المناقشة. وبالتالي ، يسعى هذا البحث إلى إعادة تأسيس توماس هاردي ككاتب سابق لعصره من حيث مفهوم قضايا مثل النوع الاجتماعي.

Résumé

Cette thèse n'est rien de plus qu'une petite goutte dans l'océan des études Hardyennes traitant du genre. S'éloignant des sentiers battus des études consacrées à l'opposition binaire traditionnelle masculine féminine, cette recherche explore un troisième genre, intermédiaire et médial, autrement connu sous le nom d'androgynie. Il examine la présence / absence d'androgynie chez les protagonistes Hardyens de romans sélectionnés, à savoir

les romans majeurs *Loin de la foule folle* (1874), *Le maire de Casterbridge* (1886), *Jude l'obscur* (1895), *Le retour de l'indigène* (1878) et *La main d'Ethelberta* (1876) et *Un laodicéen* (1881), et expose les résultats de la présence / absence d'androgynie pour mettre en évidence la politique sexuelle de Hardy qui consiste à peindre des personnages qui ne sont ni masculins ni féminins, mais le deux à la fois d'où l'argument et l'hypothèse de cette recherche qui posent justement Que Thomas Hardy a recours à l'androgynie pour signifier son opposition à la société patriarcale Victorienne. Pour le cadre théorique, la recherche s'appuie sur une variété de théories subsumées sous le joug de la théorie queer dans son orientation butlérienne, c'est-à-dire la théorie de la performance. Les autres théories qui se sont avérées également pertinentes sont la théorie de l'androgynie telle que proposée par Virginia Woolf et Sandra Bem en plus la théorie de la tragédie. La recherche révèle que certains des protagonistes des livres étudiés, à savoir Gabriel Oak, Ethelberta Petherwin et Paula Power, qui sont androgynes, gèrent bien les différentes situations auxquelles ils sont confrontés et ne s'encombrent point du problème de genre. D'autres par contre, comme Eustacia Vye, Jude Fawley et Sue Bridehead deviennent des personnages tragiques à cause de leur androgynéité même tandis que Michael Henchard finit tragiquement à cause justement d'un manque criard d'androgynie en lui. Cette recherche vise à fournir des preuves du recours de Hardy à l'androgynie pour contourner l'impitoyable politique sexuelle victorienne qui n'avait de la place que pour deux catégories de genre susmentionnées. Elle vise également à mettre en évidence le caractère crucial de l'androgynie dans le bien-être psychologique des personnages en question. Cette recherche cherche ainsi à rétablir Thomas Hardy en tant qu'écrivain en avance sur son temps en termes de conception et d'appréhension d'enjeux comme le genre.

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List of Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are iteratively used in the text. Thus, the reader needs to familiarize with them and is spared the effect of having to (re)read the same titles again and again.

FFMC: *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874) (Novel of Character and Environment)

HE: *The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876) (Novel of Ingenuity)

LA: *A Laodicean* (1881) nother novel of Ingenuity

JO: *Jude the Obscure* (1895) (Novel of Character and environment)

MC: *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886) (Novel of Character and Environment)

RN: *The Return of the Native* (187)

BSRI: *The Bem Sex-Role Inventory*

PAQ: Personality Attitudes Questionnaire

FTM: Female to male

MTF: Male to female

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General Introduction

First then, human beings were formerly not divided into two sexes, male and female; there was also a third, common to both others, the name of which remains, though the sex itself has disappeared. The androgynous sex, both in appearance and in name, was common to both male and female; its name alone labours under a reproach.¹

(Plato, *Symposium*)

Although he has received far much less attention than William Shakespeare, the Bard of Avon, Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) has been discussed by tens of critiques for the last three centuries. Robert C. Schweik genuinely remarks that “Hardy scholarship [is] an industry” (Qtd in Hardy, 1983:117). Indeed, “Hardy's fiction has inspired a massive body of criticism and analysis [and it] often seems doubtful whether anything new remains to be said” Richard H. Taylor compellingly points out (1982:4).

In a doctoral thesis entitled *Critical Attitudes to the Novels of Thomas Hardy 1870-1985* (1986), Jane Darcy identifies no less than five key periods in the evolution of critical approaches to Hardy's work. The initial one is the period dating back to the time that saw the release of Hardy's books, a period which was mainly made of reviews that appeared in journals such as the *Spectator*, *Athenaeum*, *Saturday Review*, *Academy*, *Nation* and the like which R. G. Cox compiled in the seminal *Thomas Hardy: The Critical Heritage* (1979). The following phase is located in the late Victorian era and begins in 1895, the (un)happy year of the end of Hardy's career as a novelist, and it finishes in 1928. The third period spans the third, fourth and fifth decades of the twentieth century. The 1950s constitute the fourth period and the 1960s correspond to the fifth while the last one begins in the 1970s.

The approaches are various and belong to different schools. They are sociological (Arnold Kettle, Douglas Brown), linguistic (David Lodge, Robert Heilman), structuralist and poststructuralist (J.Hillis Miller), and feminist (Rosemary Morgan, Patricia Ingham, Margaret Higonnet, Penny Boumelha). Penny Boumelha precisely observes that “[t]here is

¹ Ian Ousby contends that “it is highly unlikely that Hardy would have neglected *Symposium*, and in that work he would have found Aristophanes' bawdy fable about the origins of sexuality”. (Ian, Ousby. “The Convergence of the Twain: Hardy's Alteration of Plato's Parable” (Modern Humanities Research Association, 1982. 781-96).

a Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) for almost any critical history of the English novel...Whether you are looking for a historical novel or a *Bildungsroman*, a tragedy or a social satire, there is at least one novel of Hardy's fourteen novels that can be pressed into service" (2009:242). Hardy has also fascinated renowned writers like D. H. Lawrence, Henry James, Virginia Woolf, and many others.²

In addition to Penny Boumelha, Patricia Ingham, Kristin Brady, Rosemarie Morgan and Margaret R. Higonnet, feminist Hardyan criticism has been represented by Judith Mitchell, Katharine Rogers, Linda M. Shires, Marjorie Garson, Kaja Silverman, Pamela Jekel, Rosemary Sumner, Laurence Estanove, Pamela Dalziel and many others. Doctoral theses such as Shanta Dutta's *Hardy and Women: A Study in Ambivalence* (1996), Rosemarie Morgan's *Woman and Sexuality in Hardy* (1982), Penny Boumelha's *Female Sexuality, Marriage and Divorce in the Fiction of Thomas Hardy With Special Reference to the Period 1887-1896* (1981) and Jane Thomas' *Social Conditioning Versus Biological Determinism: A Study of Women's Character in the 'Minor' Novels of Thomas Hardy* (1985) have become groundbreaking reference books for Hardyans.

Criticism conducted by women has flourished because of Hardy's idiosyncratic portrayal of women with which he has been closely associated, according to Boumelha (1981:1). As regards this distinctive delineation of woman, Hardy's critics have been polarized into two groups antipodal to each other. The group of critics that

have accused Hardy of entrapment in conventional views of women's character and sphere of action, or else they have remarked on his particular interest in and sympathy with women. It is perhaps not surprising that women predominate among the first group, and men among the second.

²Among these writers, there is Mark Twain who spoke of Hardy as "England's literary giant" whom he met and "began to attack" without knowing him. Theodore Dreiser, for his part declared, "[e]ver since I began to look over books in a bookstore, it seems to me I have encountered Hardy. As a painter of the human scene, he seems to me to outrank most of his contemporaries." And in this view he is supported by another contemporary American novelist. Sinclair Lewis, shortly before Hardy's death, wrote "I am merely joining a majority of intelligent readers when I assert that Hardy is probably the greatest living novelist. A hundred years from now he will be distinctly seen as one of the few geniuses of all prose fiction." 'Kipling called him Lord of the Wessex Coast'. (See Carl T. Weber's 'Virtue From Wessex: Thomas Hardy'. *The American Scholar*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1939, pp. 211-222

(Ibid 1981: 3)

The second group comprises critics that consider Hardy as a proto-feminist³, and put forward Hardy's sympathetic and unconventional representation of women (Wotton qtd in Schoenfield, 2005:182). Peter Widdowson, for his part, highlights this very dichotomization of Hardy's oeuvre by underscoring the fact that,

the foregrounding of sexuality and gender as discourses everywhere encoded in the novels forces us to debate whether Hardy is a proto-feminist, sympathetically exposing the victimization of women in a patriarchal society, or a closet misogynist terrified, like many of his male contemporaries, by the rise of the New Woman⁴, and whose fiction constantly forecloses on the female aspiration and sexuality it so potently depicts.

(1999: 88)

Writing in the same vein, Kristin Brady draws attention to the importance of gender in the critics' assessment of Hardy's works in her "Thomas Hardy and Matters of Gender" (1999).

From their first publication, the works of Thomas Hardy have been explicitly and obsessively associated with matters of gender. This is the case, not only because these texts confront and perpetuate ideas about sexual difference that were influential in Hardy's own time, but also because his vivid, contradictory, and often strange representations of sexual desire, like a series of cultural Rorschach tests, have continually elicited from his readers intense and revealing responses: the act of interpretation exposes unspoken assumptions that circulate in the historical moment of the interpreter, and Hardy's representations of sexuality are especially effective in making visible those particularized hermeneutical processes.

(1999:93)

Brady's text is indistinct as to which gender she refers. Likewise, the first group mentioned earlier by Boumelha hardly ever discusses men's depiction in Hardy. The group that has examined man and masculinity in Hardy includes men as well as women; Richard Nemesvari, Tim Dolin, Richard Dellamora, Phillip Mallet, Annette Federico, Elisabeth Langland, Judith Mitchell, Jane Thomas, and Elaine Showalter who contends that

³ Protofeminism may be considered as feminism before the term existed. Protofeminists answer to the name of Plato, Ibn Arabi, Christine de Pizan, and Aphra Behn to name but a few.

Hardy also investigated the Victorian codes of manliness, the man's experience of marriage, the problem of paternity. For the heroes of the tragic novels-Michael Henchard, Jude Fawley, Angel Clare- maturity involves a kind of assimilation of female suffering, an identification with a woman which is also an effort to come to terms with their own deepest selves. (1979: 101)

Men and 'Presence': Constructions of Masculinity in Selected Novels of Thomas Hardy (2012) is an interesting doctoral thesis by Khatereh Tanoori supervised by T.R. Wright, the author of *Hardy and the Erotic* (1989). This thesis sheds light on "Hardy's ambivalent standpoint towards patriarchal ideals of masculinity" (2012: 2). Anne Z. Mickelson's *Thomas Hardy's Women and Men: The Defeat of Nature* (1976) discusses both genders in one study. She parallels Clym, Angel and Jude to Sue and some Hardyan "women [who] demonstrate [...] their failure to emancipate themselves" from the ghosts of old Christian creeds (1976:34). With the exception of Mickelson's book, I do not know of any books which have dealt with both women and men in Hardy. Furthermore, there is almost no book length concerned with individuals who are neither male nor female, individuals who belong in androgyny in sum.

It falls with good reason to my doctoral thesis to explore this well-nigh neglected avenue of research in Hardyan studies. My interest in this (un)usual subject has stemmed from my previous research. Actually, *(Mis)representation of Women in Selected Fictions by Thomas Hardy and Emile Zola: Objectification and Victimization* (2010), namely my *magistère* dissertation in English literature, has revealed interesting avenues of research as regards the issue of gender blurring/blending and/or (mis)representation and characterization in Thomas Hardy's fiction. The putative ambivalent characterization of Hardy has, it is true, been addressed by some of the aforementioned feminists critics such as Shanta Dutta, and Margaret R. Higonnet who remarks that "[q]uestions about gender and class status [...] fed the deepest contradictions as well as the strengths of Hardy's art" (2009: 121). However, both the ambivalence highlighted by Dutta and the contradictions

mentioned by Higonnet have not been rendered into androgyny strictly speaking. At this juncture, it is worth noting that the same contradictions have been laboriously exposed in the *magistère* dissertation above-named. The latter has verily revealed the presence in the Hardyian female as well as male characters of some latent partly male, partly female traits.

Partly male, partly female is synonymous of androgyny; it equates with the ‘man-womanly and/or woman-manly of the champion⁴ of androgyny, namely Virginia Woolf who also referred to the notion of “double soul” (Farwell, 1975: 442). Partly male and partly female can also be aligned with the concepts of both-in-one, or the opposites within of the Jungian June Singer, the neither/nor formula which is the favourite expression of the likes of Timothy Verhoeven (2005), the Hardyian New Woman, Sue and New Man Jude to be specific, etc. Partly male and partly female or androgynes constitute what Annis Pratt calls a “‘delightful interchange’ between qualities usually set in opposition to one another” (Ibid).

Are there man-womanly and/or woman-manly Hardyian characters? Are traditionally established dichotomic characteristics such as agency/passivity, nomadic/sedentary, etc., detectable in the likes of Gabriel Oak, Bathsheba Everdene, Ethelberta Petherwin, Paula Power, Michael Henchard, Jude Fawley, and others? The major research question⁵ of this study is whether the Hardyian female character is male, female or both? Whether these characters comply with the Victorian conception of gender roles, and conform to the instrumental role for men and the expressive one for women or stand at the liminal stage of gender which has had a terrible time to be identified.

Thus, the major concern of the following thesis is the substantiation of what I consider as a velleity for androgyny, third gender or the rivaling term sexual intermediacy.

⁴ Farwell argues that Woolf’s place in the history of androgyny is “important because her work is the basis of many contemporary definitions. Critics of Virginia Woolf recognize androgyny’s centrality to her theory and practice” (Ibid: 433).

⁵ Needless to say, the question(s) are rhetorical ones.

This velleity for androgyny, it is my contention, participates in the shaping of the Hardyan female and male characters, and copes well with the Victorian sexual politics by eluding issues which anger the feminists without discontenting the champions of patriarchy and androcentrism. *Male, Female or Both? Androgyny in Hardy's Fiction*, namely this doctoral thesis aims to explore Hardy's "surprisingly understanding of the subtle dynamics of [Victorian] sexual politics" (Stave, 1995:23). It postulates that Hardy resorted to androgyny to cope with the prevailing Victorian sexual politics, and Victoriana that was synonymous with "sexual repression, stultifying middle-class family life, and cramped vistas for women's lives" (Dreidre, 2001:1).

To bypass the rigid hegemonic Victorian sexual politics with its prurient, hypocritical middle-class morality which assigned orthodox and strict gender roles to men and women, Hardy constructed androgynous characters as an alternative. My argument is that the divergence of Hardyan scholars about Hardy's stance as regard gender can be bridged by androgyny and that the novels under discussion are fraught with androgynous overtones. To put it another way, this research is an attempt to substantiate these androgynous undercurrents, and it hopes to show how a Victorian writer, Thomas Hardy in this case, eluded the Victorian gender binarism by putting forward a sexual politics which brings balance, wholeness, and politically correct gender roles. This research also aims to discover how "Hardy's novels [...] expose and critique the means by which the [wo/man] is re-inscribed into [his] her 'proper' role" (Thomas, 2013:122).

I argue that Hardy's novels—the selected ones to be specific—offer a sustainable exploration of the in-between state of being neither male nor female. I shall explore the liminal position that the Hardyan protagonists Michael Henchard, Jude Fawley, Sue Bridehead, and Eustacia Vye and others occupy or fail to occupy. This thesis questions Hardy's "representation [...] of the social and material construction of masculinity and

femininity” (Langland, 1993:32, my emphasis) to reveal the latent androgyny that is discernible in the Hardyian characters above-mentioned.

The subsidiary aim of this thesis is, in Judith Butler’s words, “to open up the field of possibility for gender without dictating which kinds of possibilities ought to be realized” (1990: viii). Furthermore, “through his creation of alternative models of sexuality and gender [androgynous] roles, [Hardy] unconsciously attempted to provoke his readers into an awareness of the paradox of the dominant ideologies of the times” (Schoenfield, 2005: 182).

Review of the Literature

The chapter dealing with the review of the literature legitimately belongs in the part devoted to the background chapters which also includes the chapters devoted to the theoretical and conceptual framework of the research. However, I had to include the chapter in question in the General Introduction merely because the literature on androgyny in Hardy is not substantial, at all. The notion of androgyny, it is true, has appeared in Margaret R. Higonnet’s “Hardy and his Critics: Gender in the Interstices”, an article where she discerns an androgynous mind in Hardy in a similar vein to Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Virginia Woolf. In effect, Higonnet opines that for Hardy, “to become an artist required an ability to occupy both center and margin, both masculinity and femininity, to penetrate and to absorb, to inscribe and to embrace” (2009:119). She thus parallels Hardy’s own intermediacy⁶ with his very characters and exemplifies with Jude whom she compares with the young Hardy who yearned to put off manhood in his boyhood. Hence the title of her article “Gender in the Interstices”.

Like a straw screen held up for the reader, his complex narrative voice alternates between challenging and authoritatively repeating the social schemes of class and gender within which his protagonists struggle, in order to define their shifting identities. The narrative voice itself has long been

⁶The intermediate sex is the name Edward Carpenter chose for the third sex (Carpenter, 1912).

considered problematic – whether double, multiple, inconsistent, or incoherent – especially in its gendered relationship to female protagonists. (Ibid: 122)

Indeed, Hardy was equally divided between his will to devote his writing to the “effeminate” poetry and the necessary mannish prose (Millgate, 2004: 100). Another instance of Hardy’s concern with the intermediate sex is his reaction to an attack by George Moore who “called him a putrid literary *hermaphrodite*,⁷ which [Hardy] thought funny, but it *may* have been an exaggeration” (Millgate, 1982: 553). However, neither Higonnet nor Michael Millgate neatly put forward the concept of androgyny.

Indeed, Higonnet merely alludes to androgyny through the reversal of sex in *The Hand of Ethelberta* where Ethelberta Petherwin, the leading female character shifts from femaleness to maleness throughout the novel (2009:122-4). Higonnet again and again stresses gender blurring and androgyny, and invokes outstanding thinkers and writers such as,

John Stuart Mill in *The Subjection of Women* (1869) wrote “What is now called the nature of woman is an eminently artificial thing.” For Mill, “the natural differences between the two sexes” was “a subject on which it is impossible in the present state of society to obtain complete and correct knowledge” (Mill 1998: 493–4). In his 1877 lecture on the idea of comedy George Meredith, known for depicting androgynous heroines, advocated “some degree of social equality of the sexes” (Meredith 1897: 14). The complex way in which gender distinctions may survive their blurring governs the conclusion of Tennyson’s “The Princess,” where the narrator proposes: “Yet in the long years liker must they grow;/ The man be more of woman, she of man.” Similarly, in a notebook Tennyson jotted that “men should be androgynous and women gynandrous, but men should not be gynandrous nor women androgynous” (Ricks 1972: 215). Hardy’s narrative turns, shifts in voice, and dramatization of unstable gender relations translate inquiries like these that preoccupied his contemporaries.

(Ibid: 120)

But, Higonnet’s text cannot be categorized in the literature dealing with androgyny in Hardy. In her seminal *Thomas Hardy and Women: Sexual Ideology and Narrative Form*, Penny Boumelha makes mention of “Hardy’s urge towards narrative androgyny”, but goes

⁷ Italics mine.

no further (1982:120). William Mistichelli (1988) explicitly deals with androgyny in his essay on “Androgyny, Survival and Fulfillment in Thomas Hardy’s *Far From the Madding Crowd*”, but does not include other works. Besides, one is dissatisfied to find that with the exception of Bathsheba, no other character is spotlighted despite the author’s claim that “[a]ndrogyny informs the lives of these characters as a test of their adaptability and resilience” (1988:54). In a handy journal entitled “Strange (in)difference of Sex: Thomas Hardy, the Victorian Man of letters, and the temptation of Androgyny” (1995), Laura Green fleshes out a “tentative exploration of the attractions of androgyny” in *Jude the Obscure* (1995:526). She observes that *Jude the Obscure* “challenges . . . distinctions between character as socially contingent and character as inherently constituted and, most fundamentally between masculine and feminine fulfillment” (Ibid: 537). In a profitable comparative journal article between Willa Cather’s “*O Pioneers!*” and Hardy’s *Far From the Madding Crowd*, Grace Wetzel (2008) treats of Bathsheba’s androgyny (2008:283). In her recent book, *Thomas Hardy and Desire* (2013), Jane Thomas remarks about Eustacia Vye’s “androgynous position” and “the androgynised Sue.” (2013: 125-27).

Without naming it directly, Lois Bethe Schoenfield hints to androgyny through her focus on “Hardy’s use of alternative expressions of sexuality and gender roles in the novels in which his fictional characters behave differently from the expected conventions dictated by society” (2005:181). She categorizes Bathsheba, Paula, Ethelberta, Sue and Eustacia, that is, the women selected in this research, as “unconventional and unique” (Ibid: 184). Pamela Dalziel, for her part, alludes to the reversal of gender roles in her Introduction to *An Indiscretion in the life of an Heiress* (1994: xviii). Discussing *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), Joanna Devereux has highlighted Mayne Egbert’s “sense of his own gender instability” (2003:5). She equally underscores the ambivalent representation of the “patriarchal values [which] are apparently both questioned and affirmed in Hardy’s work”

(Ibid: xi). The famous Victorian sexologist and literary reviewer, Havelock Ellis compares Hardy's fiction with that of Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, and George Eliot, and claims that it "was endlessly intriguing to Victorian readers [. . .] offering a style of writing and of plot construction that was considered to be exclusively female" (Qtd in Brady, 1999:95). Harold Bloom, for his part, notes that "Shelley's tragic sense of eros is pervasive throughout Hardy and ultimately determines Hardy's understanding of his strongest heroines: Bathsheba Everdene, Eustacia Vye, Marty South, Tess Durbeyfield, Sue Bridehead" (2010: 1-2).

Despite the substantial amount of critics who mention androgyny in Hardy *en passant*, with the exception of remarkable journal articles such as William Mistichelli's 'Androgyny, Survival and Fulfillment in Thomas Hardy's "Far From the Madding Crowd."' (1988), and Laura Green's "'Strange [In]difference of Sex': Thomas Hardy, the Victorian Man of Letters, and The Temptations of Androgyny" (1995) previously mentioned, Thomas Hardy has been seldom discussed in terms of androgyny. As mentioned earlier, Mistichelli tackled the recurrent motif of "uncertainty and ambiguity about sexual identities and roles" (1988:53) in *FFMC* while Laura Green chose *Jude the Obscure* to highlight the urge of androgyny in Hardy's fiction. *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *The Return of the Native* have not been taken into consideration. Likewise, Thomas Hardy has been furtively mentioned in Carolyn G. Heilbrun's canonical *Toward a Recognition of Androgyny* (1973) and totally omitted in Tracy Hargreaves' *Androgyny in Modern Literature* (2005).

Last but not least, the magistère dissertation, previously mentioned, alludes to androgyny without naming it. Thus, one reads in page 104 that "Sue is overwhelmingly depotentiated (sic) by her *animus*, otherwise her 'inner man',⁸ that "Hardy unites in Sue an

⁸ Youcef, Hatem. *(Mis)representation of Women in Selected Fictions by Thomas Hardy and Emile Zola: Objectification and Victimization*, M.A dissertation defended in 2010 in UMMTO.

abiding conflictual couple of man and a woman; an androgynous character whose enculturation/denaturalization harms both Sue herself and every man who ventures to fall in love with her”(109). As far as I know, there is neither a doctoral thesis nor a full-length book that deal with androgyny in Hardy. Is there a gap in the the literature on androgyny in Hardy’s fiction? My thesis aims to contribute to the enrichment of the literature by exploring the gender of selected Hardyan characters that are neither female nor male or both.

Rationale

What other rationale underpins this choice? The main criterion behind my option for Hardy is the author and the historical, social and cultural background in which he gave birth to the characters under discussion. “[T]hemes centred on gender were rooted in Hardy’s experience as a boy and helped shape his artistic vision” (2009:118), Higonet remarks. “Thomas Hardy’s work”, Harrison and Taylor argue, “more than any other major Victorian writer, has historically provided a site on which views about some of the most difficult political and aesthetic issues of gender could and should be contested” (1992: 161). In sum, Thomas Hardy, like many Victorian writers, faced the constraints of his era and had to look for the recipe that would allow him to instill his standpoint as regards gender and gender roles, without incurring the wrath of the Victorian well-to-think.

Kristin Brady holds it, “to study the changing responses to gender in Hardy’s published works from 1871 to the present is, in effect, to trace a fairly detailed history of the ways in which sexuality has been constructed with the British Isles and North America since the late Victorian period” (1999:93). She maintains that “Hardy’s texts, as well as the readings of those texts over the last century and a quarter, are themselves gendered performances continually shifting permutations of ideas about sexual difference” (Ibid). What is more, “[t]here have been several feminist critiques of Hardy’s novels, but the

insights of more recent thinking about the construction of gender [queer theory] provide fresh opportunities to shed light on Hardy's treatment of gendered subjects in his novels" (Nicholson, 2002:28). Thus, it has seemed to me very appropriate to address the phenomenon of "coexistence of positive masculine and feminine dimensions [which] is androgyny" and characterizes Hardy's characters (Piel, 1952:17). The other logical basis for the choice of androgyny in Hardy is as Grace Wetzel remarks, the "lingering [Victorian] ideologies [that] checked the extent to which Hardy actually challenged conservative ideas about class and gender" and this resulted in "an unconventional plot undercut by conventional subtexts" (2008: 279-280).

Yet, why androgyny? The hostile reception of *Jude the Obscure* disgusted Hardy from prose writing, and he notoriously veered towards his original love, poetry. Before *Jude*, *Tess* and almost all the fiction of Hardy was extensively researched, and as D. H. Lawrence put it, "if one wrote everything they [Hardy's novels] give rise to, it would fill the judgement book" (Webster, 1993:143). Hardy's fiction "has not been an uncontentious site for critical debate" (Ibid), and was criticized for its morality, and his handling of issues such as marriage, sexuality and gender roles baited and allured critics mainly involved in feminism, and psychoanalysis. Feminists and non-feminists alike have been unable to decide whether Hardy was a misogynist or a proto-feminist. One thing is sure—as Patricia Ingham remarks it, "[i]n Hardy's language [. . .] the rigid signification of woman! Womanly has disappeared, leaving a fruitful ambiguity" (Qt in King, 1991:264). This 'fruitful ambiguity' merely answers to the name of androgyny. In fact, Hardy's philosophies, his thinking and his ambiguous construction of female as well as male characters—I do think that even the "rigid signification" of man! Manly has faded in Hardy's fictitious world-- call forth the issue under discussion, that is androgyny in the Hardyan fiction.

I have chosen to delve in Hardy's portrayal of men and women because his texts are palimpsests. There is the said and the unsaid, the text and the subtext. Moreover, the evaluation of the Hardyan character opens up new perspectives in the domain of characterology, and

the principle of intermediate sexual forms makes possible a better characterological description of individuals by demanding the assessment of the proportions in which male and female elements are mixed in every organism, and by insisting on the determination of the elongations of the oscillations, toward either side, of which an individual is capable.

(Weininger, 2005 [1903]:48)

To assess the proportions in which male and female elements are mixed in Hardy's fiction and to hypothesise his inclination toward androgyny, I shall delve respectively in *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874), *Jude the Obscure* (1895), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *The Return of the Native* (1878), and some minor novels *The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876) and *A Laodicean* (1881). In other words, I intend to explore the putative androgynous aspects of the Hardyan character by studying the most prominent characters of each novel. At this juncture, I have to underline the fact that the androgyny under discussion is psychological androgyny. Psychological androgyny is used here to avoid confusion with hermaphroditism. My essential aim is to highlight Hardy's "tremendous liberties in designing and executing action" and characters (Morawski 1987: 54). Indeed, Sue Bridehead, Jude Fawley, and Michael Henchard, to name but a few, are mercurial people who display both masculine and feminine traits according to the requirements of the plot. Hardy's characters were ahead of their time in terms of gender, theirs was a gender neutral society⁹ long before the advent of this concept.

For the corpus of the study, I have opted mostly for the canonical novels aforementioned because I contend that they comply well with the objective of

⁹ The notion of gender-neutral society is a (modern) society where sex is not a determinant of rights, duties and rank. Gender-neutral language is one of the characteristics of this society. (See, Mansfield, Harvey C. *Manliness*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2006) pp. 1-21.

substantiating androgyny in Hardy's fiction. I have chosen *Far From the Madding Crowd* for the queer couple Bathsheba Everdene/Gabriel Oak that affords hypothesizing androgyny in Hardy especially Gabriel Oak who is the paragon of androgyny, so my argument goes. I opted for this novel, that is, *FFMC* (I shall use these initials whenever I refer to this book) because of "uncertainty or ambiguity about sexual identities and roles becomes a recurring motif especially in connection with the heroine, Bathsheba Everdene" (Mistichelli, 1988: 53). As Linda Shires highlights it, *FFMC* engendered "a paper trail on gender, sex and power ... it encouraged comment and confusion about gender—both of its author and that of its hero and heroine" (1991:163). As for *Jude the Obscure*, I align myself with Rosemary Sumner in claiming that "[w]ith Jude [and Sue], Hardy takes very much further some of the ideas about the nature of a balanced personality and its relation to society which had arisen in the course of the creation of Tess" (1981:147). I shall also examine and display in what way Jude and Sue are, in Phillotson's words, "one person split into two." Unlike *FFMC*, *JO* (*Jude the Obscure*), *MC* (*The Mayor of Casterbridge*) and *RN* (*The Return of the Native*) have in common the tragedisation of androgyny. In fact, androgyny turns out to be a tragical fall for Michael Henchard, Eustacia Vye and Jude Fawley.

The framing of the chapters will by no means be symmetrical as the minor novels, that is, *HE* (*The Hand of Ethelberta*), *L* (*A Laodicean*) will be combined in one chapter together with *The Return of the Native* for the sake of being supported by women of the like of Mary Carmichael, the leading character of *A Room of One's Own* (1929). Discussing the novels at stake is framed into two parts. One part entitled All That is Androgynous Ends well and featuring Gabriel Oak in Chapter Three, Bathsheba Everdene in Chapter Four and Ethelberta Petherwin, Paula Power and Eustacia Vye in Chapter Five. Eustacia Vye, it is true, ends tragically, but serves as a kind of transition to reach the next

Part which is about All That is (Not) Androgynous Ends Badly. In fact, Michael Henchard in Chapter Six, Jude Fawley in Chapter Seven and Sue Bridehead in Chapter Eight embody the difficulties encountered by androgynous characters like Jude and Sue. Henchard, the mayor of Catserbridge ends tragically merely because he is not androgynous. To theorise androgyny in this Part, the theory of tragedy turned out to be the most relevant. Virginia Woolf's theorizing of androgyny in *A Room of One's Own* also emerged as an appropriate theoretical approach to discuss androgyny in *The Hand of Ethelberta* and *A Laodicean*. These two theories are naturally subsumed in Queer theory and performance theory.

In addition to the chapters dealing with Hardy's fiction, there are two initial chapters. The background chapters which are respectively devoted to the concept of androgyny and the theory/theories applied. These two chapters belong in the first part. The titles of the novels under discussion are converted into initialisms for mere convenience. The key words are purposefully printed in bold type and a set of glossaries is provided at the end of the thesis to reinforce the gloss provided along the whole thesis.

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Part One

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Introduction

The importance of both the concepts and theories used in this thesis requires devoting a separate part. This part, namely Part One is concerned with the theory and/or theories implemented, the concept and their definitions, and the literature review of the concept at stake. Thus, this initial part of my research deals with the concept of androgyny and the theories that underpin the study.

Androgyny, the theory/theories and the texts under discussion, namely Hardy's fiction, form a triptych, a pleasant trinity in sum. So, considering the importance taken on by the very concept of androgyny and the theory/theories relevant to such a theme, two separate chapters dealing respectively with androgyny and the theoritisation have turned out to be well worth a distinct part. In this first part then, I want to describe as exactly as can be the meaning, nature, and scope of the concept of androgyny. In fact, to treat androgyny slightly may affect the whole study and cut drastically an essential organ of the whole body of the thesis.

As for the theory, the nature of the topic, and the complexity of the issue of androgyny require not one theory, but a set of applicable theories that will be subsumed under the main theory which is Judith Butler's. It would have been feasible to dissolve the theory/ theories in the Discussion section, but the thesis would have been stripped from an angle of view of considerable importance. Besides, some key concepts need to be clarified in a separate section so as to allow the reader to tackle the rest with ease. Judith Butler's theory, Carl Gustave Jung's famous dichotomy animus/anima, and the theory of tragedy, plus Virginia Woolf's conception of gender through her famous *A Room of One's Own* (1928), are fundamental critical tools that deserve a particular attention.

Chapter One
Androgyny in Question

Introduction

Most of us feel trapped within the limited roles that the world expects us to play. We are instantly attracted to those who are more fluid, more ambiguous, than we are—those who create their own persona. Dandies excite us because they cannot be categorized, and hint at a freedom we want for ourselves. They play with masculinity and femininity; they fashion their own physical image, which is always startling; they are mysterious and elusive. They also appeal to the narcissism of each sex; to a woman they are psychologically female, to a man they are male. Dandies fascinate and seduce in large numbers. Use the power of the Dandy to create an ambiguous, alluring presence that stirs repressed desires.

Robert Green

The aim of this chapter is to shed light on the concepts of third gender or androgyny. In the first section, I introduce the exploration of the literature on androgyny. Androgyny has been associated with romanticism, utopianism, feminism, and misogyny. It has been raised by psychology and embodied in literature. As a life style, androgyny has become fashionable only recently with the technological developments, the emancipation of women, the explosion of arts such as singing and cinema, and selfies.

Icons such as the *caduceus* often misused as symbol of medicine, the rebis and the “rose and cross” emerged in the medieval arts to represent androgyny. Iconicity and the Judeo-Christian mindset fixed androgyny in the realm of myth from where it emerged now-and-then. “Androgyny began in a mythic time so distant that one might almost say that androgyny was the beginning of mythic time” (Singer, 1989:33).

Androgyny has been seriously affected by the fact that it has more than often been confused with hermaphroditism. At this juncture, it must be noted that androgyny has nothing to do with sexuality, that is, homosexuality and bisexuality, but is part of characterology. In fact, it is psychological androgyny which is at issue in this research as there is also physical androgyny which is about the individual who displays physical traits that are traditionally ascribed to the opposite gender. A man that displays physical traits like female voice, fair complexion, hairless face, etc., is considered as physically androgynous. In a

woman, features such as athleticism, facial hair, height, to name but a few, but not a hermaphrodite or intersex because the physical traits at issue do not include sexual organs. Personality character traits on the other hand, are related to psychological androgyny. At any rate, androgyny seems to fit well with the third category of gender which has demonstrated resilience.

1. Third Gender?

The couple male/female –including animals as well as Man--is probably the most famous and the most debated dichotomy. In fact, male/female, and other dichotomies such as man/woman, masculine/feminine, and heterosexual/homosexual rank among gender binaries. Gender binary or gender binarism categorizes people into two groups whose gender identity and gender roles are prescriptively exclusive and poles apart. Individuals who identify neither as male nor as feminine, namely homosexuals, lesbians, transgender, and androgynes fall in the category of non-binary or genderqueer.

The word gender was put in usage for the first time in Greece in the fifth century BC. It was used to categorize things into three names, masculine, feminine, and intermediate. The latter corresponds to ‘neuter’ which derives from Latin and refers to a third category which is also called ‘neither’. *The Encyclopedia of Gender and Society* mentions the definition that considers

Masculinity . . . having traits reflecting agency or instrumentality. Agentic and therefore masculine, individual easily act upon their environment. They take control and have power. Other traits commonly associated with masculinity are assertiveness and self protection. Conversely, *femininity* is associated with communal traits. Communal individuals are other oriented and enjoy group interaction. They are social caretakers who are sensitive and helpful.

(Smoak, 2009: 33, italics not mine)

The society of the title is doubtlessly the Western society which relies on the Two-sex model that divides humankind into two, male and female, man and woman, or masculine and feminine. Thus, gender is dichotomized, and hierarchized into male gender and the

opposite sex, the fair sex or the “Other.” Gender as a sexual category came into common parlance in the 1970s. Ann Oakley opened the way with her groundbreaking *Sex, Gender and Society* (1972). The same year, two sexologists John Money and Anke Ehrhardt popularized the idea of sex and gender as separate categories. There were other sexologists, Havelock Ellis, Otto Weininger and others who dealt previously with sexual diversity without designing gender. Second-wave feminism also contributed to the decantation mainly through Simone de Beauvoir’s seminal *The Second Sex* (1949).

Academia started to address gender in the 1960s following Second wave activism. Differences and inequalities between men and women began to receive attention from sociologists (women sociologists in particular) during the seventies while prior to this decade, sociology royally ignored women. In literature, the canon was contested and Kate Millet’s groundbreaking *Sexual Politics* (1970) paved the way to other studies. Women (gender) studies elicited men’s studies from the 1980s on and these later proliferated in the 1990s. Women’s studies and men’s studies came to be known as gender studies albeit some feminists consider that gender studies “is a dilution- a sign that feminist knowledge has been tamed and reconstituted by the academy” (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2004: xii).

So, gender categorizes human beings into masculine and feminine while sex knows a male and a female. The famous emblems found on the doors of public toilets probably constitute the most widely accessible literature on the binary system of gender. For any layman, sex/gender is determined by physical features that are external genitalia: the penis and the testes for males, and the vagina and breasts for females. There are also internal genitalia: the prostate and the uterus and some other characteristics that belong to one or other sex such as the chromosomes, the gonads, the hormonal states, etc. However, as scientists have argued, “there is a certain amount of overlapping in all humans, and in some unusual cases the overlapping is considerable; in addition to the XX female and the

XY male, there are individuals (XO, XXY, XXXY)” (Stoller, 1974:9). From psychological and cultural standpoint, gender is preferred because it has no biological connotations. Rather than “male” and “female”,

the corresponding terms for gender are “masculine” and “feminine”; these latter may be quite independent of (biological) sex. Gender is the amount of masculinity and femininity found in a person, and, obviously, while there are mixtures of both in human beings, the normal male has a preponderance of masculinity and the normal female has a preponderance of femininity.
(Ibid)

For Sandra Bem, “[b]oth in psychology and society at large, masculinity and femininity have long been conceptualized as bipolar ends of a single continuum; accordingly a person has had to be either masculine or feminine, but not both” (Bem,1974 :155). At this point, it is worth underlining that the Western binarism does not amount to one of the universals that govern the world. Some societies contain three genders; man, woman and *berdaches* or *hijras* or *xaniths*. In New Guinea, for example, the Tchambuli woman controls the economy of the community; she fishes and manufactures. So, gender roles vary from one culture to another and from one period to another. In fact, the Western conceptualization of gender roles was the result of the Enlightenment era.

Ellen Piel Cook compiled the characteristics that have been stereotypically fixed on men and women as follows:

Men (Masculinity)—aggressive, independent, unemotional, objective, dominant, competitive, logical/rational, adventurous, decisive, self-confident, ambitious, worldly, act as a leader, assertive, analytical, strong, sexual, knowledgeable, physical, successful, good in mathematics and science, and the reverse of feminine characteristics listed below.

Women (femininity)—emotional, sensitive, expressive, aware of others’ feelings, tactful, gentle, security-oriented, quiet, nurturing, tender, cooperative, interested in pleasing others, interdependent, sympathetic, helpful, warm, interested in personal appearance and beauty in general, intuitive, focused on home and family, sensual, good in art and literature, and the reverse of the masculine characteristics above.

(1952:4)

There are several classifications and compilations of attributes linked to either gender as it shows in the tables below:

Table 1

Adjectives associated with women, with evaluative classification

Affected	-	Feminine	0	Prudish	-
Affectionate	+	Fickle	-	Rattlebrained	-
Appreciative	+	Flirtatious	0	Sensitive	0
Attractive	+	Frivolous	-	Sentimental	0
Charming	+	Fussy	-	Soft-hearted	0
Complaining	-	Gentle	+	Sophisticated	0
Dependent	0	High-strung	0	Submissive	0
Dreamy	0	Meek	0	Talkative	0
Emotional	0	Mild	0-	Weak	-
Excitable	0	Nagging		Whiny	-

Table 2

Adjectives associated with men, with evaluative classification

Adventurous	+	Disorderly	-	Realistic	+
Aggressive	0	Dominant	0	Robust	0
Ambitious	+	Enterprising	+	Self-confident	0
Assertive	0	Forceful	0	Severe	0
Autocratic	0	Handsome	0	Stable	+
Boastful	-	Independent	+	Steady	0
Coarse	-	Jolly	0	Stern	0
Confident	+	Logical	+	Strong	0
Courageous	+	Loud	-	Tough	0
Cruel	0	Masculine	0	Unemotional	0
Daring	-	Rational	+	Unexcitable	0

Source: Based on Williams and Bennett (1975) and Gough and Heilbrun (1965). (Archer & Lloyd, 2002:21), +=positive; -=negative; 0 = neutral.

Table 3

Items from the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ)

18 Female-valued items	23 Male-valued items	12 Sex-specific items
Aware of others' feelings Considerate Creative Devotes self to others Do not hide emotions	Active Acts as leader Adventurous Ambitious competitive Competitive	Female Cries easily Excitable in major crisis Feelings hurt Home-oriented

Emotional Enjoys music and arts Expresses tender feelings Gentle Grateful Helpful to others Kind likes children Neat Strong conscience Tactful Understanding Warm to others Outspoken Self-confident Skilled in business Stands under pressure Takes a stand	Does not give up easily Feels superior Forward Good at sports Independent Intellectual Interested in sex Knows ways of the world Makes decisions easily Not easily influenced Not excitable in minor crisis Not timid Outgoing	Needs approval Need for security Religious Male Aggressive Dominant Likes maths and science Loud Mechanical aptitude
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Source: Based on Spence et al. (1975). (Ibid: 23)

Some of the above items were highly valued in the Victorian England which embodied binarism in the extreme,

Men possessed the capacity for reason, action, aggression, independence, and self-interest. Women inhabited a separate, private sphere, one suitable for the so-called inherent qualities of femininity: emotion, passivity, submission, dependence, and selflessness, all derived, it was claimed insistently, from women's sexual and reproductive organization.
(Kent, 199:179)

The separation of the Victorian world into two spheres left no room for an intermediate station. The dichotomization became a legacy, and Sandra Luth Lipsitz Bem observes that

[t]his sex-role dichotomy has served to obscure two very plausible hypotheses: first, that many individuals might be "androgynous"; that is, they might be *both* masculine and feminine, *both* assertive and yielding, *both* instrumental and expressive—depending on the situational appropriateness of these various behaviors.
(1974: 155)

But who are these “androgynous” individuals who might be both masculine and feminine? Are men and women doomed to be dichotomized, or is there a ‘middle ground’, a middle station, a third gender? Is the individual either male or female, or both? What is androgyny, anyway?

2. Androgyny in Question

Androgyny is the substantive for the condition of an androgynous person and/or an androgyne. Androgyne is an Old French term which sprung from the Latin *androgynus*, from the Greek *androgynos* (ἀνήρ, i.e. *aner*, *andros* ‘male’) and (γυνή which stands for *gune*, *gyné*, ‘woman’).¹⁰ *The Cambridge Dictionary of Psychology* defines androgyny as “[t]he state of having both male and female characteristics to a much higher degree than is statistically normal” (Matsumoto, 2009:38). In *Encyclopedia of Sex and Gender* (2009) androgyny is defined as

the combination or blurring in one being (not necessarily limited to the human) of certain identifiable sex-differentiated traits. The androgyne may display both male and female characteristics at once, but often remains overall so sexually ambiguous that these traits blend into each other and sexual identification is impossible.

(Sautman, 2007:64)

Androgyny does not fit in the Two-sex model previously mentioned; it is the mixing of masculine and feminine characteristics, but is also the balance of *anima* and *animus* in psychoanalytic theory.

The identification of androgyny does not date back to the Victorian era; Plato’s mention of the androgynous sex proves if necessary that androgyny is not an invention of sexologists or gender theorists. Indeed, the androgyne¹¹ has always been part of a remote theosophical, artistic and literary tradition stretching from ancient Greece through the Gnostic tradition and the Cabbalists in the Middle Ages up to the present. Androgyny is also found in the medieval precursor of chemistry, alchemy, in the guise of mercury (*Mercurius/Hermes*) which has the property of dissolving all the binaries found on the surface of Earth into a third class that is neither female nor male. The famous Greek sculptures represent a fusion of maleness and femaleness, probably that of the nymph

¹⁰ See the Concise Oxford Dictionary ninth edition.

¹¹ It should not be confused with androgen which is a male sex hormone, such as testosterone.

Salmacis with *Hermaphroditus*¹². Long before the Hellenist civilization, Adam, before his split into **two** and also Jesus, were androgynous, observes Raymond Furness (1965: 59).

[. . .] myths of creation found embedded within almost every culture suggest a being or entity or personhood having--beyond a physically generative power without need for or use of sexual organs--characteristics of beneficence, wholeness, goodness, integrity, contentment, containment, and truth.

(Kimbrough, 1982:19)

So, the ideal of wholeness permeates androgyny, and symbolizes an endeared symbiosis between the male and female parts of the human.

The androgynous model is said to constitute a maximized state of well-being because of the equivalent presence of high rates of masculinity and femininity in the individual. In the 1970s, specialists of the like of Sandra Bem (1974), Kaplan, A.G., and Bean, J.P (1976), Rawlings, E.I., and Carter, D.K (1977) declared androgyny “an index of adjustment and psychological health” (Lubinsky, Tellegen and Butcher, 1983:428). Androgynous people endowed with the traits of agency and communality can cope better with situations which require both traits. If the manager of a company is androgynous, s/he may succeed better when s/he shows communality with his/her team. For Cynthia Secor, androgyny is “the capacity of a single person of either sex to embody the full range of human character traits, despite cultural attempts to render some exclusively feminine and some exclusively masculine” (Qtd in Kimbrough, 1982: 19). Ellen Piel Cook, previously mentioned, considers androgyny as the cohabitation of “positive masculinity and feminine dimensions” (1985: 17). “The androgyne consciously accepts the interplay of the masculine and feminine aspects of the individual psyche. One is the complement of the other, in the same sense that the active, probing sperm is the complement of the waiting, yielding ovum (1977: 34), notes June Singer.

¹² *Hermaphroditus* was endowed with male and female physical attributes.

According to A.J.L. Busst, an androgyne is “a person who unites certain of the essential characteristics of both sexes and, consequently, may be considered as both a man and a woman or as neither a man nor a woman” (Qtd in Verhoeven, 2005:9). During the Enlightenment period, the androgyne represented an eminently significant personage, and was identified as “*l’homme collectif*” or “*l’homme universel*” (Funke, 2010:25). Queen Elisabeth I allegedly built a legend of her androgyny because of her fearing some backlash from her people. “I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king,” she shouted out at Tilbury in 1588 for the famous battle against the Spanish Armada.

Androgyny is liminality, it is the “middle ground” of Edward Carpenter who mentioned the “Uranian temperament [found in a man who] “while possessing thoroughly masculine powers of mind and body, combines with them the tenderer and more emotional soul-nature of the woman—and sometimes to a remarkable degree” (1912:32). It is worth underlying that Carpenter’s book is entitled *The Intermediate Sex: A Study of Some Transitional Types of Men and Women*. The German physician and sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld put forward the concept of *sexuelle Zwischenstufen* which can be rendered verbatim as a sexual intermediate stage and encapsulates hermaphroditism, metatropism¹³ and transvestism. He argues that “in each person there is a different mixture of manly and womanly substances” (1991: 228). Michel Foucault labels androgyny “a hermaphroditism of the soul” (1978:43). Margaret Fuller, the author of the first important feminist book in the United States, was of the opinion that “[m]ale and female represent the two sides of the great radical dualism. But, in fact, they are perpetually passing into one another. Fluid hardens to solid, solid rushes to fluid. There is no wholly masculine man, no purely feminine woman” (1998:68-9).

¹³ Metatropism is, according to Hirschfeld, the “abnormal sexual behavior” in which the woman is sexually aggressive, incumbent and conquering while the man is passive, responsive and supportive.

Jean Libis historicized the androgyne in his *Le mythe de l'androgyne* (1980). “[A]ndrogyny [also] forms the philosophical foundation for [John Stuart] Mill's vision of civil and political equality between men and women and of his belief in the free development of individuality” observes Nadia Urbinati (1991:626). June Singer, the Jungian critic already mentioned, posits that “androgyny is an archetype, inherent in the human psyche [...] may be the oldest archetype [which] appears in us as an innate sense of primordial cosmic unity, having existed in oneness or wholeness before any separation was made” (1977:20). The Austrian philosopher Otto Weininger, for his part, considers that

[a]ll human beings oscillate between the Man and the Woman in them. These oscillations may be abnormally large in one person and almost imperceptibly small in another, but they always exist and, if they are substantial enough, they also reveal themselves through the changing physical appearance of the individuals concerned. These oscillations of the sexual characteristics can be divided, like the oscillations of the earth's magnetism, into regular and irregular ones. The regular oscillations are either small: for example, some people feel things in a more masculine way at night than in the morning; or they follow the major periods of organic life, which have hardly begun to be noticed and the exploration of which seems bound to throw some light on what is so far an incalculable number of phenomena.

(1912: 48)

“[H]ow much Man and how much Woman there is in a person?” is the convenient question Weininger asks (Ibid: 17).

Androgyny is neither transsexualism nor hermaphroditism. Transsexuals undergo surgery and hormone therapy as a result of GD (Gender Dysphoria) or GID (Gender Identity Disorder). As for hermaphroditism, it implies physical union of two opposed bodies.

Androgyny has flowered in social sciences and psychology more than in literature or in any other discipline, and psychological studies concerned with androgyny outpace by far the rest. Research on androgyny exploded in the 1970s after Sandra Ruth Lipsitz Bem, Janet Taylor Spence and Robert L. Helmreich, R. L elaborated their famous new sex role orientation measures. Spence & Helmreich attribute to androgyny the role of an additive

composite of masculinity and femininity, not a third gender itself. They make it clear that their use of:

The term *Androgyny* as simply as a convenient label to identify individuals who score relatively high on both the M and the F scales . . . the term has no particular theoretical import, being intended to indicate nothing more than a relatively high degree of both instrumental and expressive personality traits, as defined by the PAQ.

(Qtd in Lubinsky et al., 1983: 430)

The PAQ (Personal Attributes Questionnaire) (1978) and the BSRI (Bem Sex Role Inventory) (1974) somehow followed Anne Constantinople's "*Masculinity-Femininity: An Exception to a Famous Dictum?*"(1973), a critique of the unidimensionality of masculinity and femininity. Bem's research pioneered measures of androgyny in individuals. Her work was motivated by the assumption that:

It is possible, in principle, for an individual to be instrumental and expressive; both agentic [concerned for oneself as an individual] and communal [concerned about the relationship between oneself and others], and even for an individual to be able to blend these complementary modalities in a single act, being able, for example, to fire an employee if the circumstances warrant it, but to do so with sensitivity for the human emotion that such an act inevitably produces.

(Qtd in McCabe, 1989:4)

Bem suggests that the two aspects of the personality are both fundamental for an individual's health and adaptation to life,

[t]hus, extreme femininity untempered by a sufficient concern for one's own needs as an individual, may produce dependency and self-denial, just as extreme masculinity, untempered by sufficient concern for the needs of others may produce arrogance and exploitation.... For fully effective and healthy human functioning, both masculinity and femininity must be... integrated into a more balanced, more fully human, a truly androgynous personality. Such a personality would thus represent the best of what masculinity and femininity have each come to represent and the more negative exaggerations of each would tend to be cancelled out.

(Ibid)

While Bem's work has promoted the concept of psychological androgyny both popularly and in psychological research, clinical psychology¹⁴ delved into androgyny to reveal that

¹⁴ Clinical psychology integrates science, theory and clinical knowledge to relieve and prevent psychological dysfunction and promote psychological health.

“the really creative individual combines ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ qualities” (Bardwick, 1971:203). Laureen Goodlad, for her part, leans on anthropology and cites Gayle Rubin’s “foundational account” in which

androgyny is not the prescribed mixture of masculinity and femininity but the entire absence of gender: an androgynous society is "genderless (though not sexless)" for in it "one's sexual anatomy is irrelevant to who one is, what one does, and with whom one makes love" (204). For Rubin, androgyny is what is left when sex is stripped of its power to ascribe gender and when, as a result, gender withers away.

(2005:221)

The manifestation of androgyny transcends space and time. Neolithic vestiges indicate that the fusion of female and male psychological characteristics was part of the rituals. The Chinese Yin-Yang, the Hindu Tantra and Devas, the African and the Caribbean Voudoun symbolize the integration of “traits considered to be feminine with those considered to be masculine” (Lindsey, 2015: 523). As already mentioned, *Hijras* in India, *Berdaches* in USA, *Xaniths* in Oman, to name but a few, are examples of different races that display androgyny.

Even the glamour world manifests androgyny, and Marlene Dietrich, Katheryn Hepburn, Elvis Presley, The Rolling Stones, David Bowie, Annie Lennox, Prince, Grace Jones and other movie stars and rockstars are “androgyny’s most beautiful champions” and impacted the culture of androgyny (Singer, 2017).¹⁵ The 1984 Grammy Awards was “a celebration of androgyny”, notes the Rev. Jefferis Kent Peterson (Kaufman, 2013).¹⁶ Furthermore, scholars and thinkers adopt androgyny as a life style and Radclyffe Hall, the author of *The Well of Loneliness* epitomizes the trend. She not only pioneered androgynous modes of dress, but also explored it in her famous novella aforementioned that will be referred to in the section that discusses androgyny in literature. Androgyny can be

¹⁵ Magazine article by Olivia Singer 30 September 2017, in <https://www.vogue.co.uk/gallery/fashion-androgynous-icons-annie-lennox-prince-david-bowie> .

¹⁶ See Scott Barry, Kaufman. “Blurred Lines, Androgyny and Creativity.” Scientific American, September 2013.

traceable in the works, ideas and lifestyle of the Bloomsbury circle in the 1920s and 1930s, the bohemian revival in the 1960s, the 'Women's Movement' of the 1970s and the anti-Thatcherite artistic and social backlash in the 1980s (Heilbrun, 1964; Kuznets, 1982; Humm, 1995; Hoffman & Borders, 2001; Hargreaves, 2005).

The androgynous style affects youths' way of clothing and behavior to such an extent that instead of the archetypal binary structure which sets a barrier between the female and the male, we are now entitled to a continuum wherein the traditional gender roles are progressively overshadowed by the unisex/androgynous tendency. "Androgyny", Morawsky argues, "can be interpreted as an emerging social style, an adaptation to contemporary life" (1987: 446-63). For Morawski, the fact is that "there are unwomanly women, man-like women, and unmanly, womanish, woman-like men"(Ibid: 2). In fact, a mixture of the alleged male and/or female attributes are crucial in some, not to say most of the modern professions such as microsurgery, computer networks and so forth. These jobs require patience, endurance, delicacy as well as firmness, and steadfastness. Osofsky and Osofsky equate androgyny as a life style with a society where there is no differentiation of gender roles, that is to say, stereotypes related to the way man and woman need to behave according to their gender identity (1972:411).

Works such as Bem's and Spence and Helmreich have been subjected to criticism of course. The first reproach relates to the singling out of androgyny which is said to be part of every individual, a "general personality quality" (Vonk & Ashmore, 1993:279). The second has to do with the subjective aspect of the measure in the sense that the traits which decide who is androgynous are selected by the researcher and are therefore biased. In her telling *Androgyny and Denial of Differences* (1992), Kari Weil offers a contrapuntal view of androgyny and remarks that "that androgyny has often functioned as a conservative, if not a misogynistic, ideal is evident in the long and learned tradition of dual-sexed being"

(1992: 2). Furthermore, she argues that “psychoanalysis equates androgyny with a repressed desire to return to the imaginary wholeness and self-sufficiency associated with the pre-Oedipal phase before sexual difference” (Ibid: 3). Elaine Showalter, for her part, deems androgyny an emotional utopia that led to the suicide of Virginia Woolf and some other writers. She considers androgyny as “the myth that helped her [Woolf] evade confrontation with her own painful femaleness” (1977: 264-66). Unlike Showalter, other critics saw “androgyny in Woolf’s work as balance between the poles of intuition and reason, subjectivity and objectivity, anima and animus, heterosexuality and homosexuality, and finally manic and depressive” (Farwell, 1975: 434). Virginia Woolf was both a theoretician of androgyny and creator of androgynous characters of the like of Orlando and Mrs Dalloway.

3. Androgyny in Literature

Traceability of androgyny in literature is the aim of this section. Some of the characteristics above saturate Euripides’ *Bacchus/Dionysus* who is, in Carolyn Heilbrun’s words, a “woman-in-man, or man-in-woman” (1988 [1973] xi). He is also “said to be effeminately beautiful, he appeared mild but could be dangerous” (Roman & Roman, 2010: 137). The concept of wholeness equally penetrates Plato’s *Symposium* in which a group of remarkable men including the philosopher Socrates, the general and political man Alcibiades and the playwright Aristophanes deliver speeches in the honour of Eros (love). Aristophanes’s speech turns out to be Plato’s literary masterpiece because Aristophane innovates and explains why lovers feel “whole”¹⁷ when they are united by love.

¹⁷ There were three kinds of human beings: male, descended from the sun; female, descended from the earth; and androgynous, with both male and female elements, descended from the moon. Each human being was completely round, with four arms and four legs, two identical faces on opposite sides of a head with four ears, and all else to match. They walked both forwards and backwards and ran by turning cartwheels on their eight limbs, moving in circles like their parents the planets. As they were powerful and unruly and threatening to scale the heavens, Zeus devised to cut them into two ‘like a sorb-apple which is halved for pickling,’ and even threatened to cut them into two again, so that they might hop on one leg. Apollo then

Shakespeare's debt to Plato is signaled in *Timon of Athens* (1623) in which the Bard "mirrors Socrates' description of misanthropy" not Aristophanes's gloss of androgyny (Kaytor, 2017:171). Androgyny in Shakespeare can be seen in "*Androgyny Seen Through Shakespeare's Disguise*" where Robert Kimbrough mentions *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* to exemplify his claim that "[a]ndrogyny reaches widely and deeply, and impulses toward a recognition and realization of its range run throughout Shakespeare's work" (1982: 18-21). Kimbrough lists no less than "seven examples of girl-into-boy disguise in Shakespeare: Julia, Portia, Nerissa, Jessica, Rosalind, Viola, and Imogen" (Ibid: 18-21). The female role in Elizabethan drama, as we know, was performed by boys/men disguised in girls/women. In addition to its didactic and entertaining ends, (Shakespearean) drama allows the players to perform their "own androgynous potential than do the "rules" of everyday life" (Ibid: 33). "Shakespeare was as devoted to the androgynous ideal as anyone who has ever written" remarks Heilbrun (1988: 29). Another bard, Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), was fascinated by "the ideal of the androgynous imagination, and [had] distaste for binary structure in thinking and in writing as well as in human relationships" (MacGravan, 1988: 57). Coleridge's ideal was endorsed by Virginia Woolf who popularized the concept among literary circles and theorized it in *A Room of One's Own* (1928). She mainly praises androgyny in thinking and writing and contends:

turned their heads to make them face towards their wound, pulled their skin around to cover up the wound, and tied it together at the navel like a purse. He made sure to leave a few wrinkles on what became known as the abdomen so that they might be reminded of their punishment. After that, human beings longed for their other half so much that they searched for it all over. When they found it, they wrapped themselves around it very tightly and did not let go. As a result, they started dying from hunger and self-neglect. Zeus took pity on the poor creatures, and moved their genitals to the front so that those who were previously androgynous could procreate, and those who were previously male could obtain satisfaction and move on to higher things. This is the origin of our desire for other human beings. Those of us who desire members of the opposite sex were previously androgynous, whereas men who desire men and women who desire women were previously male or female. When we find our other half, we are 'lost in an amazement of love and friendship and intimacy' that cannot be accounted for by a simple appetite for sex, but rather by a desire to be whole again, and restored to our original nature. Our greatest wish, if we could have it, would then be for Hephaestus to meld us into one another so that our souls could be at one, and share once more in a common fate.

If one is a man, still the woman part of the brain must have effect; and a woman also must have intercourse with the man in her [...] It is when this fusion takes place that the mind is fully fertilized and uses all its faculties. Perhaps a mind that is purely masculine cannot create, any more than a mind that is purely feminine.

(2000[1928]: 97)

In *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf places great emphasis on Shakespeare, and mentions Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, Coleridge, Keats, Sterne, Lamb, Cowper, and Proust and above all Shelley as androgynous minds and/or containers of the “double soul”. Indeed, Coleridge, Keats and Shelley could “partook in the angelic boundlessness of androgyny, the “feminine” components of which were responsible for their imaginative creativity” (Brown, 1984: 192).

Strangely, Virginia Woolf's father, Leslie Stephen, the author, critic, historian and editor of *Far From the Madding Crowd* “found the condition of androgyny to be evil”, and posits that “the slightest androgynous taint must be condemned or satisfactorily explained” (Qtd in Brown, 1984: 184). He even deemed Coventry Patmore, Richardson, Rousseau and John Stuart Mill effeminate (Heilbrun, 1988:184-85). Alfred Tennyson and Algernon Charles Swinburne were also closely associated with androgyny. Swinburne's poems *Hermaphroditus*, *Anactaria* and *Fragoletta* (1866) “threaten[ed] to destabilize the socially constructed norms of male and female behavior” of the Victorian society (Pease, 1997:43-56). “[M]id-Victorian literature is itself a rich site for a theory of androgynous ethical competence, for such literature is both historically implicated in and deeply hostile to the bourgeois development”, argues Laureen Goodlad. (2005: 219). George Eliot whose “extraordinary qualifications both of “masculine” strength of mind and “feminine” sensibility have perhaps never been combined to better purpose”(Heilbrun, 1988: 59-82). As for Hardy, his “great novels are so close to androgynous as makes no matter” remarks Heilbrun (1988:69). Laureen Goodlad mentions Jude Fawley when she refers to the female masculinities “evoked by nineteenth-century characters such as Harriet Martineau's Dr.

Hope, Charlotte Bronte's Lucy Snowe, Wilkie Collins's Marian Halcombe, Anthony Trollope's Madame Max, George Gissing's Rhoda Nunn" (Goodlad, 2005:222).

Théophile Gautier's *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1835) Honoré de Balzac's *Seraphita* (1834), Joris-Karl Huysmans' *A Rebours* (1884) represent androgyny in French literature. Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* (1928), Jeffrey Eugenides' *Middlesex* (2002) Gore Vidal's *Myra Breckinridge & Myron* (1968 and 1974), Ursula Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969) Marge Pierce's *Woman on the Edge of Time*, (1976) Jan Morris' *Conundrum* (1974), Angela Carter's *The Passion of the New Eve* (1977), and Jeanette Winterson's *Written on the Body* (1992) account among the representative books that deal with this sexual station which is located between maleness and femaleness.

Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the concept of androgyny in terms of conceptualization, definition and measures. Definitions of androgyny abound, and they all agree that androgyny is the combination of feminine and masculine traits in one individual. Androgyny is not hermaphroditism. It is genderqueer and non-binary in that it resists the traditional categorization of gender into two distinct genders with distinct roles, and identity. Androgyny, it has been said, is not a new phenomenon; Aristophanes' speech in the *Symposium* has become a recurrent motif in most of the texts that historicise androgyny.

In addition to history, specialized sciences such as psychology, sexology and even philosophy have approached androgyny and suggested a description of the nature, the scope, the advantages and disadvantages of androgyny. Ellen Piel Cook's *Psychological Androgyny* (1985), June Singer's *Androgyny: Towards a New Theory of Androgyny* (1977) and Kari Weil's *Androgyny and the Denial of Difference* (1992) constitute the major books that simplify the concept of androgyny. As for advocates of androgyny, Sandra Bem champions it and has researched it so much that her BSRI (Bem Sex Role Inventory) has become a referential measure of masculinity and femininity, but also androgyny. Bem concludes that androgyny is at the center of the gender continuum whose poles are masculinity and femininity. Androgynes flow between these poles and behave androgynously according to circumstantial needs. One can be active or passive according to a given situation. Emotivity is not the proper of the "opposite sex" and males need to cry and weep without incurring the wrath of binarism. Psychoanalytic analysis has also contributed to the recognition of androgyny as a necessary remedy for well-being thanks to Carl Gustave Jung's contribution through his archetypal analysis. Indeed, the famous pair animus and anima is of great value in recognizing the bi-sexual constitution of Man. A

conscious integration of the feminine principle in man and the masculine principle in woman is named in Jung's terminology individuation, and this is almost the same as androgyny.

Carolyn Heilbrun's *Toward Recognition of Androgyny* (1988) and Tracy Hargraves's *Androgyny in Modern Literature* (2005) stand among the books that track the course of androgyny in literature. Heilbrun's book is not only about androgyny in literature, but it is also an advocacy of androgyny. Her book has really contributed to the recognition of androgyny in academia, and Virginia Woolf's theorization of androgyny and her praise of the androgynous mind have probably participated in the way androgyny is regarded now in literature in particular. Combining agency and communion in individuals of whatever gender is interesting both for the individuals and the society. Androgyny is synonymous with balance between intuition and reason, subjectivity and objectivity for the profit of the androgynous individual who enjoys mental health and psychological well-being that is not found elsewhere.

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Chapter Two

Theory/Theories

Introduction

This chapter is about the theory and/or theories that have proved applicable to the issue at stake. Combining a set of theories like the theory of tragedy, the theory of androgyny, and archetypal theory all of which relate to the main theory, that is, queer theory, has turned out to be necessary.

Today gender and queer theory redirect us toward a more complex understanding of the social as well as psychological and perhaps even biological situatedness of conflicts and consonances among such terms. Penny Boumelha and Patricia Ingham have found Hardy's interrogation of gender – as a web of relations, an unstable process, and an artificial construct to be present everywhere in [Hardy's] writings.

(Higonnet, 2009: 117-18)

So, interrogating gender in Hardy requires a web of theories that do not only overlap, but also subsume each other. As already mentioned in the General Introduction, the theories chosen are portioned out according to the issue discussed in each Part and each Chapter too. Thus, Part Three in which is discussed androgyny as tragedy, the theory of tragedy seems more appropriate. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, for instance, I argue that Michael Henchard, the protagonist of the novel in question, is a tragic hero, and his tragic fate springs from his character. In *Jude the Obscure* the tragedy of Jude and Sue lies in their androgyny, and almost the same applies to Eustacia Vye in *The Return of the Native*. Chapter Five in which I discuss androgyny in *The Hand of Ethelberta* and *A Laodicean* through the lens of Ethelberta Petherwin and Paula Power, respectively the female protagonists of these novels, I rely on Virginia Woolf's theory of the androgynous mind. As already mentioned Eustacia Vye belongs in the same chapter and is concerned by/with Woolf's theory as well as with the theory of tragedy. Chapter Three and Four are analysed through the lens of performance theory. Proceeding by a question like "Male, Female or Both?", namely the initial part of the title of my thesis, does not claim to offer ready-made answers or assertions beyond dispute, but rather borrows Butler's method of questioning ceaselessly.

Before considering the above mentioned theories, I need to take a brief tour into semantics to reveal the meaning of the word “queer” which is at high in this thesis because of the genderqueer at issue and the apposite theoretical approach.

1. Queer Theory

This section approaches a theory that is both fascinating and thrilling. The word queer has always been purposefully queered and burdened with pejorative connotations because it does not comply with heteronormative ideology and ideals. In fact, homosexuals, LGBT and/or GLBT (bisexuels, gays, lesbians, and transgenders), transsexuals, transgenders, and genderqueers that are categorized as non-binary and third genders find shelter under this umbrella term that is queer. Homosexuals were designed by the word queer in English-speaking countries before the 1980s. After that, it was adopted by activists, organizations (ACT UP¹⁸, Queer Nation) and gender theorists to refer to an identity. The term has been politicized and conceptualized to the utmost.

Academia seized the word and transformed it into a powerful theoretical tool. Theresa de Lauretis (2008) conceptualized the word in relation to death, Judith Halberstam (2005) in connection with culture, Eve Kosofsky-Sedwick (1993) in relation to politics and above all, Judith Butler whose name has been closely connected with queer though the concept has not been mentioned in Butler’s seminal *Gender Trouble* (1990) which has become a fundamental text in Queer theory. In fact, Judith Butler and Queer Theory have been closely interrelated that most of the handbooks and dictionaries dealing with literary theory associate queer with Butler and refer to her major books. A special issue of *Differences*¹⁹ 1991, vol. 3 edited by de Lauretis that bore the word queer is considered as the first use of the word in academia. One year before, the same de Lauretis organized an academic conference about “queer theory”. She suggested using the word queer in lieu of

¹⁸ ACT UP: AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power.

¹⁹ A journal of feminist Cultural Studies.

gay and lesbian. The above mentioned Eve Kosofsky Sedwick is also important in the success of the word “queer” thanks to her research on gender and sexuality. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (1985) and *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990) constitute her major contribution to gender studies. The term “queer” has gained an important place in research about gender and sexuality, and has become a crucial critical category.

Queer theory, to say the least, is “conceptually slippery [and] oppositoanal” in Turner’s words (2000: 3-10). The word queer is the nexus of this theory which involves the rejectees of feminism that is gender queers. The word queer is found in the dictionary as a noun, a verb and an adjective altogether. “Queer research can be any form of research positioned within conceptual frameworks that highlight the instability of taken-for-granted meanings and resulting power relations” (Brown & Nash, 2010:4). Scholars and theorists that belong in queer theory go against the grain and refute essentialism in gender. They contest established ideas about binarim, heteronormativity and conventional understanding of gender and sexuality. “[T]he point of queer theory is to challenge and disrupt binaries with the hopes that doing so will simultaneously dismantle difference and inequality” (Barber and Hidalgo, 2009: 689-90). The binaries male/female, man/woman, masculine/feminine, and heterosexual/homosexual are problematised and rebutted because “they reify difference and hierarchy and, as a consequence, reinforce the notion of minority as abnormal and inferior” (Ibid).

The major credo of queer theory is that gender is a construct resulting from a socio-cultural paradigm. The second tenet of queer theory relates to new gender identity or genderqueer identity. It is, queer theorists argue, in claiming a gender identity other than the traditional dual one. Assuming one’s homosexuality, for example, is not as emancipatory as it appears to be. These identities are somehow prescribed and controlled.

“Categories are disciplinary and regulatory structures because they are inherently exclusive” (Reese Carey Kelly 2009:693-94). There is no room for definition, fixity and stasis in Queer theory; it deconstructs sexed and gendered identities and differs from feminism, gay and lesbian studies and gender studies which problematize woman, gender and sex through the assumption that the subject is already there. In sum, our view of both society and culture is redefined by queer theory. The essentialist conception of the subject, gender and identity is no longer operative; biology is not destiny anymore. *Discipline and Punish, The Birth of Prison* (1975) and *The History of Sexuality* (1976), namely Michel Foucault’s seminal books are regarded as the basis of queer theory. Queer theory is otherwise labeled performance theory especially when it comes to Butler’s theorizing.

In his *Critical Theory Today* (2006), Lois Tyson exemplifies each of the theories he presents with a chosen text read through the theory discussed. For Queer theory, he chooses William Faulkner’s “A Rose for Emily” (1931). The failure of traditional definitions of gender identity to contain the character of Emily Greirson is the core of this queer reading. It examines how Emily’s gender is troubled and unstable. She is neither female nor male, but travels through the gender continuum from femininity to masculinity.

She’s both the slender virgin in white dominated by her father and the defiant individualist who violates class norms and moral law to take what she wants from Homer Barron, including his life. She’s both the childlike recluse who teaches the feminine art of china painting and the dominant presence with iron-gray hair, like that of a vigorous man, who imposes her will on the male power structure, including the post office, the tax collectors, the church, and, in the person of the pharmacist, the medical profession.
(2006: 337)

It is clear that Emily combines female and masculine attributes; rebellious, dominated, imposing, etc. A queer approach to Faulkner’s text would pinpoint the resistance of Emily to traditional categorization, her flight from binarism and the validity of the theory that gender is no more than a social construct.

2. Performance Theory

Performance theory should not be taken in its Schechnerian sense of artistic performances, but rather as cultural ones. Defining Performance Studies, Richard Schechner categorises performances into two groups: the artistic ones which include *inter alia*, solo-performance, theatrical storytelling and performance of poetry, and cultural performances which encapsulate rituals, religious events, festivals, socio-professional roles and individual roles related to race, gender and class. Gender as performance belongs to the second group, and Judith Butler is cited among the theorists of performance theory in company with the aforementioned Richard Schechner, one of the founders of Performance Studies, and the British anthropologist Victor Witter Turner.

Elaborated in her innovative *Gender Trouble* (1990), Butler's theory of performativity borrows the poststructuralist and deconstructionist path and relies on J.L.Austin's groundbreaking *How to Do Things With Words* (1955) to present the world with a revolutionary gender theory. Butler admits in an interview given in 1993 that Austin's theory of speech acts and Jacques Derrida's deconstruction of this theory in an essay named "Signature Event Context" (1972) helped her in formulating her new theory of gender identity.

In fact, Performance theory is first and foremost a theory about gender identity which posits that gender is a process, it is "the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being. A political genealogy of gender ontologies" (Butler, 1990: 25). In other words, gender is performed and done everyday. Performance theory claims that one is not born male or female, but grows man or woman. A girl is, in Butler's words, "girled" and,

the naming of the "girl" is transitive, that is, initiates the process by which a certain "girling" is compelled, the term or, rather, its symbolic power,

governs the formation of a corporeally enacted femininity that never fully approximates the norm. This is a “girl”, however, who is compelled to “cite” the norm in order to qualify and remain a viable subject. Femininity is thus not the product of a choice, but the forcible citation of a norm, one whose complex historicity is indissociable from relations of discipline, regulation, punishment.

(1993: 232)

Drawing from Michel Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish*, Butler refutes the idea that one internalizes disciplinary structures and norms, but contends that these norms and laws are rather incorporated and inscribed in the individual. The girl playacts the gender role that is inscribed in her.

[T]he utterance ‘It’s a girl!’ or ‘It’s a boy!’ by which a baby is, traditionally, welcomed into the world, is less a constative utterance (true or false, according to the situation) than the first in a long series of performatives that create the subject whose arrival they announce. The naming of the girl initiates a continuous process of ‘girling’, the making of a girl, through an ‘assignment’ of compulsory repetition of gender norms, ‘the forcible citation of a norm’.

(Culler, 1997: 103-104)

Although gender is a performance and “gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed” (Butler, 1990: 25), the girl in question does not voluntarily perform her gender role. In fact, following Fredereich Nietzsche’s *Genealogy of Morals* (1887), Butler contends that “there is no ‘being’ behind doing, acting, becoming; ‘the doer’ is merely a fiction imposed on the doing—the doing itself is everything” (Ibid). She aligns with Simone de Beauvoir in underlying the fact that gender is what we do not what we are. The continuing performance of gender convinces the subject and society of the internality of the gender at stake, but the instability and gender trouble proves that gender is not inherent.

Gender identity is performative in that language precedes gender; language and discourse “do” gender, not the subject itself. All utterances must be taken for actions in Austin’s theory. Thus, gender in the structuralist sense belongs in the constative acts, it is being. At this point, it is worth making clear that Butler does not mean performative in the

Austinian²⁰ sense, i.e., an action or performance performed by a doer. In fact, she distinguishes performativity from performance and states that,

performativity must be understood not as a singular or deliberate "act," but, rather, as the reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names.. . . the regulatory norms of "sex" work in a performative fashion to constitute the materiality of bodies and, more specifically, to materialize the body's sex, to materialize sexual difference in the service of the consolidation of the heterosexual imperative. . . .
(1993:2)

For Butler then, individuals are by no means agents in their gender identity; they merely iterate the “gendred acts that have come before them. The only way out of this performative trap is resignification” (Hall, 2000: 186). Butlerian performativity has been criticized for the absence of the agent precisely, and also for its being enmeshed in performance. Butler herself admits to be unable to offer a precise definition, “not only because my own views on what “performativity” might mean have changed over time, most often in response to excellent criticisms, but because so many others have taken it up and given it their own formulations” (1990: XV). Indeed, in a later book, *Undoing Gender* (2004), Butler opines that,

If gender is a kind of doing, an incessant activity performed, in part, without one’s knowing and without one’s willing, it is not for that reason automatic or mechanical. On the contrary, it is a practice of improvisation within a scene of constraints. Moreover, one does not “do” one’s gender alone. One is always “doing” with or for another, even if the other is only imaginary.

(2004: 1)

Everything considered, the above words and most of Butler’s statements queer the word queer more, and Butler herself is found a queer theorist and philosopher.

²⁰ J.L. Austin is worldwide famous for his *How to Do Things with Words* (1955) in which he underscores the weight of discourse and introduces the dichotomous **performative** vs **constative** utterances. Whereas the former implies action and dynamism, the latter is mere statements. For Butler a statement such as the famous ‘It’s a girl’ which a nurse or midwife utters at the birth of a girl is not constative, but rather performative in that by such an utterance a process of ‘girling’ takes place.

2.1. Queer Butler?

‘Who’s Judith Butler?’ [the] reply might contain the words ‘queer theory’, ‘feminist theory’ and ‘gender studies’. Probe a little deeper, and you might hear ‘gender performativity’, ‘parody’ and ‘drag’, concepts and practices with which Butler has come to be widely associated, albeit somewhat misleadingly.

(Salih, 2002:1)

Indeed, as it has been mentioned earlier, Judith Butler has been closely associated with the concept “queer” and Queer theory. She has been regarded as one of the founders of this iconoclastic theoretical approach (Annamarie Jagose, 1996; William B. Turner, 2000; and Donald E. Hall 2003; Helmers, 2010). Judith Butler is also considered as one of the most prominent theorists and philosophers of the last three decades. Although, her name often reccurs in gender studies in general and queer studies in particular, Butler’s thinking encroaches on diverse disciplines like cultural studies, sociology, art theory and criticism, media and communication studies. Butler’s thinking has been influenced by Continental philosophy and theory (Jacques Derrida, Louis Pierre Althusser, Michel Foucault), feminism (Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray, Monique Wittig), psychoanalysis (Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan), and of course Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. The multiplicity and variety of inspirational sources is one the hallmarks of Judith Butler. However, as Sarah Salih puts it,

Butler is neither a Freudian nor a Foucauldian, nor is she a Marxist, a feminist or a post-structuralist; instead, we might say that she shares affinities with these theories and their political projects, identifying with none of them in a singular sense but deploying a range of theoretical paradigms wherever it seems most appropriate in various, sometimes unexpected ways.

(2002:6)

Accordingly, she contributes to the enrichment of psychoanalytic theory, postmodernist theory, poststructuralist theory, feminism, gender studies and last but not least philosophy.

Judith Butler began as Hegelian²¹; looking into how the German philosopher's *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Phenomenology of Mind) (1807) was received by the 1930s' and 1940s' French philosophers, namely Alexandre Kojève, Jean Hyppolite, Jean-Paul Sartre, Jacques Lacan, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Gilles Deleuze in her first book, *Subjects of desire* (1987). She delves in the Hegelian spirit and/or mind (subject for Butler) which is but a subject-in-process. The concepts of subject, subjecthood and subject-in-process become fundamental concepts in Butler's theorization of gender. "Subject-in-process" is the other neologism Butler adapts from Hegel whose Phenomenology is framed like a bildungsroman (initiation from ignorance to knowledge), thus the Butlerian subject passes through stages through which it passes from misrecognition to recognition.

The above-mentioned *Gender Trouble* is Butler's most influential book. *Bodies That Matter* (1993), *The Psychic Life of Power* (1997), *Antigone's Claim* (2000), and *Undoing Gender* (2004) have become reference books. *Gender Trouble* is the book which revealed Butler's theorizing of gender and her positioning as regards the woman question. When she sent the manuscript to Routledge for publication, Butler was far from thinking that her text would have the audience it has had. Indeed, the text in question has not only invaded feminist theory, but has also become "a founding text of queer theory" (Butler, [1990] 1999: vii). Her initial concern was to counter the prevailing feminist stance that "restricted the meaning of gender to received notions of masculinity and femininity" (Ibid: viii). Furthermore, Butler was and is still concerned with the evolution of feminism which, in her words, "ought to be careful not to idealize certain expressions of gender that, in turn, produce new forms of hierarchy and exclusion (Ibid). She has envisaged a myriad of possibilities for the signification of the concept of gender. In *Gender Trouble*, Butler gets down to "to uncover the ways in which the very thinking of what is possible in gendered

²¹ In fact, she is faithful to Hegel and she admits it "all my work remains within the orbit of a certain set of Hegelian questions" (Salih, 2002: 20).

life is foreclosed by certain habitual and violent presumptions”, and “undermine any and all efforts to wield a discourse of truth to delegitimize minority gendered and sexual practices” (Ibid). She asks crucial questions such as: “how do non-normative sexual practices call into question the stability of gender as a category of analysis?” and “How do certain sexual practices compel the question: what is a woman, what is a man? If gender is no longer to be understood as consolidated through normative sexuality, then is there a crisis of gender that is specific to queer contexts?” (Ibid: xi). Moreover, *Gender Trouble* critiques “the norm of compulsory heterosexuality and argue[s] that IDENTITY [is] a function not of ESSENTIALIST gender roles or characteristics but rather of PERFORMATIVITY” (Castle, 2007:205 emphasis not mine).

3. The Theory of Androgyny

This section may as well be part of the section that deals with Queer theory as it is concerned with queer. The theory of androgyny belongs in literary theory, psychoanalysis and psychology. However, neither Virginia Woolf nor Carl Gustav Jung is Queer theorist. The aforementioned Sandra R. L.Bem, Spence J.T., Heilmreich R.L., Virginia Woolf and Carolyn G.Heilbrun also theorised about androgyny, and envision it as a panacea.

3.1. Virginia Woolf’s Theory of Androgyny

Between 20 and 26 October 1928, Virginia Woolf made two conferences at Cambridge University. One year later, the two papers were published in a book entitled *A Room of One’s Own* and has not only become a theorization of androgyny, but also a referential book for feminists. The considerations that saturate the book would constitute “the precursors to the formulation of the androgynous writing mind”, remarks Tracy Hargreaves (1994:43).

In fact, “A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction; and that, as you will see, leaves the great problem of the true nature of woman and

the true nature of fiction unsolved” (Woolf, 2000 [1928]: 1) *A Room of One’s Own* is Woolf’s manifesto as regards feminism, but especially androgyny. She points out that:

Sex and its nature might well attract doctors and biologists; but what was surprising and difficult for explanation was the fact that sex—woman, that is to say—also attracts agreeable essayists, light-fingered novelists, young men who have taken the M.A. degree; young men who have taken no degree; men who have no apparent qualification save that they are not women.

(Ibid: 28-9)

A Room of One’s Own’s principal claim is Coleridge’s famous dictum which posits that a great mind is androgynous. Woolf “took this idea ... fashioned it into a critical tool that has earned the interest of many modern scholars” (Farwell, 1975:433). Indeed, Woolf’s comment on androgyny has become fundamental to later definitions of this concept. Her interest in androgyny was not motivated by psychological considerations, but concerned the domain of writing especially women writers. She contends that if men and women free themselves from gender stereotypes, and endorse their anima and animus equally, they would be “naturally creative, incandescent and unindivided” (Ibid: 102). William Shakespeare is the epitome of this incandescent writer who could have been called Judith and succeed as well provided that she has a room of her own, money, etc. In sum, appropriate material and ideological conditions and androgyny can free both men and women from the constraints of essentialism and transform them into great minds. Virginia Woolf’s “erstwhile lover” (Hargreaves, 1994:41), Vita Sackville-West declared in her review of *A Room* for *The Listener* of November 1929 knowing “no writer who fulfills this condition [the androgynous condition] more thoroughly than Mrs Woolf herself” (qtd in Hargreaves, 1994:49).

Critics have underlined the importance of androgyny both in Woolf’s fiction and her theory, but do not agree on the exact acceptation of androgyny in Woolf. Some critics describe Woolf’s androgyny as her “term for the fusion ... indicative of the *oneness* of mankind” (Farwell, 1975: 434). The oneness of mankind is balance between the extremes

of subjectivity and objectivity, intuition and reason, heterosexuality and homosexuality, and anima and animus. Anima and animus are precisely the key words in Jung's theorization of androgyny.

3.2. Jung's Dichotomy *Anima/Animus*

In her contribution to *Post-Jungian Criticism: Practice and Theory* with her "Jung's Ghost Stories Jung for Literary Theory in Feminism, Poststructuralism, and Postmodernism" (2004), Susan Rowland begins her article about anima with a recollection of Jung telling an anecdote wherein he says,

I once asked myself, "What am I really doing? . . ." Whereupon a voice within me said, "It is art." I was astonished . . . I knew for a certainty that the voice had come from a woman. . . . Later I came to see that this inner feminine figure plays a typical, or archetypical, role in the unconscious of a man, and I called her the anima. . . . I was like a patient in analysis with a ghost and a woman! . . . The anima might then have easily seduced me into believing that I was a misunderstood artist. . . . If I had followed her voice, she would in all probability have said to me one day, "Do you imagine the nonsense you're engaged in is really art? Not a bit." (*Memories* 210–12).
(2004:31)

The feminine voice in Jung's memories equates the masculine voice Virginia Woolf deals with in her *A Room of One's Own*. This is to say that both sections are suitably put together to figure in what is known as the theory of androgyny.

To the best of my knowledge, Rosemary Sumner is the only book length which approached Hardy from a Jungian perspective through a chapter discussing *The Well beloved* (1892 rewritten in 1897) which is in Sumner's words "very largely, a vehicle for theory; Hardy virtually outlines, in a simple form, Jung's concept of the anima, and there are many striking parallels between the novel and Jung's writings" (1981:32).

In fact, it has been reported that Carl Gustave Jung started to give much importance to the issue of gender in his theorizing after he had parted company with Freud. Both Freud and Jung were concerned with the presence of feminine traits in man. These, Jung called

contrasexual demands famously designed as animus and anima. R.W. Connell reports that Jung

used the idea of a masculine/feminine polarity to call for a gender balance in mental and social life, a progressive position in the 1920s. He even devised a kind of masculinity therapy, arguing that 'a certain type of modern man, accustomed to repress weakness, could no longer afford to do so. In a striking passage, foreshadowing techniques of therapy that became popular fifty years later, Jung suggested methods for talking to one's anima, as if to a separate personality, and educating it.

(2005:12-3)

Thus, a Jungian approach to androgyny in Hardy is a must because the androgyne has been regarded as an archetype among the others. In fact, psychoanalysts equate androgyny with:

a repressed desire to return to the imaginary wholeness and self-sufficiency associated with the pre-Oedipal phase before sexual difference. The fantasy of the phallic mother is one manifestation of this desire that says that sexual difference is not an originary difference, that originally the sexes were the same.

(Weil, 1992:3)

When anima and animus are well-balanced in an individual, the sexual difference wanes.

The definition which follows is more telling.

The Anima/Animus archetype represents the liaison between the conscious and unconscious mind, facilitating dialogue between the desires of the Self and the ego. Jung maintained that the Anima/Animus was a balancing archetype, ultimately serving to encourage individuation. As a balancing figure, the Anima is often taken to embody an opposing or complementary characteristic; thus, Jung posited that she was a feminine icon to the male psyche (Anima), and a masculine icon to the female psyche (Animus). In its transcendent aspect, the Anima/Animus is a messianic icon, and for this reason a juxtaposition of masculine and feminine characteristics exist in many images of messiah figures, as well as an absence of gender markers in divine figures charged with the conveyance of messages and omens between the sacred and profane worlds.

(Chirila, 2011: 50)

Anima and *animus* are without doubt the most prominent Jungian archetypes whose pertinence to the issue at stake can be justified by the mere fact that this binary is representative of the no less famous binary masculine/feminine. The Jungian Anima/animus is considered here in an acceptation that is of much good to my theorizations. Actually, I envisage the pair anima/animus as the binary that corresponds the most to the binary male/female. To put it simply, the anima stands for the female principle

that is allegedly present in every male while the animus corresponds to the male principle also present in every female. Thus, every man harbours anima or an inner woman inside him while every woman is inhabited by animus or an inner man. My contention as regards the theme of this research project is that the Hardyian female character is plentiful of animus and the male character is permeated with anima. As a result, gender is troubled and is in trouble in the Hardyian fiction, and veers from the traditional binary opposition towards the third gender which is androgyny. As a matter of fact, the duality anima/animus can also constitute a kind of MFT (male/female test), and as Knapp puts it, “Jung’s anima/animus archetypes depicts a basic androgyny which reveals new and dynamic modes of behavior—multiple sides of the mystery which is the personality” (1987:5-6 my emphasis). The personalities of Jude, Sue, Bathsheba, Tess, etc., are the mysterious ones in this particular case in which modes of behavior disclose a form of androgyny.

Animus and anima are aligned in Jung’s analysis with *Logos* and *Eros*. Jung considered that “masculine consciousness was already oriented towards Logos, powers of analysis, separateness and reason, and feminine consciousness aligned with Eros, relatedness, feeling and love” (Rowland, 2004:14-5). Jung also, “refers to Eros and Logos as capable of coexisting in individuals of either gender. (Ibid: 15). Needless to say that only the couple animus/anima is of relevance herein; it is removed of the essentialism that characterizes Jung’s thought. Indeed, some regarded these archetypes as a form of empowerment of man as “logos seems a mere accident in woman” according to Jung. It must be noted at this juncture that Jung is a developmental psychologist whereas Bem is a social psychologist.

3.3. BEM's Measurement of Androgyny

In the 1970s, Sandra L. Bem wrote a journal article, "The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny" (1974) that somehow pioneered empirical study of androgyny. Bem rejects the traditional binarism and advocates a middleway, that is, an intermediate status in which an individual "might be both male and female. (1974: 155). For Bem, "a mixed, or androgynous, self-concept might allow an individual to freely engage in both "feminine" and "masculine" behaviours" (Ibid). To support her thesis, she elaborates the famous BSRI (Bem's Sex Role Inventory).

The BSRI consists of an inventory of male and female attributes that are used to measure masculinity and femininity in individuals. The BSRI was not the first and sole MT F scale; the Attitudes Towards Women Scale (Spence & Helmreich, 1972) and the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (Spence, Helmreich & Stapp, 1974) gained a place in the realm of sex tests and measures, but the BSRI is the one which grew conspicuous by adjoining to the traditional categories masculine, feminine another category of androgyny. Besides, the BSRI has been the most widely used test; it appeared in 973 articles.²² (Beere, 1990: 5) According to the BSRI, a person is said masculine, feminine, or androgynous depending on "the difference between his or her endorsement of masculine and feminine personality characteristics" (Bem, 1974: 156).

Actually, the 1920s saw a rush of researches conducted in psychology to unravel the mysteries of masculinity and femininity by a series of scales and tests. The findings were either inconclusive (Hollingworth 1916-1918, Allen 1927), or merely speculative (Hall 1922, Moore 1922, Jastrow 1918, Leuba 1926). However, the year 1936 witnessed the publication of the Attitude Interest Analysis Test (AIST) by Lewis Terman and Catherine Cox Miles. The AIST which is a list of 910 items designed to recognize and

²² Carole A. Beere. *Gender Roles: A Handbook of Tests and Measures*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Inc, 1990, p. 5.

assess the psychological traits of males and females enjoyed the status of the prototypical M-F test for more than thirteen years. The 1970s announced the end of the reign of the traditional M-F tests and the beginning of a new approach wherein the male/female dichotomy was overthrown by the intrusion of a third party or an outsider which answers to the name of androgyny.

Contending that masculinity and femininity are not that bipolar, researchers (Bem 1974, 1977, Berzins, Welling, & Wetter, 1978, Heilbrun, 1976, Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1975) introduced a third gender; individuals who exhibit equally high amounts of masculinity and femininity cannot be regarded neither as males nor as females, but as androgynous people. The BSRI and the PAQ are similar in that both are founded on a set of gender-related characteristics which allow to rate the participants as male, female or androgynous and undifferentiated. The BSRI includes twenty female traits like nurturing, sympathetic, and twenty male traits such as aggressiveness, competitiveness, and twenty neutral traits.

Table 4

The distribution of the BSRI items (source Bem, 1974:156)

Masculine items	Feminine items	Neutral items
Acts as a leader	Affectionate	Adaptable
Aggressive	Cheerful	Conceited
Ambitious	Childlike	Conscientious
Analytical	Compassionate	Conventional
Assertive	Does not use harsh language	Friendly
Athletic	Eager to soothe hurt feelings	Happy
Competitive	Feminine	Helpful
Defends own beliefs	Flatterable	Inefficient
Dominant	Gentle	Jealous
Forceful	Gullible	Likable
Has leadership abilities	Loves children	Moody
Independent	Loyal	Reliable
Individualistic	Sensitive to the needs of	Secretive
Makes decisions easily	others	Sincere
Masculine	Shy	Solemn
Self-reliant	Soft spoken	Tactful

Self-sufficient Strong personality Willing to take a stand Willing to take risks	Sympathetic Tender Understanding Warm Yielding	Theatrical Truthful Unpredictable Unsystematic
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The participant is said to be masculine if he or she gets a higher score in the masculine trait, s/he is labeled feminine when the majority of the traits that correspond to his/her personality are the ones categorized in the feminine class. If the participant obtains a higher score in both female and male traits, s/he belongs in the third type of gender, i.e. androgyny. Bem talks of her test as

a new sex-role inventory that treats masculinity and femininity as two independent dimensions, thereby making it possible to characterize a person as masculine, feminine or “androgynous” as a function of the difference between his or her endorsement of masculine and feminine personality characteristics.

(1974:155)

Bem’s research concludes that the binary masculine and feminine are “empirically as well as logically independent” and that psychological androgyny is not wild imaginings of a fanciful author, but a reliable concept (Ibid).

As for the PAQ, it consists of less traits; eight for each gender. Unlike the BSRI which lays stress on the desirability of female and/or male traits for each gender, the PAQ focuses on the mere presence of the traits in males or females. Both tests agree on the fact that the individuals whose score in female and male traits is equally high are androgynous.

4. The Theory of Tragedy

Although it was originally intended to tackle the Greek drama, Aristotle’s theory of tragedy as elaborated in *Poetics*, can be applicable to novels in the same way as it is suitable for epics and comedy. Plot and character are essential elements of the novel which is also a kind of *mimesis* (imitation of events as they could happen). The novel’s major aim

is *catharsis* too; it aims at arousing the feelings of fear and pity in the readers who are purged of their emotions at the end of their reading exactly as the spectators leave the theater/cinema cleansed and debarassed of their ills. Hardy's reader probably develops empathy with Eustacia, Jude and Henchard. Indeed, romantic, realist, gothic, naturalist and even detective stories yearn to arouse the readers' pity and fear. Fiction is also about cause-effect chain with a plot that has a beginning, middle (climax) and an end (resolution). The major character of serious fiction is burdened with a fatalistic hubris which is a kind of tragic facet which is either extrinsic or intrinsic. In other words, the hubris can be embodied in nature, fate, society or be part of the character. The hubris is generally pride, but it can be some other trait such as androgyny in the case of Jude Fawley, Sue Bridehead and Eustacia Vye or the absence of androgyny in Michael Henchard. "Hardy's great heroes-Tess, Sue, Jude, Henchard, Clym and Eustacia-are all driven by forces within them that act as tragic flaws" (Spivey,1954: 184). The effect of the hubris is *hamartia* which is a tragic error that the protagonist commits which leads to a reversal in fortune or *peripeteia*. The *periepteia* is generally followed by *anagnorisis*, that is, the hero or heroine learns something crucial about himself or herself. Sue Bridehead learns that she cannot live as she wants, and Henchard realizes that he needs love. Oedipus's famous *angnorisis* is about his knowledge that he murdered his father and married his own mother.

Conclusion

This section has been an attempt to outline the major theoretical tools implemented in this study. It has touched upon the elusive notion of gender which is still used interchangeably with sex with which some coupled it in a legendary dichotomy. Gender has been approached from different angles, sociological, psychological, anthropological (Mead), but has not yet been able to have all the scholars who delved in it agree on one definition. Theorizing gender has been the favorite avenue of feminists and masculinists alike.

Neither feminist nor masculinist, Judith Butler revolutionized gender theory by proposing a deconstructive approach which posits that gender is performed. Butler goes against the (traditional feminist) grain and forwards notions as performativity, gender trouble and undoing gender. The choice of Butler is not fortuitous, and the multiple texts, articles, doctoral and master theses that have dealt with the issue of gender (queer) have opted for Butler, and that corroborates and reinforces this choice. In addition to Butler, Jung is also relevant to any theorization of gender in general and androgyny in particular in literature.

Though, he does not consider androgyny properly, Jung underscores the presence of two principles in man and woman which are inescapable. The contrasexual elements or animus and anima are present in everyone, and Jung warns against the empowerment of one over the other. That is if a contrasexual element such as animus overwhelms a woman, she is manned and become a man. Jung is interested in the couple animus/anima from the scientific view. Besides, for Jung both the animus and anima belong in the world of the unconscious. Animus and anima belong to the series of archetypes found in the collective unconscious as theorized by Jung.

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Conclusion to Part One

Due to the importance of both the issue of androgyny and the theory/theories selected to discuss androgyny in Hardy, mainly gender theory, it has turned out appropriate to devote an entire part to both. The question of androgyny is not part of the commonality hence the necessity of the chapter that deals with it. It has been defined in clear terms merely because it is that esoteric. Androgyny is the phenomenon of blending, and combining attributes or traits stereotypically ascribed to men or women. Being affectionate, for instance, has always been considered as a feminine characteristic, and males displaying such a trait have been regarded rather pejoratively. Women showing aggressiveness have been equally viewed as mannish, and have been stigmatized and deemed not fit to belong in the 'fair sex'. However, everywhere and at different moments of history, there happen to be some people who display both traits at higher degrees without experiencing any kind of gender trouble. Furthermore, specialists and advocates of androgyny claim that the combination of masculine and feminine traits at a proportional level constitutes a source of psychological health.

Going beyond the limits of gender is what androgyny proposes, a genderless world, and a world where gender is not fixed or stable. Lack of stability in gender is the core of Butler's thinking which is the major theory selected to approach the question of androgyny in Hardy. In fact, Butler, Jung and Bem are –the different doctoral and master theses, and even chapters of books and articles that deal with gender in general, and androgyny in particular prove it—the most relevant theoretical tools to substantiate the presence/absence of androgyny in Hardy's fiction. Butler's concept of performativity, Jung's dichotomous duo animus/anima, and Bem's measure of androgyny are a must for every approach of androgyny in literature. Needless to say that these theories subsume other theories that are likely to be relevant when dealing with particular chapters.

Part Two
All Is Androgynous That Ends Well

Introduction

I have chosen to entitle the first part ‘All is Androgynous That Ends Well’ merely because the characters under discussion do end better than the major characters of *JO* and *MC*. Thus, we shall discover that the leading characters of *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874), that is, Gabriel Oak and Bathsheba Everdene, and the major characters in *The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876), namely Ethelberta and her counterpart Paula in *A Laodicean* (1881) end happily because they have been able to harmonize between the feminine principle and the masculine one. Gabriel Oak, Ethelberta and Paula are androgynous from the onset, while Bathsheba joins the intermediate position and makes peace with her androgyny later on.

This initial part, then, will address the virtues of androgyny, which is, as the argument goes, the solution for the trouble in which the Victorians were embedded because of the prude Victorian sexual politics which ostracized both men and women. Indeed, “most Victorians regarded anything else but the self-supporting, monogamous, paternalistic, heterosexual household as abnormal expressions of sexual desire that it was culture's business to suppress” (Armstrong, 2001:109). Androgyny is virtue in the case of the happy couple in *Far From the Madding Crowd*, also in the case of Ethelberta and Paula, but it is not so as regards Eustacia Vye whom I chose to include in this part. Although she presents some sort of androgyny that would align her with the three women mentioned earlier, Eustacia does not end well; her end is tragic hence the use of the theory of tragedy to discuss her case. However, she also belongs in the category of women of the like of Ethelberta and Paula who strive to have a room of their own particularly by blending feminine and masculine traits in their personality. In fact, I have chosen to insert Eustacia in the fifth chapter as a kind of transition to the following part in which all that is (not) androgynous ends tragically.

It must be said that the hint at Shakespeare's *As You Like It* in both Part I and Part II underscores not only the Bard's established influence on the Victorian writers in general and Thomas Hardy in particular (Carl J. Weber, 1934 and 1940, E. P. Vandiver Jr, 1938, Frederick L. Gwynn, 1953), but also the use of some of Shakespeare's techniques by Hardy. As far as this study is concerned, Shakespeare's impact on Hardy becomes interesting when one scrutinizes the striking resemblance between the androgynous characters in Shakespeare and the hypothesized androgynous ones in Hardy.

Chapter Three
Far From the Victorian Madding Crowd²³
Androgyny as Panacea
(Gabriel Oak, the Uranian Temperament)

²³ The title has been modified purposefully to suggest the harsh Victorian conception of gender roles. The title of Hardy's book was borrowed from a poem, 'Elegy Written in a Country Church yard' (1751) by Thomas Gray. While Gray's poem is suggestive of quietness and serenity, Hardy's novel makes room to calmness, composure, but also to tragedy exemplified by the murder of Troy, Boldwood's insanity, the pastoral tragedy which sees Gabriel Oak lose his sheep, and the diverse natural disasters that befall Weatherbury.

Introduction

It is my intention to start tracing androgyny in Thomas Hardy's fiction through a close analysis in the first place of *Far From the Madding Crowd* because it is the first major novel where the divide between the opposite sexes begins to dissolve. I shall demonstrate that this novel is filled with references to the third sex of which Hardy was probably not aware as a scientific hypothesis, although as Dale Kramer puts it, he "perceives sex-traits as psychological in origin, not as exclusive properties of one sex or the other" (1979:8). Psychological entails culture, nurture and gender as a construct not a nature.

Far From the Madding Crowd or *FFMC* in brief,²⁴ is not only a tragic-comedy, but also a pastoral as reviewers and critics have unanimously categorized it. A pastoral tale which ends extremely well for the two leading characters. *FFMC* was intended as a magazine story 'ordered' by the Cornhill magazine editor, Leslie Stephen²⁵ who wished a story abounding with descriptions of rural life, hence Hardy's conception of a "pastoral tale which [he] thought of calling 'Far From the Madding Crowd', in which the chief characters would be a woman-farmer, a shepherd, and a sergeant in the Dragon Guards" (Qtd in Jones, 1980:404). The novel thus celebrates rural life, glorifies the humble life of peasants and shepherds, and advocates fusion of man with nature, and rejects falsehood and all the factitious values impersonated by the like of Sergeant Troy, and occasionally, Bathsheba before she reasons. Through this work, Hardy "was feeling his way to a method"²⁶, and managed to reveal the symbiotic bond between nature and humans, "the customary setting, the natural world [which] operates a good deal more forcefully than a sheer backdrop to the narrative" (Babb, 1963: 147). *FFMC* is the site of a latent contest

²⁴ I shall use the initials whenever I need to mention this novel.

²⁵ It must be said at this juncture that Leslie Stephen (Virginia Woolf's father) abhorred androgynous individuals.

²⁶ The very expression of Hardy.

between the rural world incarnated in the rustic Farmer Gabriel Oak and the urban one that is best incarnated by Sergeant Frank Troy, the landowner William Boldwood, and at varying rates, Bathsheba Everdene. Bonnie Gerard points out that “Hardy turned to pastoralism as a literary landscape for his humanist ideals” (1997:332).

For my part, I have turned to *FFMC* because it occupies a notable position within Hardy’s novelistic oeuvre (Nemesvari, 2011:83). It is admittedly the novel which has established Hardy in the pantheon of writers, and elevated him to fame with the Victorian readership (Sutherland, 2005:3). It is equally the novel which inaugurated the beginning of a fault-finding criticism campaign that propelled somewhat Hardy. Most critics (Millgate 2004, Clarke 1970, Kramer 1975) agree on the importance of *FFMC* in Hardy’s career. Indeed, by writing this novel, Hardy successfully established his authority as an author with whom the Victorian literary scene would account. In addition to literary success, Hardy enjoyed financial ease that urged him to fix the date of his marriage with Emma Gilford and to give up his work as an architect²⁷ to devote himself to writing. In fact, the 1000 copies of the first edition of *FFMC* in book form sold out in two months time. Dale Kramer remarks that *FFMC*’s “critical reputation [. . .] has remained the most stable among Hardy’s novels, and for good reason” (1975:24). The good reason is, I argue, the queer gender of Gabriel Oak and Bathsheba Everdene.

Like the previous novels and the following ones, Hardy surrounded the female protagonist with more than one suitor. Bathsheba Everdene, the leading woman in question is wooed first by the shepherd Gabriel Oak, then by Sergeant Troy and finally by farmer William Boldwood. She “is first attracted to the “right” partner, then distracted by one or more “wrong” partners before confirming--whether emotionally or formally—the

²⁷ He had designed, *interalia*, his famous house in Dorchester, Max Gate.

“rightness of the original choice” (Boumelha, 1999:130). A love story that involves more than one wooer, that is typical of Hardy in sum.

In the article mentioned earlier, Linda M. Shires observes that like other Hardy novels, *FFMC* gave rise to much debate about the issue of gender as it has been handled by Thomas Hardy. The novel “encouraged comment and confusion about gender—both that of its author and that of its hero and heroine” (1991:163). Shires of course alludes to the review of the *Spectator* of January 3, 1874 where the reviewer attributes the authorship of the novel to George Eliot because of “the gender blurring of the text” (Ibid). The following chapter aims then to examine this very ‘confusion about gender’ and the plodding and issue of the main characters of the first of the Wessex novels.

In fact, *FFMC* inaugurates the series of Wessex; it is the first novel in which the partly real and partly fictitious world of Wessex appears. Given the financial and literary success of the novel, one is inclined to assert that Wessex benefited to Hardy. Following the successive attacks of critics and publishers on his first novels, Hardy who yearned to make his entry in the world of fiction ventured in a literary genre, the pastoral which “was already highly gendered as feminine” (Higonnet, 2009:121).

In effect, as it has been mentioned above, when the first installment of *FFMC* was issued in January 1874, the above-cited reviewer of the *Spectator* mistakenly attributed the work to George Eliot. Perhaps, not that mistakenly because of the general constitution of the novel, and above all, its undecided gender that was likely to urge whoever reviewer to categorize it among the bibliography of George Eliot “whose mind was absolutely androgynous” according to Carolyn Heilbrun (1998:76). It is not Eliot’s androgyny which is at issue here, but Hardy’s characters’. The concern of this study is androgyny as a form of compliance with the Victorian society as Hardy himself put it in his February correspondence with Leslie Stephen confessing,

I am willing, and indeed anxious, to give up any points which may be desirable in a story when read as a whole, for the sake of others which shall please those who read it in numbers. Perhaps I may have higher aims some day, and be a great stickler for the proper artistic balance of the completed work, but for the present circumstances lead me to wish to merely to be considered a good hand at serial.

(Qtd in Jones, 1980:320)

In fact, Hardy did not totally surrender to the wishes of the Victorian readership, but constructed characters that are sexually balanced. Though, not yet established as a literary authority and not secure in terms of commercial success, Hardy manages to get around the Victorian decorum by blurring the gender of his leading characters the same way his novel was a blend of satire, melodrama, sensationalism, tragedy and the whole embedded in a pastoral tale (Regan, 2009:241). Thus, he constructed characters that are neither male nor female, so much so that “[t]he ambiguities and potential inversions of gender relations [and roles] becomes manifest in *Far From the Madding Crowd*” (Higonnet, 2009: 122). Before delving in the first chapter of Part Two and the analysis of Gabriel Oak, it must be underscored that the introduction above concerns both Chapter Three and Chapter Four.

1. Gabriel Oak: The Uranian Temperament

Introduction

In Plato's *Symposium* the term Uranian is not mentioned in the speaking part of Aristophanes, but in that in which Pausanias speaks about love. The German thinker Karl-Heinrich Ulrichs coined the word *urning* to name a female psyche in a male body. The Uranian temperament (Carpenter, 1912:9) also called "intermediate or mixed temperament" can be found in the like of Gabriel Oak, who combines "the masculine powers of mind and body [with] the tenderer and more emotional soul-nature of the woman" (Ibid: 32). Indeed, Linda Shires observes that "[I]ack of power and manliness can be combined . . . without contradiction at the character site of Gabriel Oak" (1991:179). Furthermore, she remarks that "gender mixing is possible for Oak" (Ibid). Gabriel Oak stands, so to speak, in the intermediate position of sex between maleness and femaleness, and this is first deployed through his name.

His name "tells us a lot; oak is tough, durable, can be put to all sorts of uses and has been part of the English landscape since man began to farm. It grows slowly and sends its roots deep" (Wood, 1985: 63). Indeed, the name Oak draws its origin in English from the tree of the same name which is reputed for its strength. The oak tree is famous for being larger and stronger than all the other European trees. And "Gabriel is as sturdy, as eminently natural, as an oak tree," (Babb, 1963:150). Is it [the name] another Hardyian coincidence or a deliberate choice? At any rate, Gabriel Oak outlasted Sergeant Frank Troy and William Boldwood because he is psychologically deep-rooted. Besides, "Gabriel Oak, as his name would suggest, appears to have integrated both Christianity and Paganism into his nature" (Stave, 1995: 27). He is called Gabriel Oak and both names may be regarded as overtones of his androgyneity. While Gabriel putatively embodies virtue and obedience-- Gabriel is an archangel, that is to say, a quintessential angel--Oak connotes strength and

hardness as it has been mentioned earlier. The names Gabriel and Oak form an alliance of power and passivity which helps him stand against the maleficent power of evil (Steel, 1993:38).

[I]t is Gabriel Oak, who embodies, cumulatively, what are for Hardy the characteristic virtues of rural life: its integrity and humility, its stoicism and stability, its rewarding labor, its love for the traditional, and as in all pastoral, its deep sympathy with the world of nature. Throughout, Oak functions as a standard value at the center of the novel.

(Squires, 1970:311)

The following chapter is devoted to Gabriel Oak who is the leading character of *FFMC*, “a character whose point of view is perhaps the most reliable in the book” as Judith Mitchel points out (1994:163). In the tradition of pastoral tales, he is a shepherd and lover, and sings and plays the flute and “could pipe with Arcadian sweetness” (Ch VI/34).

For Stephan Regan already mentioned, *FFMC* subscribes to the pastoral tradition for “taking as one of its central characters a shepherd who is also a lover” (2009:147). The loss of his sheep is a kind of pastoral tragedy which deprives Gabriel of his status of pastoral king. Unlike the other leading characters that are constantly looking for a place where they can belong, (Bantz, 2016: 3-4) Gabriel Oak belongs in the bucolic setting of the narrative. He is, as Michael Millgate puts it, the “well-established character type [. . .] the modest and stalwart hero, ultimately successful in love and upward social mobility” (1982:152).

Farmer Gabriel Oak is central and fundamental to the novel under discussion for the simple reason that all the narrative seems to comply with his paradigm, and he is the one who has the last word. A “comic/patriarchal/heroic figure,” (Devereux, 2003: xx) Gabriel Oak is the hero of the novel, but he is not of the romantic kind in the manner of Jude Fawley. However, he offers a wide range of characteristics that are in accordance with the hypothesis foregrounded in this research, namely, androgyny in the characterization of the Hardy character.

Pondering the Hardyian characterization of Gabriel Oak in her *Patriarchy and Its Discontents* (2003), Joanna Devereux asks the suitable question: “Might we argue that Hardy wants to have it both ways [masculinity and femininity] with Gabriel: make him both a feminized and life-affirming figure, and at the same time the winning male rival?” (2003: 28). Indeed, one discovers at the outset a

man of misty views, rather given to postponing, and hampered by his best clothes and umbrella: upon the whole, one who felt himself to occupy morally that vast middle space of Laodicean neutrality which lay between the Communion people of the parish and the drunken section, -- that is, he went to church, but yawned privately by the time the congregation reached the Nicene creed, and thought of what there would be for dinner when he meant to be listening to the sermon.

(Ch I/1)

Gabriel is another Hardyian Laodicean in the manner of Paula Power, the female protagonist of *A Laodicean*, but also in his own manner. Wood Colin Temblet rightly underscores Hardy’s “emphasis on balanced moderation” (1985:64). James Gibson, for his part, parallels Bathsheba’s three suitor and concludes that “[t]he superficial Troy and the deeply emotional and obsessive Boldwood, both potentially destructive, represent extremes, and it is for Gabriel, the preserver and creator, to provide the balance” (Qtd in Wood, 1985: 65).

Thus, from the outset, we have to deal with someone who is seemingly caught between two stools, and engulfed in Laodicea. Gabriel is a lukewarm, standing in the middle station wherein one is secure against the extremes. Even the impression he makes on his friends and other people varies according to their temper; if they “were in tantrums, he was considered rather a bad man; when they were pleased, he was rather a good man; when they were neither, he was a man whose moral colour was a kind of pepper-and-salt-mixture” (Ch I/1). Whether he intended it or not, Hardy introduces his pivotal protagonist in the guise of a balanced individual, an androgynous one, so to say. As Devereux observes, “Gabriel is indeed the ‘pepper and salt mixture’” (2003:31).

Indeed, Gabriel stands still from the beginning to the end; we discover him smiling, and by the end of the story, he “laughed” (Ch XXXXXVII/429). He is the first to enter the scene, and he is the one who has the last word. Patience, endurance, composure concur to make of Farmer Gabriel Oak a virtuous man, though some of his qualities equate him with the Victorian manliness, which, David Alderson points out, was “associated with virtuous restraint[. . .] bound up with the Protestant emphasis on autonomy in the pursuit of virtue; that is, self-regulation and obedience to conscience” (1998:15-8). Considered from this angle, Gabriel is very manly, but his androgyny is a sort of watered down version, and a form of reconciliation and bringing closer of extremes too. Gabriel’s ambivalence is manifest, there really is ambivalence, and Devereux rightly highlights it, “Hardy presents Gabriel’s story with a certain amount of ambivalence” (2003:21).

Farmer Gabriel Oak, twenty-eight and a bachelor, starts at the bottom with two hundred ewes and two dogs, one of which causes precisely his misfortune and somehow triggers his first peripeteia. A pastoral disaster in the form of the whole flock pushed over a precipice by the young dog which is awkwardly learning the job of sheep-keeping. “All the savings of a frugal life had been dispersed at a blow; his hopes of being an independent farmer were laid low — possibly for ever” (Ch V/31).

1.1. A Naturally Balanced Character: Animus & Anima in Harmony

In addition to the customary opposition between city and country, rural versus urban, *FFMC* contains another no less crucial opposition between characters attuned with nature and the environment and others that are alienated from the natural world. The fourth Hardy novel is listed by its author among the works of Character and Environment; both character and environment are equivalently favoured. The novel is a celebration of a formerly joyful pastoral world wherein the environment has an outgoing nature like the human characters as description such as the following tells us:

The hill was covered on its northern side by an ancient and decaying plantation of beeches, whose upper verge formed a line over the crest, fringing its arched curve against the sky, like a mane. To-night these trees sheltered the southern slope from the keenest blasts, which smote the wood and floundered through it with a sound as of grumbling, or gushed over its crowning boughs in a weakened moan.

(Ch I/ 7)

In fact, the scenery is allotted almost the same role as the human characters and descriptions of nature and humans coalesce in an unprecedented pastoral symphony. Nature seems as animate as the human beings that people the narrative, and John Holloway points to it as ““an organic living whole,” with all its parts having ‘a life and personality of their own’” (Qtd in Babb, 1963:149). Farmer Gabriel Oak is one of these parts, probably the one that shows more loyalty.

Looked at from this perspective, the description above by no means overshadows the passages devoted to the male and female characters; it is concurrent, co-occurs and coheres with them in the complex operation of gendering.

When farmer Oak smiles, the corners of his mouth spread till they were within an unimportant distance of his ears, his eyes were reduced to chinks, and diverging wrinkles appeared around them, extending upon his countenance like the rays in a rudimentary sketch of the rising sun.

(Ch I/1)

The author spotlights his central male character and in particular his smile which manifestly adheres to the plane of nature whose tiny and escapable details the author exploits and links “with human personality with consummate skill” (Grimsditch, 1962: 41).

Farmer Gabriel Oak is doubtlessly the major character in *FFMC*; at least he is the principal male character, and one of the most essential threads of the texture of *FFMC*, the other being the girl, Bathsheba Everdene. From the outset, there appears before the reader a male character that is patently neither male, nor female. Gabriel traverses the events with an energy that only people attuned with nature possess, and Bathsheba seizes more than

anyone else Gabriel's vision of life and conduct, which she considers more salutary than hers:

What a way Oak had, she thought, of enduring things. Boldwood, who seemed so much deeper and higher and stronger in feeling than Gabriel, had not yet learnt, any more than she herself, the simple lesson which Oak showed a mastery of by every turn and look he gave--that among the multitude of interests by which he was surrounded, those which affected his personal well being were not the most absorbing and important in his eyes. Oak meditatively looked upon the horizon of circumstances without any special regard to his own standpoint in the midst. That was how she would wish to be.

(Ch XXXXIII/313)

The insertion of the adverb naturally in the above sub-title is by no means haphazardly done; 'the intimate relationship' Gabriel has with nature calls for such a textual choice. The communion between the two is in fact primarily textual; Hardy opens his novels with two pages or more dedicated to the portrayal of Farmer Gabriel Oak, immediately followed by another brief graphic description of nature.

Gabriel is in communion with Mother Nature so much so that they seem to coalesce in the way they approach Bathsheba. Thus, "the sun lighted up to a scarlet glow the crimson jacket she wore, and painted a soft luster upon her brown face and dark hair", while the "myrtles, geraniums, and cactuses [. . .] invested the whole concern of horses, wagon, furniture, and girl with a peculiar vernal charm" (Ch I/4). In fact, while Bathsheba and life's vicissitudes estrange her from Gabriel, nature brings them closer whenever this is possible and plausible. This is the case when she rescues him from suffocation, and we shall return to this several times in the next section.

As stated above, Farmer Gabriel Oak is in tune with nature, to say the very least. He is "allied with the processes of nature through performing the ordinary tasks of the farmer or shepherd, his feet firmly planted in the natural world" argues Howard Babb (1963: 148-9). Gabriel is a shepherd entreating, nourishing and nurturing lambs and ewes, "he thoroughly understood [. . .] the instincts of sheep" (Ch XXXVI/259). He is "a

shepherd out of the pastoral tradition with his piping and nature lore” opines Gayla Steel (1993: 38). He managed to gain the title of ‘Farmer Oak’ after one year of industriousness during which he had been able “to lease the small-sheep farm of which Norcombe Hill was a portion” (Ch II/9). He had to work patiently for ten years to be able to own the flock which was his by the beginning of the story. “Only a shepherd-and you seem almost a farmer by your ways” (Ch VII/53) Fanny Robin tells him when she encounters him one sad evening.

Indeed, he inherited the skill from his father, and instilled it with passion and devotion as this is evidenced by the presence in his hut of “sheep-crook, and along a shelf at one side were ranged bottles and canisters of the simple preparations pertaining to ovine surgery and physic; spirits of wine, turpentine, tar, magnesia, ginger, and castor-oil being the chief” (Ch II/11). Moreover, if circumstance demanded, Gabriel could convert into a veterinarian as this happens to occur later in Weatherbury Farm when Bathsheba’s flock is diseased. Marjorie Garson argues that the “shepherd’s-calendar sequence of vignettes (Gabriel with the new-born lamb in his arms, Gabriel at the sheep-washing, Gabriel at the sheep-shearing) suggests biblical and sometimes ecclesiastical analogies” (1991:33).

The shepherd tools and the first-aid kit are almost fetishistic object in the same wise as the watch; a whimsical watch which serves more as a relic than as an instrument for telling the hour. Thus, Gabriel often compares the time his watch tells to the hour the sun and the stars tell. In fact, he can tell the hour of the day from the position of the stars. Such is the case when he slept in a deserted wagon after he had left Norcombe Hill looking for a job to compensate the loss of his farm and flock, on awaking, “the first sight he beheld was the stars above him. Charles’ Wain was getting towards a right angle with the Polar star, and Gabriel concluded that it must be nine o’clock” (Ch VI/44). Farmer Gabriel Oak is equally able to foretell the weather, and communicate with the Great Mother (nature). On

several occasions, he is the addressee of messages, signs if not omens that announce imminent events. This is now a toad, now a spider; bestowing on him some of the power for prophetism which very few people possess.

Gabriel's artfulness and mastery of natural elements as the weather forecast and the time telling is, as Donald Eastman puts it, an essential element in Hardy's construction of the character of Oak. "In his characterization of Oak", Eastman argues "Hardy merges the ability and the need to know the time with the ability to perceive" the messages sent by nature" (1978:24). Oak's valuing of time is almost disinterested, unconcerned in the mercantile sense, but pertinent as regards his belonging in the natural world and his natural equilibrium which this places him at equidistance between the animus and the anima. Eastman remarks similarly that the "sense of time and fitness which emanates from Oak [. . .] serve normative functions in the novel," (Ibid: 25) hence Oak's centrality and androgyny. In other words, the standard by which the value of the other characters is valued is incarnated by Farmer Gabriel Oak whose androgyny is the guarantor of his success.

Oak's androgyny is equally patent in his embodiment "of the happy paradox nature which changes within the framework of permanence, of *natura naturata*, of the seasonal metamorphosis which is ever new and ever the same" (Ibid: 25-6). Oak is aware that he is but an element of nature, and he pleasurably appreciates it and contemplates:

The sky as a useful instrument, and regarded it in an appreciative spirit, as a work of art superlatively beautiful. For a moment he seemed impressed with the speaking loneliness of the scene, or rather with the complete abstraction from all its compass of the sights and sounds of man. Human shapes, interferences, troubles, and joys were all as if they were not.

(Ch II/12).

Many an event demonstrates Oak's involvement in nature's project and his initiation into her secrets. First, when he loses his fortune after his youngest dog zealously drove the bulk of his flock over a precipice, dispersing at a blow all the economies Gabriel managed to do

after a frugal life, and he naturally and joylessly shoots the dog. Next, when he contributes in maintaining the natural equilibrium by fighting against fire and water especially when he jeopardises his life to extinguish the huge fire which threatens to ruin Bathsheba's farm. Indeed, Gabriel is in communion with nature and communicates with her as often as not. As aforesaid, her messages are now a toad venturing under his feet, now spiders engaged in a race over his ceiling, etc. Gabriel heeds these various signals and acts accordingly, and ensures some successful outcomes such as the rescue of Bathsheba's rick which an imminent storm well nigh eats up. Gabriel beholds the nascent storm, and the scene captured by his eyes reveals the sympathy of Gabriel with the cataclysm with which he is to fight in respectful terms. As a matter of fact, the scene portrayed in, chapter XXXVII provides us with a forthcoming dual between two natural forces whose respect for one another is undisputed; a storm and a man, and each one acts on behalf of the same goddess, Mother Nature. Gabriel's communion with nature is perceptible even for the rustic Coggan, and Smallbury for whom:

- "'Faith,' said Coggan, in a critical tone, turning to his companions, 'the man [Gabriel] !hev learnt to say "my wife" in a wonderful naterel way, considering how very youthful he is in wedlock as yet— hey, neighbours all?'

- 'I never heerd a skilful old married feller of twenty years' standing pipe "my wife" in a more used note than 'a did,' said Jacob Smallbury. 'It might have been a little more true to nater if't had been spoke a little chillier, but that wasn't to be expected just now.' (Ch XXXXXVII/ 429). At this point, it is worth making clear that the secondary characters of *FFMC*, namely, the rustics, Jacob and Billy Smallbury, Mark Clark, Jan Coggan, Joseph Poorgrass, Susan Tall's husband, Cain Bell, and Mathew Moon act as the chorus of the tragic-comedy, commenting on the actions of Gabriel, Bathsheba, and the other principal characters. They are entitled to tell Farmer Gabriel Oak speak the truth, and highlight his

androgyny. For Jacob, he is a “right sensible man” (Ch VIII/58) and “by nature ye be a very handsome man, shepherd” (Ch VIII/69) for Joseph Poorgrass, and “he’s his grandfather’s own grandson [. . .] a nice unparticular man” (Ch III/58) for the maltster, old Smallburry.

To return to the notions of *anima/animus*, it is worth noting at this point that the words for nature and earth in Greek and Latin are feminine in grammatical gender, *gaia* and *ge* in Greek, and *tellus* and *terra* in Latin. In literature, nature in particular, has long been associated with romanticism, sensibility, motherhood and femininity in sum. In addition to nature, one needs to underscore the link that exists between sheep and stars in the Judao-Christian tradition, and in the English literature in particular. Thus, sheep is essential to the British culture; 50% of the 18th century British exports were woolen products, the English language is saturated with proverbs and phrases dealing with sheep such as: count sheep to fall asleep, beware of a wolf in a sheep’s clothing, be a black sheep in the family, and babies are innocent lambs, etc. Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth, to mention but a few English authors, made room to sheep in their works. Religions too grant a special place to sheep and shepherd; Jesus was a shepherd, God is a shepherd according to the Old Testament, the Christians are the sheep/flock ministered by a pastor which is the Latin equivalent of the English shepherd. *Agnus Dei* is the Latin denomination for Jesus Christ, the lamb of God. The pastoral mode in literature begot masterworks such as *As you Like it*, *The Winter’s tale* (Shakespeare), *Lycidas* (Milton), and *Far From the Madding Crowd*. Allusions to ancient authors such as Homer and Vergil is patent especially where Hardy compares his shepherd-singers (Jacob Smallburry in particular) to the shepherd-singers found in Vergil’s *Sixth Eclogue*.

In addition to expressions thematizing sheep and shepherd, English also associates adjectives such as: “harmless”, “humble”, “simple” with sheep and lambs, and Farmer

Gabriel Oak is humble, harmless and simple. He is also passive, and his passivity is in Annette Federico's terms, a "pathological [one] that is the reverse extreme of the cult of masculine virility and aggression" (1991: 55-56). Gabriel, it is true, is in no way aggressive; neither Bathsheba nor the men he had to deal with could say the contrary. Even the episode of the killing of George, the young dog aforementioned, falls within the scope of natural course of things. In addition to androgyny, both of the names Gabriel and Oak encapsulate and connote the dichotomous animus/anima. Farmer Gabriel Oak doubtlessly owes his steadfastness and his rootedness to his being assimilated to this "lord of the woods" (Ibid) which symbolizes the two English qualities mentioned earlier. The author intended him to "make the most of it [his name]" (Ch II/22). Thus, balance starts with the very names the author by no means fortuitously, chose for his male protagonist.

Gabriel is twenty-eight, possesses a modest number of lambs and ewes which stand for a farm wherein he enjoys a simple life as a shepherd, but Oak displays such a smile that conveys a kind of bucolic happiness. However, his smile is to evanesce as "poor Gabriel will have little to smile about" (Sutherland, 2005:81). Indeed, different events that occurred in the story demonstrate that it is Gabriel whom Hardy chose to be the vehicle of his endorsement of such virtues as mildness, moderateness, conciliatoriness as is the case when he intervenes to pay the insignificant twopence Bathsheba refuses to concede to pass the gate. Gabriel's view of money eloquently denotes once again his absolute adherence to the natural world. The author is aware that in Farmer Gabriel Oak *animus* and *anima* do not overpower one another; the male principle coheres with the female one, and this abuts to an androgynous being whose features, in Hardy's terms:

[A]dhered throughout their form so exactly to the middle line between the beauty of St John and the ugliness of Jude Iscariot, as represented in a window of the church he attended, that no single lineament could be selected and called worthy either of distinction or notoriety.

(ChI/6)

It stands to reason that the bodily features at stake are but the shop window of the psyche or the soul, Gabriel's to be specific, which is the site of an alliance between two allegedly opposite facets of human nature, that is to say, the masculine and feminine aspects that become what Woolf calls a 'double soul'. St John's beauty is supposedly a womanly characteristic; beautiful, or say very handsome men, are as often as not assimilated to women almost worldwide. Men are expected to be unrefined and rustic. Thus, though he displayed generosity at the turn-pike gate, the recipient of Gabriel's magnanimous gesture did not utter the circumstantial thanks, and "in gaining her a passage he [Gabriel] had lost her point." (Ibid) and this equates the narrator's aphoristic Gabriel's generosity is not a manlike quality.

Gabriel is a church-goer in the same vein as St John, a shepherd like Jesus, metaphorically so called, and a flute-player. All three occupations constitute a set of types found in both man and woman. His fluting unites him more intensely with Mother Nature, and releases "a series of sounds [that] had a clearness which was to be found nowhere in the wind, and a sequence which was to be found nowhere in nature" (Ch II/9). The flute symbolizes pastoral life and is inseparable from the shepherd; "in an obvious synecdoche the pipe [flute] could stand for pastoral poetry itself" (Ferber, 1999:155).

To say that Gabriel is a melodist is humdrum, and he genuinely harmonizes with nature as mentioned earlier. Furthermore, the sounds of his flute rival with the sounds of birds, trees, and he "could pipe with Arcadian sweetness and the sound of the well-known notes cheered his own heart as well as those of the loungers" (Ch VI/42). In fact, Gabriel's flute-playing seemingly adheres to, and interpenetrates with the natural orchestra of which a telling example is displayed in the second page of the second chapter in which one reads, and sees a musical performance whose leading musicians are the trees and the winds. The musical performance of the trees and winds succeed to that of Gabriel and rivals with it.

However, his “tune was not floating unhindered in the open; it seemed muffled in some way, and was altogether curtailed in power to spread high or wide” (Ibid). This image is corroborated by the other description wherein we see that:

Oak’s motions, though they had a quiet energy, were slow, and their deliberateness accorded well with his occupation. Fitness being the basis of beauty, nobody could have denied that his steady swings and turns in and about the flock had elements of grace. Yet, although if occasion demanded he could do or think a thing with as mercurial a dash as can the men of towns who are more to the manner born, his special power, and mentally was static, owing little or nothing to momentum as a rule.

(Ch II/10)

Grace, deliberateness, slowness, etc., the diverse epithets the author chose for the above description attune to the attributes that generally suit an androgynous person. Even Bathsheba could discern a woman-like grace in Gabriel’s features as when “she saw Gabriel’s face rising like the moon behind the hedge” (Ch III/17).

Even his lodging, “a small dark object under the plantation hedge—a shepherd’s hut” seemingly belonged in the natural world that is the setting of the pastorate wherein he reigns, and passes for a “pastoral king” (Ch VI/ 41). Gabriel’s hut complied so much with the local environment that “an uninitiated person might have been puzzled to attach either meaning or use” to this dark spot (Ch II/9). The shepherd’s hut is almost a portable shelter, like the tent of the nomads, and acts like a mirador wherefrom the shepherd attends his flock in the night. The shepherd’s hut not only fits the surrounding, but also falls within the scope of time which is not unimportant as regards Hardy’s vision of the pastoral as a literary genre. He equates the scene of Gabriel’s hut to the image:

Of a small Noah’s Ark on a small Ararat, allowing the traditional outlines and general form of the Ark which are followed by toy-makers—and by these means are established in men’s imagination amongst their firmest, because earliest impressions—to pass as an approximate pattern.

(Ch II/9)

So even Gabriel’s lodging coheres with the ambient natural world. In fact, one senses a kind of (con)fusion between Farmer Gabriel Oak and the natural site which somewhat

appropriates the farmer, his flock and hut as well when it is not the farmer who enters in possession of the local environment. Even when he is called to face some natural phenomena such as the fire which led him to encounter Bathsheba again, and the storm which threatened to eat up her ricks, Gabriel displays signs of coalescence with nature. Thus, “breezes coursed in transparent eddies round” his face, and a “huge drop of rain smote” it (Ch XXXVIII/271). Much more than the rest of the characters, Gabriel is encompassed “within a carefully drawn environment in such a manner that [he] could be seen as part of a continuum of vegetable, animal and human life within a defined habitat” (Birch, 1981: 353). Such is the case when:

A portion of what would have been casually called a wild slope had been appropriated by Farmer Oak for his great purpose this winter. Detached hurdles thatched with straw were struck into the ground at various scattered points, amid and under which the whitish forms of his meek ewes moved and rustled.

(Ch II/12)

Gabriel’s adherence to nature is made plain by the abundance of similes, and metaphors. Thomas Hardy, as the above mentioned B.P. Birch puts it, has a tendency to tie “his characters and their misfortunes to particular environments” and “humanized the physical landscape to further stress this ecological link” (Ibid: 354-8). As I have already asserted, Gabriel is naturally balanced; harbouring a “balance between the poles of intuition and reason, subjectivity and objectivity, anima and animus . . .” (Farwell, 434) and what has proceeded is but a truism. Among all the other characters, men as well as women, he is the only one who “displays wisdom, patience, and unerring friendship for Bathsheba” (Steel, 1993:37) Fanny Robin, Boldwood and the peasants. In fact, Gabriel is so deep-seated in the natural world, so resolute that he is viewed by some critics as “the representative of rural stability and firmness” (Carpenter, 1964:332).

Besides, Gabriel Oak is a subtle observer of nature, and the multiple natural events he faces (the loss of his flock, the fire, the storm, etc.), constitute a telling example of this

ability to detect nature's mode of expression. "Being a man not without a frequent consciousness that there was some charm in this life he led, he stood still after looking at the sky as a useful instrument, and regarded it in an appreciative spirit, as a work of art superlatively beautiful" (Ch II/12). Awareness, stillness, and appreciativeness are some of the virtues which participate in the natural and psychological balance of Gabriel; the very balance and harmony that place him in the "psychic striving for an ideal state of personal wholeness" which is androgyny (Kimbrough, 1982:20).

Farmer Gabriel Oak is conceived as a wholeness to say the least; the author distinguishes him from Bathsheba and the other characters by this aspect of completeness, and eventually characterizes him as neither male, nor female; but rather as someone who combines both genders in one. In a sense, Hardy has him transcend "the duality of gender differences imposed by culture" (Krishnaraj, 1996:9) to attain the wholeness with which he ascends upwards socially, economically and last but not least sentimentally. Gabriel Oak's androgyny is undoubted; he combines strength, emotion, control and kindness. In him, coalesce the contrasexual traits of sensitiveness and decisiveness, endurance and feeling for others as is the case of his transient help for Fanny Robin twice. When he heartily passes her some money—the only shilling he spared—when they first met on their undecided destiny.

Though his *Androgyny, Survival, and Fulfillment in Thomas Hardy's Far From the Madding Crowd* is centred on Bathsheba and to a lesser degree on Fanny Robin, William Mistichelli doubtlessly considers Gabriel Oak and the other male characters when he states that:

Androgyny in its various manifestations colors the conflicts which arise among the major characters and contributes significantly to their resolution. The transference of sexual traits—the adoption of women of attitudes or roles commonly held to be exclusively male, or vice-versa—in one sense promises a greater share of creative power and self-determination.

(1988:54)

Farmer Gabriel Oak is probably the character that displays most androgyny; he is androgynous in the sense in which “the Androgyne also served to formulate a philosophy of history based on the ideas that humanity has been corrupted by immoral passions and that the ‘highest characters’ have the duty to regenerate society by reeducating individuals and reforming social institutions” (Urbinati, 1991:633). Indeed, Farmer Gabriel Oak somewhat cures Bathsheba Everdene of her ‘immoral passions’ and regenerates her as well as the society of Weatherbury.

The following section will deal precisely with the relationship between Farmer Gabriel Oak and Bathsheba Everdene, and the weight of androgyny in this very bond. “It is their great genius for attachment which gives the Uranian types their penetrating influence and activity, and which often makes them beloved and accepted far wide even by those who know nothing of their inner mind” (Carpenter, 1912:13-4). Gabriel’s attachment to Bathsheba has never been endangered despite her maltreatment of him.

1.2. Gabriel and ‘the girl’²⁸

This section deals precisely with the relationship between Gabriel and Bathsheba in the light of which much of Gabriel’s androgyny can be unearthed and highlighted. Indeed, one sees the androgynous farmer in a favourable light in his very links with the one who is but the girl at the outset. Before we proceed in underscoring Gabriel’s androgynous behavior with Bathsheba, it is worth remembering that for many Hardy scholars, Farmer Gabriel Oak is the pivot of *FFMC*, still, there are many others who regard Bathsheba as the thread of the narrative.

For sure, it is through Gabriel’s eyes and viewpoint that we discover and sense the “woman, young and attractive” (Ch I/3). In the following paragraphs, the woman becomes ‘the girl’ (twice), a “handsome girl” (I/4) and then a woman whose “prescriptive infirmity”

²⁸ Bathsheba Everdene is sometimes a/the girl, sometimes a/the woman, and very often a mannish woman.

(Ch I/5) is highlighted by the narrator, and remarked by Gabriel. The process of gendering begins through the lens of Gabriel, and as Butler puts it: “The body implies mortality, vulnerability, agency: the skin and the flesh expose us to the gaze of others but also to touch and to violence. The body can be the agency and instrument of all these as well, or the site where “doing” and “being done to” become equivocal” (Butler, 2004:21).

Throughout this whole thesis, it will be question of the equivocality of gender. In this section as well as in the other sections of the different chapters, I shall unearth this very ambivalence, and the ambiguous gendering of male and female characters alike.

Hardy exposes the girl’s body and flesh to the gaze of the readers, but mainly to that of Gabriel and the turnpike gate doorkeeper. The girl’s body becomes the site of ‘being done’ of being gendered, and ‘doing’ that is gendering. In other words, the girl is being confined in a gender role, that of the ‘fair sex’ to be specific, to serve and justify the transient manhood of Farmer Gabriel Oak. Indeed, the eyes with which Gabriel scrutinizes the girl are allegedly those of a male, but there is some *gaucherie* in the whole process of voyeurism as there is some uneasiness in the womanhood displayed by the girl to which we shall return in the chapter dealing with Bathsheba Everdene. Her ‘being done’, her being utterly feminized at this juncture, is patently ill-adapted, and the tour de force proves to be a failure, as we do not discern neither womanhood in the girl’s performance before her mirror nor manhood in Gabriel’s turn.

As a matter of fact, the author has his protagonist stumble against colours which are glaring and ominous to say the least, but this is seemingly done for stylistic motives. Indeed, when Farmer Gabriel Oak beholds the girl, that is, Bathsheba Everdene, for the first time, two colours in particular strike him and augur well or ill depending on the rest of the story. Indeed, it “was a fine morning, and the sun lighted up to a scarlet glow the crimson jacket she wore, and painted a soft luster upon her bright face and dark hair” (Ch

I/4). The colours in question are the most widely used colours in literature to say the least, and Stendhal's *Le rouge et le noir* as well as Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* popularized these colours in literature more than any other author. These colours, the red and the black, to be specific are the girl's; her dark hair and her crimson jacket. The black/dark is generally associated with death, hell, mourning, (bad) heart, etc. As for the red/crimson, it symbolizes blood, fire, gold, anger, etc. In effect, both colours will stain the girl's course of life, but also the lives of Sergeant Troy, and Boldwood's. Death – Troy's—which Bathsheba will cause is black in Homer's *Iliad*, the hell is black in Sophocles, Euripides, Seneca, Dante, Shakespeare, etc. When Gabriel encounters Bathsheba, the latter is on her way to her aunt's, and this first encounter supposedly revealed a vain woman for the budding farmer.

Though he “had lost her, her point” after paying the twopence which were required by the keeper of the turnpike-gate to let her wagon pass, Gabriel manages to find another occasion to meet Bathsheba. He brings her the hat she had lost on her ride to the Mill. Gabriel grows infatuated with the girl and yawns when she yawns (Ch II/13). Before long, he becomes enamoured of her, and his feelings grow:

[A]s sensitive as the money-market in calculations upon his chances. His dog waited for his meals in a way so like that in which Oak waited for the girl's presence, that the farmer was quite struck with the resemblance, felt it lowering, and would not look at the dog. However, he continued to watch through the hedge for her regular coming, and thus his sentiments towards her were deepened without any corresponding effect being produced upon herself.

(Ch III/24)

For sure, Gabriel's situation is comic and ridiculous; the comparison with the dog is telling. One might as well say that he pants for the girl the way his dog pants for food. A sensible change is thus taking place in his constitution; he dreads the day when the girl's cow will cease to give milk which means that the girl won't come anymore. He learns about her name and indulges in declaiming it, he “turned over his taste to black hair,

though he had sworn by brown ever since he was a boy, isolated himself till the space he filled in the public eye was contemptibly small” (Ch III/25).

Though Bathsheba does not come, Gabriel invents an opportunity to visit her aunt’s cottage, and spends as much time as a bride; cleaning his watch, whitening his boots, wearing another waistcoat, he himself gets a new walking stick and strives to untwist his “dry, sandy, and inextricably curly hair” by applying on it “all the hair oil he possessed” (Ch III/26). Accompanied by George, the dog, Gabriel takes with him a lamb and resolves to ask her for marriage, but the aunt sends him “away from courting” Bathsheba (Ch III/28). Though she redresses her aunt’s mistake which urges Gabriel in his demand of marriage, Bathsheba dismays him by claiming that she feels concerned by the necessity of denying her being engaged with anyone. Harmed and ridiculed, Farmer Gabriel Oak is not dissuaded, and without any form of restraint he readily confesses his flame to her face: -Come, think a minute or two. I’ll wait a while, Miss Everdene. Will you marry me? Do Bathsheba. I love you more than common. (Ch III/30)

Bathsheba transiently visualizes with Gabriel the happy conjugal life he envisages for both, but refrains and admits that she could not marry without love. Gabriel is more and more willing to wed her, and desperately utters: -‘But I love you-and, as for myself, I am content to be liked. . . I shall do one thing in this life- one thing certain – that is, love you, and long for you, and keep waiting you till I die.’ (Ch IV/31)

Thus spoke not a desperate and tearful woman, but a man. Indeed, were it not the following lines which run as follows: “his voice had a genuine pathos now, and his large brown hands perceptibly trembled” (ibid), even a well-advised reader would fail to say that the smooth words contained by the epigraph are incumbent to anyone, but some female

character. Bathsheba's reaction to this pathetic scene revolutionizes the traditional gender roles and results in a woman pitying a man, and recommends prudence in case he wishes to marry. Rather than a reply for his insistent demand for marriage, Gabriel receives the striking news of her departure which shocks him right then.

This is neither misogyny nor mere overgeneralization; the famous binary system and/or sexual difference are obstinate. Besides, archetypes are not purely theoretical view, they are rather a reality. An example of these archetypes can be found in chapter XI in which one can see the parallel between the scene abovementioned and another one where Fanny Robin addresses her lover, Sergeant Frank Troy in the same vein:

-You said I was to come.

-Well- I said that you might.

-Yes-of course.

-Can you- come to me?

(Ch XI/91)

The supplicating tone is there in both Fanny Robin's words and Gabriel's. So while this seems almost natural in a girl's demeanour, it is discomposing when we realize that the words are uttered by a man. This glossing is the pattern for the upholders of dualism in sexual identity; social psychologists like Sandra Bem [who] regards this type of gender as androgyny which is a station between masculinity and femininity (1974: 155). At this juncture, it is worth mentioning Mistichelli's emphasis on Fanny Robin's androgyny which is manifested through her courting "Troy's favors" (1988:54). One is surprised to see Gabriel not particularized among the characters included in the group concerned by this quote which states that "androgyny [. . .] touches other characters, as well, in important ways" (Ibid: 54-5).

Before he faces the girl's humiliating and unexplained refusal to marry him, Gabriel has many an occasion to go through the lowering debuts a seduced maid endures. Such an occurrence is brought about by the girl's loss of her hat which the shepherd is glad to find as it provides him another opportunity to see "the young woman of the night before" (Ch III/15). He returns her her hat, and offers the reader another proof of his androgyneity through his conduct which manifestly equates with the reversal of gender roles. It is for "him to withdraw his own eyes from hers as suddenly as if he had been caught in a theft" (Ch III/18). The other occurrence gives her more prominence and power—androcentric power of course-- by having her save "a man from death" (Ch III/21).

By the beginning of the fourth chapter of the novel, Gabriel's androgyneity, so my argument goes, is plainly stated, and his "emotional constitution" overpowered and he is emasculated by the "well-favoured" girl (Ch IV/24). He loves her, that is undeniable, but his love is unilateral, and "his sentiments towards her were deepened without any corresponding effect produced upon herself" (Ch IV/24). One wonders whether the author is not blurring the gender borders deliberately by having Gabriel and Bathsheba behave as they do.

I return to the pathetic scene where the marriage proposal is preceded by another scene no less pitying wherein a man makes a toilet worthy of a bridegroom eager to marry. In lieu of the various concoctions any bridegroom would resort to so as to bewitch the bride, Gabriel's toilet was "of a nature between the carefully neat and the carelessly ornate", not that feminine, but rather mixing the feminine refinement with the masculine brutishness. "He thoroughly cleaned his silver-watch . . . put new lacing straps to his boots, [got] a new walking stick, . . . took a new handkerchief..." (Ch IV/26) to appear before the woman he intends to marry. Things turn out to be quite different from what he has

envisioned; his “colour deepened: hers was already deep, not, as it appeared, from emotion, but from running” (Ch IV/28). The narrator’s innuendoes are edifying; the rest of the scene is an act where Gabriel’s emotions become “the sport of a merry-go-round of skittishness” (Ch IV/33). Indeed, he is at first gladly surprised to see the girl he did not find at her aunt’s, “racing after him, waving a handkerchief” (Ch IV/28), running after him to “say- that [her] aunt made a mistake in sending [him] away from courting [her]” (Ibid), and avowing to have no one in her life. His surprise intensifies and he smiles “one of his long smiles”, and again blushes. Gabriel blushes far more than Bathsheba; he blushes at every turnhe even reddens “at the consciousness of sounding her name” (Ch XV/119), but he immediately discovers that her words are but a “wooden story” (Ch IV/31). He may appeal, creep, and admit he can do with mere liking and display a pathos worthy of Fanny Robin—once more—yet the girl merely regrets that it “. . . seems dreadfully wrong not to have you [Gabriel] when you feel so much” (Ch IV/32). Bathsheba manifestly discerns Gabriel’s androgyny, his disempowerment and emasculation, and asserts that she needs “somebody to tame” her (Ibid) and this somebody is not Farmer Gabriel Oak who is “balanced between poetry and practicality” (ibid) which is the very distinctive feature of androgynous people. In fact, Gabriel is halved into two parts which are neither too masculine nor too feminine; he “had one-and- a half Christian characteristics too many to succeed with Bathsheba: his humility and a superfluous moiety of honesty” (Ch IV/32) which are not found in Sergeant Troy whose motto as regards women is: “Treat them fairly and you are lost” (Ch XXV/178).

Gabriel is fair, and gallant too; his gesture at the turnpike gate is supposed to be disinterested gallantry. On the face of it, Gabriel’s chivalry complies with Victorian androcentric conception of manliness and virility which requires heroism, aggressiveness, and so forth. Gabriel is generous and true towards Bathsheba, he displays much heroism

endangering his life to save her ricks, and fighting against the fire. His gentlemanly behavior with Fanny Robin equally categorizes him in the chivalrous world where noble qualities such as courage, honor and readiness to help the needy constitute the hallmark of manliness. However, gentlemanliness and chivalry is also synonymous with courteousness especially with women, and in this Gabriel is somewhat awkward; less chivalrous than Troy. Though his chivalrous conduct implies unquestionable adherence to the patriarchal pattern, Gabriel is, according to Marjorie Garson, meant by the narrative as “a balanced and integrated figure” combining masculine as well as feminine attributes (1991:28). Meaningfully, Bathsheba’s departure coincides and equates with Gabriel’s ‘pastoral tragedy’; he loses the main part of his flock, and sinks “from his modest elevation as pastoral king into the very slime-pits of Siddim” (Ch VI/41).

When he sees her for the first time after the episode of marriage refusal, he is a job seeker, and the term of address, ‘ma ‘am’ is telling as for the vicissitudes both the former farmer and the newly proprietor of Weatherbury Farm have gone through. Gabriel’s ally, nature affords him a heroic deed—the fire that has assaulted Bathsheba’s barn dies out owing to Gabriel’s power—through which he is readmitted in Bathsheba’s realm as a shepherd, and contents himself with this very role. As it has already been underscored, Gabriel acts with wisdom and puts up with patience whenever this is necessary; he assumes his new role without unearthing the sad episode of Norcomb Hill. Thus, by a combination of circumstances Gabriel (un)willingly finds himself back in Bathsheba’s world, but not as an equal because he is “not quite good enough for “her (Ch IX/79).

Gabriel seemingly repudiates his former role of a suitor whose love is disdainfully unrequited, he has “long given up thinking of that matter” (Ch XX/142); he stands up to her and resolves to leave the farm at the very minute she asks him to. He recovers manliness, “took his shears and went away from her in placid dignity” (Ch XX/143).

Placidity is another characteristic of androgynous people, and even when he behaves mannishly, Gabriel has recourse to attributes which are neither absolutely male nor utterly female. Gabriel's manliness reappears at the hands of the woman who depreciates it; though she determinedly says that she will never "send for him" (Ch XXI/147) even though at the expenses of her folk, she resigns herself to request him "to come civilly and in proper manners" (Ch XXI/148).

In this very episode of Gabriel's relationship with Bathsheba, Gabriel's androgyny apparently verges to manliness, though –whatever the androcentric view on the issue--dignity is not the privilege of men. Rather than extreme virility, this conduct (re)displays and enhances Gabriel's balance which is central in androgyny. At this juncture it must be noted that Bathsheba is equally balanced; she sheds tears, feels weak and is in need of a man's protection. Even her reproaches are "tenderly-shaped", and Gabriel can see that they are not commendations, and he agrees to stay after she smilingly asks him whether he wishes to be readmitted in her farm.

This happy incident brings back Gabriel but does not mean that he has gained the favours of Bathsheba's heart.

Poor Gabriel's soul was fed with a luxury of content by having her over him [. . .] happy in that he was not over happy. He had no wish to converse with her: that his bright lady and himself formed one group, exclusively their own, and containing no others in the world, was enough.

(Ch XXII/155)

Contentedness and sufficiency equate with androgyny too, and this takes us back to the beginning of the narrative to the episode where I mentioned the confusion in the gender of Gabriel and Bathsheba. Needless to say that Farmer Gabriel Oak does comply with the Butlerian concept of 'doing' gender, she argues that,

If gender is a kind of a doing, an incessant activity performed, in part, without one's knowing and without one's willing, it is not for that reason automatic or mechanical. On the contrary, it is a practice of improvisation within a scene of constraint. Moreover, one does not "do" one's gender

alone. One is always “doing” with or for another, even if the other is only imaginary.

(2004: 1)

Hitherto, Gabriel has gone through this sort of continual process of gendering in which he vacillates between manliness and womanliness; displaying now and again facets of manhood and womanhood. The Butlerian concept of “subject-in-process” is more applicable to Bathsheba, and this we shall discuss in the chapter dealing with her, but Gabriel also experiences it though one may say that he is more or less stabilized, and his gender already done; neither as a man nor as a woman, but as an androgyne.

Gabriel has somewhat been tamed, but his love for Bathsheba does not totally die out; he “grew troubled by Boldwood’s intrusion into Bathsheba’s life; though he was rejected by the unreachable woman, he could not tame his heart and have it despair” (Ch XXIII/165). However, he manages to adapt to Boldwood’s presence near Bathsheba. He even lobbies for the owner of Upper Weatherbury Farm. Indeed, he becomes a go-between Boldwood and Bathsheba urging her not to “play pranks upon a man like Mr Boldwood, merely as a pastime” (Ch XX/142). He intercedes with Bathsheba for Boldwood whose tiny chances to win her are threatened by the gallant Troy. The latter constitutes a far more eminent danger than Boldwood for Gabriel, so he “determined to speak to his mistress. He would base his appeal on what he considered her unfair treatment of Farmer Boldwood, now absent from home” (Ch XXIX/201). This facet of Gabriel’s personality would not be favoured neither by the feminists nor by the supporters of androcentrism; something goes wrong in this matron of honour-like conduct which cannot be attributed to androgyny. He even acts as a wise man or a conscientious grandmother who mothers and warns her little daughter against ‘bad characters’. He utters the words she does not want to hear,

-I wish you had never met that young Sergeant Troy, miss,’ he sighed.

-‘Why?’ she asked.

-‘He is not good enough for ’ee.’

‘Did any one tell you to speak to me like this?’”

(Ch XXIX/203)

She dismisses him again, but this time he refuses to go, and deploys more energy to tip the scales in favour of Boldwood. Only androgynous people can plead for a rival for the sake of the beloved, and speak these words:

You know, mistress, that I love you, and shall love you always. I only mention this to bring to your mind that at any rate I would wish to do you no harm: beyond that I put it aside. I have lost in the race for money and good things, and I am not such a fool as to pretend to ’ee now I am poor, and you have got altogether above me. But Bathsheba, dear mistress, this I beg you to consider — that, both to keep yourself well honoured among the workfolk, and in common generosity to an honourable man [Boldwood] who loves you as well as I, you should be more discreet in your bearing towards this soldier.

(Ch XXIX/25)

Boldwood himself cannot do better; he rather multiplies gauche manners, and sends her in Troy’s arms. Boldwood and Gabriel share a weakness in common; when he first beholds Troy at the window of Bathsheba’s house, Gabriel grows pale like a corpse, and had to “lean on the gate” (Ch XXXV/251) to avoid falling. He is unutterably grieved by the scene, and dreads Bathsheba’s eventual marriage with the soldier. But she secretly marries with the sergeant to the great displeasure of Gabriel who could do nothing but observe the successive grievous events which start with the storm that threatens to destroy Bathsheba’s ricks, Fanny Robin’s death which unmasks Troy and accelerates his departure. When he comes back, another disaster plunges Bathsheba in a sorrow that Gabriel’s patience heals; the two suitors ruin each other and make room to the androgynous Gabriel Oak who can regain the woman he has wished to marry at the outset.

Thought to be dead after he has been reported to be lost at sea, Sergeant Troy reappears at the wrong time and in the wrong place. He arrives on the scene on the day

chosen by Boldwood to organize a party inviting many guests, and Bathsheba in particular to seal a future marriage. The remainder of the scene is made of shouts, mainly Bathsheba's, shots from Boldwood's rifle and Troy's death. The androgynous farmer, the balanced shepherd emerges victorious from the battle which has opposed Farmer Boldwood to Sergeant Troy. Unlike these suitors, Gabriel owes his happy end to his middle station; being neither too mannish nor too womanish. The next section will precisely deal with the antagonism between Farmer Gabriel Oak on the one hand, and Sergeant Troy and Farmer Boldwood on the other.

3. Gabriel and the Rivals

It goes without saying that the characters of Sergeant Troy and Farmer Boldwood are at the service of the central male character of the novel, that is to say, Farmer Gabriel Oak. The character of Boldwood in particular, was not part of the 'casting' which was triangularly shaped involving Gabriel Oak, Bathsheba Everdene and Sergeant Troy, and Boldwood emerged only later (Garson, 1991.: 25).

Boldwood comes on stage in the ninth chapter, some time after the neighbouring farm has been handed over to Bathsheba Everdene as a legacy from her deceased uncle. He is anxious to know "if anything had been heard of Fanny Robin" (Ch IX/77). He is unaware of Bathsheba, but soon discovers her when he receives a Valentine from her. Unlike Gabriel who tones down feelings, and circumscribes the fire the red and black colours of Bathsheba's jacket and hair have set to his heart, Boldwood is soon overwhelmed by both the fire and the fire raiser. It threatens to consume his manhood, has him make all the possible concessions, because he is estranged from Nature, and is victimized by the social conception of virility as sexual restraint from.

Sergeant Troy on the other hand, is licentious and sets fire in the female world for the sole pleasure of passing for a seducer. Fanny Robin, Bathsheba's servant, is his first

victim. Troy is empowered through the seduction of Fanny Robin and afterwards Batsheba, while Boldwood is disempowered at the very moment he responds to Bathsheba's Valentine. Gabriel is emasculated by Bathsheba at the outset, but he is not disempowered whereas Boldwood is both disempowered without being emasculated. Unlike, Boldwood and Troy, Gabriel is not possessive, and is not disconcerted when things turn out to be different from what is expected. Gabriel is not absolutely male, Troy is utterly masculine while Boldwood's masculine attributes which are celebrated and dreaded before the dreadful valentine, melts when exposed and put to test. Troy's maleness is winded with both Fanny and Bathsheba. This is not the case of Gabriel who does not renounce the male side of his personality, and finally wins the woman and the farms.

Gabriel, it has been discussed at length, is naturally balanced and conforms to the laws of Nature while Troy and Boldwood "turn their back on the natural world" (Babb, 1963: 155). In addition to the natural factor, the choice of the names of each character enlightens us on the opposition between the male characters at stake. We have already dealt with Gabriel's names and have drawn attention to the balance these names embody. Boldwood's name on the other hand, suggests shallowness while Frank Troy is, in Babb's terms, synonymous with weakness because it evokes the legendary Greek city of Troy (Ibid: 150). Eastman, for his part, observes that "in the name of 'Francis Troy', [Hardy] has linked the name of a place both pagan and evil to a generic synecdoche for war, to which the vices of French life inevitably lead" (1978: 26).

Indeed, Troy is fundamentally dissolute, immoral and vicious while Boldwood is wrongly virtuous. Gabriel is steadfast, generous and is the fittest. The difference is put eloquently by the narratorial voice which points out that "Troy's deformities lay deep down from a woman's vision, whilst his embellishments were upon the very surface; thus

contrasting with homely Gabriel, whose defects are patent to the blindest, and whose virtues are as metals in a mine. (Ch XXIX/201)

Before we go further in our discussion, it is worth underlining that to sort out Gabriel's androgyny in the light of Sergeant Troy's unbalance and Boldwood's confusion, we need to rely on some theoretical framework that will doubtless facilitate the task.

Structuralism, and more particularly, Greimas's theory of the sign is genuinely suitable to discuss Gabriel's position in relation to Sergeant Troy and Farmer Boldwood. I intend to envisage these three characters in terms of "differential" articulation or opposition; Gabriel as *being* androgynous, balanced and natural, as opposed to Troy and Boldwood as *seeming*, or Gabriel as *not being* the epitome of the sexual binary opposition antagonized to Troy and Boldwood who are the very paragons of the sexual duality, and *not seeming* balanced. In simple words, this kind of theorizing can be rendered more tellingly in the following assumptions: Farmer Gabriel Oak is a rustic whereas Troy is a military, and Boldwood a landowner. Gabriel is part of the rural world, and the core of the pastorality that Thomas Hardy celebrates in *FFMC*. Farmer Boldwood lives in the countryside, but seems unbound with the *being* of this world. Troy is urban and displays the very qualities Gabriel does not incarnate.

It is my contention to start this differential reading of *FFMC*'s male characters by referring to Richard Beckman's typology of the Hardyan character where he argues that "Troy's experience with happenstance is the un-stoical counterpart of Oak's patience in the face of accident, his getting up the next day to look for a job when his flock of sheep has accidentally been massacred or, comically, in a rustic scene (1963: 78). In fact, the aforementioned patience and stoicism of the natural Gabriel is best exemplified by the incident of the accidental loss of his flock which does not unbalance him while Sergeant Troy often disorientates the run of his life at the least sign of vexation. He leaves

Weatherburry after Fanny's death, and embarks on a boat to the New World which he leaves after few months to serve at a circus. In fact, his very ruin is the outcome of this artificiality, and absence of naturalness which goes hand in hand with androgyny. Ups and downs are equally the lot of Gabriel, but he manages to overcome all sort of hardships he comes up against. Boldwood is similar to Troy in that he too, is completely lost from the moment Bathsheba addresses him the Valentine letter. Like Troy, his lack of patience, his *not being* temperate causes his downfall.

The difference between Gabriel and Bathsheba's two other wooers hinges on the factors which categorize a given individual in the class of androgynous people. Throughout the novel, Gabriel is *being*, deep-seated, unwavering, and belonging in the natural world surrounding him. His *being* neither male nor female helps him face the vicissitudes of his life till he reaches the goal nature has mapped out for him. Not *seeming* too masculine like Troy and Boldwood wins him Bathsheba, and the admiration of the folk as well as the friendship of Boldwood. Both the latter and Troy are unable to access to *being*; Sergeant Troy first appears as the romantic soldier, the hero who charms the country girl, Fanny Robin, but proves to be a mere philander not a bit noble. Gabriel is static, noble, a noble rustic and a stable hero, a humble farmer dissimilar to Boldwood, the "gentleman-farmer" (Ch IX/77). Gabriel Oak [is set off] against . . . Troy [whose] sharp intellects, genteel manners, inflammable faithless passions, shallow good-nature, and flashy disdain for rusticity [results in] unstable swaggering natures (Beckman, 1963: 74).

Troy's passion for Fanny is transient, deceitful and deadly. His promising affection for Bathsheba is also artificial and staggers the day after their marriage. Gabriel's attachment to Bathsheba outlives the peripeteia, her vanity, her haughtiness, her mannishness, her ephemeral union with Troy and her betrothal and prospective marriage with Boldwood. Though apparently different from Troy's demeanour, Boldwood's interest

in Bathsheba is unnatural or even psychopathic. Unlike Gabriel who conceives the woman as a natural partner, and goes straight to the point and asks Bathsheba to become his wife, Boldwood's conception of the bond between man and woman is abnormal. He admits that he "never had any views of [himself] as husband" (Ch XIX/134), and revels in his seclusive bachelorhood. The Valentine and the bewitching and mysterious 'marry me' produce a considerable effect by sending the *seemingly* hardened bachelor to the far end of individuation. To return to the authorial act of naming, Boldwood distinguishes himself by not having a first name, and the name Boldwood seemingly refers to some hard stuff, wood to be specific, and he is indeed bold and as hard as wood at the onset. However, he develops in the wrong direction, and proves to be made of nothing but bark. He is like the old tree which appears to standstill, but is in fact hollow.

Boldwood is engulfed in his passion for Bathsheba, gets rid of his dignity, his farm and last but not least, his sanity because he is unable to assume any gender role properly. He, too, is neither male nor female, but he is not androgynous like Gabriel Oak. Sergeant Troy can boast that at the death of Fanny Robin, he fleetingly displays some sensitivity which nature denies and discourages. In fact, he has an epitaph inscribed on Fanny's tomb which he strives to ornate with flowers, but torrential rain reduces his putative good deed into nothing. These two deeds are artificial and belated; they are neither well-intentioned nor disinterested as Gabriel's two acts towards her. Gabriel helps her when she is wandering by giving her the sole shilling left, and protects her memory by ensuring that she is buried properly. It is not the only difference that separates the androgynous Gabriel from the fake Troy. Troy ignores and disdains nature; he is not attentive to the storm which threatens to destroy his wife's ricks, and lives from day to day. He is disrespectful of the past and the future, and ignores all about artistry. The only episode where he gets nearer to the the androgynous model, is during the hiving off, and this is so brief and ill-fitting.

Even the sea rejects him because it does not recognize him as one of the natural sons of nature; he does not drown, but does not reappear at the spot where he has left his clothes. This episode bears many a symbol and could be a kind of renaissance for him, alas; he reappears more thoughtless than before. He returns to Weatherbury to meet his death in Boldwood's house.

1.3. A Tentative Measure of Gabriel Oak's Androgyny

One might object to the measure of a fictional character's gender "without running the risk of slipping into irreality oneself" (Butler, 2000:1), but given the place that the Hardyan character occupies in Hardy's life, one irresistibly opts for this kind of measure whose aim is to reinforce my argument as regards Gabriel Oak's being a transitional type in terms of matters of gender. The following table enlists items supposedly belonging to masculinity, femininity and in-between. We have tried to implement this scale to Oak and the asterisk marks the attributes proper to Gabriel.

Table 5

Items on the masculinity, femininity, and social desirability scales of the BSRI

Masculine items	Feminine items	Neutral items
49. Acts as a leader*	11. Affectionate*	51. Adaptable*
46. Aggressive	5. Cheerful*	36. Conceited
58. Ambitious*	50. Childlike	9. Conscientious*
22. Analytical*	32. Compassionate*	60. Conventional*
13. Assertive*	53. Does not use harsh language*	45. Friendly*
10. Athletic	35. Eager to soothe hurt feelings*	15. Happy*
55. Competitive	20. Feminine*	3. Helpful*
4. Defends own beliefs	14. Flatterable	48. Inefficient
37. Dominant	59. Gentle*	24. Jealous*
19. Forceful	47. Gullible*	39. Likable*
25. Has leadership abilities*	56. Loves children	6. Moody
7. Independent*	17. Loyal*	21. Reliable*
52. Individualistic	26. Sensitive to the needs of others	30. Secretive*
31. Makes decisions easily*	8. Shy*	33. Sincere*
40. Masculine*	38. Soft spoken	42. Solemn*
1. Self-reliant*	23. Sympathetic*	57. Tactful
34. Self-sufficient*	44. Tender*	12. Theatrical
	29. Understanding*	27. Truthful*
	41. Warm*	18. Unpredictable

16. Strong personality 43. Willing to take a stand* 28. Willing to take risks*	2. Yielding	54. Unsystematic
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Note. The number preceding each item reflects the position of each adjective as it actually appears on the Inventory. (p.156) while the asterix is placed next to the items which correspond to Gabriel.

Source Bem 1974: 156.

Gabriel is the leader of the rustics, and the leader of his flock. He is ambitious and his association with Boldwood shows it. Though he loves his mistress, Gabriel is assertive and the episode of his departure exemplifies it. However, he is also tender with the sheep, the ewes, Fanny Robin and even with Boldwood. He is gentle, loyal, shy, understanding and warm, all of which are recorded as feminine items. Manifestly, Gabriel scores in each of the three columns; he counts thirteen (13) masculine items, fifteen (15) feminine items and thirteen neutral items. Needless to say that the score is telling as to Gabriel's psychological balance and/or androgyny. Here are instances for each of the attributes and/or items marked above: We shall deal with the items according to the gender they allegedly belong to, so Gabriel is self-reliant and his small farm at the outset shows. In the same wise, his search for a job after his loss of the flock and his departure from Weatherbury Farm after his argument with Bathsheba demonstrates his possession of this attribute. Self-reliance goes hand in hand with independence and Gabriel is undoubtedly independent and equally self-sufficient. As Marjorie Garson rightly puts it, "*Far From the Madding Crowd* is an exuberant attempt to invest the male with a wholeness borrowed from the female" (1991: 53).

Moreover, a substantial amount of femininity coupled with more or less the same number of masculine items are, in Bem's terms, essential for an individual's health and adaptation to life. She argues that:

Thus, extreme femininity untempered by a sufficient concern for one's own needs as an individual, may produce dependency and self-denial, just as

extreme masculinity, untempered by sufficient concern for the needs of others may produce arrogance and exploitation.... For fully effective and healthy human functioning, both masculinity and femininity must be... integrated into a more balanced, more fully human, a truly androgynous personality. Such a personality would thus represent the best of what masculinity and femininity have each come to represent and the more negative exaggerations of each would tend to be cancelled out.

(Qtd in McCabe, 1989:4)

Bem considers that to be an entirely healthy human being, one needs to have masculine as well as feminine traits, and these traits need to be proportionately arranged. Gabriel Oak is neither arrogant, nor dependent, neither male nor female, he is both. He is a truly androgynous individual, and represents the quintessence of humankind. Gabriel is, in Garson's terms, depicted by Hardy "as the locus of a unifying movement which will bring the novel to a satisfactory moral and emotional conclusion", (1991:27). He succeeds and gets the upper hand because he "is not divided [. . .] eminently 'together'" (Ibid). Furthermore, "[t]he very rhythms of the narrator's language set Gabriel as a balanced and integrated figure" (Ibid: 28).

Conclusion

Gabriel, it is true, has a Uranian temperament, but should not be confused with homosexuals or gays with which the term Uranian is equally associated. Gabriel is rather androgynous in the sense that he combines male and female attributes. In fact, delineating Gabriel is sufficient to grasp the meaning of androgyny. He blends masculine and feminine attributes in such a way that one cannot say whether he is male or female. The combination of these traits contributes to his serenity, his resilience and his happiness.

Gabriel occupies an outstanding rank in the narrative, and in the world of Weatherbury. He is a kind of balance which stabilises all that surrounds him, the townsfolk, Bathsheba Everdene, and Boldwood before the reappearance of Troy. Because he is balanced and psychologically healthy, Gabriel traverses the various difficulties and vicissitudes stoically and manages to recover soon. At the outset, he tragically loses his modest business after the sheep is pushed from the cliff by the young dog. Instead of lamenting his fate, he feels happy he is not married, and immediately sets to start a new life. He is impressed neither by Troy's success with Bathsheba, nor by Boldwood's farm. He is self-confident, but not vainglorious or hubristic as androcentric men are in general.

Reading Gabriel Oak informs us that verily androgyny is panacea. It is the solution against Boldwood's vision of manhood, and Troy's frivolous way of life. Sergeant Troy, Boldwood and Gabriel, we said it afore, compete with each other in chivalry, however their manliness is not the same. While Troy, and to a lesser degree Boldwood, act in a gentleman way with Bathsheba on purpose, Gabriel's gentlemanliness is disinterested, and this shows best when he behaves politely with Fanny, whom the "chivalrous" Troy has abandoned.

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Chapter IV
Bathsheba the Hero/ine

Introduction

Were it not better,
Because that I am more than common tall,
That I did suit me all points like a man?
A gallant curtle-axe upon my thigh,
A boar-spear in my hand; and, in my heart
Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will,
We'll have a swashing and a martial outside,
As many other mannish cowards have
That do outface it with their semblances.

(*As You Like it* I.iii. 110-18)

It goes without saying that the quotation above is not here fortuitously; it has already been argued that Shakespeare's influence is traceable in Hardy's oeuvre. His androgynous characters are replicated in Hardyan ones of the like of Bathsheba Everdene, who can mouth *verbatim* what Rosalind, her twin sister, tells her girl, Celia, when they are about to flee through the Forest of Arden in a "wished-for male disguise" (Kimbrough, 1982: 23). As a matter of fact, in chapter 44 of *FFMC*, after the scene of the coffin where the corpse of Troy's former mistress, Fanny Robin lays, Bathsheba Everdene feels downgraded, reacts in a womanly manner by running away. She finds herself in "a thicket overhung by some large oak and beech trees" (Ch 44/260). The symbolism of the place is patent; this

seemingly protected spot appears far more congenial than it is in actuality. Bathsheba, stripped of a role and a right she thought was hers, wishes to slip back into a void of pre-gendered nothingness. The possibility of death, which she seriously entertains, signifies peace from gender struggle and specifically what she perceives as male domination. On a deeper level, however, Bathsheba here enacts a crisis of gender.

(Shires, 1991: 162)

The words emphasized align Linda Shires with Judith Butler. Shires interprets this scene in terms of (un)doing gender, the scene "operates as a triple gender scenario: it is a fantasy of gender annulment, a scene of gender mixing, and a drama of sexual choice" (Ibid).

The following chapter thus addresses this drama of sexual or gender choice as regards the character of Bathsheba Everdene. When she makes her entry in the story, Bathsheba is womanized to the extreme. First through the gaze of Gabriel Oak, and then through her own eroticizing trick on the horse's back. Soon, she grows a woman farmer, and (un)fortunately takes possession of her uncle's farm in Weatherbury. Bathsheba can no longer content herself with one gender role, but had not only to reverse, like Rosalind, to the 'opposite' gender role to manage the farm, but also to travel in the gender continuum between the two extremes of femaleness and maleness as required by her new role of woman farmer.

Could one contend that, in the wise of Shakespeare, Hardy has Bathsheba display a wider "range of human character traits" (Kimbrough, 1982:22) by making her the bequeather of a farm that she is to manage in the place of her uncle? Like Rosalind, Bathsheba somehow "grows into a fuller human self" by experiencing the role of a man, (Ibid: 23) and attains happiness by the end of the novel through her marriage with Gabriel. Because this study is not a comparative one between Shakespeare and Hardy, the parallel, though alluring, needs to cease here. *FFMC* has offered this thesis another androgynous or nearly androgynous character, Bathsheba Everdene to be specific.

This chapter will then deal shed light on androgyny as regards the female heroine of *FFMC*, viz Bathsheba Everdene whom some (Jekel 1986, Casagrande 1979, Steel 1993, Shires 1993) consider as the pivot of the narrative. Indeed, notwithstanding the anonymity which is her lot in the first chapters, the pivotability of Bathsheba Everdene in *FFMC* is indisputable. The first section which is the biggest one of this chapter is devoted to Bathsheba, and discusses her androgyny and the process of subjecthood through which she goes. There will also be question of psychological evolution and development which is known in Jungian literature as individuation which refers to

the process of personality development which leads to the fullest possible actualization of the Self. Individuation means becoming a single, homogeneous being, and, in so far as 'individuality' embraces our innermost, last, and incomparable uniqueness, it also implies becoming one's own self.

(CW 7, para: 266)

Before she becomes a single being, and androgynous, Bathsheba goes through some sort of gender trouble. I endeavour to highlight her being neither female nor male in her bond with her first suitor, Farmer Gabriel Oak. Her tumultuous ties with the two other suitors, Frank Troy and Boldwood and her oscillation between femininity and masculinity constitute the core of the third section. The last section draws a parallel between Bathsheba and the other female characters, particularly Fanny Robin, in order to flesh out her gender trouble. That the author uses her as the thread of the story, the centre around which orbit the three male characters, or merely a literary scapegoat that highlights the merits of the male character, needs much more exploration. Thus, we shall examine the gender role(s) allotted to this female character that fits the exploration of androgyny in Hardy's fiction, and this is well-adapted to the divide between male and female in *FFMC*.

Right away, this divide is represented in ambiguous terms as we are given to discover a woman who displays the facets of both masculinity and femininity. At first her "soft, though not particularly low voice" (Ch I/3) is heard, then there comes the picture of a girl "handsome", with a "bright face and dark hair" (Ch I/4) surveying herself attentively and narcissistically in the mirror, following the example of her fellow women, smiling and blushing. The reverse side, the masculine aspect of the girl is betrayed by her (re)action at the turnpike-gate, which makes her virile side fly at the face of the turnpike-gate keeper and that of Gabriel too. She exhibits the image of someone who is antipodal to the representation aforementioned; someone who obstinately argues about the sum required to pass the turnpike-gate. ". . . she says that's enough I've offered to ye, you great miser," (Ch I/5). Manifestly, the girl is not an altar boy; she stands up to the gatekeeper, and ignores

Gabriel's gentlemanliness. Indeed, though the latter pays the litigious twopence, she neither thanks him nor admits her fault. "An Elisabeth in brain and Mary Stuart in spirit" (Ch XX/138), Bathsheba is seemingly doomed to devote much of her energy to have the two parts of her divided self come to terms with each other. "Does being female constitute a "natural fact" or a cultural performance, or is "naturalness" constituted through discursively constrained performative acts that produce the body through and within the categories of sex? (1990: XXXI), questions Judith Butler. The first section of this chapter sheds light on the personality of Bathsheba Everdene. This chapter is tasked to substantiate the double role of hero and heroine allotted to Bathsheba Everdene.

1. Bathsheba on the Whole

The following chapter of *FFMC* focuses on the character of Bathsheba Everdene, regardless of her commitment with the other characters. Before we reach chapter 6, we know little about this major female protagonist; it is only in the fourth chapter that the reader and Gabriel "found that the girl's name was Bathsheba Everdene" (Ch IV/25). As it has already been mentioned in the chapter devoted to Gabriel Oak, Bathsheba is now the girl, then the woman, now the milkmaid, the maid, and more than often, she is merely referred to as "she".

Her name Bathsheba is saturated with insinuations; the biblical Bathsheba marries twice like the Hardyan Bathsheba, she espouses a soldier too, and loses him in a violent scene with her lover in the wise of Bathsheba Everdene. According to Bryn Caless, the family name Everdene has perhaps sprung from Everand which means wildness, and tracks of her wild spirit are scattered throughout the story (1974: 10-16). Bathsheba admits to Gabriel that she is untamed, and her aunt avows to Gabriel again that she "was too wild" (Ch IV/27), and Hardy describing her as a caged leopard chaffing to and fro in

rebelliousness. Tamed or not, the reader discovers her through the eyes and conception of the hero, Farmer Gabriel Oak who

saw coming down the incline before him an ornamental spring wagon, painted yellow and gaily marked, drawn by two horses, a waggoner walking alongside bearing a whip perpendicularly. The wagon was laden with household goods and window plants, and on the apex of the whole sat a woman, young and attractive.

(ChI/ 3)

Again and again, Bathsheba is referred to as “a woman” then as “the girl” (Ch I/3), and from the contents of the waggon’s load, one guesses that Bathsheba has left a house for another, and the narrator conjectures that the “pots of geraniums, myrtles and cactuses” come “all probably from the windows of the house just vacated” (Ch I/4). At this juncture, one needs to point out that the girl/woman’s position is very suggestive; the phrases, “on the apex of the whole” and “on the summit” (Ch I/4) allude to her fondness of the domineering demeanour which is traditionally that of the male. Indeed, the couple apex and summit tell about the stature which will be that of the woman in question throughout the novel mainly in regards Gabriel until the end which sees her leave the apex and marry Gabriel. In the same page, we learn that the sun coheres with the prevailing scene to orbit around Bathsheba, so,

[t]he sun lighted up to a scarlet glow the crimson jacket she wore, and painted a soft luster upon her bright face and dark hair. The myrtles, geraniums, and cactuses were packed around her were fresh and green, and at such a leafless season they invested the whole concern of horses, waggon, furniture and girl with a peculiar vernal charm. What possessed her to indulge in such a performance in the sight of the sparrows, blackbirds, and unperceived farmer who were alone its spectator-whether the smile began as a factitious one, to test her capacity in that art- nobody knows; it ended certainly in a real smile. She blushed at herself, and seeing her reflection blush, blushed the more.

(Ch I/4)

Thus, like the traditional queens, Bathsheba seems to reign with the support of the sun which enlightens her, and womanizes her all the way. She is young and attractive, and manifestly narcissistic; she is ‘caught’ looking “not at the bird, nor at the cat” (I/4) which are in passing pets particularly prized by women, but at a package wherein lies the symbol

of her narcissism and egocentrism. Marjorie Garson observes that the “vignette of Bathsheba with her mirror informs us from the opening pages that her pride will have a fall” (1991: 30). Disguising conjectures in truths, the narrator infers some “prescriptive infirmity “of woman’s, and has Gabriel infer uselessness in “her looking in the glass” (Ch I/5). Furthermore, this is not the only conjecture of the narrator; we guess beforehand the events waiting for us,

She simply observed herself as a fair product of Nature in the feminine kind, her thoughts seeming to glide into far-off though likely dramas in which men would play a part -- vistas of probable triumphs – the smiles being of a phase suggesting that hearts were imagined as lost and won. Still, this was but conjecture, and the whole series of actions was so idly put forth as to make it rash to assert that intention had any part in them at all.

(Ch I/5)

When the “girl/woman” reappears, she reappears—one more time-- through the lens of Farmer Gabriel Oak who “happens” to see her in company of another woman, her aunt, in a hut, and seen from a bird’s-eye view. The process of engendering the woman is back again; she is with another woman who is seemingly older, and attention is once again drawn to her youth and grace (Ch II/13). At this stage of the narrative, the girl/woman has not yet been “defeminised” by the proprietorship of her uncle’s farm, so the scales are tipped at the side of femininity. She labours to run the flock of sheep and cows she and her aunt uneasily manage, calving and milking Daisy, the cow which has grown somewhat endeared in the eyes of Farmer Oak. She displays the very feminine awkwardness that allows the male hero the opportunity to assist her. Indeed, Gabriel needs motives like the lost hat to reencounter Bathsheba, and he is about to restore the lost hat, but a “performance” supposedly unusual in a woman, troubles him and astounds him.

Gabriel and the putative reader-voyeur discover Bathsheba the Amazon; “she wore no riding-habit . . . dexterously dropped backwards flat upon the pony’s back, her head over its tail, her feet against its shoulders, and her eyes to the sky” (Ch III/15-16). The

suggestiveness of the above lines is undoubted; the erotic scent trails throughout the whole narrative, and we shall be confronted to such scenes where eroticism is patent in different sites. Objectified by male voyeurism, the girl is publicly feminized by the striptease-like show that amuses and sets Gabriel on fire. Besides, the use of words such as performance and performer allude to Bathsheba's manly behavior in this very occurrence which is seemingly unwanted both by the writer for whom Bathsheba sat on the horse "in the manner demanded by the saddle [which is] hardly expected of the woman"(Ch III/16), who is supposed to ride in the Amazonian way. When she reappears, an hour later, Bathsheba is seated "properly" (Ibid), that is, with both legs on the same side of the saddle. This seemingly trivial event proves if need be that Bathsheba is as androgynous as Gabriel.

In the eyes of Gabriel, "the young woman of the night before" (Ch III/15) has the feminine charms found in Englishwomen; she "could have been not above the height to be chosen by women as best [. . .] must have had a beautiful neck and shoulders [and] was not a shy girl" (Ch III/17), and when at last, he could hand her her hat, it is he who blushes not she after a face-to-face wherein Gabriel loses the face though the espial was his and the inquisitive manners have been were launched by him. In fact, Bathsheba is able to stand comparison with Gabriel and any other putative hero, and the next time she meets the farmer, she is the hero(ine).

Gabriel's "head was upon her lap [. . .] her fingers were unbuttoning his collar" (Ch III/20); she has just rescued him from certain death. Furthermore, she displays a force of character usually seen in men; solacing the dumbfounded man and behaving like someone who is used to such heroic deeds. The words she uses to retort his questioning could easily run in the mouth of some chivalrous man,

-I would just as soon not tell it-rather not. There is no reason either why as I should, as you probably will never have much to do with me.

-Still I should like to know.

-You can enquire at my aunt's--she will tell you.

-My name is ***.

And mine isn't. You seem fond of yours in speaking it so decisively ...

(Ch III/22)

Manifestly, Bathsheba is not the least affected by the three meetings that have preceeded. Thus, whenever she came to milk the cows. She “never allowed her vision to stray in the direction of Oak's person” (Ch II/19). Bathsheba is the seducer not Gabriel; she supposedly “made appreciable inroads upon the emotional constitution of young Farmer Oak” (Ch III/24). The ironic tone is indisputable while the empathetic stand is on the side of Oak. In addition to being the seducer, Bathsheba is presented as a trickster alluring him by denying her aunt's information to Farmer Oak about her having many suitors.

Bathsheba is, in Marjorie Garson's terms, “a spirited brunette [flanked with] willful self-sufficiency” (1991:25). She [Garson] deems her as *FFMC*'s most “schematically self-divided character” (Ibid: 34); she rides the horse like a man, and conceives marriage like men. Garson emphasizes on the pair Venus-Diana to highlight Bathsheba's self-division and/or androgyny. Her mannish manners categorize her in the club of Diana while her feminine characteristics place her in the circle of Venus, and Gabriel sees in her an “Ashtoresth of strange report [that] was only a modification of Venus the well-known” (Ch VII/51). Diana/Artemis is the epitome of Arcadianism, chastity while Venus/Aphrodite reigns over love, and stands as a symbol of licentiousness. Indeed, the scene of her appearance in the midst of colours, flowers and the mirror affiliate her to Venus. Garson points out that:

By comparing his heroine to two goddesses, Hardy whimsically elevates her; by locating Bathsheba within the polarities of ancient myth, he lends authority to his paradigm, and suggests that the contradiction he analyses in

his heroine is a universal and permanent aspect of female nature. And the Venus-Diana split buttresses Hardy's plot.

(1991: 35)

Polarities, gender polarities in harmony and the two in one buttress this thesis too which contends that these polarities are not clear cut, but are rather present in the characters under discussion in a counteracting way sometimes in agreement as it is the case in Gabriel, and often in disagreement in Bathsheba. Ian Ousby rightly draws attention to "uncertainty and ambivalence" in the characterization of Bathsheba (1981: 25).

For Hardy, what we call androgyny is a contradiction that is archetypal and permanent in the female nature, not in the male one. We believe that this 'contradiction' is equally applicable to the Hardyan male character. Garson notes that:

Though Venus and Diana seem to pull Bathsheba in opposite directions, the text undermines the very oppositions which have been so carefully set up. The Venus-Diana paradigm has a unifying force upon which Hardy equally relies. Bathsheba's independence evokes anxiety about whether she is too 'mannish' (227 sic). Hardy wants to erase any hint of the tomboy about Bathsheba, and the Venus-Diana imagery enables him to describe a split which might too readily be conceptualized as masculine-feminine in terms of reassuringly feminine prototype. Though split in two, Bathsheba is wholly feminine. His simultaneous insistence both on her unity and on her duality expresses in fact a fundamental contradiction in Hardy's attitude towards his heroine.

(1991:34)

So there is a split which we conceptualize in terms of androgyny; our contention is that Bathsheba is neither totally feminine nor entirely masculine, and substantiating her masculine side is one of the aims of this section. The antipodal forces embodied by the two goddesses, Venus and Diana (dis)join Bathsheba in many an occurrence, and we shall see this in detail afterwards. Androgyny is also embodied in the two settings, Norcombe Hill and Weatherbury where Bathsheba displays two different personalities. While "only her beauty [is] her fortune" (Steel, 1993: 34) in Norcombe Hill where she milks Daisy the cow, strives with her aunt to secure enough food for both of them, and could boast to be

feminine, at Weatherbury, she is the lady farmer in charge of a farm and men servants which require tough guys not an inexperienced woman.

While she is revealed at the outset through the eyes of Gabriel, Bathsheba reappears through the gossip of two strangers who happened to be on the wagon in which Gabriel sleeps in his way to Shottsford:

- "Be as 'twill, she's a fine handsome body as far's looks be concerned. But that's only the skin of the woman, and these dandy cattle be as proud as a lucifer in their insides."

- "Ay -- so 'a do seem, Billy Smallbury -- so 'a do seem."

- "She's a very vain feymell -- so 'tis said here and there."

"Ah, now. If so be 'tis like that, I can't look her in the face. Lord, no: not I -- heh-heh-heh! Such a shy man as I be!"

- "Yes -- she's very vain. 'Tis said that every night at going to bed she looks in the glass to put on her night-cap properly." (Ch VI/44-5).

Bathsheba is no longer a milkmaid, but a lady farmer and the two guys whose preceding gossip deals with belong in her uncle's farm which she has just inherited. So she enters in possession of Weatherbury Farm and becomes the mistress of all the workers and servants who work therein. Jacob Smallbury rightly reports that her parents "were townsfolk" (Ch/.63). Her father was less handsome than the mother according to the maltster who added that he seemingly loved her more than she did. Bathsheba is the very spit of her mother, they say. Her father admired and loved his wife, but was fickle and unable to do with one woman. Henery Fray joins Jacob and the old maltster to say that Bathsheba was not pretty when she was a child. For Henery Fray, she is a tomboy (Ch/70).

Henery Fray's judgment is partly motivated by his impeded ambition of becoming Weatherbury Farm's new bailiff, however, Miss Everdene's firm-handedness leaves no room for doubt as to her manliness. She immediately shows part of it by her first meeting

with “her men” whom she gives the responsibility to find the missing Fanny Robin. On meeting them for the second time, Bathsheba tells her men about her resolution to “manage everything with [her] own head and hands” (Ch X/81) like a man. She appears before her men to pay them and “Gabriel was rather staggered by the remarkable coolness of her manner” (Ch X/85). Though she warns her men not to mistake her for a master, and keep away from thinking that because she is a woman, she does not “understand the difference between bad doings-on and good” (ChX/87). She insists that she “will be up before you are awake; I shall be afield before you are up; and I shall have breakfasted before you are afield. In short, I shall astonish you”(Ch X/87). Indeed, Bathsheba resolves to administer her uncle’s farm by herself after she had dismissed the bailiff for thieving. That Bathsheba decides to manage her farm by herself surprises the men, but also discontent them, mainly Henery Fray who, as it has been said earlier, sees himself as the successor of the fired bailiff. For him, Bathsheba is a “headstrong maid, that’s what she is — and won’t listen to no advice at all. Pride and vanity have ruined many a cobbler’s dog” (Ch XV/111).

Next, she ‘invades’ the cornmarket at Casterbridge, until recently, an androcentric realm *par excellence*. She is “the single one of her sex that the room contained » (Ch XII/95). Among “these yeomen” (ibid), Bathsheba is conspicuously feminine, and the author highlights it through a telling comparison which underscores her being like “a chaise between carts”, “a romance after sermons” or “a breeze among furnaces” (Ibid). In this realm, one can see better that Bathsheba swings to femininity and from masculinity. The very signs of Bathsheba’s androgyneity are shown in the following authorial assertion, “there was elasticity in her firmness which removed it from obstinacy, as there was a *naïveté* in her cheapening which saved it from meanness” (Ch XII/95). As the owner of her uncle’s farm, she is not easily taken in, she negotiates and argues as an experimented merchant or dealer. What is more, Bathsheba is, in the author’s terms, as aforementioned,

An Elizabeth in brain and a Mary Stuart in spirit, she often performed actions of the greatest temerity with a manner of extreme discretion. Many of her thoughts were perfect syllogisms; unluckily they always remained thoughts. Only a few were irrational assumptions; but, unfortunately, they were the ones which most frequently grew into deeds

(Ch XX/138)

Thus, she displays a man-like temerity and discretion, but tends to give form to her emotions.

Thus, one might see Bathsheba from the standpoint of Henery Fray, Joseph Poorgrass, and the other men who contribute to the revelation of her character to us.

-I don't see why a maid should take a husband when she's bold enough to fight her own battles," (Ch XXII/158), Henery Fray comments.

The allusions to her manliness are undeniable. Like men, Bathsheba's "emblazoned fault was to be too pronounced in her objections, and not sufficiently overt in her likings" (Ibid).

Few women display such features indeed. Henery Fray continues, and squarely considers her,

-A true man, and proud as Lucifer'" (Ibid), he adds.

Joseph Poorgrass is doubtless the one whose continuous *lapsus linguae* substantiate better Bathsheba's overt oscillation between womanhood and manhood. When she calls him to give him his pay,

- 'Joseph Poorgrass, are you there?'

- 'Yes, sir—ma'am I mane,'

- 'How much to you?'

- Please nine and ninepence and a good halfpenny where 'twas a bad one, sir—ma'am I mane.'

(Ch X/82)

That Poorgrass makes the same slip of the tongue twice is telling as to Bathsheba's man-like behavior which is not only required by her occupation as a lady farmer and owner of a big farm with servants, but is also enforced on her by the authorial conception of gender

roles and the binary system which categorizes humanity into feminine and masculine types. Though Bathsheba insists on her being a “mistress instead of a master” (Ch X/86), her dignity affects Liddy, her servant whose very femininity is equally troubled to see her mistress behave with such virility. Even Laban Tall whom everyone calls Susan Tall’s husband had his two cents, ““She never do tell women’s little lies, that’s true; and ’tis a thing that can be said of very few. Ay, all the harm she thinks she says to yer face: there’s nothing underhand wi’ her” (Ch XXXXXIII/393), says he.

The 29th chapter of *FFMC* opens on an authorial sentence which goes as follows: “We now see the element of folly distinctly mingling with the many varying particulars which made up the character of Bathsheba Everdene” (ChXXIX/200). Bathsheba is neither female nor male; “she had too much understanding to be entirely governed by her womanliness, had too much womanliness to use her understanding to the best advantage” (Ibid). In his “Androgyny, Survival, and Fulfillment in Thomas Hardy’s *Far From the Madding Crowd*”, William Mistichelli rightly draws attention to these various misapprehensions about Bathsheba’s “sex and the inability of others to match her behavior with her sexual identity” (1988: 53). Indeed, Gabriel, the turnpike gatekeeper, Henery Fray, Joseph Poorgrass and the other Weatherbury Farm workers and servants, and even Sergeant Troy remark and reproach Bathsheba with her ambivalent conduct. Mistichelli highlights both Bathsheba’s feminine love of flowers, her knitting, and her ‘masculine’ attributes of decisiveness, and daring. He demonstrates her balance by opposing her ruthless firing of the Pennyways, the bailiff, to her planting of flowers around Fanny Robin’s tomb (Ibid: 63). As a matter of fact, she can as well be glamorous, refined and seducible and display courage and firmness which are the two facets of the androgyne. Bathsheba is a true female, and her shaly androgyny reveals itself much better when “dropping from haughtiness to entreaty with capricious inconsequence” (Ch XXX/211).

She admits that she does “often cry” (Ch XXX/211), and has Liddy promise to her not to divulge this pathetic scene “because it will be dreadful” for her (Ch XXX/212).

Bathsheba is conscious of her dormant androgyny, and is “alarmed by this Amazonian picture of herself. “I hope I am not a bold sort of maid— mannish?” she continued with some anxiety.

‘O no, not mannish; but so almighty womanish that ’tis getting on that way sometimes. Ah! miss,’ she said,” (Ch XXX/212). In fact, Bathsheba may go on pretending to be cruel and indifferent, but

in spite of her mettle, [she] began to feel unmistakable signs that she was inherently the weaker vessel. She strove miserably against this femininity which would insist upon supplying unbidden emotions in stronger and stronger current. She had tried to elude agitation by fixing her mind on the trees, sky, any trivial object before her eyes, whilst his reproaches fell, but ingenuity could not save her now.

(Ch XXXI/176)

Thus, femininity and masculinity war inside Bathsheba and drive her to the extremes while she needs to be balanced as Oak is. Butler contends that the terms “female” and “woman” are unstable and troubled, and man and woman are “relational terms” (1990: XXXI). These concepts do not seem to be rational in Bathsheba; she is very weak with the sergeant, and too strong with Boldwood and Oak. And she confesses that an “unprotected childhood in a cold world has beaten gentleness out of” her (Ch XXXI/218). Judith Bryant Wittenberg claims that she has such “male” attributes as assertiveness, intellectual superiority, and aggressivity (1986:32)

Irresponsibility and/or sporting; it is not sharply defined whether Bathsheba is unconscious of the harmful attitude she adopts now with Gabriel, now with Boldwood or she whimsically acts in such a way to divert herself and titillate her pride by bewitching both men without reciprocating their passion. She retains Gabriel from leaving her aunt’s, and indulges in a discussion with him which proves to be playful. She sends Boldwood a compromising Valentine which troubles the farmer’s gender and sets tumult in his life. Her

decisiveness is not used when the latter urges her to promise to marry him. However, Bathsheba is very conscientious, and her scrupulousness somewhat gainsays her conduct. She hates marriage and wants to make amends to Boldwood.” I hate the act of marriage under such circumstances, and the class of women I should seem to belong to by doing it!” (Ch XXXXXI/379) In the wise of the Victorian New Woman, Bathsheba rejects the very idea of being “thought men’s property” (Ch IV/29), and argues that “a marriage would be very nice in one sense. People would talk about me and think I had won my battle, and I should feel triumphant, and all that. But a husband-” (Ch IV/30-31).

Bathsheba is capable of maddening jealousy, as is shown at the death of Fanny Robin, whom Sergeant Troy avowedly prefers to her. She intercedes with Boldwood to protect Troy, even if this means engaging in a virtual marriage with him. Bathsheba’s balance, androgyny and her embodiment of both *anima* and *animus* is more cogent in Hardy’s description of her first appearance in the corn market at Casterbridge aforementioned,

Something in the exact arch of her upper unbroken row of teeth, and in the keenly pointed corners of her red mouth, with parted lips, she somewhat defiantly turned up her face to argue a point with a tall man, suggested that there was enough in that lithe slip of humanity for alarming exploits of sex, and daring enough to carry them out.

(Ch XII/94)

The feminine features highlighted above do not defeat her, but rather seemingly ally with her masculine attributes to form the androgynous individual whose very beauty belongs “rather to the demonian than the angelic school” (Ch XXI/145). Linda Shires tells us that Bathsheba’s self is divided into masculine and feminine; she becomes a scene where both genders melt and unite.

The landscape is inscribed with sexual signs both masculine, such as spiky ferns and tall fungi, and feminine, such as the dawn and the pool. Bathsheba’s own body is represented as a landscape of gender, but not one marked by sexual difference. Red and yellow leaves (recalling Troy’s brass

and scarlet uniform [24.148], but also her own “crimson” jacket and ‘bright’ face [1.5]) entwine in her luxuriant dark hair and rest in her lap.

(1991:61)

However, she draws our attention to the persistence of the masculine weight on Bathsheba:

Yet, what had seemed to be a womblike haven, where she could commune with herself alone, is invaded not only by the sounds of birds, but also by the voice of a ploughboy and a team of her own horses. Masculinity intrudes, as in the corpse scene, here with the male voice and her team as metonymy of her power and is meant to represent her masculine position in the community.

(Ibid)

Psychologically speaking, Bathsheba belongs both in the demonian and angelic school like Gabriel Oak. In addition to her being potentially androgynous, Bathsheba is, in Judith Butler’s terms, a subject- in-process, that is, an individual whose subjecthood comes to life after a long process. From the innocently vain milkmaid of Norcombe Hill, through the firm, independent lady farmer of Weatherbury to the wise woman who marries Gabriel Oak, she goes through a process of gendering.

1.2 Bathsheba and the Rustics

This section addresses the potentially androgynous Bathsheba in the light of her relationships with Gabriel Oak and farmer William Boldwood. Gabriel and Boldwood are artless in their attitude towards Bathsheba, and in so doing appeal to the masculine attributes in her, and encourage her in her manliness.

Bathsheba Everdene, the woman/girl, in the manner of the archetypal Eve, arises from Farmer Gabriel Oak’s rib. In a sense, she is partly female, partly male or both; she is neither female nor male, but potentially androgynous. She is defined in Gabriel’s words, conception and value judgments. In fact, during her first three encounters with him her femininity is rarely placed in the foreground with the exception of the episode of the wagon at her first appearance before his eyes. Then her angelic and womanly facet surfaces as she is alone and believes she is unseen. On other occasions she appears in the

guise of a proud, firm and unshakeable person. Rather than thanking Gabriel for having helped her at the turnpike gate, Bathsheba looks at him and her eyes discover a man with no “single lineament [that] could be selected and called worthy either of distinction or notoriety” (Ch I/6). Unthankful and disdainful of Gabriel’s gesture, “she carelessly glanced over him, and told her man to drive (Ibid).

Gabriel, as it were, envisions an androgynous woman, and Bathsheba is still unable to reconcile her antipodal selves, and establish the balance that is proper to androgynous people. She is not seduced; never courted and gallantly spoken to; reason and practicality are the weapons Gabriel uses in approaching Bathsheba. He asks her for marriage somewhat coldly; Bathsheba is not at home and the “every-day sort of man” that is Gabriel (his own terms) is on the point of leaving when she arrives and the discussion which follows is telling as for Bathsheba’s troubled gender:

-I ran after you to say- that my aunt made a mistake in sending you away from courting me. . . It was quite a mistake- aunt’s telling you I had a young man already, I haven’t a sweetheart at all- and I never had one, and I thought that, as times go with women, it was such a pity to send you away thinking that I had several”. (ChIV/28)

Bathsheba’s words constitute an invitation and an encouragement, but what follows justifies the comparison with Sue: “I never said I was going to marry you” (ChIV/29) and Oak’s reply tellingly underlines the irrationality of her behavior: “Well-that is a tale! To run after anybody like this, and then say you don’t want him” (Ibid). She claims that “there is no harm in hurrying to correct false news” (Ibid).

The episode in which Gabriel nearly suffocates in his hut, and the (un)happy happening of Bathsheba to rescue him probably urges him to envisage a legal union with her in the same wise Boldwood is encouraged by the Valentine. She “was beside him [. . .] his head was upon her lap” (Ch III/20). She has just rescued him from suffocation and the

narrator alluding to her as Delilah and Gabriel being Samson. Peter J. Casagrande observes that the paralleling of Gabriel with Samson alludes to the risk of being unmanned which threatens him (1979:55). She behaves with him as a savior, cheering him and consoling him, and talking in a tone that harmonizes “with the dignity of such a deed” (Ch III/21). By this very act and other no less crucial prerogatives, Bathsheba’s impacts on the emotional Gabriel; an influence however which disappears at the moment she leaves Norcomb Hill for Weatherbury.

When Bathsheba re-enters Gabriel’s life, she reappears in the gossip of her men as it has already been noted; her vanity is highlighted one more time and her dignity is this time is annoyed by the heroic act of the shepherd who has actively contributed to extinguish the fire proves to be Farmer Gabriel Oak, whom she has refused to marry before. Having him in her service, Bathsheba treats him disdainfully though he often defends her reputation. It is as though she were the *enfant terrible* whose licentious behavior needs to be watched by the mother hen. In fact, she wants him to report what others think of her attitude:

-‘Did the men think it odd?’ She said again.

-‘Odd was not the idea, miss.’

-‘What did they say?’

-‘That farmer Boldwood’s name and your own were likely to be flung over pulpit together before the year was out.’

-‘well, then, Bathsheba!’ said Oak, stopping the handle, and gazing into her face with astonishment.

-‘Miss Everdene, you mean,’ she said with dignity.

-‘I mean that if Mr Boldwood really spoke of marriage, I bain’t going to tell a story and say he didn’t to please you. I have already tried to please you too much for my own.’

-‘I can say that to them if you wish, Miss Everdene. And I could likewise give an opinion to ‘ee on what you have done.’

-‘I daresay, but I don’t want your opinion.’

It has proved necessary to transcribe part of the conversation—not the only one—between Bathsheba and Gabriel. In fact, she obviously wants allegiance without counseling, and loyalty with distance. Gabriel retains some of his dignity and refuses to answer for her fake liaison with Boldwood who might win her and thus deprive him from the wife he yearns to get.

Boldwood, the “gentleman-farmer at Little Weatherbury” (Ch IX/77) starts to excite Bathsheba’s feminine impulses first when he comes enquiring for Fanny Robin who is his *protégée*, and then more intensively at her first appearance in the corn market where her “feminine” presence attracts every male except “one man who more sense than to waste time upon me” as Bathsheba the woman admits it (Ch XII/97). The scant information she got from Liddy Smallbury, her favourite attendant, romanticises both the man and the instant. On the other hand, Boldwood’s conduct starts to trouble her and she can discern in him something of the kind of “Daniel in her kingdom who persists in kneeling eastward when reason and common sense said that he might just as follow suit with the rest, and afford her the official glance of admiration which cost nothing at all” (Ch XIII/102). Thus, that dignity, indifference and sense soon melts at the reception of a Valentine Bathsheba haphazardly sends to him rather than to Teddy Coggan, one of her men’s children. In fact, the Valentine is less culpable than the motto it contained. “Boldwood had felt the symmetry of his existence to be slowly getting distorted in the direction of an ideal passion” (Ch XIV/104). His gender has started being troubled; he is getting rid of the virile armour which has stereotyped him as “an interesting man” (Ch XII/98) probably because “he is so wrapt up and indifferent, and seemingly so far away from all he sees around him”

as Bathsheba thinks she perceived him (Ibid, sic). Unlike Gabriel, Boldwood does not possess that natural balance which would immunize him.

The confusion is so profound that he admits that his “life is not my own since I have beheld you clearly, Miss Everdene-I come to make you an offer of marriage” (Ch XIX/ 133). It is the second offer in marriage she receives; the first being from farmer Gabriel Oak and the second from farmer Boldwood, and she reacts almost in the same manner altering the form of the words without affecting the content.

-‘I feel, Mr Boldwood, that though I respect you much, I do not feel-what would justify me to-in accepting your offer,’ she stammered;

-‘My life is a burden without you,’ he exclaimed, in a low voice. ‘I want you-I want you to let me say that I love you again and again!’

-‘Mr. Boldwood, it is painful to have to say that I am surprised, so that I don’t know how to answer with propriety and respect-but am only just able to speak out my feeling-I mean my meaning; that I am afraid I can’t marry you, much as I respect you. You are too dignified for me to suit you, sir.’

It must be said that she rejects the offer of marriage of Boldwood exactly as she does with Gabriel, though she shows more respect for the latter given his rank. However, Gabriel proves to be more dignified than Boldwood as he does not let her devastate him. Boldwood gets bogged down in the passion because he lacks spirit, the very spirit which androgyny allows Gabriel. Because for him, “women had been remote phenomena rather than necessary complements” (Ch XVII/123), and thus has gone beyond maleness, Boldwood ignores everything about gender roles and knows almost nothing about the equilibrium androgynous people experience. Like Gabriel, Boldwood had an ephemeral instant of communion with Bathsheba on evening when she invites her men to the shearing-supper. He makes his second offer of marriage and manages to secure a promise to promise to

marry him. And even this sheer promise does not last owing to the intrusion of the man who could verily tame Bathsheba. Henceforth, the old farmer implores the mercy of the woman he madly loves and the man she chooses as the master of her heart. He tries to remove Sergeant Troy, Bathsheba's seducer, by paying him and see that he will not be needy for the rest of his life provided that he does get in his way. Alas, his money is of no use and resignation momentarily seizes him, but the fire consumes him once the news of Troy's death reaches his ears. This time, he is so close to the endeared goal that he murders the intruding Troy who reappears the day she is to declare her acceptance of the third offer in marriage. For Shires, Boldwood represents "a desperate, bullying, and self-consuming masculinity" (1991: 56).

The androgynous Gabriel, on the contrary, controls the situations and indirectly controls Bathsheba till nature clears the way for him. Shires remarks that "unlike Boldwood, Gabriel does not idealize or objectify Bathsheba when she has once rejected him" (1991: 55). His androgyny shows in "his resolving not to be governed by an uncontrollable male desire" (Ibid: 56). He is able to be patient when necessary, and show dignity when his maleness is put on trial as is the case when she dismisses him for criticizing her private conduct, and he leaves immediately. He even gets his revenge after she begs him to come back after her flock gets into trouble. By the end of the story, the two androgynous people characters, i.e. Farmer Gabriel Oak and Bathsheba Everdene, are at last united, and the natural balance is reestablished. In fact, while Boldwood is emasculated by Bathsheba once for all, Gabriel is not because of his being a mixture of genders. In him "Lack of power and manliness are combined without contradiction" argues Shires (Ibid: 57).

Bathsheba and Gabriel are alike in many respects; they both possess masculine and feminine qualities, and are both androgynous. However, while Gabriel's androgyneity is

all-important for Gabriel, it is not that useful for Bathsheba who is either all too feminine or utterly masculine, and rarely balanced in the wise of Gabriel. In fact, Bathsheba “is nearly destroyed by the conflict between her “masculine” desire for independence and her ‘feminine’ desire for love”(Garson,1991. 28).While Gabriel owes his balance to his feminine qualities, Bathsheba suffers from the predominance of her masculine attributes, which rarely come to terms with her femininity.

At first Bathsheba and Gabriel cannot cope with one another successfully, cannot form the couple Gabriel wishes for so much because both of them are androgynous. They are certainly different androgynes, yet androgynes. In fact, most of the time Bathsheba is either too feminine or too masculine. She is sometimes very womanly, sometimes very man-like. When she finally admits her androgyny, she accepts Gabriel’s proposal and both form the required couple.

Marjorie Garson, it has been said, mentions the construction of *FFMC* on the basis of oppositions between characters, but omits to mention the notable opposition between the two main characters of the novel, namely Bathsheba and Gabriel Oak though she does so when she writes that:

Unlike Bathsheba who is nearly destroyed by the conflict between her ‘masculine’ desire for independence and her ‘feminine’ desire for love, Gabriel is all the stronger for possessing both masculine and feminine qualities. Valiant battler though he is against fire and storm, Gabriel, as a shepherd, is also a nurturing figure, a kind of mother to his sheep (see page 112, chap 17) ; indeed we initially see him practicing midwifery under the aegis of Lucina and getting up at night to feed the baby. He is on good terms with the ‘Great mother’, Nature herself, whose reliable signs he alone reads. These female identifications give Gabriel’s character stability and maturity; indeed, it is his solidarity with the Great mother which is the basis of his own inner unity.

(1991: 28-9)

Garson reaches the very topic of my thesis when she asserts that: “More winningly than Oak, who is androgynous in his moral nature, Bathsheba is an erotic androgyne, a figure fusing ‘feminine’ beauty, willfulness and naivety with “masculine” energy, independence

and athleticism (Ibid: 36). Linda M. Shires for her part, ends her analysis of gender in *FFMC* by pointing out that, “in allowing Oak the position of both phallic male and castrated male while awarding Bathsheba the contradictory position of powerful and dependant female, Hardy is not denying power and sexuality to either sex” (1991: 64). In sum, there is androgyny in these two characters who are now male and now female; they are neither totally male nor totally female. While Gabriel is androgynous and well-balanced since the onset, Bathsheba succeeds to cope with her androgyny by the end of the eventful narrative after she is subdued to the process of individuation already mentioned.

1.3. Bathsheba and the Military Man

This section looks into the brief, but tumultuous relationship that has united Bathsheba Everdene to Sergeant Troy. In fact, when Troy enters her life, Bathsheba displays a facet of her personality which is quite different from what has been discovered hitherto. Though she is a very woman at the hands of Sergeant Troy, the latter now sees her as a “mate”, now asks her whether she is a woman or not. Thus, even the man who seemingly underscores her femininity does not fail to see her manly side. In tune with Butler, I wonder whether “there is a region of the “specifically feminine,” one that is both differentiated from the masculine as such and recognizable in its difference by an unmarked and, hence, presumed universality of “women” (1990: 6).

It must be reminded that when the character of Sergeant Troy enters the scene, he is described in harsh words by the lady-farmer. “For any lover of hers [Fanny Robin] might come to the house if he had been a respectable lad” (Ch VIII/72). The lad in question is supposedly behind the unexplained absence of Fanny Robin whom Boldwood and Bathsheba are eager to find. She meets the lad one night during one of her “looking round the homestead” (Ch XXIV/169), and a strange encounter it is. They are hooked to each other; the military man’s spur being entangled in Bathsheba’s dress.

Nancy Armstrong sums up the whole case of the Hardyan hero/ine, Bathsheba to be specific. She posits that Bathsheba ends up marrying Gabriel Oak because he combines “the masculine vigor of the preindustrial Englishman with the emotional receptivity of the feminized economic loser. In marrying [...] Bathsheba settle[s] for a life more ordinary than each had hoped” (2001:107). The ordinary life is that of androgyny which allows balance, psychological health and commonsensical happiness. By the end the vain Bathsheba matures and succeeds in the process of individuation which is also

a conscious integration of all the possibilities inherent in an individual, a coming to selfhood. Part of this individuation process is Jung's recognition of a dual gender potential in people, that is, a "masculine" aspect in females- "animus" in Jung's words-and a "feminine" aspect in males- "anima.

(McCabe, 1989: 5)

Bathsheba manages to reach this stage of self-realization through the integration of both animus and anima. From the narcissistic girl of the scene of the wagon till her marriage with Gabriel, she matures. What is more,

Bathsheba [...] is the only character who changes and matures, [...] develops the same strength that Oak possesses at the outset. . . . grows silent, and learns to bear her sorrow alone. “Her original vigorous pride of youth had sickened” (287), “her exuberance of spirit was pruned down, “and “the severe schooling she had been subjected to had made Bathsheba much more considerate than she had formerly been for the feelings of others . . . “ (294). Only then does she reassess her values, and begin to appreciate Gabriel Oak. She appreciates him because her maturing attitudes gradually come into unison with his own seasoned outlook.

(Squires, 1970: 312)

The fullest possible actualization of the self is androgyny. Through androgyny, Bathsheba manages to become one single, homogeneous being. She has been capable of harmonizing her feminine traits with her masculine ones. “Bathsheba is girlish, womanish, mannish” observes Casagrande whose statement equates androgyny, I argue (Casagrande, 1979:62). For Laura Green, “androgyny [...] is essential to” Bathsheba (1995:5-4).

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed how Bathsheba finds her way to happiness once she resolved to be a “double soul”¹. Thus, Bathsheba is androgynous too, although a different androgyne from Gabriel Oak. Back to Bathsheba’s likeness with Rosalind, both are restless and disguise in men’s apparel to hide their femininity and impose some authority on others. “on the surface, [Bathsheba] is now both male and female” (Kimbrough, 1982: 24) Like Rosalind, Bathsheba “grows into a fuller human self”, and this is one of the recurrent definitions of androgyny (Ibid: 23). Rosalind and Bathsheba have been going through the process of individuation throughout the plot. They start as wise and witty young women, become wise and witty young man, and through their interactions with both men and women, have been able to reach toward a fuller realization of their humanhood, or potential for androgyny.

The Bathsheba of the start, when she displays vanity and narcissism has made room to the owner of her uncle’s farm. She has had to show toughness and masculine attributes to manage the farm and not let people like her bailiff take advantage of her femininity to mismanage and steal. She is also harsh with friendly Gabriel, but soon her vanity comes down through her infatuation and marriage with the frivolous Sergeant Troy. William Boldwood equally reminds her that she has to value her anima, and stop behaving like a man. Both Troy and Boldwood propose her a gender role that is not suitable for her psychological wellness. Gabriel Oak on the contrary, inspires her and naturally allures her to rejoin the condition which is hers, that is androgyny. In fact, Bathsheba Everdene shows that androgyny transcends the duality of gender enforced by culture through Troy and Boldwood. At last, she accepts to let her femininity and masculinity interplay while she has not done so at different episodes of her life. Somehow, Bathsheba has repressed her

androgyny, but the latter overwhelms her mainly because of the extreme manliness of Frank Troy and William Boldwood.

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Conclusion to *FFMC*

All in all, *FFMC*'s main hero is indisputably Gabriel Oak, because he is the winner, and the one whose lot is the comic part not the tragic one of the story. Troy, Boldwood, and even Bathsheba pay for him, and this he owes to his being androgynous. Farmer Gabriel Oak succeeds even when he is seemingly in failure because he manages to combine the self and the other. His personality is balanced and dwells on the two fundamental poles of mankind, i.e. masculinity and femininity.

Bathsheba, for her part, goes through the process of (dis)engendering; unwomanized throughout most of the episodes of the narrative. At the opening of the novel, Gabriel Oak and Bathsheba Everdene are the first characters that come to the encounter of the reader. A tentative seduction by the farmer proved unsuccessful because Gabriel is awkward, not sufficiently mannish, but also because Bathsheba cannot see in him the man that will tame her. She is fierce and independent while the androgynous Gabriel is somewhat less inclined to resort to the stratagems of Troy. Gabriel is balanced, not too much masculine in the wise of the sergeant nor too womanish like Fanny Robin who lets Troy victimize her and destroy her.

Gabriel's gender role is not ambiguous; from the onset, he is able to be both active and passive, independent and sympathetic. Self-sufficient, but not haughty. Bathsheba starts with the stereotypical role of temptress, then shifts to the role of a landowner and patriarch ready to fight her own battles, then reverts to the role of the woman that is seduced by the chivalrous military man. Finally, she is able to bring some sort of equilibrium in her self through the patience of Gabriel Oak who supports her and endures her whims to win her at the end.

Chapter Five

Gender Role Reversal and Transvestism in *The Hand of Ethelberta*, *A Laodicean* and *The Return of the Native*

Introduction

I have decided to include in the following chapter two subtopics that concern three novels. For the two “minor” novels which are *The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876) and *A Laodicean* (1881), and a novel that is by no means minor, *The Return of the Native* (1878). I shall address the question of gender role reversal in all three novels with a special focus on transvestism and transgenderism in *The Return of the Native*. One might object that I devote only one chapter for three novels be them minor like the first two ones.

In fact, *The Hand of Ethelberta* and *A Laodicean* are minor novels for some, lesser novels and marginalized novels for other critics. Along with *Desperate Remedies* (1871), they have been categorized among the ‘Novels of Ingenuity’ by Hardy himself. The 1912 classification resulted in a patent neglect of the lesser novels by critics, hence a lack of substantial material for longer chapters. These novels were categorized by Hardy in the 1912 Wessex edition by MacMillan in what he termed “Novels of Ingenuity”, and this classification influenced later criticism of Hardy’s work, relegating these novels to the category of minor novels²⁹. As a matter of fact, these novels “began to slide towards near-oblivion” (Rimmer, 2009: 268). After they had often been object of reviews and studies before 1912.

These novels “have been consistently undervalued [. . .] The great novels of character and environment have cast them into shadow so that they have remained dustily elusive of serious critical examination”, Richard H. Taylor faultlessly opines (1982:1). In tune with Taylor, Richard Carpenter notes that “[d]espite the inferior nature of some of [Hardy’s] work, a considerable proportion of the novels and short stories is worthy of consideration and even the obvious failures are of interest” (1976:38). Considering the

²⁹ I, too, have chosen to discuss some of the lesser novels because “these marginalized texts provide new and sometimes more blatant manifestations of the interrogation of the Victorian ideology of gender which has been so exhaustively investigated in those texts favoured by the literary critical establishment” (Jane Thomas, 2012:7).

character of Ethelberta Petherwin and Paula Power and their ambition to enjoy a stature traditionally reserved to men, it has proved relevant to discuss androgyny in these two undervalued novels.

One might also think it odd to include Ethelberta Petherwin, Paula Power with Eustacia Vye as regards the tragedy of Eustacia and the rank of the novel in which she is the pivot. My argument is that what unites them is far more important than what separates them. All of them yearn to enjoy the advantages that seemingly are men's alone. Authorship for Ethelberta, ownership for Paula and freedom for Eustacia. Considering the character of Ethelberta, Paula and Eustacia and their ambition to enjoy the status of men, the theory of androgyny as it has been developed in *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf is of great use in approaching the issue of gender reversal in the novels under discussion. In addition, Eustacia Vye is equally approached through the lens of the theory of tragedy.

But before delving deeper in the study of these female protagonists, I wish to start with the legend of Teiresias. Teiresias, the greatest mythical seer, is the earliest epitome of gender reversal in the history. Born a man, Teiresias became a woman by some miracle, and then became a man again after eight years in the realm of womanhood. This experience of androgyny, he paid with his sight as he had the arduous task of telling the awful couple Zeus and Hera about, who of man or woman derived more pleasure from sexual intercourse. Hera punished him by blinding him because he answered that women did. Zeus compensated him by giving him the power of prophecy. The objective of this historical introduction is to forward the theme of this chapter which has to do with reversal in gender role mainly in *The Hand of Ethelberta* and *A Laodicean*. My contention is that Ethelberta Petherwin, the leading female character of *HE*, and Paula Power, her

counterpart in *LA* go through the experience of Teiresias, and oscillate between womanhood and manhood for different purposes.

Ethelberta, Paula, but also Eustacia are not metamorphosed into an opposite sex by some mighty god like Teiresias; they consciously alternate gender roles to fit the needs of the society. Ethelberta is compelled to do so in order to move up in the social rank, and extract her family from poverty. Paula, for her part, performs the same gender roles so as to retain the de Stancy castle which represents somehow Paula's room of one's own. While for Ethelberta and Paula, the story of Teiresias is the most relevant, for Eustacia Vye, there is another compatible story closely linked with apostleship. *The Acts of Thecla* is the story of Thecla, a strong female character who takes on male dress and roles to preach the word of God. The story of a heroine who alters gender in a symbolic and metaphorical manner. In Iconium, though already betrothed and enchained in marriage, the young woman is captivated by a preaching voice coming from the neighbouring house of Onesiphorus. Dealing with "continence and the resurrection", the sermon preached bewitches the young virgin to the great sorrow of her mother, Theocleia, and Thamyras, her betrothed. Indeed, Thecla becomes "dominated by a new desire and a fearful passion" to follow the Apostle and his ideal of chastity (Welch, 1996: 67).

"Dishearted and desperate, Thamyras leads an angry mob that throws the Apostle Paul and throws him into jail for corrupting Thecla and the other wives of the city. The latter reacts firmly and "uses her jewelry and her silver mirror as bribes to escape her home and enter his prison cell" (Ibid). She "claims the rights and privileges of a male apostle, based on the same access to power" (Ibid: 69) Thecla decides to flee, but because she is dressed as a woman, she is assaulted hence her decision to wear men's clothes and gain thus freedom and safety.

In "becoming male," Thecla escapes not only the risks, but also the obligations of traditional womanhood: marriage and childbirth. In doing so,

she achieves freedom from male domination by men. Thecla's autonomy comes as the result of her rejection of sexual intercourse. Celibacy offer women who could afford it, or those who are "widows" and supported by the community, the opportunity to control their own bodies and thus their own place in the world, a fact that has been noted by ancient writers as well as modern ones. By dressing as a man, Thecla publicly declares her freedom from sex and all the social and political consequences it had for women.

(Ibid: 70)

Unlike Ethelberta and Paula, Ethelberta Eustacia Vye does not share Thecla's religious commitment, but shares with her some sort of commitment, ambition, transgender and transvestism.

In 1969, Virginia Prince used the term transgender in *Transvestia*, a magazine for cross-dressers. The acception of transgender for Prince is someone who inhabits the opposite gender without willing to go through a sex reassignment surgery. In fact, transgender is an umbrella term that encapsulates male-to-female (MTF), female-to-male (MTF), transgenderists, genderqueers, androgynes, drag-performers (drag-kings and drag-queens) and cross-dressers (Tauches, 2009: 843-44). All these people are said to instantiate the instability of gender and also the entanglement of sexuality. Biological sex does not correspond to the gender identity transgendered individuals assume. Transgenderism is frequently confused with transvestitism (cross-dressing) though transgenders do not necessarily wear clothes of the other gender/sex (Lerner et al, 2006:181).

Quoting Marjorie Garber and her influential *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (1992), Jane Thomas suggests that *cross-dressing (trans-vestism)* equals with a shift from one world to another. Cross-Dressing and transvestism "also suggests a transitional, liminal space somewhere between the opposite ends of the gender continuum, a space within which the dictates of birth-sex and assigned gender may be, if only temporarily, evaded" (2013/ 122). Citing Garber, Thomas puts an emphasis on the parallel between androgyny and transvestism, and opines that the realm of transvestites is a third space, an intermediate position which "challenges and deconstructs the apparently stable

and harmonious ‘binary symmetry’ of gender, which is itself a ‘fiction of complementarity’” (Ibid). In fact, Garber emphasizes this third as “that which questions binary thinking and introduces crisis” (Garber, 1992:11). In the famous episode of the mumming, Eustacia rightly defies the binary system of gender, and uncovers the instability of gender. In a sense, Eustacia goes through an experience that is frequent in the West. As Charlotte Suthrell puts it,

In Western culture, most transvestites dress in the clothing of not only the opposite sex but also their own, and are therefore in some sense choosing to create a second identity. Perhaps the appeal is not only of *another* identity but of passing through forbidden (and therefore exotic) portals into the world of the opposite. Clothing is the clue and the passport to this because it acts as such a significant marker. To enter into the clothing of the opposite sex is as close as one can become to *being* one of that sex; to participating in activities which would otherwise be proscribed.

(2004: 8)

In the section devoted to Eustacia, I shall deploy the necessary arguments to substantiate the role of transvestism and transgendering in Eustacia’s androgyny. In the first sections concerned with Ethelberta and Paula, androgyny takes the guise of reversal in gender roles.

1. *The Hand of Ethelberta* and The Reversal of Roles

To discuss Ethelberta as a character at all is difficult because she is so divided ... and because the reader experiences her in all three roles no one of which can be identified definitively as 'real'. Ethelberta 'her character' must comprise all of these roles. She is fashioned by circumstances and is constituted by the social roles consequent upon it.

(Widdowson, 1989: 187)

Although it is genuinely difficult to tackle Ethelberta, it is also challenging especially in case of androgyny. The following chapter provides a reading of one of Hardy’s novels of “Ingenuity”, *HE*, to be specific. *HE* is in a way akin to *Jude the Obscure* in that both are closely related to the author’s own life. Ethelberta takes after her creator in being a writer of poetry and fiction as well. Furthermore, both Hardy and Ethelberta rose from the lower-class to the class above. The story of Ethelberta was aimed as a comedy, a paltry “narrative [. . .] produced as an interlude between stories of a more sober design”, as Hardy put it in

his prefatory introduction of the novel. Though lacking the laboriousness found in the novels of character, *HE* contains “consistent and human characters” as Hardy himself put it in this prefatory text.

As it has been underscored earlier, many scholars have drawn attention to the discrepancy in the undervaluation of *HE*. Richard H. Taylor and Jane Thomas reject the label “minor” that has been fixed on the novel along with six other novels, namely, *Desperate Remedies* (1871) *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), *A Laodicean* (1881), *Two on a Tower* (1882) and *The Well-Beloved* (1892-1897). William Mistichelli contends that *The Hand of Ethelberta* “continues to provoke sufficient interest to suggest that its place in the Hardy canon remains yet to be firmly established (1992:88).” The title of this novel is seemingly queer; there is a *double-entendre*.³⁰ What more, this *double entendre* is “relevant to the notion of the engendering of women” (Thomas, 1999: 94). Sarah Davies observes that in this novel “Hardy deliberately attempts to undermine and therefore go beyond the constraints of traditional patriarchal ideology” (1993:123). She highlights “the numerous examples in which the character and role of the traditional female figure is deliberately exposed and parodied” (Ibid). For Davies, *The Hand of Ethelberta* is different from the other Hardy novels in that through this minor novel,

Hardy intentionally sets out to destroy the myth of woman's limited character and sphere of action, as propagated by a substantial amount of nineteenth century fiction, including much of his own work. He constantly draws the reader's attention to the conventional assumptions made in fiction about inherent feminine characteristics and by inverting those very conventions he succeeds in exposing them as fallacious.

(Ibid)

The Hand of Ethelberta is saturated with matters of gender. There is the traditional meaning of hand which is associated with marriage. To request the hand of some woman is to ask her for marriage. Ethelberta is spoiled. She was wooed by the musician Christopher

³⁰ Double-entendre refers to a word or phrase that is open to two interpretations, one of which is usually risqué or indecent.

Julian whom she rejects to Marry Mr. Petherwin who dies earlier than expected. Ethelberta then finds herself or her hand coveted by three men, Ladywell, Neigh and Lord Mountclere whom she marries at the end. The hand here is too worthy and pushes Ethelberta to use her hand to contrive to succeed in her desire to climb socially. Jane Thomas notes that the other interpretation of hand is the one of “five cards which contains the good cards of beauty, intelligence, education and youth but which is compromised by her origins: a card she reserves to play last of all” (1993: 94).

Ethelberta plays a game of Poker in which success is often determined by a player's ability to bluff her opponent into believing that she holds superior cards. The use of the gambling metaphor points to Ethelberta's realisation that successful social emplacement for a woman lies not in accepting the rules of a strict and uncompromising game such as chess, but in recognising the crucial role played by bluff and pretence.

(Thomas, 1999: 94-5)

HE has not enjoyed the same praise as its predecessor *FFMC* because of the abrupt change (Dutta, 1996: 29) in mode. While *FFMC* is steeped in the pastorate genre, and combines comedy and tragedy, *HE* belongs in the satirical genre. It resembles Hardy's unpublished novel *The Poor Man and the lady* in that they both belong in the satiric mode. In addition to *The Poor Man and the Lady*, *HE* takes on two major novels of Hardy; *Jude the Obscure* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* in being eponymous protagonists. In fact, *HE* is the first Hardyan novel entitled by the name of one of the protagonists. Shanta Dutta argues that Hardy's unexpected shift from one genre to another resulted from Hardy's fear of being ghettoised in the “rural love comedies” (Ibid). As a matter of fact, *HE* is urban and set in London and some other smaller towns. The desire to be no longer compared with George Eliot constitutes another reason for Hardy's move in the direction of the satiric genre.

The narrative of *HE* opens on a young Mrs. Petherwin. Ethelberta Petherwin/Chickerel, seemingly, the central female character with whom the narrative unfolds, belongs by adoption to what the author calls “gentle order of society which has no

worldly sorrow except when its jewellery gets stolen” (*HE*:1), that is, the aristocracy or the upper class. The narrator emphasises that the lady in question is brilliant by her brains more than her beauty. The information is valuable and essential to the character of the woman at stake. Ethelberta spends three years in a boarding-school in Bonn. The narrator underlines the fact that Ethelberta is elegant and graceful without being a descendant of aristocracy. She is so distinguished that “even the inanimate objects in the street appeared” to react to her presence (*HE*: 4). Ethelberta happens to come across a scene as she is sauntering; a duel between two birds which arouse her curiosity and compels her to behold the whole fight till she loses her way.

Ethelberta Chickerel experiences the Butlerian concept of “sex and gender as enactments” (Butler, 1990: 57). She performs both gender roles depending on the situational requirements. Coming third among the ten children of butler Chickerel, Ethelberta claims to be the daughter of a deceased bishop of Silchester in order to climb the social ladder and extract her family from poverty. From the onset then, Ethelberta displays characteristics that are stereotypically ascribed to men. In enacting the gender role of a man, she shows self-abnegation, perseverance, and manoeuvring. She begins at the bottom, then marries Mr. Petherwin and rejects Christopher Julian, whom she loves. At the death of Mr. Petherwin, she contrives to become the head of Enckworth Court, the seat of Lord Mountclere, whom she marries despite his being much older than her. “By making Ethelberta both a widow—an unusual situation for a nineteenth-century heroine—and a professional teller of stories [Hardy] gave her possibilities of social freedom beyond those normally accorded to women of the time” observes Millgate (1971:107).

She stood there, as all women stand who have made themselves remarkable by their originality, or devotion to any singular cause, as a person freed of her hampering and inconvenient sex, and, by virtue of her popularity, unfettered from the conventionalities of manner prescribed by custom for household womankind.

(*HE*, 262)

Freed from her inconvenient gender, and unfettered from the conventionalities of manner imposed on women, Ethelberta can enjoy some sort of wholeness afforded by androgyny. In fact, much of the plot of *HE* is founded upon gender role reversal. There is Christopher Julian, the only man Ethelberta truly loved who is however, unmanly and does not act in accordance with his gender and what is expected from a man. On the other hand, there is Ethelberta who is visibly the key protagonist of the novel and the leading figure. Ethelberta is masculinized now and then and adopts a role that is “specifically masculine” (Millgate, 1971: 109).

Far less present and visible than Ethelberta, Christopher Julian performs a gender role unusual for the Victorian readership. He can be paralleled with Angel Clare (*Tess*) or Jude Fawley. His very job bespeaks his character; he is a music teacher “piping that others might dance” (*HE*, 44). Though he is talented, he cannot prosper professionally because of a patent lack of ambition. Ethelberta advises him to combine his skill with ambition if he is to move up, but she knows that he is not ambitious. He is bereft of the characteristics that are stereotypically ascribed to men, traits such as assertiveness and forcefulness. Christopher Julian may be termed androgynous, but there is imbalance in his personality. His anima outweighs his animus. He is also unsuccessful in terms of love. He is assaulted by Ethelberta, he is intimidated and he presents her a hand that is “trembling with unmanageable excess of feeling;” (*HE*: 132) while she offers a cold hand. “Christopher Julian [is] woman-like” contends Sarah Davies (1993:124). In fact, he is brought under control by Ethelberta, and blushes before her as Gabriel does when he tries to woo Bathsheba. However, Julian lacks the heroism of Gabriel. Rather than acting a respectable suitor, he idealizes Ethelberta in the wise of Angel Clare (*Tess*), and loses her. As the narrator puts it, “the beauties ...may be called” (*HE*, 24). He not only idealizes Ethelberta, but equally judges her as “immeasurably stronger ...control” (*HE*. 127).

Ethelberta is obviously the dominant character in *HE*, and for Richard H. Taylor, “Ethelberta is arguably larger than the novel in which she appears, because we are able to see her in the impressive company of Hardy's women and may prefer to wish her into a more serious work” (Taylor, 1982: 74). Indeed,

She is quite different from his other major women characters, neither capricious nor submissive, neither erotic nor neurotic. Instead, she is a woman of strong purpose, masculine command, and a powerful ambition contending with a basically passionate nature: "A talent for demureness under difficulties without the cold-bloodedness which renders such a bearing natural and easy, a face and hand reigning unmoved outside a heart by nature turbulent as a wave, is a constitutional arrangement much to be desired by people in general; yet, had Ethelberta been framed with less of that gift in her, her life might have been more comfortable as an experience, and brighter as an example, though perhaps duller as a story" (*HE* : 121) .

(Carpenter, 1976:54-5)

She is “such a potentially magnificent character [drowned in] such a trivial subject.” (Ibid: 54)). Coming from the lower class, Ethelberta had to adapt her gender so as to be woman-like and man-like depending on the needs of the situation. “*Gender reversal*” Petra Ramet posits “may be understood to be any change, whether “total” or partial, in social behavior, work, clothing, mannerisms, speech, self-designation, or ideology, which brings a person closer to the other (or, in polygender systems, *another*) gender” (1996: 2). Ethelberta adjusts her social behavior and succeeds to be part of the polygender system which allows her to attain the position which is hers. With a large family of so limited resources, with so many brothers and sisters, a disabled mother, and a father who is a mere butler in London, Ethelberta finds herself laden with the task of breadwinner which generally falls to the elder son. She initiates her gender reversal by forcing herself to repudiate her only love, Christopher Julian and marries a certain Mr.Petherwin who dies soon. A disagreement with her parents in law result in her being disinherited.

One is right to expect that she regains Christopher Julian once Mr.Petherwin died, but Ethelberta once again silences her heart and prefers to leave her place to her sister

Picotée. The latter is secretly infatuated with Christopher, and acting like a mother, Ethelberta opts for her sister's happiness at the detriment of her own passion. "In her social climbing she learns to 'repress' the emotional side of her nature and her social triumph at the end represents the triumph of reason over passion" notes Shanta Dutta (1996, 30).

She consults J.S. Mill's treaty on *Utilitarianism* to justify her choice of contriving to get married on practical grounds, not on sentimental ones. Wooed by three other men, namely, Neigh, Ladywell and Lord Mountclere. She opts for the oldest one, but assuredly the richest. She weds Lord Mounclere, and moves to Enckworth Court. She takes control of Mountclere estate, and becomes Lady Mountclere. She also becomes 'my Lord' because she handles the old man with an iron hand,

when he's asked out to dine, or to anything in the way of a jaunt, his eye flies across to hers afore he answers : and if her eye says yes, he says yes : and if her eye says no, he says no. 'Tis a sad condition for one who ruled womanland as he, that a woman should lead him in a string whether he will or no.'

(HE, 388)

She shows a masculine severity with the servants of the household, and her father compellingly believes "she must have had a will of iron" (HE, 92) to overrun all the people and the society that strive to impeach her from attaining her objectives. A companion of Alfred Neigh, one of her suitors notes the "method in which she handles curious subjects, and at the same time impresses us with a full conviction of her modesty, is very adroit, and somewhat blinds us to the fact that no such poems were demanded of her at all" (HE, 92).

In addition to marriage, Ethelberta takes control of another realm that has always been traditionally considered to be man's property. She enters in possession of words and rhymes, and composes her first poem *Metres by E* which gains her a certain status and the admiration of women. In tune with Woolf's androgynous mind, Ethelberta "adopts the enunciative position claiming her right to produce knowledge rather than be produced by it" (Thomas, 1999: 87). Continuing in her role of mother and father, she warns her sister

Picotee against proverbs which are not innocent because they are men's words. "Don't you go believing in sayings, they are all made by men, for their own advantages. Women who use public proverbs as guide through events are those who have not ingenuity enough to make private ones as each event occurs" (*HE*,158).

Knowing the power of words, she painstakingly endeavours to get a lot from them. "By making of her a writer," Patricia Ingham suggests that 'the artist-writer is the vehicle of a metaphor that questions the conventional signification of woman! womanliness/ womanly' (1989: 57). In fact,

Hardy is attempting to degender certain previously gendered roles and characteristics [...]In challenging the convention of the separateness of the feminine and masculine experience, Hardy unavoidably questions the entire categorisation of the female figure in fiction as an emotional, child-like creature who is both physically and intellectually inferior to the male. Throughout the novel, Hardy systematically deconstructs the traditional signification of 'woman'. The traditional literary stereotype of woman as 'idealised inferior' who is destroyed in the novel is replaced by an unknowable, contradictory female figure who refuses to be categorised and thus limited. Ethelberta is ultimately unknowable, she is whoever her observers want her to be: Mrs Petherwin the beautiful young widow, Berta Chickerel the butler's daughter, public story-teller, the beloved of four men, Lady Mountclere.

(Davies, 1993: 126)

Gender reversal is precisely in these various roles Sarah Davies mentions. Unlike, the stereotypical figure of an emotional creature, Ethelberta now and then reverses to the other side of the continuum and enjoys attributes traditionally thought to be man's. The different roles assumed by Ethelberta throughout the narrative exemplify her capacity to reverse gender roles and annihilate the androcentric definition of man and woman on the basis of constructed attributes. Davies remarks that

Ethelberta has no 'real' or identifiable self. She is comprised of multiple constructs of herself, even to herself she seems more than one woman: In looking back upon her past as she retired to rest, Ethelberta could almost doubt herself to be the identical woman with her who had entered on that romantic career a few short years ago.

(Ibid)

Peter Widdowson attunes with Davies and argues that the numerous facets displayed by Ethelberta illustrate “how illusory is the conception of “character”, of the unitary, efficacious human subject, in humanist-realist fiction.” (1989: 196). In portraying Ethelberta as no more than ‘the amalgam of discourses which structure her in the novel’ (Ibid), Hardy draws attention to Ethelberta as a construct and thus he undermines the fictional notion of ‘real’ or ‘round’ characters” (Davies: 126). Millgate, for his part, points out that Ethelberta’s “personality proves finally elusive — perhaps even to Hardy himself, though the deliberate indirection of the final view of her seems not so much an evasion of difficulty as a conscious choice of ambiguity, a decision to rest with the enigma (1971:37).

Hardy tests the boundaries of cultural definition by making social hierarchies interact with and interrogate gender hierarchy. In a musical structure of motif and counter-motif, he builds a number of his plots on shifts in social and economic status that alter the relationship of power in a couple and thus invert relationships of gender: “their sexes were thus reversed,” reflects the narrator, when Christopher Julian shyly if eagerly visits Ethelberta Petherwin after her success as a performer (*HE* 124).

(Higonnet, 2009:124)

Back to her breathless ascension, Ethelberta is not allowed any repose; after losing ground in London, her sister advises her to stage her story-telling in the province, but Ethelberta replies: “A man in my position might perhaps do it with impunity; but I could not without losing ground in other domains . . . when it comes to starrng in the provinces she establishes herself as a woman of a different breed and habit. I wish I were a man!” (*HE* , 178). She knows the profit obtained from being a man, so she enacts the role of man. In her fiction, her heroine symbolically cross-dresses to access freedom. For Butler, “[c]ross-gender identification is “the desire to be”the other sex or the insistence that one is” (2004:93).

This desire to be a man, to arrogate the male privileges, makes Ethelberta herself almost ‘masculine’. 6 The traditional equation of reason with masculinity and emotion with femininity is specially pertinent in Ethelberta’s case as she tries to suppress all emotion and rationally and dispassionately plan her future.

(Dutta, 1996: 31-2)

Dutta supports the issue of gender reversal in *HE* by invoking the scene of the Imperial Association's archaeological expedition to Corvsgate Castle in which Lord Mountclere offers Ethelberta his arm to help her down the grass slope. Though she takes his hand, Ethelberta, cannot hide her power over him and those presents can see that “she stood like a statue and his slips and totterings, some of which taxed her strength heavily, and her ingenuity more, to appear as the supported and not the supporter.” (Ibid: 33).

Beginning as someone who is impelled to support her family, Ethelberta now supports Lord Mountclere. She efficiently achieved both gender roles. Devereux points out that Ethelberta “has to a degree internalized the masculinized structure power of her time” (2003: 37).

Ethelberta does not combine the female and the male in her, but also different roles enacted by women. Jane Thomas precisely posits that Ethelberta Petherwin, is a combination of Cinderella and *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*.³¹ She argues that

Ethelberta exposes the artifice of feminine sexual identity through her own self-conscious story telling. At the same time, she provides a step-by-step guide to the art of professional sexual bargaining, indicating precisely how the 'Fortune Hunter' is a feminine achievement rather than a tendency.
(1999: 86)

Furthermore, through her writing, “Ethelberta's *Metres* by E demonstrates how inherently repressive sexual practices targeted at the construction of sexual identity can be co-opted and turned into a source of resistance.” (Ibid) “The lines present a series of playful defences of the supposed strategy of womankind in fascination, courtship and marriage the whole teeming with ideas bright as mirrors and just as unsubstantial yet forming a brilliant argument to justify the ways of girls to men” (*HE*, 49). Devereux notes that by the end Ethelberta manages to have enough time and means to compose “that most patriarchal of works: an epic poem.” (2003: 40). For Jane Thomas, “Ethelberta's aim is to effect a compromise between the confines of the patriarchal social formation and the demands of

³¹ A ballad by Keats.

her resistant subjectivity. This is achieved through 'contrivance' at which, we are informed, she is 'a rare hand' (*HE*, 226)" (1999:88)

For Richard Taylor, she "is the most worldly, ruthless and ambitious of all Hardy's heroines...the first of the moderns. What she manages to do is suppress emotion and healthy sexuality in pursuit of a much less wholesome ideal, the acquisition of social rank and status and wealth " (Taylor, 1982: 64). She knows to be practical and utilitarian when her goals are at stake and Taylor rightly fleshs out the situation and opines that

To an unusual extent in Hardy's novels, Ethelberta is in control of her life. She determines her course and runs it; Chance has no significant part to play and her only impediments are mundane and social. But Ethelberta's freedom contains greater responsibility for her own behaviour, and her ruthlessness suggests the sort of positive action that Hardy's women may be capable of when they are given their head.

(Ibid: 66)

Released between two major novels, namely, *FFMC* and *RN*, *HE* differs in its setting which is urban and is mainly set in cities; London, Rouen and Paris. It also proposes another instance of Hardy's velleity of androgyny through the reversal of gender roles.

2. A Laodicean and Empowerment

A Laodicean³² is exceptional among Hardy's novels because of the conditions in which it was composed. The book came out in a kind of forceps delivery as Hardy was seriously ill during the composition of the novel; so ill that he deliberately inserted many of his own life in the book lest the illness would be his last, as he confessed it to William Lyon Phelps (Millgate, 1971: 165). In fact, the author fell ill at the middle of the project, "lost control of the story in Book Four and Five" (Taylor, 1982:98), and had to rely on his

³² Thomas Hardy originally intended to entitle his novel '*The Castle of the de Stancys: A Story of To-day*' which rightly underscore the importance of the castle which is give the major role as the heath was done so in *The Return of the Native* .

wife Emma as his amanuensis. In effect, Emma was so intimately involved in the creation of *LA* that Hardy was probably inhibited by her presence and this has seemingly effected and affected the whole novel. “[T]he novel’s execution does not entirely meet the demand of its theme” (Ibid: 110) remarks Richard H. Taylor who also rightly singles *LA* because

it dramatises some of Hardy's most personal preoccupations: class, heredity, modern practicality and the ambiguous qualities of medievalism. Beneath melodramatic trappings which at times thwart the novel's serious purpose there is an original and often subtle insight into the problems of conflicting ideologies.

(Ibid: 102-3)

In her enactment of gender, Paula Power³³ troubles and destabilizes her suitors Captain de Stancy and Somerset, and the reader as well. Thus the second section of this chapter explores the issue of androgyny in *A Laodicean* (1881) through the various gender roles Paula Power experiences.

Unlike *HE*, *LA* belongs to the sensational type which contains “plotting villains, and heroines whose marriages are the focal point of the plots” (Rimmer, 2009: 269). The major protagonist is a woman, Paula Power, the daughter of a railway tycoon, is a very modern young woman, a “New Woman” for (Harvey, 2003:105). Like Gabriel Oak, discussed earlier, naming is tellingly suggesting in the case of Paula Power. One might see that her forename, Power is representative of one facet of her character which is the male facet precisely which make her an androgynous person.

Paula is a somewhat alienated woman. Divorced from the sustaining life of the community by her status as an orphan, her wealth and her castle, she has to create her own values. Her Laodiceanism, her lukewarmness, is essentially a modern condition, part of the restlessness that leads her to renovate the castle and to travel abroad.

(Ibid)

As a matter of fact, the de Stancy castle embodies somehow Paula’s gender trouble as well.

³³ Paula is also paralleled with De Stancy Castle which plays an important role in the narrative as it symbolizes the ambiguity of the past and the present and Paula’s gender ambiguity.

Jane Thomas, for her part, points out that “Paula is implicated in the evolution of a new and resistant female subject position - a style of existence resistant to dominant modes of femininity.” (Thomas, 1999: 104) Thus, through the character of Paula Power, Hardy looks like suggesting the third gender and/or androgyny as a palliative for the harsh treatment reserved for women as well as men. Taylor points out that “Paula is the touchstone of sensibility and uncertainty” (Taylor, 1982:103)

In her unpublished PhD thesis entitled “Only the Rames of a Man”: investigating Masculinities in Thomas Hardy (2017), Tracy Hayes highlights “fluid nature of gender and its constructions within Victorian cultural discourse,” and “his [Hardy] interrogation of the cultural norms of his society is evident in his deployment of an androgyne as the alpha-male chief protagonist in both *Desperate Remedies* and *A Laodicean*” (Hayes, 2017: 112-113). She argues that “the androgyne, as represented by Manston and Dare, is an articulation of a masculinity comprising an inchoate sexual ideology at odds with contemporary Victorian society's normative gender constructions” (Ibid). Tracy Hayes discerns the androgyny in the character of William Dare, Captain De Stancy’s (illegitimate) son. However, Dare is not the sole Laodicean of the novel, but also Paula Power. Paula’s lukewarmness is androgyny which rescues her from engaging in any given set of ideas and allows her bypass the normative social roles.³⁴ Jane Thomas puts the idea clearly,

A Laodicean, however, as its title can be seen to suggest, confronts the issue of resistance to specification by concentrating on the state of uncertainty experienced by an intelligent and independent woman in the face of coercive social and sexual pressures to conform to an identity which fails to satisfy or adequately articulate her desires.
(1999: 97)

³⁴ G.Harvey, p .106

Thomas Hardy has one of the characters, the architect Havill, highlight Paula's idiosyncrasy when he tells Dare precisely that Paula Power

holds advanced view on social and other matters; and in those on the higher education of women, she is very strong, taking a good deal about the physical training of the Greeks, whom she adores, or did. Every philosopher and man of science who ventilates his theories in the monthly reviews has a devout listener in her; and this subject of physical development of her sex has had its turn with other things in her mind.

(LA: 194)

She had a gymnasium installed "to exercise and train her body is an attempt to define herself against prevailing standards of femininity in line with late nineteenth-century progressive feminism" (Thomas, 1999:106). She displays energy, forcefulness and placidity.

Paula Power rejects her father's (the clerical patriarch) dying request that she publicly admit her faith, and is assimilated by the minister Parson Woodwell to the Christians of Laodicea who had lukewarm faith. Paula refuses to conform to the traditional gender role imposed by the Victorian androcentric society; she wants to be female when required and male when it is necessary. Responding her uncle's desire to see her espouse De Stancy, Paula cites Mathew Arnold's view on Goethe,

It is diplomatically, as I may say, such a highly correct thing—such an expedient thing—such an obvious thing to all eyes.' 'Not altogether to mine uncle,' she returned . . . 'I don't care one atom for artistic completeness and a splendid whole; and do care very much to do what my fancy inclines me to do.'

(LA: 360)

Do what her fancy inclines her to do cannot cope with the traditional gender role imposed on women of the Victorian era. Jane Thomas points out that

Paula's 'laodiceanism' is a form of cynical subjectivity. Her constant self-appraisal is akin to an actor's assessment of his or her performance on stage. Paula recognises that in order to be integrated within the play of social processes she must choose a part wife to Somerset or de Stancy - which is incommensurate with her own desires. Her reluctance stems in part from the constrictive nature of that role - the fact that its successful undertaking requires her to subsume her desires beneath the illusion of a stable and

integrated mask and that in so doing she risks being wholly identified with that mask which will henceforth represent her to others.

(1999: 99)

Performance, play, role and desires are all crucial words in Butler's theorisation in that she aligns gender identity with the Hegelian concept of desire,

If part of what desire wants is to gain recognition, then gender, insofar as it is animated by desire, will want recognition as well. But if the schemes of recognition that are available to us are those that "undo" the person by conferring recognition, or "undo" the person by withholding recognition, then recognition becomes a site of power by which the human is differentially produced.

(2004: 2)

Paula Power yearns to be recognized as the owner of the castle and runs the risk of being "undone" by both suitors. Pondering her relationship with Charlotte De Stancy, Michael Millgate precisely wonders whether "it seems too much to suggest that Hardy saw Paula as a sexual Laodicean, occupying an equivocal mid-way position between male and female" (1971: 172). Captain de Stancy calls her 'Miss Steam-Power' probably because of her sudden becoming an important shareholder in the railways, but also due to her 'masculine' forcefulness and her ability to cope with difficulties. This mid-way position or intermediate position between male and female is androgyny which implies for Paula an

inability to make up her mind about fundamental issues that confront her. Her constant vacillations- between nonconformist faith and humanist scepticism, between incorporating or abjuring neo-Greek modifications in Stancy Castle, between Somerset and de Stancy, between emotional reticence and commitment, between past and present- make her attractively ambiguous.

(Taylor, 1982: 119)

Michael Millgate ends his article about *LA* by underlining the parallel between different Hardy novels. Knight from *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, Manston and the two Cythereas in *Desperate Remedies*, and *LA*. "He [Hardy] is not so much blundering in the pre-Freudian darkness as exploring, tentatively and with instinctive sensitivity, some of those eras of sexuality which lay beyond the stereotypes of Victorian fiction (1971:173). Those areas of sexuality which refuse to be confined in the Victorian sexual politics are neither male nor

female, but a third gender which has become known as or Jane Thomas, “Paula, by virtue of her gender, occupies a position between the pioneer and the conformist” (1999: 104).

In tune with Butler’s theory of subject in progress, Taylor argues that “[Paula’s] own sexuality is unconventional and she too undergoes a maturing process [. . .] there is no fixity in her personality; her emotions as well as her intellect are in a state of flux”(1982, :117). She shares Gabriel’s stoicism, and Sue’s unconcern with sexual matters. For Jane Thomas, *LA* makes room to “the idea of subjectivity and its construction and articulation through language” (1999:96). Indeed, Thomas is in tune with Foucault and Butler in underscoring the importance of discourse and “how reality and truth are discursively produced and, by their very nature, artful, provisional and therefore open to change” (Ibid).

Paula Power is a precursor of Sue Bridehead in the sense that both belong in what has come to be known as the “New Woman”. “In making Paula Power wealthy, educated, propertied, modern and therefore independent Hardy isolates gender as a vital factor in the construction and projection of the self” (Ibid: 96). He blurs the gender of Paula or sets her in the intermediate position of someone who is neither female nor male, but both. Paula Power, “though [. . .] culturally constructed, or ‘enmired’ [. . .] is nevertheless vested with an agency, usually figured as the capacity for reflexive meditation, that remains intact regardless of cultural embeddedness” (Butler, 1990: 141).

Here again, Shakespeare’s shadow lurks behind Paula’s performance in Book 3 Chapter 8 where there I a play, *Love’s Labour’s Lost* in which Paula playacts the Princess of France, but also *Winter’s Tale* through Paula being almost statuefied by de Stancy’s performance and the hint to the transformation of Hermione into Leontes in *Winter’s Tale*. Thomas Jane underscores Hardy’s resort to Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labour’s Lost* for its being “one of Shakespeare’s most contrived and artful comedies, which explores the nature of illusion, mask and role through the device of a play within a play” (Thomas, 1999:100).

By the end of the narrative, Paula adopts once again the role of the suitor and follows Somerset to Europe.

3. Cross-Dressing and Cross-Gender in *The Return of the Native*

Eustacia Vye does not fall within the category of Female to male transgenders (FTM); she experiences transgenderism through an episode of transvestism. The episode of mumming in which she disguises as a Turkish knight. Boumelha points out that Eustacia “is doubly disguised in her mumming costume, she experiences the interdependence of her sexuality and her identity:” (Boumelha, 1981:74). and exemplifies with the passage wherein the narrator draws attention to “[t]he power of her face all lost, the charm of her emotions all disguised, the fascinations of her coquetry denied existence, nothing but a voice left to her: she had a sense of the doom of Echo” (RN, 169). Leonard W. Deen deems this mumming scene an instantiation of Eustacia’s gender trouble and her gender instability; he argues,

[A]s Hardy is careful to emphasize, in becoming a mummer Eustacia “changes sex,” and the whole episode is an adventure on the outer limits of respectability. What is suggested elsewhere in the novel is clearly revealed here. Eustacia in the mumming assumes the heroic masculine role to which she is always aspiring. She wants to alter her essential human condition, to change her sex. A dissatisfaction so thoroughgoing amounts to a denial of life itself.

(1960: 211)

Along with Bathsheba Everdene, Sue Bridehead, and Tess of the D’Urbervilles, Eustacia Vye accounts among the most memorable female characters in English fiction. Criticism dealing with matters of gender cannot fail to include them. Actually, discussing gender in Hardy’s fiction must not fail to devote a chapter to Eustacia Vye, the mysterious female character of RN.

RN is Hardy’s fifth published novel. It is, in Kramer’s words “Hardy’s most imitative, most self-conscious, and generally least successful effort at high tragedy” (Kramer, 1975: 48). It appeared first as monthly installments between January and

December of the year 1878 in the sensationalist periodical, *Belgravia*. The later was regarded as a lowbrow magazine unlike Leslie Stephen's *Cornhill* that was categorized as highbrow. Leslie Stephen precisely, who contributed to the fame of Hardy by editing *FFMC* refused to publish the first chapters of novel fearing the turner of the relations between Eustacia Wildeva and Thomasin. Hardy solicited *Blackwood's Magazine* and afterwards *Temple Bar*, but both rejected *The Return of the Native*. The novel was bowdlerized when serialized, but the removed elements were restored when it was published in its novel form.

The third section of the chapter addresses Eustacia's troubled gender that is best substantiated in her cross-gender through cross dressing in Hardy's first attempt in tragedy. Like Henchard, Eustacia's tragedy is one of gender too. Eustacia, it is true, does not negate her masculine self like Henchard does with his feminine self, but she is flawed because she is not entirely satisfied with her own gender, and yearns to be both.

It is the story of a mysterious woman whose fate was to travel, in Dixie Lee Larson's words

back and forth between the traditional image of a vulnerable woman who drowns herself in despair and shame and the image of a strong, sexually-aware woman who, discontented with the cultural and moral *status quo* of her time, seeks death as a way out of social and sexual limitations.

(Qtd in Dutta, 1996:63)

Likewise, Ethelberta Petherwin and Paula Power, Eustacia Vye is visibly imprisoned in traditional gender orientation. Eustacia is different from the two other protagonists in that her plight is tragic and her ends also.

Queen of Night

The tragic fate of Eustacia Vye has been highlighted by many critics. Discussing the tragic fate of Michael Henchard in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Simon Gatrell includes a whole passage above from *RN* to underline the relationship between both novels.

“[B]eing a man, Henchard has the freedom and the opportunity, as he certainly has the desire, to attain power, to achieve a certain amount of control over a small section of earth and mankind” (2010 :43). Power, however is what lacks Eustacia; “it is in part frustration at her lack of power in any area of life save the sexual, at her lack even of the possibility of ever obtaining such power, which drives Eustacia to the actions that lead ultimately to her death” (Ibid).

Eustacia Vye was the raw material of a divinity. On Olympus she would have done well with a little preparation. She had the passions and instincts which make a model goddess, that is, those which make not quite a model woman. Had it been possible for the earth and mankind to be entirely in her grasp for a while, had she handled the distaff, the spindle, and the shears at her own free will, few in the world would have noticed the change of government. There would have been the same inequality of lot, the same heaping up of favours here, of contumely there, the same generosity before justice, the same perpetual dilemmas, the same captious alternation of caresses and blows as we endure now.

(Book II/ 63)

In fact, despite the title—probably in the manner of *Jude the Obscure*—it is the female protagonist, namely Eustacia, who stands as the leading character of the novel. She is the pivotal figure who affects all the other characters (in)directly either through her relationship with Clym Yeobright who is the native returning from Paris. For Deen, Eustacia is different from the other characters of the novel,

Eustacia Vye, more than any other of Hardy's protagonists, seems intended to be grandly heroic, to exist on a higher level of significance than the other characters in the novel. She is alone, rebellious, even powerful-and so little explicable that she can be taken for a witch by the superstitious.

(1960: 207)

“When the whole Edgon concourse had left the site of the bonfire to its accustomed loneliness, a closely wrapped female figure approaches the barrow from that quarter of the heath. . . (VI.) So goes the opening of Chapter VI of Book First which sees the entrance of Eustacia Vye “[p]robably the most fully developed romantic hero in Hardy ... a living embodiment of passion” (Spivey, 1954: 187). “All that could be learnt of her just now” is that “she was tall and straight in build, that she was ladylike in her movement” (RN, VI).

She appears standing on a ruin on the top of the highest hill in Edgon Heath, Rainbarrow.

There she stood

motionless as the hill beneath. Above the plain rose the hill, above the hill rose the barrow, and above the barrow rose the figure. Above the figure was nothing that could be mapped elsewhere than on a celestial globe. . . . The scene was strangely homogeneous, in that the vale, the upland, the barrow, and the figure above it amounted only to unity. Looking at this or that member of the group was not observing a complete thing, but a fraction of the thing.

(*RN*, II: 4-5)

She is a nineteen-year young woman with romantic dreams of heroic love, and "to be loved to madness," (*RN*, 79) is her major ambition. She marries Clym Yeobright, the native who returns from Paris. He brings the illusion that he can fulfill Eustacia's dreams, and help her to escape her remote and isolated life on Egdon Heath. Actually, she falls in love with him before she sees him. Previously, she had a dream which she does not doubt to be ill-omened. She soon comes against disenchantment and conflicts with her mother-in-law. She quarrels violently with with her husband, and this leads her to opt for attempt a desperate flight with Damon Wildeve, her former lover. Both drown; Eustacia has likely committed suicide though there are no hints as to whether she has deliberately put an end to her life or has died by accident, and Damon dies while trying to rescue her. Trapped between the unbearable idea of staying in Edgon Heath and living with someone she despises, Eustacia chooses to end her life. Yet, the reasons are quite obscure.

As a matter of fact, obscurity surrounds her alive and dead; readers are troubled by the obscure reason of her presence on that spot at that moment of the night. This is not the only shade that surrounds the leading character of the following chapter which aims to highlight Eustacia's troubled gender. There are many "wild regions of obscurity"³⁵in *RN* especially as regards Eustacia Vye. To begin with, there the episode of characterization;

³⁵ Penny, Boumelha's Title for her chapter below

Eustacia's characterization underwent significant modification [. . .] she had emerged from Hardy's pen in the first flush of writing a spirited "bad girl" of some considerable power prone to fits of temperament, mood swings, and witching-hour passions. she is considerably more nonconforming than her predecessor [. . .]Bathsheba may protest the patriarchal world she finds herself struggling in, but Eustacia goes further and rebels against practically every social convention imaginable, especially prescriptions of feminine behavior and the conventions of marriage.

(Morgan, 2007:62)

In effect, "Eustacia is a figure whose desires are greater than her environment can encompass" (Boumelha, 2009: 254). She dreams of some cavalier who would uproot her from Edgon Heath which seems to imprison her though she is more often than not confused with it. Indeed, "Eustacia is as frequently identified with the heath through imagery," observes Dale Kramer (1975:54). Boumelha also remarks that, "Egdon Heath³⁶ has multiple functions in the novel: part backdrop, part protagonist, part metaphor" (2009: 265). "An impulse to live the spot, a desire to stay, struggled within [Eustacia]. (RN. 332) There is an "internal tension between stasis and energy" (Kramer: 1975:50). More importantly, within her rage a ferocious contest between two contrasexual opposites, anima and animus. For the author, she is Artemis, Athena, Hera³⁷, but also Alcinous, De Vere, William the Conqueror, Saul, and Napoleon. Goddesses and legendary personages all of who embody the allegedly contrasting principles which are hers. She has the stature of a tragic heroine; Kramer parallels her with Antigone (Ibid: 49). She is opposed to Thomasin, the other woman in that while the latter is submissive, Eustacia is imperious, fervent not docile, angry not amiable, outspoken not demure as Thomasin (Morgan, 2007:65).

Eustacia is hubristic in that she has a strong ego, despises Edgon Heath and yearns to leave.

The egoistic nature of Eustacia's existence, made evident by her disdain for a Wildeva rejected by Thomasin and by her wish to live an active social life in a resort town, is especially manifested by her attitude toward the heath. Although willing to grant that it has beauty, she is quite unable to accept its visual attractiveness as ameliorating its unpleasantness (p. 220). More

³⁶ Like de Stancy castle in La, Edgon Heath exemplifies Hardy's personification of the setting.

³⁷ In Greek, Hera is the feminine of Hero. Alcinous' name literally means mighty mind.

tellingly, Eustacia sees the heath as directly opposed to her as an individual (p. 405). The heath, as the immediate object of Eustacia's paranoid hatred, becomes an image for Destiny, God, the colossal Prince of the World that she constantly blames for her unhappiness, which is clear from her final outcry.

(Ibid: 51)

Whimsical, powerful, proud, throughout the story one faces a mysterious young woman who is physically and socially, alien to the Egdon community. She estranges her own self from the place and its inhabitants.

Her physical isolation from the community is reinforced by a mutual awareness of her difference. She regards the local girls with something like contempt. Her alienness, in turn, is perceived by the Egdon inhabitants as a threat, which Susan Nunsuch attempts to exorcize by the long-standing methods of protection against witches.

(Ibid: 70-71)

The famous scene of mumming wherein she performs the role of a Turkish knight has been the focus of much criticism. Deen notes that Eustacia has two objectives in becoming a mummer. On the one hand, the disguise, she hopes, will lead her concretise her dream and encounter Clym, the putative knight of her dream, who would extract her from Edgon Heath, and transpose her in the glamorous world of Paris. On the other hand—the most interestingly, she indulges in mumming to cross-gender.

Change sex or merely transgender, but not through a surgical operation in which she has her sexual organs removed and replaced by those of the opposite sex. Eustacia transgenders to escape from the horizonless life she leads in Edgon Heath. Eustacia is eager to endorse the masculine role to attain the goals that her traditional gender role and identity are not able to concretise for her.

Changed in sex, brilliant in colours, and armed from top to toe" (p. 128) when posing as the Turkish Knight, Eustacia crosses the limits of gender which, in a society dependent on surveillance, must be maintained by such external markers as clothing. Although she usurps the phallic armaments of male power—"sword and staff (p. 26).

(Malton, 2000:151)

Jane Thomas regards the knight with whom Eustacia fancies herself in love “as a self-projection; a masculinised image of herself which enjoys the freedom, glamour and material comforts that she is denied” (2013: 124). Thus, the scene of the mumming becomes a palimpsest. “The play literally dramatises the performativity of gender and women’s double alienation from desire in the power play that is the patriarchal system within which Eustacia has her being” (Ibid). In fact, like with the Elisabethan drama where roles of women were taken by men, mumming excluded women and their part was performed by young men when it is not entirely omitted.

Eustacia’s cross-dressed performance is a reproduction of an ossified role that only marginally challenges the stability of meaning of the original. On the surface, the mumming play appears immune to even the minor mutations that are implicit in all iterative practices in that mummers perform their parts ‘unweetingly’ (120). In arrogating to herself the knight’s role, Eustacia fuses masculine and feminine into one parodic body whose agency is severely compromised by the limited recognition which attends it.

(Ibid : 124-25)

Deen parallels *RN* to *Jude the Obscure*, which will be discussed later in the last chapters, in that both the couple Clym/Eustacia and Jude/Sue embody the dichotomy flesh/spirit. Clym/Jude being the flesh and Eustacia/ Sue the spirit. It has been signaled hither and thither that Eustacia is intellectual. Besides, “Eustacia has many of the masculine qualities-energy, aggressiveness, ambition, and Promethean rebellion -which [Clym] lacks. If Eustacia is too fervid, Clym is too idealistic for life on earth” (1960: 214). Eustacia Vye belongs in the category of women Virginia Woolf refers to in *A Room Of one’s Own* in that she, too, aspires for ownership. She yearns to be the author of her own destiny, and write her own script.

Eustacia Vye’s tragedy is one of gender. Breathlessly swaying between the poles of the gender continuum, she is overwhelmed by her inability to fit any of the heteronormative roles the local community allots her. “Hardy’s first attempt at a tragedy should revolve upon sexual disharmony” remarks Boumelha (2009: 83). The tragic end of

Eustacia links this chapter to Part Three and aligns *RN* with *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *Jude the Obscure* in that these novels end tragically because their tragic heroes and heroines meet their nemesis. Jude, Henchard and Eustacia die tragically leaving behind them a world that cannot understand their gender identity.

Conclusion

This chapter has approached the issue of androgyny as it manifests itself in the character of three Hardy female protagonists. Androgyny shows itself in Ethelberta Petherwin, Paula Power and Eustacia Vye in another guise. Indeed, for the two first, we have seen that it takes the form of gender role reversal. Ethelberta, in particular, has to behave in a man-like manner while she has to endorse her emotions, her weaknesses and so forth. Paula Power is the site of an inner struggle between Paula and Power, and the struggle is also embodied by the two suitors who wish to gain her interest.

Ethelberta manages to access the world of letters, and fuses her feminine skills with her masculine ones to compose poetry and feed her family from writing. Eustacia Vye experienced manhood through a play wherein she goes through the feelings of a knight, and so gets her lot of masculinity and power. Ethelberta managed to have what Woolf considered as the best mind, that is an androgynous mind in which the masculine and feminine skills are fused to give birth to her metres E, and her status as the head of Enckworth Court and lady Mountclere. Paula Power also attains her objective which is the possession of de Stancy castle and thus be in possession of the past and the present. These two androgynous women owe their success to the balanced personality that is theirs. A personality in which the Jungian couple *animus/ anima* cohabite in serenity and peace. Eustacia is alienated and alienates herself from the community and the place where she lives. The mumming scene offers her a transient freedom and a particular experience of the sensations of masculinity which she cannot assume without the knight's uniform. Unable to fit, she ends tragically and dies drowned with the man who tries to rescue her from Edgemoor Heath and herself.

Ethelberta, Paula and Eustacia, it is true, do not share the same destiny and cannot be said to (un)do gender similarly. While the two female protagonists of the two minor

novels elevate the novels in question to the stature of major novels, Eustacia heightens *The Return of the Native* by her mere presence in the narrative, and it is known that the addition of a happy end to the novel was among the requirements and anomalies of the Victorian readership.

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Part Three

All is (not) Androgynous That Ends (Un)Well

Introduction

As it has been mentioned in the last section of the previous chapter, the following chapters share with *The Return of the Native* the fact of being tragedies. *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *Jude the Obscure*, that is to say, the novels to be discussed in Part Three are tragedies and will be approached by the use of the theory of tragedy, namely, Aristotle's *Poetics*.

While the first part the androgynous individuals who are Gabriel Oak, Bathsheba Everdene, Ethelberta and Paula have a happy end because they manage to cope with the 'antipodal' principles that are in them, they assume both their femininity and masculinity, in this part, we shall discover androgynous characters such Jude, Sue who end badly because they are androgynous. Henchard for his part ends tragically because he rejects his feminine self. Androgyny can thus constitute a gender trouble. It is a sexual tragedy for both Jude and Sue because society rejects the way they (un)do gender. Their compagnonage, Sue's conduct with Phillotson, her legal husband, and Jude's endurance of Sue's whimsical behavior.

Even Phillotson adheres to this sexual politics which defies the Victorian paradigm, and heralds the advent of new men/women who do not care whether their gender role complies with the prescriptive ones, whether it is heteronormative or not.

In this initial part then, it is question of the burden of androgyny which, it is my working hypothesis for this part of my thesis, is the tragedy and the trouble in which the likes of Jude, Sue and Phillotson are imprisoned by the Victorians for whom the prude Victorian sexual politics ostracizes both men and women. Indeed, Jude and Sue, in particular do not comply with the self-supporting, monogamous, paternalistic, heterosexual household which were the norms then.

Chapter Six

The Mayor of Casterbridge: The Retributive Man³⁸ and the Return of the Repressed Female Self

³⁸ The Retributive Man is a concept linked to the categorization of men into two classes; the public and the repressed ones. The Retributive Man belongs in the public sphere which aims to reestablish the traditional masculinity based on a 'tough and independent authority' in contrast with the New Man who belongs to the repressed category which attempts to express emotions and feelings. Henchard is the retributive man while Jude is the New Man (See Rowena Chapman and John Rutherford (eds.), *Male Order: Unwrapping Masculinity*. (1988) London: Lawrence & Wishart)

Introduction

MICHAEL HENCHARD'S WILL

“That Elizabeth-Jane Farfrae be not told of my death, or made to grieve on account of me.
“& that I be not bury’d in consecrated ground.
“& that no sexton be asked to toll the bell.
“& that nobody is wished to see my dead body.
“& that no murners walk behind me at my funeral.
“& that no flours be planted on my grave.
“& that no man remember me.
“To this I put my name.

(Ch XLV/386)

I chose to start this chapter about Michael Henchard by the denouement of “a general drama of pain” (Ch XLV/386). The drama is that of Michael Henchard who has never been so clear-sighted as in the last instant of his life. He wishes that “no man remember[s]” him, but it is quite hard to forget Michael Henchard.

I believe that Elaine Showalter’s “The Unmanning of *The Mayor of Casterbridge*” (1979) is the very first analysis of gender roles in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. The split between the masculine and feminine selves in Michael Henchard constitutes the very tragedy of Henchard according to Showalter. She argues that the character of Henchard typifies the idea of gender as a social construct (1979: 102). Hardy denounces through *MC* the Victorian conception of masculinity that was synonymous of a dichotomization of the human beings into two categories, male and/or female.

A discussion of gender in Hardy cannot omit Michael Henchard the chief character. Along with *JO*, *MC* is the novel whose title bespeaks the topic treated. In fact, these titles “tell us something in advance about how to read” (Mullan, 2006:16) Furthermore, the title tells “us who the novel is about” (Ibid: 17) and it is about Michael Henchard. The book tells us that the novel at stake is about one character in particular, and a man of character. Henchard is all the more interesting to examine because he is probably the most

Shakespearean of Hardy's characters. Furthermore, "Henchard is certainly the best articulated and most consistent of Hardy's male personages", as Harold Bloom has judiciously underscored it (2010: 3).

Borrowing Freud's metaphor of the return of the repressed, and embedded in Aristotle's theorizing, this chapter addresses the issue of gender in Thomas Hardy's tragic novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, and the tragic predicament of the main protagonist, Michael Henchard, to be specific. The issue at stake is the absence of androgyny in Henchard. He is a Retributive Man who goes through the process of the return of the repressed female self. In sum, Michael Henchard or the retributive man belongs to the category of men who are deemed public, and are part of the public sphere and he yearns to reinstate the ancient masculinity which relies on toughness and authority. Through the sale of his wife and daughter, and all his subsequent deeds, Henchard champions the masculine ideal to the detriment of his anima which returns in the guise of Donald Farfrae, and the firmity woman. In other words, Henchard's repression of his feminine self constitutes both his *hubris* and *hamartia* which lead to his *nemesis* and downfall which is mainly caused by the aforementioned Farfrae and the firmity woman. There is tragedy and it is the tragedy of one man, Michael Henchard, to be specific, who is the core of the narrative.

For Harold Bloom, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is "the least flawed and clearly the closest to tragic convention in Western literary tradition" (Ibid: 3). The illustration of the book is Robert Barnes' and they has "proved crucial to the reception of the novel by the Victorian readers and even somewhat reorientated Hardy's own conception of his text mainly as regards the characterization of the female characters" (Dalziel, 2002:64). Thomas Hardy's second tragic novel is also the tragedy of a certain conception of gender based on the exclusion of the other half which is femininity in the case at stake. Michael Henchard, a "man of character" begins at the bottom, reaches the top, and becomes the

most important man of his community as its mayor, and then returns to the lowest point of human condition and wishes to be erased from the very memory of his fellows. A representative of the old order, the dying old system, Michael Henchard is paralleled with Oedipus, Julius Ceasar, King Lear and Othello. Henchard's impressiveness was underscored as early as June 1886 in the *Spectator's* review wherein the reviewer, R.H. Hutton remarks the "grandeur of conception about this shrewd, proud, illiterate, primitive nature, which, so far as we remember, surpasses anything even Mr. Hardy has yet painted for us in that strong and nervous school of delineation in which he excels so much" (Qtd in Cox, 1979: 147). Virginia Woolf compellingly deems *The Mayor of Casterbridge* "among the glories of English fiction" (2003: 146). Furthermore, she remarks that "If we are to place Hardy among his fellows, we must call him the greatest tragic writer among English novelist" (Ibid: 145).

Indeed, Michael Henchard stands as an unforgettable Hardyan tragic hero and the novel as "the best plotted and the most dramatic of [Hardy's] works" (Widdowson, 1989:80). Indeed, as Dale Kramer compellingly notes it,

[t]he basic plot situation of *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, with its emphasis upon the single protagonist and upon the course of the hero's downfall, is patently Aristotelian; the plot also derives, perhaps making it more influential in its appeal, from the vision that places man against man, and individual man against the universe, with nothing for him to rely upon, finally, but whatever he has inside himself.

(1975:70)

Michael Henchard is an Aristotelian hero, and as it has been mentioned earlier, Aristotle's theory of tragedy seems the most convenient to approach the lack of androgyny in *MC*.

1. The Retributive Man

A man of character, Michael Henchard verily is, and his very character is what lies behind his tragedy. "The iron will is Henchard's trademark" (Spivey, 1954:188) remarks

Spivey. He is in Gatrell's words, "the bull-like man, the man of strong appetites, powerful desires, apparently thoroughly masculine" (2010: 46).

Needles to say that the plot begins with the description of this man of exception. The scene is set in a summer evening, the village of Weydon-Priors in Upper-Wessex could see approaching a "young man" flanked with a woman carrying a child. The man is a hay-trusser, even a "skilled countryman [. . .] distinct from the desultory shamle of the general labourer" (Ch I.1). "The man was of fine figure, swarthy, and stern in aspect; and he showed in profile a facial angle so slightly inclined as to be almost perpendicular" (Ibid).

The entrance is described as though it constituted an event for the village and the community, and it turns out to be an event. In effect, though the hay-trusser and his woman betray some kind of reciprocity afar off, they do not chat and the man even seems unaware of his wife's presence. However, "there could be little doubt" that "the man and woman were husband and wife, and the parents of the girl in arms" (Ch I/1). One is relieved to discover that the awkward atmosphere that surrounded the couple is proper to the bond of marriage. The young man is reading or feigning to read for the sake of ignoring his companions. Straightaway, the narrator draws the reader's attention to the weighty silence which even a casual observer cannot fail to discern in the couple's demeanor. He thus behaves with wife and daughter according to the patriarchal mores in which the male enacts the aristocrat of the family while the wife and the daughters are the proletariat as Engels put it in *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884). The narrator has us guess from his walk a skilled countryman and "in the turn and plant of each foot, there was, further, a dogged and cynical indifference" (Ch I/1). Singling these particular aspects of Henchard is neither fortuitous nor redundant. They are relevant here

because of the ensuing events which allow us to measure the weight of balance in every human.

When they arrive to the village, the fair is almost over, and only an auction of inferior animals could be heard in the Fairfield. In search for a refreshment tent, Henchard has to choose between 'Good Home-brewed Ale, Beer, and Cyder' and 'Good Furnmity Sold Hear'. Needless to say that the word 'hear' is wrongly used in the place of here by the furnmity woman. Though he is first inclined to opt for the tent first mentioned, Henchard follows his wife's advice and enter the tent of the furnmity woman. It must be noted that for the first time Henchard obeys his wife, it is for his and her tragedy. As R.G.Hutton puts it, Henchard

is yet subject to the most fitful influences, who can do in one mood acts of which he will never cease to repent in almost all his other moods, whose temper of heart changes many times even during the execution of the same purpose, though the same ardour, the same pride, the same wrathful magnanimity, the same inability to carry out in cool blood the angry resolve of the mood of revenge or scorn, the same hasty unreasonableness, and the same disposition to swing back to an equally hasty reasonableness, distinguish him throughout.

(Qtd in Cox, 1979:145)

In the tent, the wife urges her husband for furnmity. He mixes it with rum which proves disastrous for both of them. As a matter of fact, the rum metamorphoses the hay-trusser,

At the end of the first basin the man had risen to serenity; at the second he was jovial; at the third, argumentative; at the fourth, the qualities signified by the shape of his face, the occasional clench of his mouth, and the fiery spark of his dark eye, began to tell in his conduct; he was overbearing- even brilliantly quarrelsome.

(Ch I/6)

As expected, Henchard joins the conversation whose theme seemingly suits him; the irrelevance of marriage at an early age. Henchard being one of these young men who wedded at the age of eighteen and could not know what to do with the wife and the child, believes that his freedom and his economic progress cannot cope with a family. By and by, the solution presents itself in the form of a sale, an auction which is inspired by the auction

that is taking place in the Fairfield where an auctioneer is selling his inferior animals. The connection with the sale of the wife and the child is not easily established, for the trusser too who carries on the conversation on the use of wives to admit that he does not “see why men who have got wives, and don’t want ‘em, shouldn’t get rid of ‘em as these gipsy fellows do their old horses,” “Why shouldn’t they put ‘em up and sell ‘em by auction to men who are in want of such articles? At last, he merely proposes his, “Hey? Why, begad, I’d sell mine this minute if anybody would buy her” (Ch I/8). The man again and again draws the conversation to the sale and to publicize the goods, he orders Susan, his wife to show herself.

““Five guineas,” said the auctioneer, “or she’ll be withdrawn. Do anybody give it? » (Ch I/11), and at last sells her and her child for five guineas.

It could not positively have been asserted that the man, in spite of his tantalizing declaration, was really in earnest. The spectators had indeed taken the proceedings throughout as a piece of mirthful irony carried to extremes; and had assumed that, being out of work, he was, as a consequence, out of temper with the world, and society, and his nearest kin. But with the demand and response of real cash the jovial frivolity of the scene departed. A lurid colour seemed to fill the tent, and change the aspect of all therein. The mirth-wrinkles left the listeners’ faces, and they waited with parting lips.

(Ch I/11)

Indeed, the scene is so tantalizing that even a sworn champion of androcentrism cannot envision it. The narrator too, does not fail to remark that

the difference between the peacefulness of inferior nature and the wilful hostilities of mankind was very apparent at this place. In contrast with the harshness of the act just ended within the tent was the sight of several horses crossing their necks and rubbing each other lovingly as they waited in patience to be harnessed for the homeward journey.

(Ch I/13)

Before the day is over, the man gets rid of his wife and daughter by simply selling them in an extemporized auction that takes place in the very tent the wife chose to have dinner. Michael Henchard sells both his wife and daughter to a sailor who takes him at his word. Richard Newson, the sailor in question takes Henchard’s wife and daughter. Henchard sells

them just like one sells a property and goods in a fair or at the market. He pushes the codes of virility to their utmost limits; by a mere announcement which is at first perceived as a whimsical utterance provoked by a discussion on the consequences of early marriage on men.

“For my part I don’t see why men who have got wives and don’t want ‘em, shouldn’t get rid of ‘em as these gipsy fellows do their old horses” (ChI/8), says he. Horses, articles and owner are the words Henchard uses in speaking of his wife and daughter whom he swaps for a handful of shillings. “The auction is clearly an extraordinary event, which violates the moral sense of the Casterbridge community when it is discovered twenty years later” remarks Elaine Showalter (1979: 102).

A man who is capable of such a transaction is doubtlessly a despotic man, bullying, headstrong, egotistical, and the very epitome of the patriarchal system to which Henchard strives to conform at the expense of his own family. “His refusal to acknowledge any link to the feminine, as doubly exemplified by ignoring his girl child as well as his wife, is a standard way to construct the male through contempt for, and denial of, the female”, suggest Richard Nemesvari (Nemesvari, 2011:62). Right at the beginning, one is struck by the character of Henchard for whom maleness is “the identity he wishes to inhabit: the manly man who, although attached to women, is not constrained by them” (Ibid). In fact, as Nemesvari puts it,

[t]he text implies the constructedness of gender from its first paragraphs, as the description of Henchard “reading, or seeming to read” his ballad specifically implies a calculated effort to generate a masculine persona of indifference. This posturing, unsurprisingly, is then intensified with the appearance of an actual audience, since Henchard must now convince not only himself but also the people around him that his “expressions” of masculinity, to use Butler’s word, are in fact the truth of his personality.
(Ibid: 63)

Henchard envisages masculine persona as his very essence. The presence of an audience in the tent of the furmity woman where the transaction has taken place reinforces Henchard in

his showy act. As D.H. Lawrence puts it, “a man who is strongly male tends to deny, to refute the female in him” (1936:60)

The transaction made, Henchard awakens the day after and blames his wife for having yielded to the transaction. His next worry is his repute; he was afraid that someone knew his name. Henchard is hubristic *par excellence*; he is foolishly proud, dangerously overconfident and arrogant. Henchard relates his honour to his name rather than his family. Lacking humility, he is blinded by his pride as an authoritarian man, and is bound by his words even when the words can cause suffering and remorse such as the wife sale. He knows that alcohol inhibited the rest of emotions left in him, so he declares the following day:

I, Michael Henchard, on this morning of the sixteenth of September, do take an oath here in this solemn place that I will avoid all strong liquors for the space of twenty years to come, being a year for every year that I have lived. And this I swear upon the book before me; and may I be struck dumb, blind, and helpless, if I break this my oath!”

(Ch II/18)

His oath to abjure both liquors and women is another instance of his patriarchal creed; he self-disciplines himself and lives in loneliness, and independently of women. He disdains women and deems them emasculating. He “commits his life entirely to the male community, defining his human relationships by the male codes of money, paternity, honour, and legal contract. By his act Henchard sells out or divorces his own ‘feminine’ self, his own need for passion, tenderness, and loyalty” (Showalter, 1979: 103).

He is a conservative man who silences his emotions, hides his kindness, and puts ahead his physical strength, and “has divorced himself from feeling” (Ibid; 106). For Henchard, his wife Susan is as responsible as the strong liquors of his error; he puts the blame on her; his utter manhood is grounded on her meekness. The character or the absence of character in his wife, Susan is also responsible of Henchard’s demeanour; she is self-effaced and Pamela Dalziel categorizes her in the group of fallen women. She has, in

Dalziel's terms, a "conventional 'womanliness.'" (2002: 68) She hides the true story of her sale from her daughter. "Her simplicity- the original ground of Henchard's contempt for her- had allowed her to live on in the conviction that Newson had acquired a morally real and justifiable right to her by his purchase- though the exact bearings and legal limits of that right were vague"(Ch IV/26). As a matter of fact, the very character of Susan is somewhat compatible with that of Henchard who could probably not behave so with someone like Bathsheba or Sue. Rather than resisting him, Susan adheres to the paradigm of her seller and thus contributes in his alienation.

Once the wife and daughter gone, Henchard carries on his quest of the lost wife and child, but in vain. His quest is made ineffectual by his very conduct. In fact,

a certain shyness of revealing his conduct prevented Michael Henchard from following up the investigation with the loud hue-and-cry such a pursuit demanded to render it effectual; and it was probably for this reason that he obtained no clue, though everything was done by him that did not involve an explanation of the circumstances under which he had lost her

(Ch II/19)

The mayor is loyal to the sex role which he contends to be his; he is ashamed of revealing his previous conduct. In reality, he is not repentant because his deed is disgraceful for his manliness not from mere empathy for his family. The wife-sale is not the core of Henchard's tragedy; it is one among the many *peripeteia* that concur to the downfall of the mayor. The Butlerian concept of gender performativity permeates the whole narrative; the wife-sale, the oath and the rest instantiate this process of performing a gender role and a male one in the case of Henchard.

Unable to redress his error, he yearned to forget his misdemeanor and now that he is no longer encumbered with the wife and daughter, he can start a new life. When he leaves Weydon-Priors no one behold the mayor save a little dog. He is now seized by thoughts of the like of why his wife took him to the word and did not fight back and refuse to be sold. He put this on "the extreme simplicity of her intellect". He was oscillating

between charging her with his shameful misdeed and the duty of searching her. He, it is true, thrives economically and succeeds to become an important businessman, and subsequently gains the mayorship of his town. At this stage, one is impelled to underscore the importance of the town of Casterbridge which is not without some meaningful relation with the character of Michael Henchard. In point of fact, the stature of Henchard cannot do with a place of less eminence than that of mayor, churchwarden and a successful corn-factor and hay producer. Henchard needed a town with a character like his; "Casterbridge announced old Rome in every street, alley, and precinct. It looked Roman, bespoke the art of Rome, concealed dead men of Rome" (Ch XI/80) just like Michael Henchard was a reminiscence of the ancient Roman gladiators and Greek heroes. He becomes the patriarch who is admired and feared. He manages his business and town with an iron hand; he publicly ill-treats his employee Whittle by extracting him from his bed and forcing him to walk in the street without his breeches.

The third chapter is set after "a long procession of years" (Ch III/20) after the sad episode of the auction. The same place as before; the road towards Weydon-Priors and the same characters heading towards this village save that this very time, the man was absent and the auctioned wife and her daughter were no longer the same. The wife grew older and less graceful while the child of yore became a "well-formed young woman" (ChIII/20). Unlike the first time when they were three, the woman and her daughter walk with hands joined which shows their close bondage. It is the firmity woman who previously contributed to the shameful auction by putting in Henchard's drink firmity that directs her to Casterbridge. shows her the way back

Though she had been surrendered for few guineas, Susan seeks to return to Henchard once her purchaser, Newson is reported to be dead, and she returns to her former husband. The description given of Michael when he is seen in the hotel is one of a

patriarch; he grew a man of “heavy frame, large features and commanding voice” (Ch V/36). His very laugh inspires awe to those who were not familiar with him because he was said to be pitiless with weakness and admiring before strength and greatness which are the very traits relished in males. The narrator doubts that Henchard possessed any generosity and in case he has any, it is probably an oppressive one contends the narrator. “. . . a powerful mind to hold out so long” (Ch V/39), says of him one of the rustics who assembled in the courtyard of the hotel beholding the festivities that were taking place in the hotel’s dining room. Solomon Longways, one of the beholders goes further and compares him with a god, saying “if any of his men be ever so little overtaken by a drop, he’s down upon ‘em as stern as the Lord upon the jovial Jews” (Ch V/39). Through the converse of the loungers, we discover how the hay-trusser ascended towards the powerful status he enjoys at the moment Susan and their daughter Elisabeth-Jane found him in Casterbridge. A powerful townsman, a successful businessman and the mayor of the aforementioned town. A self-made man in the tradition of the androcentric heroes who moved upwards thanks to perseverance, hard work and other similar characteristics of the virile male who is not shaken by the wife, children or emotions. But, something looks artificial, and “Henchard is performing a certain type of masculinity well before the wife sale, so that that event becomes the culminating indication of his version of manliness, not the determinative one” (Nemesvari, 2011: 62).

Once he is found by his wife, Henchard decides to make amends. However, his demeanor with Susan is grounded in the sense of honour and gentlemanship. In fact, his behavior toward Susan is for him an act of bravoure similar to the one where he subdues a bull which threatens Elisabeth-Jane, his putative daughter and Lucetta, his other woman. Henchard has other positive facets like his dignity during his bankruptcy, his refusal to “finish” his rival Donald Farfrae during their wrestling, his return to Lucetta her

compromising letters, and also his refusal to reveal Elisabeth-Jane's illegitimacy which would hinder her union with Farfrae (Raine, 1994:159). But even these qualities serve his patriarchal mores.

Thus, Michael Henchard exemplifies the hubristic personage in his personality and his yearning to become the most outstanding man of his community. Henchard is subdued by his ego which unfailingly results in his first hamartia which is the introduction of Farfrae into his realm. He immediately falls under his spell, and offers him the post of manager. His loneliness compels him to introduce an intruder in his kingdom. He evokes and invokes some resemblance between his dead brother and Farfrae to justify the irresistible attraction the latter exercises on him. The echo of Henchard's confessed love for Farfrae resounds in every critique of the novel; "no man ever loved another as I did thee at one time" (Ch XXXVIII: 315). Though, he is physically less strong than Henchard, Farfrae symbolically defeats the patriarch and bereaves him of his women, Elisabeth-Jane and Lucetta, his business and mayorship. Farfrae does not negate his feminine self; he is resilient, adaptive, calculator, displays romanticism in his courtship and his playing of music. In sum, he is able to accommodate his animus and Henchard to commit the fatal error, the hamartia which has been preceded by another flaw or hamartia which took place in the refreshment tent 'Good Furnity Sold Hear' where he got drunk and sold his wife and daughter. His act "is not, strictly speaking, voluntary, in that the agent does not freely choose the act with full knowledge of its particulars, neither is it, strictly speaking, involuntary, in that it is not wholly unforeseen." It is hamartia, and "Aristotle's tragic hamartia [. . .] falls somewhere between an act that is fully intended and one that is completely unexpected" (Eden, 2005: 46). As a matter of fact, the first error elicited the second one. Michael Millgate explains that the tragic fate of Hardy's hero derives directly from his own actions, or that these proceed in turn from his whole personality'. Once he

“divorced” of his wife and daughter, Henchard becomes painfully lonesome, and to remedy this, he unites with Farfrae which is the very tragic error, the sin which conjures the turning point in his life, the *peripeteia*.

1. The Return of the Repressed Feminine Self

As noted earlier, the introduction of Farfrae in Henchard's realm is another of Henchard's *hamartia*. Donald Farfrae enters the scene at the very day Susan and her daughter arrive at Casterbridge. He is the only stranger among the bystanders. He “a young man or remarkably pleasant aspect” (Ch VI/ 42). Farfrae is singled out by his demeanour, his act of sending a note to the mayor and the fact that Elisabeth-Jane noticed him. The mayor too noticed him though through the note he sent him. The mayor immediately heads to the hotel where the Scotchman and the two women have booked their lodgings. “I merely strolled in on my way home to ask you a question about something that has excited my curiosity,” pretended the mayor (Ch VII/52). After the demonstration of Farfrae, Henchard offers him to “manage the corn branch entirely, and receive a commission in addition to salary”(Ch VII/54) ,but the Scotchman declines the offer. Though not patent, the arrival of Susan and her daughter and Donald Farfrae to Casterbridge constitute Henchard's *Peripeteia*. “[S]omething in the air which had changed his luck. That dinner at the King's Arms with his friends had been Henchard's Austerlitz”, posits the narrator (Ch XX/154).

At the Three Mariners where they stay for the night, Elisabeth-Jane and the Casterbridgians agreeably discover the musical talent of the stranger. Indeed, Farfrae enraptures them with his bewitching melody and verse, and leaves them ensorcelled. “To be sure, to be sure, how that fellow does draw me!” Henchard says to himself. “I suppose ‘tis because I'm so lonely. I'd have given him a third share in the business to have stayed!” (Ch VIII/64).

“Mr. Henchard’s sudden liking for that young man” (Ch IX/66) is queer and well-nigh suspect. From the outset Michael Henchard displays no sign of interest in matters of gender; his sale of his wife and daughter and the ensuing lines show no commitment on his part in gender issues. Thus, his sudden inclination for the Scotchman may be read as a homoerotic impulse. The words encapsulated in inverted commas are Susan’s and she knows her husband though they lived together but few years. Hearing him express shame for his relinquishment of her and his being a lonely widower encouraged Susan to send her daughter to see him to claim a meeting. Meanwhile, the Scotchman decides to be Henchard’s man after the latter repeatedly insisted on his staying with him to be in charge of his business.

Susan sends her daughter to see Henchard as aforementioned. He learns from Elisabeth-Jane that Susan “had behaved kindly to him in return for his unkindness, and had never proclaimed her wrong to her child or to the world” (Ch X/76). When she was introduced into his dining room, Elisabeth-Jane could see among other things a folio-volume entitled ‘Whole Duty of Man’. Once he knows about his wife’s return, Henchard does not fail to do his duty; he accepts to see Susan though he is not absolutely sure that Elisabeth-Jane is the very Elisabeth-Jane that accompanied his wife when he had sold her years before. For the first time, we learn that Henchard can be upset and this event really upset him. Some inexplicable change occurs in Henchard; not only does he accept to meet Susan at the Amphitheatre, but devises a plan to renew with her and thus erase his past disgraceful act. He merely suggests to feign the one who is enamored of her and marry her.

“[A] man who knew no moderation in his requests and impulses” (Ch XII/ 88), such is the image Farfrae has of his employer, Henchard. “Being by nature something of a woman-hater”, as he himself describes himself, Henchard has no difficulty to do without

women (Ibid 89). However, no man can live for ever without a woman, so he starts a relationship with Lucetta.

As planned, Henchard hires a cottage for Susan and her daughter and begin paying them regular visits. Soon, an offer in marriage is done and is pursued despite Susan's lack of warmth. Henchard avowed that he could devote her the required time as he seemingly found a good superintendant. The facility with which he confides in Farfrae and the words he uses in describing him portend some tragic turn in the course of events. At any rate, the arrival of Farfrae, his entrance in Henchard's business and heart are somewhat lacking in verisimilitude even for a fictitious story like Henchard's.

Henchard's visits here grew so frequent and so regular that it soon became whispered, and then openly discussed, in Casterbridge, that the masterful, coercive Mayor of the town was captured and enervated by the genteel widow, Mrs. Newson. His wellknown haughty indifference to the society of womankind, his silent avoidance of converse with the sex, contributed a piquancy to what would otherwise have been an unromantic matter enough.

(Ch. XIII/ 94)

People in Casterbridge start to gossip about their mayor. First it was murmured then overtly said and even commented. Henchard's decision was motivated by three elements: take care of his daughter, make amends to his wife and punish himself by debasing his repute in marrying a woman who was called 'the ghost' because of her miserable condition. Nemesvari points out that "the return of the women [symbolizes] Henchard's rejection of the feminine" (2011: 65). "Lest she should pine for deeper affection than he could give, he made a point of showing some semblance of it in external action" (Ch XIV/99). Thus, Henchard is determined to make amends truly *vis-à-vis* his wife and as can be seen from the narrator's testimony, Henchard "is as kind to her as a man, mayor, and churchwarden could possibly be" (Ibid). Through his casual discussion with Elisabeth-Jane who has become as close to him as her mother, the word 'leonine' is added to the various epithets wherewith the narrator weighs down Michael Henchard. Of course, he is a bit

discountenanced by Elisabeth-Jane light-coloured hair which he surmised would be darker, but Susan had him believe that children's hair alter.

The ghost dies; Mrs. Henchard/Mrs Newson crosses the narrative as a ghost and leaves the scene before the eighteenth chapter comes to a close. This death somewhat leaves Henchard orphaned. Indeed, "Henchard's wife was dissevered from him by death; his friend and helper Farfrae by estrangement; Elisabeth-Jane by ignorance" (Ch XIX/139). Unable to stand Elisabeth-Jane's ignorance of him being her real father, Henchard reveals her his truth and this distresses her more. Does he act out of selfishness or altruism? The narrator concedes that Henchard "was the kind of man to whom some human object for pouring out his heat upon were it emotive or were it choleric- was almost a necessity" (Ch XIX/142).

Before she dies, Mrs Henchard writes a letter addressed to Mr. Henchard and insists that he reads it after Elisabeth-Jane is wedded. Regardless of his deceased wife's request, Henchard reads the letter and commits another fault. Unable to believe the letter's contents, Henchard riskily intrudes into Elisabeth-Jane's bedroom to check her wife's vow with his own eyes. Richard Newson's traits transpierce Elisabeth-Jane's face. "Henchard, like all his kind, was superstitious, and he could not help thinking that the concatenation of events this evening had produced was the scheme of some sinister intelligence bent on punishing him" (ChXIX/144), Despite the pain and the despair, Henchard sticks to his former resolution; aided by Elisabeth-Jane's decision to act as his daughter, he keeps the letter's content from her. However, the behavior of the mayor afterwards betrayed the lack of affiliation between him and the young maiden who was staying in his house as his daughter. Remarks on her dialect, her handwriting, her conduct with the servants, etc. earns her Henchard's acrimony.

The increasing frequency of the latter mood told her the sad news that he disliked her with a growing dislike. The more interesting that her appearance

and manners became under the softening influences which she could now command, and in her wisdom did command, the more she seemed to estrange him. Sometimes she caught him looking at her with a louring invidiousness that she could hardly bear.

(Ch XX/150)

By the end of the twentieth-one chapter Henchard finds himself all alone after Elisabeth-Jane takes the decision to move to High Place hall, a large house tenanted by a strange woman who has utterly impressed her. Thus, he loses his wife, his hope of continuing mayoralty and now his step-daughter, who is something of a cumbersome co-lodger. “His bitter disappointment at finding Elisabeth-Jane to be none of his, and himself a childless man, had left an emotional void in Henchard that he unconsciously craved to fill” (Ch XXII/169). “The return of Susan and Elisabeth-Jane which precipitates the main phase of the novel is indeed a return of the repressed, which forces Henchard gradually to confront the tragic inadequacy of his codes, the arid limits of patriarchal power” (Showlater, 1979: 103).

““The artful little woman!” he said, smiling (with reference to Lucetta’ (Ch XXII/171), Henchard cannot be said to hold in much respect the fair sex. When he is badly handled by one of them like Lucetta, he generalizes and deems them “cursed women-there’s not an inch of straight grain in ‘em! (Ch XXII/171). If anything, Lucetta is of the type of character Hardy affiliates to a French pedigree in the same wise as Sergeant Frank Troy. Her meeting with Elisabeth-Jane is not coincidental and from the moment she enters the scene one feels some misdeed lurking there. The link is patent as both are related to the garrison and both display very French characteristics.

Transiently reunited with his wife and putative daughter and relieved of the task of managing his corn business by the consent of Farfrae who has played hard to-get, to run the business, Henchard had no idea of the insidious *peripeteia* that lurks under these happy circumstances. In fact, with the prosperity of his corn and hay traffic, came a furtive and sly reversal of Henchard’s realm; his old *viva voce* method in which the memory and

the tongue plays crucial roles is being dismissed by Farfrae and “Letters and ledgers took the place of “I’ll do it,” and “you shall hae’t;” and, as in all such cases of advance” (Ch XIV/103). In sum, “the rugged picturesqueness of the old method disappears with its inconveniences” (Ibid). Farfrae’s physical insignificance is counterbalanced by his brains and it is the brains which attract Henchard so much that he not only confides his business to the Scotchman, but also confides him his secrets and thus initiates him to his Achilles ‘heel.

What Elisabeth-Jane beholds when she is in her room and Henchard and Farfrae are outside is laughter and familiarity. However, “[h]er quiet eye discerned that Henchard’s tigerish affection for the younger man, his constant liking to have Farfrae near him, now and then resulted in a tendency to domineer” (Ch XIV/104). Indeed, Abel Whittle, the oversleeper’s addressing Henchard by the appellative “your worshipful” is telling. Henchard’s obsessive carrying out of his words supposedly illustrates some virile attitudes on the part of Henchard. At the beginning, he lost his wife and daughter because he carried out his words and preferred to sell them rather than lose the face in public. He keeps his word again when Whittle oversleeps; he goes to his cottage and rouses him so violently that the poor Abel clothes himself while running.

By and by, the masculine couple develops “impetuous cordiality on the mayor’s part, and genial modesty on the younger man’s” (Ch XV/110). And the narrative voice goes with the same thought and indulges in theories about male to male friendship. However, the “I don’t care what Mr. Henchard said, nor anybody else! ‘, uttered by Farfrae shakes Henchard’s authority when the former interposes between the corn-factor and one of his men, the already mentioned Abel Whittle. From that episode on, Henchard’s moral authority is ruined to the benefit of the manager. And the gossip has it that “people always want Mr. Farfrae”, “they like him because he is cleverer than Mr. Henchard, and because

he knows more; and in short, Mr. Henchard can't hold a candle to him" and the boy who repeated this gossiping to Mr. Henchard added, "there is more! [. . .] and he is better tempered, and Henchard 's a fool to him, "even women preferred Farfrae to Henchard, "He's a diment-he's a chap o' wax-he's the best . . ." (Ch XV/115).

It goes without saying that Henchard's conduct towards his manager was no longer the same; he does not become hostile as could be expected, but rather diffident and less courteous than before. At any rate, the august corn-merchant is being overshadowed by his manager. Eventually, the comparison between Henchard and his manager is a subject for discussion as when both set about to organize a public day of merrymaking. The rain ruins Henchard's painstaking enterprise and people desert him for the ball-room Farfrae set up without huge means. Henchard is filled up with comments on Farfrae outwitting Henchard in everything, business, and taste. Herein Henchard commits another fault by ridiculing his manager and announcing the end of their partnership. "Mr. Farfrae's time as my manager is drawing to a close- isn't it, Farfrae?" (Ch XVI/123), these words said in haste were to bring much repent to the sayer, who does not ponder the damage such a public dismissal of the Scotchman can cause. Rather than leaving Casterbridge as would have hoped Henchard, Farfrae is lucky to take on the corn-business of a man who sells him his small scale business. When he knows about the purchase, Henchard reverts to the same condition of "the same unruly volcanic stuff beneath the rind of Michael Henchard as when he had sold his wife at Weydon Fair" (Ch XVII/129). To the queer intimacy he imposes on his manager, Henchard now substitutes a fierce animosity which leads to his own downfall.

Henchard was responsible of a trivial incident on the day of the passage of a royal personage through Casterbdrige, "I'll welcome his Royal Highness, or nobody shall!" he says (Ch XXXVII/304). He appears before the royal personage with a "private flag, and removing his hat he advances to the side of the slowing vehicle, waving the Union Jack to

and fro with his left hand, while he blandly held out his right to the illustrious Personage” (Ch XXXVII/306). Henchard had been roughly invited by the mayor, Farfrae, to get out of the centre of the scene and the former did not like it and ruminated the snub.

Without further reflection the fallen merchant, bent on some wild purpose, ate a hasty dinner, and went forth to find Farfrae. After being injured by him as a rival, and snubbed by him as a journeyman, the crowning degradation had been reserved for this day- that he should be shaken at the collar by him as a vagabond in the face of the whole town.

(Ch XXXVIII/ 311)

Jane Thomas considers this episode of the transit of the royal personage in Casterbridge as the culmination of Farfrae’s overthrow of the androcentric Henchard in the very field of manhood and androcentrism. Removed from the top of business, from the heart of his mistress and that of his step-daughter, from the mayoralty of Casterbridge, Henchard had been utterly emasculated and unmanned by his rival (Thomas, 2013: 133). To regain his sense of manhood, Henchard arranges to meet him and settle the affair once for all, “it must come to a tussle—face to face; and then we’ll see how a cuxcom [Farfrae] can front a man [Henchard]” (Ch XXXVIII/311).

At the yearned for meeting Henchard addresses his rival in plain words,

“Now,” said Henchard quietly, “we stand face to face- man and man. Your money and your fine wife no longer lift ‘ee above me as they did but now, and my poverty does not press me down.” “What does it all mean?” asked Farfrae simply.

“Wait a bit, my lad. You should ha’ thought twice before you affronted to extremes a man who had nothing to lose. I’ve stood your rivalry, which ruined me, and your snubbing, which humbled me; but your hustling, that disgraced me, I won’t stand!” Farfrae warmed a little at this. “Ye’d no business there,” he said.

(Ch XXXVIII/313)

And the two rivals wrestled, Henchard having tied one arm to counterbalance the physical advantage he had over Farfrae. Obviously, the latter could not stand the physical comparison and was overruled by the ex-mayor who

looked down upon him in silence, and their eyes met. “O Farfrae!that’s not true!” he said bitterly. “God is my witness that no man ever loved another as I did thee at one time.... And now- though I came here to kill ‘ee, I cannot

hurt thee! Go and give me in charge- do what you will- I care nothing for what comes of me!” He withdrew to the back part of the loft, and flung himself into a corner upon some sacks, in the abandonment of remorse. Farfrae regarded him in silence; then went to the hatch and descended through it. Henchard would fain have recalled him; but his tongue failed in its task, and the young man’s steps died on his ear.

(Ch XXXVIII/315-16)

In fact, Henchard did love Farfrae more than anyone else; he loved him more than his wife, more than Lucetta and Elisabeth-Jane.

Henchard took his full measure of shame and self-reproach. The scenes of his first acquaintance with Farfrae rushed back upon him- that time when the curious mixture of romance and thrift in the young man’s composition so commanded his heart that Farfrae could play upon him as on an instrument. So thoroughly subdued was he that he remained on the sacks in a crouching attitude, unusual for a man, and for such a man. Its womanliness sat tragically on the figure of so stern a piece of virility.

(Ch XXXVIII/316)

Henchard smothered unwontedly and soon after Farfrae left, he wished to see him and apologize. Henchard is no longer believable and his truth turns to be mere lie as can be verified when Mrs. Farfrae falls ill after the incident of the mummerly performed by those who know about the contents of her letters. Henchard is pitiable and his running after Farfrae to inform him about what occurred to his wife makes him the more pitiable. Farfrae refuses to believe Henchard’s account despite the latter’s imploring.

“Believe me, Farfrae; I have come entirely on your own and your wife’s account. She is in danger. I know no more; and they want you to come. Your man has gone the other way in a mistake. O Farfrae! don’t mistrust me- I am a wretched man; but my heart is true to you still!” Farfrae, however, did distrust him utterly.

(Ch XL/329-30)

Farfrae triggers Henchard’s tragic flaw, directly takes the responsibility of the sudden change in Henchard’s fate, and embodies the feminine self which has been repressed and denied through the wife-sale, the abjuration of the company of women and the regime of isolation to which Henchard restricted himself. Farfrae, the androgyne, comes to announce the importance of balance in one’s personality.

Another *peripeteia* in Henchard's life occurred with the reappearance of Lucetta, his former girl in Casterbridge where she intended to settle. In effect, "Lucetta had come to Casterbridge to quicken Henchard's feelings with regard to her. She quickens them, and now she is indifferent to the achievement" because his rival, Farfrae comes to see her by mere chance (Ch XXIII/188). While the latter is gaining much terrain in Lucetta's world, Henchard, in a Boldwood-like manner, is losing ground and his step-daughter too. Henchard's loss of control and power is conspicuous, and his delayed offer of marriage to Lucetta proves this. Before long, the powerful mayor of Casterbridge starts to ridicule himself by inquisitively turning around Lucetta. Farfrae grows a double rival to Henchard; rival in business and in love. At this stage, one must underscore the subtext which deals with corn and its weight on the national destiny of England.

The farmer's income was ruled by the wheat-crop within his own horizon, and the wheat-crop by the weather. Thus, in person, he became a sort of flesh-barometer, with feelers always directed to the sky and wind around him. The local atmosphere was everything to him; the atmospheres of other countries a matter of indifference. The people, too, who were not farmers, the rural multitude, saw in the god of the weather a more important personage than they do now. Indeed, the feeling of the peasantry in this matter was so intense as to be almost unrealizable in these equable days.

(Ch XXVI/211)

Henchard hires Jopp, the foreman whose place has been unduly taken by the Scotchman. His first task is to outrun Farfrae "by fair competition" Henchard insists (Ch XXVI/210). Henchard is reduced to visit a weather forecaster. But confiding in the prophet's cats he loses a lot, and disaster begins to reach him.

The rivalry between Henchard and his former manager affects their workmen too, and one day two of the waggoners of both hay-merchants collide. Besides the problems of hay-harvest, Henchard has to cope with Lucetta sliding in the direction of Farfrae. He spies them and bothers her with his proposals, "And unless you give me your promise this very night to be my wife, before a witness, I'll reveal our intimacy- in common fairness to other

men” (Ch XVII/226). Henchard cannot admit that she drifts into Farfrae’s lap. Like Boldwood in *FFMC*, Michael Henchard succeeds in getting a promise from Lucetta that she be his woman.

Henchard is still the mayor of Casterbridge and Justice of peace and the latter occupation was to constitute his ultimate *peripeteia*. He has to judge the furmity-woman, the one who is present when he sold his wife and daughter. She could not hold her tongue and disclosed Henchard’s secret before the jury and the other judge. “You’ve been asked if you’ve anything to say bearing on the case”, retorted the second magistrate, but she overbid “That bears on the case. It proves that he’s no better than I, and has no right to sit there in judgment upon me” (Ch XXVIII/232).

“’Tis as true as the light,” he says slowly. “And upon my soul, it does prove that I’m no better than she! And to keep out of any temptation to treat her hard for her revenge, I’ll leave her to you”, Henchard admitted the truth and left the court (Ch XVIII/232).

Shocked by the news, Lucetta leaves Casterbridge for some days and is so bewildered to unite her fate to a man who has already sold his former wife and daughter. She borrows the road to Port-Bredy and is soon joined by Elisabeth-Jane. They are attacked by a bull and happily Henchard rescues them and is thus given a chance to display his manhood. He is soon saddened by the confession of Lucetta; she has secretly married Farfrae. Henchard was not the only one to suffer from Lucetta’s relationship and marriage with Donald Farfrae. Elisabeth-Jane not only lost any hope of gaining Farfrae, but could not stay in High Place Hall as easily as before because of the arrival of Farfrae. And “the instant decision of Susan Henchard’s daughter was to dwell in that house no more. Apart from her estimate of the propriety of Lucetta’s conduct, Farfrae had been so nearly her avowed lover that she felt she could not abide there” (Ch XXX/249-50).

So the repressed feminine self also returns in the guise of Lucetta, Susan and Elisabeth-Jane who torments Henchard. Though Sailor Newson is not really dead, Susan returns to regain her place as Henchard's wife. Elisabeth-Jane unclothes his sense of manhood by having him endure the stinging experience of being or not being her father. Henchard's repressed feminine self eventually returns in the form of the furmity woman who equally contributes to the peripety of Henchard first by her 'good furmity' which inhibits Henchard's consciousness and has him make the mistake of selling wife and daughter. Then, by being present at this wife-sale, and last but not least, by revealing some years later Henchard's deed in her 'Good Furmity' tent. "With her revelation [. . .] the furmity woman has knocked Henchard off his patriarchal pedestal", remarks Joanna Devereux who compares the furmity woman to "the twin threats of disorder and femaleness" which signal the downfall of Henchard (Devereux, 2003: 61). The testimony of the furmity woman was the final stroke.

On that day- almost at that minute- he passed the ridge of prosperity and honour, and began to descend rapidly on the other side. It was strange how soon he sank in esteem. Socially he had received a startling fillip downwards; and, having already lost commercial buoyancy from rash transactions, the velocity of his descent in both aspects became accelerated every hour.

(Ch XXXI/251)

The Henchard of the beginning is no longer in his milieu after this; he is misfit. He informs his step-daughter that he has decided to leave Casterbridge.

Henchard left the town, to whose development he had been one of the chief stimulants for many years. During the day he had bought a new tool-basket, cleaned up his old hay-knife and wimble, set himself up in fresh leggings, knee-naps and corduroys, and in other ways gone back to the working clothes of his young manhood, discarding for ever the shabby-genteel suit of cloth and rusty silk hat that since his decline had characterized him in the Casterbridge street as a man who had seen better days

(Ch XLIII/ 360)

Those better days are gone, and the mayor of Casterbridge is no longer needed in the place.

Henchard "cursed himself like a less scrupulous Job, as a vehement man will do when he

loses self-respect, the last mental prop under poverty (Ch XL/330). Dignity abandons Henchard; his interest is now redirected toward Elisabeth-Jane. He receives her in his apartment and shows much kindness; prepares her a breakfast. He “waited on, looking into the fire and keeping the kettle boiling with housewifely care, as if it were an honour to have her in his house. In truth, a great change had come over him with regard to her” (Ch XLI/334-35). In effect, Henchard becomes someone different and the process of subjecthood almost reaches its final station. “His mood was no longer that of the rebellious, ironical, reckless misadventurer; but the leaden gloom of one who has lost all that can make life interesting, or even tolerable” (Ch XLI/340-41). He takes to Elisabeth-Jane so much that when her real father, Newson reappears, Henchard lies and tells him that she has died like her mother. “[H]is jealous soul speciously argued to excuse the separation of father and child” and justify his cruel lies (Ch XLI/339). Newson’s imminent return and claim of his daughter overweighs Henchard for who “The whole land ahead of him was as darkness itself; there was nothing to come, nothing to wait for. Yet in the natural course of life he might possibly have to linger on earth another thirty or forty years—scuffed at; at best pitied” (Ch XLI/341). His conscience of himself is seriously affected by the various events that come across his path. He becomes his own indictor, ““Who is such a reprobate as I!” (Ch XLI/345) would he think.

Under the ministration of his step-daughter, Henchard manages to stand on his feet again and “had fettered his pride sufficiently to accept the small seed business which some of the Town Council, headed by Farfrae, had purchased, to afford him a new opening” (Ch XLII/347). Henchard and Elisabeth-Jane now lives together and he regrets that he wasted some much time “his severe censorship, frozen up her precious affection when originally offered” (Ch XLII/349). Lack of balance is conspicuous in Henchard; he never profits from

happiness when it comes. Henchard's idiosyncracies do not totally disappear and Farfrae's renewed interest in Elisabeth-Jane helps resurface them though with less force.

Henchard was, by original make, the last man to act stealthily, for good or for evil. But the solicitous timor of his love- the dependence upon Elisabeth's regard into which he had declined (or, in another sense, to which he had advanced)- denaturalized him. He would often weigh and consider for hours together the meaning of such and such a deed or phrase of hers, when a blunt settling question would formerly have been his first instinct. And now, uneasy at the thought of a passion for Farfrae which should entirely displace her mild filial sympathy with himself, he observed her going and coming more narrowly

(Ch XLII/351)

Besides, the budding union between Elisabeth-Jane and Donald Farfrae replaces Henchard in his moody condition.

Embittered as he was against society, this moody view of himself took deeper and deeper hold of Henchard, till the daily necessity of facing mankind, and of them particularly Elisabeth-Jane, became well-nigh more than he could endure. His health declined; he became morbidly sensitive. He wished he could escape those who did not want him, and hide his head for ever

(Ch XLIII/356-57)

He was merely growing anomic. He informed his step-daughter that he had decided to leave Casterbridge. Elisabeth-Jane accompanied him when he departed and she could see his silhouette

Diminish across the moor, the yellow straw basket at his back moving up and down with each tread, and the creases behind his knees coming and going alternately till she could no longer see them. Though she did not know it, Henchard formed at this moment much the same picture as he had presented entering Casterbridge for the first time nearly a quarter of a century before; except, to be sure, that the serious addition to his years had considerably lessened the spring of his stride, that his state of hopelessness had weakened him, and imparted to his shoulders, as weighted by the basket, a perceptible bend.

(Ch XLIII/360-61)

Once the tragic hero has left the scene, Elisabeth-Jane meets her true father and prepares for her wedding with Farfrae. Henchard directes towards the city of his *hamartia*, Weydon-Priors where lied his past memories,

Yes, we came up that way," he said, after ascertaining his bearings. "She was carrying the baby, and I was reading a ballet-sheet. Then we crossed about hereshe so sad and weary, and I speaking to her hardly at all, because of my cursed pride and mortification at being poor. Then we saw the tent-that must have stood more this way." He walked to another spot; it was not really where the tent had stood, but it seemed so to him. "Here we went in, and here we sat down. I faced this way. Then I drank, and committed my crime. It must have been just on that very pixy-ring that she was standing when she said her last words to me before going off with him; I can hear their sound now, and the sound of her sobs. 'O Mike! I've lived with thee all this while, and had nothing but temper. Now I'm no more to 'ee- I'll try my luck elsewhere.'" He experienced not only the bitterness of a man who finds, in looking back upon an ambitious course, that what he has sacrificed in sentiment was worth as much as what he has gained in substance; but the superadded bitterness of seeing his very recantation nullified. He had been sorry for all this long ago; but his attempts to replace ambition by love had been as fully foiled as his ambition itself.

(Ch XLIV/ 367)

The scene abounds with pathos and the distance between this episode and the earlier one seems so close as though the time elapsed is nullified. The fact that the narrator draws our attention to the motive of Henchard's visit to this very place which is penance betrays the masochistic and existentialist mood which has installed itself in Henchard's soul. He became a hay-trusser again and settled some fifty miles from the spot where Elisabeth-Jane lived. The wish to be unbecome creeps into his soul and he philosophizes, "Here and everywhere be folk dying before their time like frosted leaves, though wanted by their families, the country, and the world; while I, an outcast, an encumberer of the ground, wanted by nobody, and despised by all, live on against my will!" (Ch XLIV/369).

Be despised is the continual obsession of Henchard; at every turn one reads about his fear of being despised mainly by Elisabeth-Jane. Fear of disdain is in fact a feature of the kind of man Henchard strives to be. His sudden desire to go back to Casterbridge to be closer to his step-daughter is contemptible and he knows it verily, but he resolves to be present in Elisabeth-Jane's wedding. The whole undertaking "quite unmanned him" (Ch XLIV/373). Indeed, "[s]olitude and sadness had so emolliated Henchard that he now feared circumstances he would formerly have scorned" (Ch XLIV/374). As expected, his step-daughter does not receive him well for the lie over her death. She rebuffs him in such a way

that he forgets to hand his step-daughter the little gift he has bought for her wedding. Wrapped in paper and forgotten there, the goldfinch starves and is found by one of the servant. Elisabeth-Jane immediately concludes that it is Henchard's gift.

He had not expressed to her any regrets or excuses for what he had done in the past; but it was a part of his nature to extenuate nothing, and live on as one of his own worst accusers. She went out, looked at the cage, buried the starved little singer, and from that hour her heart softened towards the self-alienated man.

(Ch XLV/379-80)

Thus, she asks her husband to help her find Henchard and the former acquiesces despite his multiple problems with the latter. "Although Farfrae has never so passionately liked Henchard as Henchard had liked him, he had, on the other hand, never so passionately hated in the same direction as his former friend had done;" (Ch XLV/380) among the two, Farfrae is the androgynous one. Henchard is antipodean, either extremely masculine or utterly feminine.

The tragedy of Henchard is that for him the establishment of character, even of identity itself, always entails the institution of a certain lack and experience of loss without ever fully escaping the allure and the strength of all that has been denied and disavowed. For all his assumption of despotic status Henchard can never shake himself free from his territorial roots. The repressed, the territorial, in the figure of the haggish furnitry woman, will return.

(Musselwhite, 2003:54)

From the Victorian point of view, Henchard is guilty of having abdicated his business, his town, his women and his furniture for the villain androgyne Farfrae. But, for the authorial voice, Henchard's character is his hubris, and this fatalistically emerges as hamartia or tragic errors (wife-sale, Farfrae) that causes his peripety and finally his downfall. Elaine Showalter argues that in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Hardy "gives the fullest nineteenth-century portrait of a man's inner life—his rebellion and his suffering, his loneliness and jealousy, his paranoia and despair, his uncontrollable unconscious. Henchard's efforts, first to deny and divorce his passionate self" (1979:101). Self for self, "[s]elf-made, Henchard is

also self-destroyed; if he feels pursued, it is essentially himself that he cannot escape” (Millgate, 1971: 27). “Henchard’s melodramatic masculinity requires for its demonstration the kind of dramatic gestures that punctuate the text,” observes Nemesvari (Nemesvari, 2011: 61).

Indeed, the seeds of his downfall are ingrained in the depth of his own psychology. The self he desperately strives to escape is his feminine self. “Failure to reach higher states of personal development is the fate of Hardy’s heroes” (Spivey, 1954:189) and Henchard more than any other Hardy hero complies with this dictum. Higher states of development equate with androgyny which alone allows the individual to attain a psychological healthy state.

Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with Michael Henchard, the tragic hero of Hardy's successful attempt at tragedy, *MC*. My argument is that Henchard's tragedy springs from his denial of the feminine in his soul. Unlike Showalter's claim, Henchard has not "succeeded to come to terms with [his] deepest [self]" (Showalter, 1979: 101). In tune with Aristotle's conception of the hero in *Poetics*, Henchard is a powerful and imposing hero who enjoys fortune, but commits a big error that leads to a reversal in his life that is followed by the downfall. In separating himself from his wife and daughter, Henchard separated his own self into two antipodal entities. The negation of his anima constitutes the essence of Henchard's tragedy and that of every man who ignores his other half which is synonymous of communion that is translated into openness, union, cooperation, expressiveness, and so on. Henchard's tragedy lies in his identification with the Retributive Man, the authoritarian man who deems it possible to do without the feminine principle.

Henchard's first error is to get rid of wife and daughter fancying that in doing so, he would be extremely virile. For Henchard, his wife, his daughter and the other women in his life constitute a serious threat that can emasculate him if he is not equipped with the safeguards that the patriarchal society gave him. In negating all that links him to the feminine, Henchard deems that he can build himself and enjoy a prosperous and quiet life. The repressed feminine self soon returns through the wife and daughter, through the Scotman who seduces Henchard and emasculates him, but also through the firmity woman who entrapped him before when he received from her the liquid that inhibited his nerves and resulted in his sale of wife and daughter, but also in her testimony against him. She revealed his error and contributed to the advent of his sudden reversal of fortune.

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Chapter Seven
Jude the Obscure: The Convergence of the Twain

The Convergence of the Twain

I

In a solitude of the sea
Deep from human vanity,
And the pride of life that had planned her, sitly couches she.

II

Steel chambers, late the pyres
Of her salamandrine fires,
Cold current third, and turn to rhythmic tidal Lyres.

III

Over the mirrors meant
To glass the opulent
The sea-worm crawls-grotesque, slimed, dumb, indifferent.

IV

Jewels in joydesigned
To ravish the sensuous mind,
Lie lightless, all their sparkles bleared, black and blind.

V

Dim moon-eyed fishes near
Gazes at the glided gear
And query: "What does this vainglorious down here?" . . .

VI

Well: while was fashioning
This creature of cleaving wing,
The Immanent Will that stirs and urges everything

VII

Prepared a sinister mate
For her-so gaily great-
A shape of Ice, for the time far and dissociate.

VIII

And as the smart ship grew
In stature, grace, and hue,
In shadowy silent distance grew the Iceberg too.

IX

Alien they seemed to be:
No mortal eye could see
The intimate welding of their later history,

X

Or sign that they were bent
By paths coincident
On being anon twin halves of one august event,

XI

Till the Spinner of the Years
Said "Now!" And each one hears,
And consummation comes, and jars two hemispheres.

Thomas Hardy³⁹

³⁹ The Poems of Thomas Hardy: A New Selection, Selected and introduced by Ned Halley, London: MacMillan, 2017, pp. 236-7.

Introduction

The following chapter opens with a poem by the same author merely for the sake of the theme under discussion. In fact, in this chapter, I shall argue that Jude and Sue are like the twain who converge, but are deemed to end tragically because of this convergence. “The Convergence of the Twain” is “considerably better than the rest of [Hardy’s] occasional poetry (better, indeed, than most occasional poems of the last two hundred years) are not far to seek” (1982: 780) remarks Ian Ousby, whose interesting article, explores how Hardy’s poem alters Plato’s famous parable found in *Symposium* purposefully used at the very beginning of this thesis. Ousby relates Hardy’s poem with the Platonic parable in which “a third [sex/gender], common to both others, [. . .] The androgynous sex, both in appearance and in name, was common to both male and female.”⁴⁰ The androgynous gender, I argue in the next two chapters, is common to both Jude and Sue, the leading protagonists of *Jude the Obscure*.

The purpose of using the poem above is not a revisitation of the fatal link between the Titanic and the iceberg, but rather a pondering of Hardy’s alteration of Plato’s parable to elicit the tragedy of gender in *Jude the Obscure*. In place of the Titanic and the Iceberg, one is inclined to place Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead, the sinister couple of the novel at stake. Indeed, the twain that converge in *JO* are Jude and his cousin Sue. The two halves “being anon twin halves”, and struggle throughout the narrative to stay one, but “consummation comes and they end tragically. Their ‘two in oneness’ is highlighted in (*JO* 241, 306, 357).

Their reciprocal attraction, the way they perform gender is their fatal flaw, their *hamartia*. Neither Jude, nor Sue is hubristic, but peripeteia and nemesis are their lot in the manner of tragic heroes and heroines. The ultimate novel of Thomas Hardy has been

⁴⁰ Symposium by Plato trans Benjamin Jowett.

regarded as one his most autobiographical novels. As a matter of fact, many elements of Hardy's own life are found in the novel and this is tellingly exemplified by the parallel Margaret R. Higdon draws in the article earlier mentioned. There is his child sensitivity, his friendship with Horace Moule, his neurasthenia, and his frustrated love for his cousin Tryphena Sparks. The same liminality which has embedded Hardy as regards "the competing ideals of masculinity that defined his adolescence and adulthood" (Thomas, 2013: 122-23) is found in his female characters "who find themselves antagonistic to, 'undone or 'dis-eased' by social and gender norms" (Ibid: 123). Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead epitomize more than any other Hardy characters this undone gender. Stephan Horlacher points out that "there can be little doubt that the two main protagonists in *Jude the Obscure* are characterized by an odd combination of what Linda Dowling calls "male effeminacy and female mannishness" (Horlacher, 2007: 117).

Jude's gender is not troubling, the trouble is society which is not capable of admitting individuals such as Jude and Sue who are the new man and the new woman. For Frank R. Giordano, the ultimate novel of Thomas Hardy deals with the "psychological problems of Jude's sexuality and his urge to self-destruction, and of Sue's epicene temperament and her moral masochism (Giordano, 1972: 580). The novel's major preoccupation is "Jude Fawley's developing awareness of his personal being and his efforts to define himself in order to function effectively and usefully in society (Ibid: 581).

JO occupies a special place in Hardy's canon, and stands among the books that have been carefully examined. In fact, it has been reviewed virulently at the time of its release, "a titanic bad book by Mr. Hardy," (Cox, 1979: 261) and "a book whose tendency throughout is so shameful" (Ibid: 269). *The New York World*, *Balckwood*, *The Critic* decry the novel, and 'The Bookman calls it "a novel of lubricity"' (Schwartz, 1970: 797). The attacks are justified by his handling of the issues of marriage, the New Woman,

his attack of the education system and his championing of the working class, but also the ambivalent gender of Jude, Sue as well as Philotson. No other novel by Hardy has ever received the harsh criticism that befell *JO*.

Can Thomas Hardy's last novel, *Jude the Obscure*, be regarded as the tragic act in his career, his *hamartia*⁴¹? Is it the fatal flaw which has ended Hardy's career as a fiction writer? What was the author's guilt?

The real blow to the eminently shockable Victorian public was the fact that Hardy treated the sexual undertheme of his book more or less frankly: less frankly, he complained, than he had wished, but more frankly than was normal or acceptable." The controversy over *Jude the Obscure* appears at first to be of the same type as that aroused by *Madame Bovary*: a case of society not wanting to grant the existence of conditions conducive to a way of life that lead to what is considered deviant behavior.

(Schwartz, 1970: 798)

The deviant behavior in question is, it is my contention, relates to Jude's performing of gender, his (un)doing gender, but above all Sue's whose lot will be discussed in the following chapter. Considering the Victorian standards, Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead constitute an odd couple. Unlike, Henchard, Jude is not hubristic; he is neither foolishly proud nor arrogant. The hubris is that of society.

1. Jude the Androgyne

Jude the Androgyne does not belong in the initial list of titles Thomas Hardy has chosen for the novel at stake. The list comprises *The Simpletons* which is replaced by *Heart Insurgents* which, in turn, is followed by *The Recalcitrants*. "Jude focuses on the dilemma of a perceptive man in an uncongenial world, and on particular kinds of response to this situation" remarks Michael E. Hasset (1971: 432). It is my pinion that *Jude the Androgyne* is another title the author could have seriously envisaged. I can read Jude's obscurity in

⁴¹ The *hamartia* is not, strictly speaking, voluntary, in that the agent does not freely choose the act with full knowledge of its particulars, neither is it, strictly speaking, involuntary, in that it is not wholly unforeseen. Aristotle's tragic *hamartia*, then, falls somewhere between an act that is fully intended and one that is completely unexpected. (Eden, 2005: 46)

terms of gender; he is neither male nor female, but both. He is obscure because he cannot comply with the sex-role system of society, and he fails because he is androgynous.

Critics like Laura Green and Lauren M.E. Goodlad discern the same phenomenon in the novel. Green observes that “[a] conventionally Victorian opposition between the domestic and social demands of women and the intellectual of the male protagonist does recur in Hardy’s novels” (1995: 523). In her “*Toward a Victorianist Theory of Androgynous Experiment*” (2005), the aforementioned Goodlad includes “Thomas Hardy’s Jude Fawley”, in a list of “nineteenth- century characters such as Harriet Martineau's Dr. Hope, Charlotte Bronte's Lucy Snowe, Wilkie Collins's Marian Halcombe, Anthony Trollope's Madame Max, George Gissing's Rhoda Nunn” who display various masculinities and/or, in Halberstam’s words, “a multiplicity of masculinities” (Goodlad, 2005: 222).

Jude Fawley is not an antihero. The term antihero is discharged here from some of the characteristics its traditional definition comprise, i.e., pettiness, ignominy and dishonesty, but retains passivity, ineffectuality and above all, the disillusionment that characterizes the existentialist central characters of the writings post-Second World War. He is an antihero in so far as he is “the man who is given the vocation of failure” (Cuddon, 199:43). Jude is, to a certain extent, the very male character that can be said to comply with the features found in androgynous individuals. Androgyny abounds in *Jude the Obscure*; indeed the ultimate Hardyan novel can easily bear another title wherein the word androgynous would reign undisputed. The bulk with which the author constructed the major characters, Jude and Sue but also secondary characters such as Phillotson and Arabella is partially constituted of a blended gender where men are both male and female and women behave now as females and then as males.

Besides gender, both Jude and Sue display an (im)possible fusion between flesh and spirit, rationality and irrationality, *animus and anima*, The Chinese Yin-Yang, the Hindu Tantra and Devas, and so forth. Both battle “with the class and gender self-constructions [their] culture offers [them]” (Langland, 1993: 32). One can state that Jude and Sue are the two sides of the same coin, and even the two other characters against whom they are somewhat set, i.e. Phillotson and Arabella, are engaged in the same gender (con)fusion. There is a quadrangular arrangement in which the four individuals swing to masculinity and femininity and often settle in the middle station that answers to the name of androgyny. Richard Beckman observes that there is some sort of complementariness between Jude, Sue and Arabella; “[they] correspond to Jude’s body and soul, his sense and intellect, his earthy durability and airy fragility, his Caliban and his Ariel” (Beckman, 1963: 82), his femininity and masculinity, I am inclined to add and Phillotson is his devalued alter ego. Jude is a Butlerian ‘subject’ who passes from a state of nescience and innocence to that of knowledge.

While the Hegelian ‘*geist*’ (mind or spirit) which is Butler’s model voyages, and experiences a process which has at its ends ignorance and (self)knowledge, Jude begins with a mind and heart full of dreams and ambitions to end with disillusion and an embittered heart. This is corroborated by the critics and reviewers classifying *Jude the Obscure* in the category of *bildungsroman* genre owing to Jude’s plodding which the plots tellingly illustrates through the divisions of the narrative which stretches from stations such Marygreen, and Christmisnter, which are different stations in Jude’s journey toward ‘enlightenment’. The *rites de passage* in *Jude* are but a continual process of (un)manning.

As Giordano puts it, “Jude the Obscure is preoccupied with Jude Fawley’s developing awareness of his personal being and his efforts to define himself in order to function effectively and usefully in society” (Giordano, 1983: 581). Self-definition is the

leitmotif *par excellence* of the book; Jude being now a gentleman, a manual toiler and then a tender-hearted individual who blushes and grows tearful almost more than all the Hardy female characters put together. *Jude* is “a kind of anti-*bildungsroman*” Giordano argues (Ibid: 589).

1.1. Jude Fawley, the Choirboy?

Margaret R. Higonnet opens the aforementioned text where she deals with Hardy, his critics and gender by juxtaposing a passage from Hardy’s autobiographical book *The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy* (1984), and another from the second chapter in *JO* to highlight the vulnerable masculinity of both the young Hardy and the young Jude (Higonnet, 2009:117).

Indeed, when we meet Jude for the first time, he is a boy of eleven; a choirboy and it shows. When we open *Jude the Obscure*, we are first confronted with a departure, that of the village schoolmaster. The departure in itself proves to be important in that it reveals the sensitive Jude Fawley, “A little boy of eleven, who had been thoughtfully assisting in the packing, joined the group of men, and as they rubbed their chins he spoke up, blushing at the sound of his own voice” (I.i.3). In addition to Jude and his departing teacher, there was the blacksmith and the farm bailiff.

He is still a boy and that is probably why one can admit that “Tears rose into” (ibid: 4) his eyes on attending the scene of Phillotson’s departure for Christminster, the city where he is due to teach. Unlike the regular pupils of Phillotson who showed no enthusiasm to help their teacher pack his things, and are conspicuously indifferent to his leaving, Jude was totally submerged by emotions and showed it. The bond between him and the teacher illustrates the pedigree of Jude and his teacher too. “There was a quiver in his lip now” (I.i.5) which indicates a smooth affectionate person whose face is one “wearing the fixity of a thoughtful child's who has felt the pricks of life somewhat before

his time” (Ibid). The authorial tone is not for gaiety neither as we are, from the outset, assaulted with gloomy passages which read as follows:

He said to himself, in the melodramatic tones of a whimsical boy, that the schoolmaster had drawn at that well scores of times on a morning like this, and would never draw there any more. 'I've seen him look down into it, when he was tired with his drawing just as I do now, and when he rested a bit before carrying the buckets home. But he was too clever to bide here any longer--a small sleepy place like this!' A tear rolled from his eye into the depths of the well. The morning was a little foggy, and the boy's breathing unfurled itself as a thicker fog upon the still and heavy air.

(I.i.5)

A schoolboy bidding farewell to his endeared schoolmaster is almost an ordinary scene, and the signs Jude show are plausible. In addition to his psychological frailty, Jude is “slender in frame” (I.ii. 7). However, as his aunt Drusilla puts it, the boy “is crazy for books, that he is. It runs in our family rather. His cousin Sue is just the same,” (I. ii. 8). Here, we discover that the gender of Jude and that of his cousin are almost the same as both are aligned in their likes for books by Aunt Drusilla. From the onset, one guesses that Jude Fawley is the (epi)centre of the whole story, and the other characters are closely related to on him. Arabella, Phillotson and even Sue are schemers, diversely cruel victimizers of Jude and contribute in his tragedy. In her ‘Growing up to be a Man: Thomas Hardy and masculinity’, Jane Thomas underscores the inescapable fact that Hardy was harsh with himself in his boyhood estimating his character by the standard of masculinity that prevailed then among the rough labourers and the bourgeois professionals (2015: 118).

Although healthy, he was, we read, ‘fragile and precocious to a degree’. His temperament was ‘ecstatic’ and he possessed an extraordinary sensitivity to music, so much so that, at the age of four, certain tunes played by his father on the violin at home in the evening moved him to tears ‘though he strenuously tried to hide them’. Hardy was clearly concerned by what he terms ‘this peculiarity in himself’ – or ‘Tommy’ as he refers to himself in those early years – which ‘set him wondering at a phenomenon to which he ventured not to confess.

(Ibid)

Jane Thomas points out that “hardy’s model for himself as a deeply sensitive child is both literary and feminine” (Ibid). He identified with Calantha, a female character in *Hardy’s Broken Heart*.

‘How ugly it is here!’ He murmured. (I.ii.8). His sense of the *beau* unveils a susceptible self, and this utterance prefigures the kind of lot awaiting the boy, but also the sort of ‘transgendered’ character Hardy constructed. Tears sprung from his eyes more than once as though he was a girl or had the sensitivity of the fair sex. The author purposely underscores Jude’s link with the birds which he nourished though he can anger Mr. Troutham for whom he works. “A magic thread of fellow-feeling united his own life with theirs. Puny and sorry as those lives were, they much resembled his own.” (I.ii: 9)

As expected, the farmer punishes him and dismissed him for having given the birds food, and the punishment rendered Jude miserable.

He was a boy who could not himself bear to hurt anything. He had never brought home a nest of young birds without lying awake in misery half the night after, and often reinstating them and the nest in their original place the next morning. He could scarcely bear to see trees cut down or lopped, from a fancy that it hurt them; and late pruning, when the sap was up, and the tree bled profusely, had been a positive grief to him in his infancy. This weakness of character, as it may be called, suggested that he was the sort of man who was born to ache a good deal before the fall of the curtain upon his unnecessary life should signify that all was well with him again. He carefully picked his way on tiptoe among the earthworms, without killing a single one. (I.ii: 11)

Jude was troubled by what happened to him and the birds; he pondered over the “[e]vents did not rhyme quite as he had thought. Nature’s logic was too horrid for him to care for. That mercy towards one set of creatures was cruelty towards another sickened his sense of harmony [. . .] If he could only prevent himself growing up! He did not want to be a man.” (I.ii: 13). Right away, the pitch is given; manhood is not interesting for Jude who does not long to become a man and immerse in the masculine world where virility, aggressiveness and all the representative characteristics of maleness reign. “Jude appears to consist of a complex blend of traditionally male and female attributes and continues to seek a

semblance of security” remarks Stefan Horlacher (2007: 117). For Horlacher, Jude’s “male identity is insecure, fractured and fraught with problems” (Ibid: 116).

Before he grows older, the young Jude starts to yearn for Christminster, the city of knowledge where his teacher, Richard Phillotson whose departure tore his heart, had gone. “He was getting so romantically attached to Christminster that, like a young lover alluding to his mistress, he felt bashful at mentioning its name again. He pointed to the light in the sky--hardly perceptible to their older eyes.” (I.iii: 19). So before he becomes an adult, Jude already endures the pangs of indeterminacy being “an ancient man in some phases of thought, much younger than his years in others—“(I. iv: 22).

Rightaway, he displays an ambivalence that is also applicable to his gender constitution. He can know about the cupidity of adults before he became one; on meeting Vilpert, a quack-doctor, who promised to publicise his pills and cures in exchange of a book of grammars. Jude does his part, the doctor forgot all about it. “Jude [. . .] was an unsophisticated boy, but the gift of sudden insight which is sometimes vouchsafed to children showed him all at once what shoddy humanity the quack was made of” (I.iv: 25).

Happily, his teacher and friend, Phillotson sent him the desired books, and thus managed to get a bit nearer to the city of light, Christminster though he was somewhat disappointed to discover that it was hard to learn Latin and Greek word by word. Jude grows older and mature; works for his aunt then launched in masonry in Alfredston. He becomes well committed in his enterprise of autodidacy which assuredly would lead him to Christminster. Reveries about his future life in Christminster accompanie him everywhere and one day hise daydreaming stumble against an earthy reality. He is stricken by a piece of flesh of a pig thrown by one of the three girls whom he saw at the stream. One of them,

was a fine dark-eyed girl, not exactly handsome but capable of passing as such at a little distance, despite some coarseness of skin and fibre. She had a round and prominent bosom, full lips, perfect teeth, and the rich complexion of a cochin hen's egg. She was a complete and substantial female animal--no more, no less; and Jude was almost certain that to her was attributable the

enterprise of attracting his attention from dreams of the humaner letters to what was simmering in the minds around him.

(I.vi: 36)

This is Arabella Donn, one of the two “females” who holds sway over him and balance him from manhood to womanhood through the episodes where they are engaged together in communal affairs. She immediately allures him and momentarily stands on his virtual way to Christminster.

“Whether you do or whether you don't, he's as simple as a child. I could see it as you courted on the bridge, when he looked at 'ee as if he had never seen a woman before in his born days. Well--he's to be had by any woman who can get him to care for her a bit, if she likes to set herself to catch him the right way” (I.vi: 39). This was the replication of one of the two other girls to Arabella after she joined them.

Thus, Jude surrenders to the desire of meeting Arabella though he is due to study his Classics. Visibly, the man is unable to resist this new inclination and all along his relationship with Arabella, we shall see a reversal of roles; Jude acting like a woman while Arabella displays attributes proper to men.

Had he promised to call for her? Surely he had! She would wait indoors, poor girl, and waste all her afternoon on account of him. There was a something in her, too, which was very winning, apart from promises. He ought not to break faith with her. Even though he had only Sundays and week-day evenings for reading he could afford one afternoon, seeing that other young men afforded so many.

(I.vii: 40)

She manages to have him forget his dreams about Christminster and before long succeeds to assert “her sway in his soul” (I.vii: 45). All of a sudden, the whole philosophy that he has constructed falls like a house of cards,

What were his books to him; what were his intentions, hitherto adhered to so strictly, as to not wasting a single minute of time day by day? 'Wasting,' it depended on your point of view to define that: he was just living for the first time: not wasting life. It was better to love a woman than to be a graduate, or a parson; ay, or a pope.

(I.vii: 45)

As aforementioned, the roles are reversed in this liaison between Jude and Arabella; the scene that followed their meeting shows. Indeed while the 'man' indulged in

[r]etracing by the light of dawn the road he had followed a few hours earlier, under cover of darkness, with his sweetheart by his side, he reached the bottom of the hill, where he walked slowly, and stood still. He was on the spot where he had given her the first kiss. As the sun had only just risen it was possible that nobody had passed there since. Jude looked on the ground, and sighed. He looked closely, and could just discern in the damp dust the imprints of their feet as they had stood locked in each other's arms. She was not there now, and 'the embroidery of imagination upon the stuff of nature' so depicted her past presence that a void Was (sic) in his heart which nothing could fill. A pollard willow stood close to the place, and that Willow was different from all other willows in the world. Utter annihilation of the six days which must elapse before he could see her again as he had promised would have been his intensest wish if he had had only the week to live.

(I.vii: 46)

Arabella "came along the same way with her two companions of the Saturday. She passed unheeding the scene of the kiss, and the willow that marked it, though chattering freely on the subject to the other two" (Ibid). Arabella manages to trap Jude one more time by doing the thing that chained them through the bonds of marriage.

There is some sort of dramatic irony in this occurrence; chivalry seems ill-suited to Jude who acts gentlemanly with Arabella and pretends that he has to marry her, abide by her and assume the consequence of his deeds. Thus the "banns were put" (I. ix: 56). At the age of nineteen the homeless and jobless Jude is ensnared in marriage, and on their first night after the marriage he discovers that her hair is fake and that she had already worked as a barmaid. One might as well say that Jude is the victim not Arabella. What is more, he hurries to marry her because he is convinced that she is pregnant, and when she tells him that this is not the case, the roof falls on his bare head.

'That accounts for his crying so. Poor creature!' (I. x: 63). The words are Jude's who is moved by the pig which has stayed without food for one day. 'Upon my soul I would sooner have gone without the pig than have had this to do!' said Jude. 'A creature I have fed with my own hands.' (Ibid) The following sentence emphasises Jude's emotivity,

and Arabella almost scolds him and exhorts him,

“Don't be such a tender-hearted fool! There's the stickingknife--the one with the point. Now whatever you do, don't stick un too deep.' (I.x.63)

One wonders who is the man and who is the woman at this stage. Indeed, Jude as it has been seen during the schoolmaster's departure is tender-hearted, and tender with animals be they birds or pigs. If one considers the traditional measure of gender traits, Jude can be sex-typed as female. He fails to slaughter the pig correctly and Arabella is discontented and he “felt dissatisfied with himself as a man at what he had done, though aware of his lack of common sense,” (Ibid, 65).

It is the women who are the active agents in all this unsavoury imbroglio: the story is carried on, and life is represented as carried on, entirely by their means. The men are passive, suffering, rather good than otherwise, victims of these and of fate. Not only do they never dominate, but they are quite incapable of holding their own against these remorseless ministers of destiny, these determined operators, managing all the machinery of life so as to secure their own way.

(Mrs. Oliphant qtd inCox, 1979: 272)

The first quarrel between Jude and Arabella occurs after he learns about the advices her friends had given her as to the marriage. Arabella throws Jude's books and he reacts somehow violently for a tender-hearted man. She flees towards the highway and started to grow hysterical. In the fight, Arabella tells Jude about his belligerent parents who have divorced because the man supposedly ill-treated the wife. Jude's mother has committed suicide while his father has disappeared in South Wessex. Jude's aunt (his father's sister) too could not stand being married and Jude read this as omen.

The news about his parents and the scene with his undignified wife would have made Jude commit suicide. As suicide fails and “death abhorred him as a subject” (I.xi: 70), Jude turns to liquor to soothe his pains. Arabella leaves the cottage where she and Jude have spent their honeymoon, she sends him a letter explaining that she is to leave for Australia with her parents. Jude does not object at all and is even relieved to get rid of her.

In fact, Arabella is so indifferent to Jude's fate that she has included his own photograph in the goods she and her parents have sold by auctions to raise the required money to go to Australia. Once Arabella is away, and Jude feels as though he is "his own again" (Ibid: 73). Thus, Part one of the novel ends on an optimistic tone; Jude resumes his freedom and can concentrate on his ambition of joining Christminster.

Once Arabella is no longer there, Jude is rejuvenated and he "would now have been described as a young man with a forcible, meditative, and earnest, rather than handsome, cast of countenance" (II. I: 77). Jude somewhat releases himself from Arabella, but soon gets ensnared in the claws of another woman whose photograph he discovers on the mantelpiece of his aunt's. Sue Bridehead, his cousin from the inimical branch of the family, happens to lodge in Christminster, the city of the dreams. "His aunt would not give him the photograph. But it haunts[] him; and ultimately form[s] a quickening ingredient in his latent intent of following his friend the schoolmaster thither" (II. I: 78). Jude reaches Christminster at last, and revives the spectre of his cousin in him. He requests her photograph from his aunt and she sent it, but warns him against bringing "disturbance into the family by going to see the girl or her relations. Jude, a ridiculously affectionate fellow, promise[s] nothing, put[s] the photograph on the mantelpiece, kisse[s] it" (II.II: 86).

Though as emotional as a woman, Jude Fawley is strong and exerts a hard job, which is masonry. "He was young and strong, or he never could have executed with such zest the undertakings to which he now applied himself, since they involved reading most of the night after working all the day" (II.ii :87). A strong man who feels "very shy of looking at the girl [Sue] in the desk" (Ibid: 89). Rather than approaching her, he contents himself with espial and fancying she is there near him. Once again, Jude grows by the mere fact of being close to Sue; "he trembled, and turned his face away with a shy instinct to prevent her recognizing him, though as she had never once seen him she could not possibly do so;

and might very well never have heard even his name” (II.ii: 90). She begins to overwhelm his realm and seriously influence him as though she was the seducer. He devised that his relationship with her would be that of a cousin to cousin no more. His prospects are those a man can pursue, but Jude is not that man.

Jude decides to make the first step toward Sue and awaits her just like Gabriel awaits Bathsheba. Jude can do with a little of something, and to “see her, and to be himself unseen and unknown, was enough for him at present” (I.iii: 92). He fancies and contents himself with the thought of being ensphered by the same harmonies as Sue in the church where he envisages approaching her. He cannot approach her because he feels he is not ready. “Some men would have rushed incontinently to her, snatched the pleasure of easy friendship which she could hardly refuse, and have left the rest to chance. Not so Jude” (I. iv: 98). He is a different man; a man blended with womanhood. What is more, he realises that Sue’s influence over him grows day by day. He realized the pains he was going through and thought of knowing her “to cure himself of this unexpected and unauthorized passion. A voice whispered that, though he desired to know her, he did not desire to be cured” (I.iv: 99).

At last, it is Sue who makes the move and goes to see him, but he is not in his office. The note she leaves at his lodging is sufficiently alarming to have him arrange a meeting that very evening. In fact, what alarms Jude and urges him to rush toward her is the news of her probable departure from Christminster. They meet at last and Jude cannot help feeling prevent bashful. He learns about Sue’s relationship with his idol and previous teacher, Phillotson. Sue goesw dearer for Jude for whom

She was so vibrant that everything she did seemed to have its source in feeling. An exciting thought would make her walk ahead so fast that he could hardly keep up with her; and her sensitiveness on some points was such that it might have been misread as vanity. It was with heartsickness he perceived that, while her sentiments towards him were those of the frankest friendliness only, he loved her more than before becoming acquainted with her.
(I.iv: 104)

So as to keep her in Christminster, Jude has the idea of asking Phillotson to hire Sue as a teacher. So Phillotson accepts and hires Sue, who becomes a stopgap or temporary substitute. Sue is attracted the old Richard Phillotson too and Jude has a “glad flush of embarrassment” when they three met at the exhibition (I.v: 109). Jude is ready to acquiesce at Sue’s opinion whether it is right or wrong and this is part of the influence she exerts on him. “Jude in the meantime had been waiting impatiently for Friday. On both Wednesday and Thursday he is so much under the influence of his desire to see her that he walks after dark some distance along the road in the direction of the village, and on returning to his room to read, finds himself quite unable to concentrate on the page. On Friday, as soon as he gets himself up, makes a hasty tea, he sets out to meet Sue. “The trees overhead deepened the gloom of the hour, and they dripped sadly upon him, impressing him with forebodings--illogical forebodings; for though he knew that he loved her he also knew that he could not be more to her than he was” (I.v: 111). Poor Jude soon discovers that he has brought by himself Phillotson into the world of Sue. On the dreamed Friday of his visit to the school, he can see some sort of intimacy between Sue and Phillotson and this tears his heart.

Jude is unable to decide whether he must woo his cousin or no. The same indecision characterizes him in his approach of the colleges and universities he eagerly wishes to join. In fact, he is unable to opt for a firm act, and even the prospect of sending application letters to some provosts and wardens seem to him awkward once it has been done. Jude soon realizes that the scheme of joining one of Christminster colleges is out of his reach and he consoles himself that the companionship of Sue would cure him from the impossible ambition of becoming a learned man. In this and other things, Jude resembles Phillotson who has also been deprived of the desire of furthering his studies. “Phillotson had, no doubt, passed through a similar intellectual disappointment to that which now

enveloped him. But the schoolmaster had been since blest with the consolation of sweet Sue; while for him there was no consoler” (Ibid: 119).

One more time, the weak Jude reverts to alcohol to drown his sorrows. He becomes self-conceited, impudent and boastfully talking of his knowledge which the dwellers of the colleges do not possess according to what he says. He grows a clown reciting Latin words for a glass of whisky. He spends the night with Sue, but leaves her lodgings unknown fearing to face her. His employer dismisses him, so he goes to Marygreen to get some rest after his failure in love and ambition.

He wishes he was a woman to cry, and this is one of the other ironies of the narrative. Behaving as a woman throughout the whole story, Jude is denied the only way of relieving his pain because of a supposed virility. As Ingham points out, “Though Jude cannot weep as a woman would, he acts like a woman by internalising the failure of his academic ambition as a lack of self-worth” (Ingham, 1996: 171). At last he decides for the church and the ecclesiastical career. Jude is obliged to veer in the direction of a career as bishop without being an enthusiastic believer or preacher.

Jude is restless and self-seeking; even his gender identity is not settled, but in process like Sue. Both are the two faces of the same medal. Jude moves to Melchester where Sue lives now to keep her company and this he does docilely. In Melchester, Jude has the opportunity to have his first *tête à tête* with the woman he loves intellectually. Jude, for sure, is a tender-hearted creature. He is something of an androgyne with a tender heart, tearful eyes, and easily reddening face, built with rough hands. He has the hands of a man whose bread comes from the frequent manipulation of rocks and bricks. During a conversation at Melchester, Jude had Sue admit that she plans to get married with Phillotson in two-year time and launch a business together. Jude is not indifferent, but Sue manages to have him accept a deal which consists in not dealing with this angering topic

any more and he accepts although he knows that she is ambivalent. In fact, as far as gender is concerned, both are riddles; one playing the role of man while he ought to act as a woman while the other one behaves like a woman while he is expected to show virility. To come back to Sue's influence on Jude, the latter admires her modernism while she claims to be mediaeval. Jude was distressed because "Sue's conduct was one lovely conundrum to him" (III.ii: 141).

Jude's features are not those of a virile man, and even the nuns in Melchester College consider him a "kindlyfaced young man" (III.iii:145). Jude receives Sue in his room when she flees from the College after she has been severely punished. He must admit that he does not know how to cope with her. She talks like a man, but often reacts like a child. "He looked away, for that epicene tenderness of hers was too harrowing. Was it that which had broken the heart of the poor leader-writer; and was he to be the next one?" (III.iv: 159). Jude is convinced that Sue is an epicene, and an epicene is the other name of the androgyne, someone having characteristics of both sexes or someone who has no characteristics of either sex, an androgyne indeed. Jude is vexed once more when she tells him that she fears Phillotson's reaction because he "is the only man in the world for whom I have any respect or fear. I hope he'll forgive me; but he'll scold me dreadfully, I expect!" (III.V: 160). She vexes him again when refuses to let him declare his love for her, "You mustn't love me. You are to like me--that's all!" (Ibid: 161).

And one more time, she is no longer by his side, and sends him a message which is all the more distressing,

What I really write about, dear Jude, is something I said to you at parting. You had been so very good and kind to me that when you were out of sight I felt what a cruel and ungrateful woman I was to say it, and it has reproached me ever since. *If you want to love me, Jude, you may:* I don't mind at all; and I'll never say again that you mustn't! 'Now I won't write any more about that. You do forgive your thoughtless friend for her cruelty, and won't make her miserable by saying you don't?—Ever. (Ibid)

Jude is not deceived by her words, but he is afraid of getting submerged by Sue's

impulsiveness. He sends three notes inquiring about her, but she does no reply so he resolves to pay her a visit at Shaston where she has said she would stay few days with a fellow-student sister who has a school there. She is in in bed and cannot see him. She sends him back and writes another message saying: “Forgive me for my petulance yesterday! I was horrid to you; I know it, and I feel perfectly miserable at my horridness. It was so dear of you not to be angry! Jude, please still keep me as your friend and associate, with all my faults. I'll try not to be like it again.” (III.V: 164).

Jude can console himself by discovering that Phillotson is a victim like him. The next letter Jude receives from Susanna Florence Mary Bridehead is not as joyful as the previous ones. She informs him about her imminent marriage with Phillotson. The poor man was “staggered under the news; could eat no breakfast; and kept on drinking tea because his mouth was so dry” (III.VII: 176). He receives another letter which is no less harmful as it runs

“Jude, will you give me away? I have nobody else who could do it so conveniently as you, being the only married relation I have here on the spot, even if my father were friendly enough to be willing, which he isn't. I hope you won't think it a trouble? I have been looking at the marriage service in the Prayer-book, and it seems to me very humiliating that a giver-away should be required at all. According to the ceremony as there printed, my bridegroom chooses me of his own will and pleasure; but I don't choose him. Somebody *gives* me to him, like a she-ass or she-goat, or any other domestic animal. Bless your exalted views of woman, O Churchman! But I forget: I am no longer privileged to tease you.--Ever,
'SUSANNA FLORENCE MARY BRIDEHEAD.'

(Ibid: 177)

Of course Jude reluctantly agrees to ‘give’ his cousin to Phillotson. In order to perform this role, the bride has to dwell some days with Jude so as to be properly married. One day they go on errands and enter into the church where she is due to be united to Phillotson. She holds Jude’s arm, but cannot prevent from vexing him by mentioning his union with Arabella. At this juncture Jude proves his gender trouble and his being neither a man nor a woman by reacting emotively to one her vexing remarks that was followed by a pathetic

apology. "The appeal was so remorseful that Jude's eyes were even wetter than hers as he pressed her hand for Yes." (III. Vii: 180). In fact, Sue was so particular that "[p]ossibly she would go on inflicting such pains again and again, and grieving for the sufferer again and again, in all her colossal inconsistency" (III.vii: 182). Jude wonders if she has really left her handkerchief behind as she claims; or whether it were that she had miserably wished to tell him of a love that at the last moment she could not bring herself to express (III. Viii: 183). A fancy or a real motive, Sue returns to Jude's lodging at the very moment of her departure to Phillotson's as his wife, and this very gesture revives Jude's flame.

Though she does leave, Jude amuses himself with his queer ideas and relies on Sue's unpredictability to see her appear at any moment in his lodging, "[H]e returned to the room and sat as watchers sit on old-Midsummer eves expecting the phantom of the Beloved. But she did not come" (III.viii: 183). Between the drunkenness of liquor and that of work, Jude opts for the latter that affords him daydreams and too many ifs. "[. . .] in the cathedral [where he had some stonemasonry to do] he seemed to hear a voice behind him, and to be possessed with an idea that she would come back. She could not possibly go home with Phillotson, he fancied. The feeling grew and stirred" (III.viii: 183).

He could not shake off the feeling that she would come back and sleep in the little room adjoining his own, in which she had slept so many previous days. Her actions were always unpredictable: why should she not come? Gladly would he have compounded for the denial of her as a sweetheart and wife by having her live thus as a fellow-lodger and friend, even on the most distant terms.

(Ibid)

His aunt Drusilla's is an opportunity to see her again. He sends to her informing her about aunt Drusilla's growing seriously ill. Jude comes across Arabella who is back from Australia and works now as a barmaid. He lets her engage him in a journey to Aldbrickham where they spend a night in a "thid-rate inn" (III.ix: 191). He learns from her that she has been guilty of bigamy in Australia. At this juncture, one is stricken by the

irrelevance of Jude having fun with Arabella again, but this is probably intended to be part of his manhood. He cannot not resist her charms when he sees her in the bar.

In fact, Arabella manages to drag him toward that inn and even have him forget his appointment with Sue whom he meets only later. Jude is troubled more than never; “[h]is passion for Sue trouble[s] his soul; yet his lawful abandonment to the society of Arabella for twelve hours seeme[s] instinctively a worse thing--even though she had not told him of her Sydney husband till afterwards” (III.x: 201). Imbalance grows in him and he knows “he was a man of too many passions to make a good clergyman; the utmost he could hope for was that in a life of constant internal warfare between flesh and spirit the former might not always be victorious” (Ibid). Jude goes on meeting Sue despite her being legally united with Phillotson, and they meet at Shaston on Sue’s request. Once again, she plays with him and has him do what she wants and even judges him “You are Joseph the dreamer of dreams, dear Jude. And a tragic Don Quixote. And sometimes you are St. Stephen, who, while they were stoning him, could see Heaven opened. O my poor friend and comrade, you’ll suffer yet!’ (IV.i: 215).

Accordingly, Jude is once again entitled to the usual versatility of Sue at Shaston. This time, she invites him to leave the house, then retains him outside and makes confessions which bewilder him more than ever. Jude cannot know which way to turn. The death of Aunt Drusilla is another opportunity for them to be together, the moment to speak about his night with Arabella and she confesses her indifference to Phillotson. Jude/Sue, who is who? They are alike as mentioned afore, and their reaction to the cry of the rabbit at Marygreen shows, “I haven’t been able to sleep at all, and then I heard the rabbit, and couldn’t help thinking of what it suffered, till I felt I must come down and kill it, But I am so glad you got there first. . . . They ought not to be allowed to set these steel traps, ought they!” (IV.ii: 225). Though these are Sue’s words, they reflect Jude’s thoughts too. He,

too, cannot sleep and is moved by the rabbit's agony and resolves to deliver it from its pain by killing it.

"I'll never care about my doctrines or my religion any more! Let them go!" (IV.ii: 226), These supplicatory words are not Sue's, but Jude's. Jude's ambition for apostleship is being daunted by his infatuation with Sue the same way his wish to join Christminster world of learning is hindered by Arabella. He buries his theological books in the same manner he gets rid of his grammar books when he first meets Arabella. He prefers to destroy his books so as to feel relieved from the burden of feeling hypocrite, "In his passion for Sue he could now stand as an ordinary sinner, and not as a whitened sepulchre" (IV.iii: 229).

Jude is like his cousin and Phillotson can see it clearly when he confesses to his friend and former student-fellow that he has resolved to let Sue go and join Jude whom she visibly loves. Phillotson rightly considers Jude a Shelleyan figure whose involvement with Sue singles him from other men. In fact, Phillotson seems fit to judge both of them because they remind him of the famous lovers Paul and Virginia whom Bernard de St. Pierre has moulded in androgynous clay. They are also paralleled to the Shelleyan Laon and Cyntha who are brother and sister in an early version of Shelley's poem.

Jude deserts his work, his ecclesiastic ambition and burns his books and in doing so "he disclaims all masculine ambition. In doing so he becomes as unmanly as the narrator, as he dedicates himself to the decadent role of defending 'tooth and nail' his affection for another man's wife and in pressing upon her his 'impassioned attentions'" (Ingham, 1996:172). The instant Sue tells him about her departure from Phillotson's. He decides to settle with her in Aldbrickham where no one can recognize them, he fancies. Sue's leaving of Phillotson coincides with Arabella's return and her begging Jude to ask her for divorce in order to be able to marry legally with the man she has married illegally in Australia.

“[...] your will is law to me” (IV.v.251), “He could see that she was distressed and tearful at his criticisms, and soothed her, saying: ‘There, dear; don’t mind! Crucify me, if you will! You know you are all the world to me, whatever you do!’” (IV.v: 253). These utterances are some of the declarations the traditional binarism cannot envision in man’s mouth. By a pure coincidence, the couple books in the same inn where Jude spends a night with Arabella and the waiting-maid tells Sue about this event. For Ingham, Jude “does become more woman-like in deciding to find his fulfilment in the emotional side of life” (Ingham, 1996 : 172).

Sue reproaches Jude his being touchy, but she, too, is touchy, very touchy indeed. However, Sue is right in pointing to Jude’s over sensitiveness and one night this very touchiness springs when Arabella knocks at the door of Jude’s house for the second time after she has been dismissed a first time by Sue, “An inconvenient sympathy seemed to be rising in Jude’s breast at the appeal” of Arabella who was seemingly in trouble and required his help (V.ii: 277). One may see at this point Jude the androgynous type who combines touchiness and chivalry. “‘Poor thing--I must do her the kindness of hearing what’s the matter, I suppose,’ said Jude in much perplexity” (Ibid: 277). This is another instance of the fusion of gentlemanliness and motherliness in Jude. In fact, despite Sue’s repeated supplications, Jude for once, exhibits a manly determination to override the woman’s weakening appeal to “hear what it is she [Arabella] is so anxious to tell me. No man could do less.” (V.ii: 278). Jude’s demeanour is eloquent; it complies with the Victorian model of gentleman ship and chivalry. He beholds Arabella as “an erring, careless, unreflecting fellow creature,” (Ibid: 279) in need of the man’s help. This manly behaviour melts at the instant Sue foregrounds the idea of marriage which Jude earnestly wishes for. However, the marriage is postponed at Sue’s demand, and Jude is again made sport of by Sue.

At last He learns about the reason which has impelled Arabella to ask for his help. The child she had in Australia and who is Jude's lawfully child is received at Jude's home, and Sue does not object. The troubles start to befall to the "obscure pair" (V.vii: 325) who is now burdened with the child with the queer name, Little Father Time. People start gossiping and Jude finds it difficult to get a job employment in Aldbrickham hence their opting for a nomadic life.

Jude reverts to the idea of marriage and agrees with Sue to avoid the church and do it at the registrar's office, but on the D-day, he is as depressed as Sue by the prevailing atmosphere which discourages couples like Jude and Sue who are not that decisive. In fact, it is as if Jude has grown a clone of Sue, thinking her thoughts, uttering her words, reacting eccentrically. She has succeeded to emasculate him and manipulate him like a puppet. He sends back widow Edlin who accompanied them to the office and postpones the wedding ceremony. Seemingly, "He's charmed by her as if she were some fairy!" Arabella remarks (V.v: 307). From Arabella's point of view Jude is a "queer fellow" (V.vii: 329), someone that is easily moved by the feminine tears and supplications. Though she turns to religion, Arabella changes her mind at the sight of Sue and resolves to regain Jude. Jude has thence become a mere victim, a prey swinging from Sue from Arabella and then to Arabella from Sue. 'He's more mine than hers!' she bursts out. 'What right has she to him, I should like to know! I'd take him from her if I could!' (V.viii: 332). These are the very words of Arabella whose opinion about Jude betrays his being objectified. In Richard Beckman's words, "Arabella and Sue correspond to Jude's body and soul, his sense and intellect, his earthly durability, and his airy fragility, his Caliban and Ariel" (1963:82).

Jude had been ill for a long time due to his exposure to stone's dust; in the meantime, his child and companion have become the breadwinners. After having settled temporarily in different places, he thinks it better to rejoin Christminster, the city of his

dreams, admitting “I should like to go back to live there--perhaps to die there! In two or three weeks I might, I think. It will then be June, and I should like to be there by a particular day (V.viii: 337). On their return to Christminster, Jude can attend the procession of collegians and is recognized by some fellow masons who remind him of his first years in the city of light. Jude, then, starts to talk of his frustrated dreams and his plight in a mood that is one of a preacher, to the displeasure of Sue, who is against Jude’s outpouring. He compels Sue and the children to await under the rain to “gratify his infatuation” of Christminster (VI.i: 347). Christminster is to witness Jude’s final tragedy; the loss of his children, Sue and his own life. Though he has sincerely tried to retain her and help her overcome the loss of the children, Jude cannot help losing his sole *raison d’être*, namely Sue.

Sue, Sue--affliction has brought you to this unreasonable state! After converting me to your views on so many things, to find you suddenly turn to the right--about like this--for no reason whatever, confounding all you have formerly said through sentiment merely! You root out of me what little affection and reverence I had left in me for the church as an old acquaintance. . . . What I can't understand in you is your extraordinary blindness now to your old logic. Is it peculiar to you, or is it common to Woman? Is a woman a thinking unit at all, or a fraction always wanting its integer? How you argued that marriage was only a clumsy contract--which it is--how you showed all the objections to it--all the absurdities. If two and two made four when we were happy together, surely they make four now? I can't understand it, I repeat!

(VI.iii: 370)

Reversal of role, Jude becoming Sue and Sue becoming Jude. Never a man is changed by a woman as Jude does. He may beg her to stay with him, but she refuses. However, one cannot fail to notice that Jude is affected by Sue’s plight and seems indifferent to the death of his children. There is no effusion of melancholy on his part and his tears are strangely absent for the circumstance Jude does not seem affected when he is expected to display melancholy.

His gentleman ship emerges again when Arabella returns to him after she became “lonely, destitute, and houseless” (VI.vi: 391). Indeed, he is almost resourceless, but is

“unable to be harsh with her” (Ibid), so he gives her shelter and lets her drag him in her sombre intrigues which leads him to repeat the same thing error he does at the every beginning when he meets her for the first time. Jude is again tormented by Sue’s talk of departing for Phillotson which he fancies is another of her fancies. He is soon shocked to discover that she genuinely wishes to rejoin the old schoolmaster and reunite her destiny with him sacramentally. His eyes wet once more, and “[t]he blow of her bereavement seemed to have destroyed her reasoning faculty. The once keen vision was dimmed. 'All wrong, all wrong!' he said huskily. 'Error--perversity!'” exclaims Jude in a woman-like manner (VI.iv: 380). He considers her imminent (re)union with Phillotson as a “fanatic prostitution” (Ibid: 381), Sue is determined to finish off the natural prostitution which has resulted in three sacrificed children. “Jude argued, urged, implored; but her conviction was proof against all. It seemed to be the one thing on earth on which she was firm, and that her firmness in this had left her tottering in every other impulse and wish she possessed” (Ibid: 381). Though he has renounced his clerical ambitions, his principles and beliefs for her sake and love, Sue “’s gone from [him]” poor oversensitive lad (VI.v: 383).

The sixth chapter of the last part of the novel displays a sad passage in which the reader encounters Jude extremely embittered by the turn of the events. Sue has really joined Phillotson, his prospects for academic and ecclesiastic studies have died out and his health has started to play a trick on him. Ensnared one more time by Arabella, Jude finds himself compelled to marry her the same way Sue was compelled by her repentant mind to marry Phillotson again. By and bye, Jude is reduced to a mere physical and mental wreck and supplicates Arabella to summon Sue and tell her about his ultimate desire to see her. Tears pour out of Jude’s eyes at the disappointment of not seeing Sue appear before him. Finally, he collects all his strength and ventures on a journey under the rain to Marygreen where Sue dwells. The journey of Jude is reminiscent of Fanny’s in FFMC and Jude’s

supplicatory words were also heard in Fanny's mouth, "Don't go--don't go!" he implored. "This is my last time. I thought it would be less intrusive than to enter your house. And I shall never come again. Don't then be unmerciful. Sue, Sue" (VI.viii: 410).

Penny Boumelha has demonstrated that their lives follow very similar patterns (1999: 142), and Elizabeth Langland argues that "[t]hrough kinship and twinship with Sue, Jude seeks an alternative to the frustrating constructions of his masculinity that his culture holds out" (1993: 33).

Despite their likeness, Jude's gender make-up is more static. He does display conventionally feminine susceptibilities, particularly in his disgust with the cruelties of farm life, which activate the equally conventional association between feminization and social ambition. He feels sorry for animals: he makes common cause with the crows that he is supposed, as a young boy, to be scaring away, and after his marriage, his inability to kill a pig properly causes the practical Arabella to call him a "tender-hearted fool" and Jude to feel "dissatisfied with himself as a man at what he had done" (65)-not because he has done a bad job of killing the pig, but because he has done it at all.

(Green, 1995: 545-46)

Feminine susceptibilities and masculine generosity contribute to make of Jude an androgynous individual. However, he suffers from this androgyny and ends tragically because he cannot have society accept his gender constitution which aligns him in the category of New Man. Jude's tragedy also lies in being divided with Sue. The twain continuously strive to converge, but they end by parting in different and divergent ways.

Happiness was unattainable for Jude because he was perpetually confronted with the sordid, earthly world of men, opposed as it was to his glorious ideal, the realm of ghosts; and the unbridgeable gap between them was widened perceptibly and irrevocably by Jude's reactions of bewilderment, incredulity, and hurt.

(Hoopes, 1957: 154)

Conclusion

This chapter has shed light on the troubled gender situation of Jude Fawley, the new man. Jude is a new man in that he is not like the androcentric Michael Henchard who makes of virility *sensu stricto* his creed. Jude does not care when farmer Touthram whips him for letting birds eat from the crops he was supposed to care for.

The tragedy of Jude is a tragedy of gender exactly like that of Sue Bridehead, his cousin, lover and twain. As the title has it, Jude and Sue constitute the twain that converge to form one. It is Plato's symposium where the two genders platonically meet and reunite in one, the unique sex/gender which answers to the name of androgynous. Jude is not as hubristic as Henchard, he is not proud or haughty, and shows humility and simplicity. Society and Christminster are hubristic and despiseful toward him. Jude's hamartia is his very gender, and the way he performs gender, the way he (un)does gender.

Jude's androgyny is patent and shows from the very day his teacher, another androgyne, Phillotson leaves the village for Christminster to study and improve his career. Jude takes after his teacher and develops a pathological bond with him. Phillotson marries Sue, but accommodates himself with both she and Jude eloping together or developing a love affair that he alone can understand because he is like them. Jude's other error is his union with Arabella who embodies the opposite side of the intellectual. They marry transiently and beget Little Father Time whose suicide heralds the peripeteia of Jude. From then on, Jude's life decays and the fatal end is death.

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Chapter Eight
Sue Bridehead the Obscure

Introduction

This chapter tackles the case of Sue Bridehead who has fascinated critics, readers as well as the author himself. An “enigma, a pathetic creature, a nut, and an iceberg”, Phillip Mallet quotes Kate Millett to highlight the fact that much of the critical discussion of *Jude the Obscure* has been an attempt to decide which of these she is, and why” (Mallett, 2004:191).

In fact, long before the 1960s, the character of Sue has begun to attract the attention and admiration of readers and critics as well. In the preface of the 1912 edition of *JO*, Hardy includes a lengthy passage on Sue as the modern feminist:

After the issue of *Jude the Obscure* as a serial story in Germany, an experienced reviewer of that country informed the writer that Sue Bridehead ... was the first delineation in fiction of the woman who was coming into notice in her thousands every year the woman of the feminist movement- the slight, pale 'bachelor' girl- the intellectualised, emancipated bundle of nerves that modern conditions were producing, mainly in cities as yet; who does not recognise the necessity for most of her sex to follow marriage as a profession, and boast themselves as superior people *New Women for Old* because they are licensed to be loved on the premises. Theregret of this critic was that the portrait of the newcomer had been left to be drawn by a man, and was not done by one of her own sex, who would never have allowed her to break down at the end.

“If we consider broadly and without prejudice the tone and scope of the book”, wrote Robert Tyrrell in his review of *Jude the Obscure*, “we cannot but class it with the fiction of Sex and New Woman, so rife of late” (qtd in Cullingham, 1978:80). “The first readers of *Jude the Obscure* would have every excuse for immediately identifying Sue Bridehead, with her quivering nerves and anti-marriage sentiments, as a typical New Woman of the neurotic school” (Ibid).

One might also excusably identify her as an androgyne or in Jude’s own words, an epicene person (III.iv: 159). The adjective epicene refers to someone with characteristics of both sexes or no trait of either sex. Sue Bridehead first appears in the life of Jude in the

guise of a photograph. She becomes an iconic figure for both Jude and Phillotson. When she appears in the flesh, Jude can see that she has “liquid, untranslatable eyes, that combined, or seemed to him to combine, keenness with tenderness, and mystery with both,” (II.ii: 90).

Jude Discerns that she is not natural; she “Sue was a countrygirl at bottom, a latter girlhood of some years in London, and a womanhood here, had taken all rawness out of her” (Ibid). Sue is a bookish and has a proclivity for arts, and buys statuettes of two saints St. Peter and St. Mary Magdalen which she hides from her lodger.

Reviewing JO in 1896 for *Cosmopolis*, Edmund Gosse pathologises Sue Bridehead and reduces her part in the novel to a series of errors which ruin three men.

[A] poor, maimed ‘degenerate’, ignorant of herself and of the perversion of her instincts, full of febrile, amiable illusions, ready to dramatize her empty life, and play at loving though she cannot love. Her adventure with the undergraduate has not taught her what she is; she quits Phillotson still ignorant of the source of her repulsion; she lives with Jude, after a long, agonizing struggle, in a relation that she accepts with distaste, and when the tragedy comes, and her children are killed, her poor extravagant brain slips one grade further down, and she sees in this calamity the chastisement of God. What has she done to be chastised? She does not know, but supposes it must be her abandonment of Phillotson, to whom, in a spasm of self-abasement, and shuddering with repulsion, she returns without a thought for the misery of Jude. It is a terrible study in pathology,

(Qtd in Cox, 1979: 280)

Gosse simply attributes Jude and Phillotson’s ills to Sue. Her own hubris is her “sexual maladjustment” which relates to restlessness in the heteronormative Victorian society. Sue’s gender identity or gender identity disorder or dysphoria is at stake. It is her *hubris*; she wants to be both a woman and enjoy male’s attributes. Anne Michelson remarks that “[s]ecretly, she identifies with the male because male means power” (1976: 140). She prefers the company of men to that of women, and visibly relishes having the hobbies of men instead of those of women. Kathleen Blake categorises Sue as the type of “woman who gravitates toward men more than ever before because masculine contact, in contrast to her constrictive feminine circle, means ‘light, freedom, and instruction’” (Blake, 1978:

709). Sue admits that she has “no fear of men, as such, nor of their books. I have mixed with them – one or two of them particularly – almost as one of their own sex. I mean I have not felt about them as most women are taught to feel – to be on their guard against attacks on their virtue....” (III. iv: 152).

However, she troubles every man who ventures to be by her side. One day she wants to be with Phillotson and the other day she yearns to be with Jude. She calls him her dear cousin Jude and confesses that she has known about his living in Christminster learnt by the merest accident. She reproaches him not letting her know about it. “They might have had such nice times together, she said, for she was thrown much upon herself, and had hardly any congenial friend. But now there was every probability of her soon going away, so that the chance of companionship would be lost perhaps for ever” (I. iv: 100). She both attracts and rejects Jude and Phillotson, and thus “attempts a daring and dangerous combination of gravitation and rejection” as Blake puts it (1978: 709). “Inadvertently, Sue is uniting both masculine and feminine physical traits, creating an androgynous performance – a menace to society’s heterosexually reproductive culture’ observes Christina Nicole Bartlett (2006:44).

On the demand of Jude, Phillotson engages Sue as a temporary teacher and the old teacher soon discovers both her charm and intellect, and begins to be mesmerised by the apprentice. Sue does not like to be criticized by the schoolmaster for her comments on Jerusalem and she shows it. The opportunity to approach her and touch her hand. “He looks so gently at her that she is moved, and regrets that she has upbraided him. When she is better she goes home” (Ibid: 111).

Jude’s aunt reveals something about Sue’s troubled gender when Jude goes to see her during her illness. She tells him about Sue’s childhood (about twelve), and her tomboyish conduct. Drusilla’s neighbour also hints at the queer gender of Sue who “could

do things that only boys could do as a rule” (I.vi: 115). Sue decides to get training and join a Training College at Melchester. She manages to have Jude join her in Melchester to befriend because she claims to be “utterly friendless” (II.i: 135). For the first time, Sue’s “ever-sensitive lip began to quiver, and her eye to blink” when Jude opens the subject of her relationship with Phillotson (III.i: 138).

“I shall tell you!” says she, with the perverseness that is part of her. She admits about her promise to marry Phillotson after her graduation the Training-School. Together, they plan to run “a large double school in a great town--he the boys' and I the girls'-as married school-teachers often do, and make a good income between us.”(III.i: 138). Despite the bitter avowal, Sue continues to require Jude’s companionship; they take one single compartment when travelling by train. The fact of being thought to be lovers does not bother her. “That's a good intention wasted!” (III.ii: 144), she condescendingly remarks. One day, as they walk a lot, they fail to arrive in time to catch the train so they have to dwell in a shepherd’s hut for the night and Sue has the witticism: “Outside all laws except gravitation and germination.” (III. ii: 143) Jude immediately refers to her being a product of civilization. When she flees from the nunnery and spends the night with Jude, she is punished, and Jude “[h]e palpitated at the thought that she had fled to him in her trouble as he had fled to her in his. What counterparts they were!” (III.iii:149).

In Jude’s room, Sue appears in her natural, innate state, “a slim and fragile being masquerading as himself on a Sunday, so pathetic in her defencelessness that his heart felt big with the sense of it. On two other chairs before the fire were her wet garments. She blushed as he sat down beside her, but only for a moment” (III.iii: 150). She had, however, enough sense as to opine on the modern issue of gender/sex identity, “I suppose, Jude, it is odd that you should see me like this and all my things hanging there? Yet what nonsense! They are only a woman's clothes--sexless cloth and linen. . . .” (Ibid). This scene is

denounced as sexless and focus is put on the androgynous aspect of the woman, and the androgyny of Sue is heightened by the parallel with Jude “Fawley himself” (Ingham, 1996: 162). Sue is conscious about her ambivalence and admits that “[. . .] life has been entirely shaped by what people call a peculiarity in” her (III.iv: 152). “Women are taught to feel--to be on their guard against attacks on their virtue; for no average man--no man short of a sensual savage--will molest a woman by day or night,” she philosophises (III. iv: 152).

A peculiarity, a gender peculiarity she should say, this is what Sue is. Throughout the discussion she avows that she has befriended an undergraduate and has formed with him a couple of friends whose intimacy is not related to heterosexuality at all; “like two men almost” (Ibid: 153). Living together for quite long, but Sue bombasts that she has been to live with him without any sexual attraction. “[H]e could never have believed it of a woman” (Ibid).

She knows that “[p]eople say I must be cold-natured,--sexless--on account of it. But I won't have it! Some of the most passionately erotic poets have been the most self-contained in their daily lives.” (Ibid: 154), but she goes on her way and tries her best to keep the balance that is so necessary for androgynous people. “Jude felt much depressed: she seemed to get further and further away from him with her strange ways and curious unconsciousness of gender” (III.iv: 154). In fact, Sue ceaselessly travels in the gender continuum; now a man and then a woman. When she asks Jude about his reaction to her experience with the undergraduate, she uses a “voice of such extraordinary tenderness that it hardly seemed to come from the same woman who had just told her story so lightly” (Ibid). Jude also discovers in Sue a Voltairean person, one who treats religion with such easiness that only few bold men can dare think and say it. However, Sue is also capricious and whimsical like a child and makes “a personal matter of everything” (III.iv: 158). Even when she sleeps, Sue looks as “boyish as Ganymedes” (III.iv: 159).

On leaving Jude's lodging, Sue directs to Shaston where a sister of a fellow-student of hers dwells and runs a school. When Jude visits her, she blames him for everything that befalls her such as her exclusion from the Training School because of the report sent to the school recounting Jude's past behaviour. Thus, (un)willingly Sue fools Jude and ill-treats his poor heart by showing him two faces, one that is horrid and to which he is entitled when in her presence, and the other which is tender, but out of his reach because *in absentia*. Jude can see Sue's duplicity, that she "often not so nice in [her] real presence as [she is] in [her] letters." (III.vi: 171).

Sue has another opportunity to display her troubled gender when Jude admits that he is married. What is more, she displays a keen knowledge of how ought to be the relationship between man and woman. She has once again the ascendant over him by blaming him for not telling her about his brief union with Arabella. When she compares Arabella to Sue, Jude can discern an

ethereal a creature that her spirit could be seen trembling through her limbs, he felt heartily ashamed of his earthliness in spending the hours he had spent in Arabella's company [...]He regarded the delicate lines of her profile, and the small, tight, apple-like convexities of her bodice, so different from Arabella's amplitudes.

(III.ix: 195)

Sue is however more complicated and troubled than Arabella. She seems to be in need of some kind of hindrance whenever she is with Jude. If there is no hurdle, she invents one. At Shaston for instance, she tells him to leave then retains him with "the high window-sill [...] between them," to keep him far from her fearing close quarters.

I have been thinking,' she continued, still in the tone of one brimful of feeling, 'that the social moulds civilization fits us into have no more relation to our actual shapes than the conventional shapes of the constellations have to the real star-patterns. I am called Mrs. Richard Phillotson, living a calm wedded life with my counterpart of that name. But I am not really Mrs. Richard Phillotson, but a woman tossed about, all alone, with aberrant passions, and unaccountable antipathies. . . . Now you mustn't wait longer, or you will lose the coach. Come and see me again. You must come to the house then.'

(IV. I: 215-16)

Throughout the narrative, one sees scattered here and there allusions to Sue's blurred gender, "the elusiveness of her curious double nature," (IV.ii: 219). An example of this is the occurrence of their parting at Shaston "she says tearfully that it is hardly proper of him as a parson in embryo to think of such a thing as kissing her even in farewell, as he now wishes to do. Then she concedes that the fact of the kiss would be nothing; all would depend upon the spirit of it. If given in the spirit of a cousin and a friend she sees no objection: if in the spirit of a lover she cannot permit it. "Will you swear that it will not be in that spirit?" (IV.iii: 227).

Unlike Jude who is exalted by the kiss at Shaston, Sue is revulsed and shows remorse,

I have been too weak, I think!' she jerked out as she pranced on, shaking down tear-drops now and then. 'It was burning, like a lover's--O it was! And I won't write to him any more, or at least for a long time, to impress him with my dignity! And I hope it will hurt him very much--expecting a letter tomorrow morning, and the next, and the next, and no letter coming. He'll suffer then with suspense--won't he, that's all!--and I am very glad of it!--Tears of pity for Jude's approaching sufferings at her hands mingled with those which had surged up in pity for herself"

(IV.iii: 229)

Indeed, there is "no order or regularity" in Sue's sentiments as Phillotson puts it on the night he has found her hiding in the windowless clothes-closet (IV.iii: 232). "Domestic laws should be made according to temperaments," she concludes (IV.III: 233).

In addition to her penchant for philosophy, Sue displays a knowledge that is hardly expected from a Victorian woman of her class; "Sue's reading would be more appropriate to a middle-class man and makes her more mannish than womanly" (Ingham, 1996: 181). She is "the fantastic *raisonneuse*" Mrs. Oliphant puts it (Cox, 1979: 271). She decides to leave Phillotson and join Jude, but Phillotson clings to her just as Jude does. Husband and wife convene to stay in the same house but part rooms. In fact, Sue is so horrified by Phillotson that she does not hesitate to jump from the bedroom one day that he happens to undress before her.

For Philotson Sue is “one of the oddest creatures” (IV.iv: 240) He admits later that he is wrong in taking “advantage of her inexperience, and toled her out for walks, and got her to agree to a long engagement before she well knew her own mind. Afterwards she saw somebody else, but she blindly fulfilled her engagement” (IV.iv: 240). From Phillotson’s mouth we learn that Sue and Jude “seem to be one person split in two” (Ibid: 241). Their gender identity is confuse; they are both male and female. Sue is at last released and is free to join Jude. She even seems a bit sorry for Phillotson and is “for a few moments a little tearful” (IV.iv: 246).

“My liking for you is not as some women's perhaps. But it is a delight in being with you, of a supremely delicate kind, and I don't want to go further and risk it by--an attempt to intensify it! I quite realized that, as woman with man, it was a risk to come” (IV.v: 252). Sue’s own words betray a “disembodied creature” (IV.v: 256) as Jude observes it. Sue’s gender is a conundrum for everybody, Jude, Phillotson, and the reader.

Patricia Ingham points out that Sue’s “disastrous end to her earlier platonic cohabitation with the undergraduate does not deter her from half inclining to the same asexual relationship with Jude” (1996: 173). She not only elopes with Jude and leaves her husband, but causes his professional ruin. Indeed, Philloston is forced to resign, grows verfy saddened and so ill that on his friend Gillingham’s advice, addresses Sue a note and she comes. She consoles him and even gives him the illusion of coming back, but soon returns h to Jude.

“You, Sue, are such a phantasmal, bodiless creature, one who--if you'll allow me to say it--has so little animal passion in you, that you can act upon reason in the matter”, Jude himself remarks (V.i: 272). As tough as a virile man, Sue has never allowed Jude have “from her an honest, candid declaration that she loved or could love him” (Ibid). She is “as slippery as an eel” Jude observes (Ibid: 273).

Sue's neurotic demeanor is not unfamiliar to Jude but the reappearance of Arabella is an occasion for him to discover another Sue "whom the least thing upset" (V.ii: 276). She supplicates him not to reply Arabella's plea and uses her feminine plaintive accent to impede him from leaving the house at that moment of the night to join Arabella whose desperate condition Sue denies. Defeated, Sue turns "to her room as meekly as a martyr, heard him go downstairs, unbolt the door, and close it behind him. With a woman's disregard of her dignity when in the presence of nobody but herself, she also trotted down, sobbing articulately as she went" (Ibid: 278). In the presence of another woman and a rival, Arabella to be specific, Sue becomes again a woman. This episode of Arabella's reappearance reveals a hysteric Sue whose fierce jealousy lets all sort of emotions leak abundantly. She is so jealous that she condescends to agree to marry Jude. It is only at this price that she manages to weight on Jude's resolution and has him rebolt the front door and accede to her capricious and abnormal wish not to see Arabella.

In an unusual outburst of feelings, Sue "ran across and flung her arms round his neck" and confessed, "I am not a cold-natured, sexless creature, am I, for keeping you at such a distance? I am sure you don't think so! Wait and see! I do belong to you, don't I? I give in!" (V.ii. 280). Once she agrees to banns, Sue's whimsical mood resurfaces and she starts to show remorsefulness for her conduct with Arabella and decides to inquire about what had become of her. At the arrival of Jude's child, Sue's jealousy once again resurfaces when she beholds the conspicuous resemblance between Little father Time, the child, and Jude. She is, for sure, affected by the child and when he cries, her feminine expressive role is called back at a stroke. She is "being a harp which the least wind of emotion from another's heart could make to vibrate as readily as a radical stir in her own" (V.iii: 293). She cannot retain her tears and joins her cry to the child's. The arrival of the child is an occasion for the newly married couple to take the decision of registering the

marriage at a superintendent Registrar's office. However, Sue is never able to take to the idea of vowing to Jude as she does before to Phillotson and as Jude has done before with Arabella.

Sue is not only an androgynous person, and an adept of J.S.Mill's idyllic and ideal world bereft of gender; she belongs in more than a world and as William J.Hyde observes it, she is alternatively Hellenic in her ostentatious paganism and intellectual freedom, and belongs in the Hebraic world of morality, conventionality and righteousness (Hyde, 1965: 155).

When Arabella comes across Sue again, some years have already elapsed; two children were begotten by the queer (un)married Fawley couple, and Arabella has been widowed. Sue is forced to sell gingerbreads in fairs such as Kennetbridge's which is held in spring. She accepts to follow Jude to Christminster where he wishes to end his life. They have some difficulty to find lodgings and Sue cannot retain herself from confessing to the landlady who has agreed to lodge her and the children the truth of her union with Jude. There is some sort of unlikeliness in Sue's talking to the woman as though the latter could apprehend the motives of her rejection of marriage.

Sue hesitated; and then impulsively told the woman that her husband and herself had each been unhappy in their first marriages, after which, terrified at the thought of a second irrevocable union, and lest the conditions of the contract should kill their love, yet wishing to be together, they had literally not found the courage to repeat it, though they had attempted it two or three times. Therefore, though in her own sense of the words she was a married woman, in the landlady's sense she was not.

(VI.i: 349)

Sue's ambivalence is patent and the process of subjectification has not yet arrived to term with her. Her naivety is striking for a woman who cites Hobbes and all modern thinkers. Sue is neither a new woman nor a man; she is a woman in process, or rather an androgyne badly balanced. By the end of the novel, Sue becomes a conventional woman.

However, all her wits and the sermons with which she torments Jude fails her with the little Jude, i.e. Little father Time whom she tactlessly leads to commit a collective suicide with his siblings when she lets herself indulge in a Malthusian discussion about the hardships they encounter in getting a place to dwell in. On the morning when she and Jude discover the macabre scene of the children dead, her “nerves utterly give way, an awful conviction that her discourse with the boy had been the main cause of the tragedy throwing her into a convulsive agony which knew no abatement” (VI.ii: 355). This is the reversal of her fate, her *perepiteia*.

As troubles never come singly, the child Sue is expecting comes earlier and dies. The tragedy leaves her soulless, “no longer the same as in the independent days, when her intellect played like lambent lightning over conventions and formalities” (VI.iii: 363). If anything, Sue has gone through the same process of self-knowledge; from a man-like woman, she has become the very conformist creature that praises duty and self-abnegation. Despite Jude’s emphasis on her being “the most ethereal, least sensual woman” he has ever met, Sue’s mind is at last made (VI.iii: 364). She resolves to forget the idea of marriage with Jude and calls for self-penance and wishes to return to Phillotson. Jude can see it clearly; Sue’s gender is not like that of any other woman. She is a “fay—or sprite” (VI.iii: 372) and these creatures are neither male nor female, but androgynous. Her ambivalence is never harmful to Jude as when she resolves to leave him and join her former husband, and this she has cruelly “been considerate [. . .] to let [him] know [. . .] not [. . .] hearing of it at second hand” (VI.iv: 381).

On leaving him, Sue sermonizes Jude one more time and delivers a speech only hardened men can utter about the wisdom of life and its lessons and considers it her duty to comfort him by telling him that his “worldly failure, if you have failed, is to your credit rather than to your blame. Remember that the best and greatest among mankind are those

who do themselves no worldly good. Every successful man is more or less a selfish man” (VI.v: 382). However, on arriving to Marygreen where she rejoins Phillotson she changes into a female liar when she naturally shrinks from him and cannot hide her aversion for him after he has posed a kiss on her cheeks.

“O no, dear--I--have been driving through the damp, and I was chilly,” (VI.v: 384), she says, and immediately shifts the discussion on the grounds she favours.

Sue meets Jude again when the latter breathlessly reaches Marygreen hoping to regain her before his death. Though she at first rejects him and urges him to go back, she cannot help flinging herself into Jude’s arms and begs, “don't scorn me! Kiss me, O kiss me lots of times, and say I am not a coward and a contemptible humbug--I can't bear it!” She rushes up to him and with her mouth on his, continued: ‘I must tell you--O I must--my darling Love! It has been--only a church marriage--an apparent marriage I mean!’ (VI.viii: 411). In a mannish way, Sue pulls herself together again and told him, “Don't follow me--don't look at me. Leave me, for pity's sake!” (Ibid:412) and goes away struggling against her desire to rejoin him again when she hears his coughs, but “she knelt down again, and stopped her ears with her hands till all possible sound of him had passed away” in the manner of an unwavering man (Ibid).

To expiate her sin, Sue forces herself to share Phillotson’s room and let him take her and represses her nausea. “Strange difference of sex, that time and circumstance, which enlarge the views of most men, narrow the views of women almost invariably” would profer Jude (VI.x: 422).

It is wrong for Jude to take her physically, it is a violation of her soul. She is not the virgin type, but the witch type, which has no sex. Why should she be forced into intercourse that is not natural to her? Sue wishes to identify herself utterly with the male principle and the animus. That which is female in her, that is the anima, she wants to

consume within the male force. She must, by the constitution of her nature, remain quite physically intact, for the female is atrophied in her, to the enlargement of the male activity.

Phyllotson, her occasional husband, confesses 'I can't answer her arguments- she has read ten times as much as I. Her intellect sparkles like diamonds, while mine smoulders like brown paper She's one too many for me!' Jude calls her as 'a woman-poet, a woman-seer, a woman whose soul shone like a diamond -whom all the wise of the world would have been proud of, if they could have known her.

It may be the plan of evolution to produce at some future period a race of sexless beings who, undistracted and unharassed by the ignoble troubles of reproduction, shall carry on the intellectual work of the world, not otherwise than as the sexless ants do the work and the fighting of the community. Sex is fundamental, lies deeper than culture, cannot be ignored or defied with impunity. You may hide nature, but you cannot extinguish it. Consequently it does not seem impossible that if the attempt to do so be seriously and persistently made, the result may be a monstrosity-something which having ceased to be a woman is not yet a man-"ce quelque chose de monstrueux," which the Comte A. de Gasparin forebodes, "cet etre repugnant, qui deja parait a notre horizon." (477-78)

(Qtd; in Green, 1995 :541)

“[T]he coexistence in Sue of androgynous or even masculine traits with more conventionally feminine attractions emerges very clearly.” (Summer, 1981:543).

Elisabeth Langland remarks that ‘Sue has been represented in a more gender-neutral way, as a “tomboy”, who joins boys in their exploits, or as “comrade” with a “curious consciousness of gender” (Langland, 1993: 38). Penny Boumelha points out that

For Sue, mind and body, intellect and sexuality, are in a complex and disturbing interdependence, given iconic representation in her twin deities, Apollo and Venus, which she transmutes for Miss Fontover-prefiguring the later collapse of her intellect and repudiation of her sexuality-into the representative of religious orthodoxy, St.Peter, and the representant sexual sinner, St.Magdalen.

(Boumelha, 1982:146-47)

Mind and body, intellect and sexuality are the poles which allow androgynous individuals to enjoy the psychological balance that affords transcending the limits of binarism. Childers highlights Hardy’s putative love for woman and singles Sue Bridehead

[I]n *Jude the Obscure* Sue Bridehead carries the burden of both her own and Jude's confusion. Jude's inconsistencies are obvious, of course; his dreams of being a scholar and a cleric are incompatible with his sexuality. But these contradictions are recognized as social phenomenon which he has, unhappily, internalized. Sue's inconsistencies are, on the other hand, legendary, extravagant, grotesque. The contradictions she is victimized by are represented as the internal and incalculable features of femininity. Sue is the exhibitor of the ambivalence which both she and Jude feel about sexuality. She is made the cause for a neurotic relationship of which she is the symptom. She is so excessively neurotic because she must display both of their neuroses, which if represented in both men and women would have to be recognized as the results of the social organization of sexuality. Of course, Sue's behavior cannot be explained only through its function of disguising the appearance of male irrationality. The actual dynamics encouraged between the sexes do serve to promote more demonstrative female enactments of hysteria.

(1981:330)

Sue then enacts gender according to the creed of queer theorists, moving between masculinity and femininity without succeeding to impose her mindset.

Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with Sue Bridehead, the other part of the twain that constitutes the famous couple Jude/Sue. Sue's gender is as troubling as Jude's. The characterization of Sue has troubled readers and critics and many saw in her a psychological study, a neurotic woman who alters the cold and the hot.

She claims to be Hellenic and paganist. Her inspirations are Mill and Shelley, but she sometimes acts like a superstitious individual who thinks it necessary to (re)join Phillotson. She considers Little Father's suicide as her nimesis for her sexual conduct and the fact that she joined Jude and lived with him out of the bonds of marriage. Unlike Jude, Sue is somewhat hubristic; she is proud and unable to cope with Phillotson despite the solemn commitment to be his wife. However, she ill-treats both Phillotson and Jude whom she wants to be hers only when Arabella reappears.

Though she purports to be rational, Sue shows jealousy and superstition. Her hamartia consists in her very psychological constitution. Her performance of gender ill-eases Jude, phillotson and all those who know about her relationships with the undergraduate student who died because of her.

Sue could easily be the analysand of Jung or Freud; her behaviour and her reactions could interest every specialist whose concern is the psychological structure of human mind. In her anima and animus rage a war that victimizes the men who dare approach her. She cannot fix her gender and differs entirely from Arabella whom she despises and deems unworthy of her. Like Eustacia, Sue does not conceive that her femininity can be paralleled with Arabella's. The convergence of the twain takes all its meaning once one has reviewed both protagonists of *Jude the Obscure*. In fact, Jude confuses Sue's voice with his at the first meeting (2.2.103). And when she finds herself in his home after she had escaped from the Training School, and running under the rain, she wears his clothes while hers were

drying, she looked ‘a slim and fragile being masquerading as himself on a Sunday.’ (3.3.173). ‘You are just like me at heart’ he tells her (4.1.243) and Phillotson corroborates this by highlighting the ‘extraordinary sympathy, or similarity between the pair. . . they seem to be one person split into two!’ (4.4.276).

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General Conclusion

Male, Female or Both? Androgyny in Thomas Hardy's Fiction, namely, my doctoral thesis on the putative androgyny in Thomas Hardy's fiction has dealt with five novels. There are four major novels, namely *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Jude the Obscure*, *The Return of the Native*, and two other novels, *The Hand of Ethelberta*, and *A Laodicean* which account among those novels Hardy himself has regarded as of less importance, and categorized in the 1912 Wessex Edition.

The major question is whether the Hardyan character, the selected protagonist to be specific, is male, female or both. In fact, some of the major protagonists in Hardy's fiction display attributes traditionally regarded as either masculine or feminine. Agency and communion, for instance are two antipodal characteristics that are considered as belonging to men and to women. Gabriel Oak, the leading protagonist of *Far From the Madding Crowd* constitute an epitome of this type of characters who are both male and female according to the requirements of the circumstances. He is heroic during the disasters that befall Bathsheba Everdene. He is hired in her farm after he actively contributes to extinguish the enormous fire that has assaulted her farm. Another time, he is there to rescue her crops from rain while her husband Frank Troy is laying asleep after a night of orgies. Gabriel is the savior of her sheep too. However, he is also able of feminine tenderness toward ewes, lambs, Fanny Robin and even William Boldwood whose infatuation with Bathsheba affects him because he too loves her and wishes to win her. Gabriel is ambitious and wishes to have his own farm, and does not despair even after the disastrous loss of his flock. He works hard and manages to enter in possession of Boldwood's propriety. He is assertive and the rustics know that. He possesses neutral attributes such as adaptability, helpfulness, reliability, and so forth. He is also feminine in that he is affectionate, cheerful, compassionate, gentle, loyal, and so on.

Despite the androcentric weight, and despite the continuous cultural trend to dichotomize humankind into two distinct opposite genders, Gabriel has the capacity of a single person of either sex to embody the full range of human character traits. Gabriel is neither man nor woman, or both man and woman because he is inhabited by the quintessential attributes of both genders. Gabriel Oak is the transitional type; the intermediate sex. Gabriel is both instrumental and expressive; both agentic (concerned with his own interests and well-being) and communal [concerned with the fate of Fanny Robin, Bathsheba Everdene, William Boldwood, and the rustics). Even when he has to be decisive and ruthless, he blends it with sensitivity as when he has to kill George, the young dog, after the tragic loss of all his sheep.

Gender mixing is a reality in Gabriel Oak as Linda Shires compellingly puts it. Though she addressed the issue of patriarchy in Hardy, and deems Gabriel as the paradigm of patriarchy, Joanna Devereux wonders whether Hardy did not steep Gabriel Oak in both genders [masculinity and femininity] and made him both a feminized, and at the same time the winning male rival. Annette Federico, for her part, attributes to Gabriel Oak passivity. a “pathological [one] that is the reverse extreme of the cult of masculine virility and aggression” (Federico, 1991: 55-56). Gabriel, it is true, is in no way aggressive; neither Bathsheba nor the men he had to deal with could say the contrary.

In his affair with Bathsheba, he shows the opposite behavior of Sergeant Troy. He blushes, and offers her the opportunity to save him from suffocation. Though he was rejected by the unreachable woman, he could not abdicate. Gabriel Oak has the Uranian temperament; he is androgynous model which is said to constitute a maximized state of well-being because of the equivalent presence of high rates of masculinity and femininity in the individual. Indeed, throughout, the narrative, Gabriel showed the same state of well-being and balance. He is the index of adjustment and psychological health.

Bathsheba Everdene, his female counterpart and the woman he loves is not as androgynous as he is. She is too womanish now, and too mannish then. Before she inherits her uncle's farm in Weatherbury, Bathsheba is a young girl inclined to narcissistic behavior. Vain and proud and ready to allure a sincere suitor like Gabriel Oak. Frivolous too, so much so that she dethroned a certain respectable farmer by merely sending him a Valentine for the sake of joking. Once she becomes the owner of her uncle's farm, she becomes mannish, and behaves aggressively with Gabriel, her new bailiff. She believes a woman in her position needs to act like a man because she has no one else to fight her battles. She is no longer the smooth girl that yearned to be tamed by someone less tender than Gabriel.

The tamer comes and reduces her to her utmost femininity. The sergeant Frank Troy, the tamer in question, pushes Bathsheba to the extremes of femaleness, and jeopardizes her very domain and being. William Boldwood appeals to her femininity too, and leave her no repose. After many tragic events that cost the lives of two of her suitors, namely Sergeant Troy and Boldwood, Bathsheba knows that individuation is only possible when she follows the example of Oak. In incorporating both her feminine and masculine principles, in following Oak and unite with him in marriage, she obtains psychological health. The true psychological well-being entails that she is neither too much womanish nor too much mannish, but androgynous in the like of Gabriel Oak.

Far From the Madding Crowd owes much of its success to its happy end which is the lot of comedies and pastoral tales. The tragic end of Sergeant Troy, the downfall of William Boldwood, the cruel end of Fanny Robin, and the natural disasters which affected both Gabriel (the loss of his sheep) and Bathsheba whose ownership has been on the verge of collapsing twice, make of FFMC a tragicomedy. However, the narrative ends well, at

least the story of the couple Gabriel/Bathsheba because they have understood that all that is androgynous ends well.

Another comedy in chapters, namely, *The Hand of Ethelberta* ends well with the main protagonist, Ethelberta Petherwin wedding not the man she loves, but Lord Mountclere, a noble man forty years her elder. Her marriage is one of the means of empowerment through which Ethelberta sought to experience the comfortable position only males enjoy. Besides, she invests in another domain that is traditional man's, and writes poems and strives to earn her life and that of her family through words. Ethelberta shifts between the two gender roles that have been set in diametric positions. She moves from her role of woman to that of a powerful individual, contriving and having a hand whenever required to protect her family against poverty. *The Hand of Ethelberta* has been classified by Hardy among the lesser novels and critics have ignored it save some memorable books such as Jane Thomas's *Thomas Hardy, Femininity and Dissent: Reassessing 'Minor' Novels* (1999) and Richard Taylor's *The Neglected Hardy: Thomas Hardy's Lesser Novels* (1982) which refused to view the novel as minor mainly because of the stature of Ethelberta who is bigger than the novel. In choosing this novel, one somewhat amends for the neglect that befell this tremendous hero/ine.

Ethelberta may be regarded as another attempt to present the world with an androgynous individual that succeeds because s/he manages to balance masculine and feminine features in her self for the pleasure of her family. Ethelberta is also the feminine alter ego of Hardy; the latter's love for poetry, and his fight for recognition among the literary realm is undisputable. Like her author, Ethelberta attained her other patriarchal goal of composing an epic in the manner of *The Dynasts* which occupy a particular position in Hardy's canon.

The Hand of Ethelberta has been placed in the same chapter with *The Return of the Native* though the latter is a tragedy, the first attempt of Hardy in tragedy. The Return of the Native is not a minor novel and Eustacia Vye, its memorable protagonist, gave birth to much criticism. Eustacia is androgynous in her way through her quest of power and freedom. The episode of mumming wherein she disguises in a Turkish costume putatively clothing a knight, substantiate her desire to experience men's feelings and behavior. She cross-dressed to travel beyond her gender, to transgender and show the world that the traditional gender roles are not that stable.

Eustacia is androgynous, but ends unwell. She ends tragically because she is hubristic, rejects Edgon Heath, and commits the tragic flaw of leaving her husband. Eustacia's nimesis is her drowning with the man with whom she desperately wanted to escape. Jude Fawley and Sue Bridehead also end unwell despite being as androgynous as Gabriel Oak. This convergent twain is not hubristic, the society wherein they live is. Their hamartia is their very gender, their androgyneity. Sue is the new woman while Jude is the new man and both are ready to refute heteronormativity, marriage and Hebraism. Both society and Christminster abhor them and condemn them to death for Jude, and oblivion for Sue. The death of the children constitutes the peripeteia.

Another Hardyan character has gone through a reversal of fortune and ended tragically, not because of androgyny, but because of its absence. Michael Henchard, the mayor of Casterbridge, one of the most successful characters in English fiction, and one that no one forgets easily though he wished not to be remembered. Henchard annihilated his feminine self and conducted his life in accordance with the androcentric creed. His first tragic flaw was the sale of his wife and daughter whom, he thought would exonerate him from the feminine qualities that may hinder his ascension. He became powerful and succeeded in business and politics, but soon the repressed feminine soul returned in various

forms. It returned in the guise of Susan, the wife he sold earlier. It returned in the guise of Elisabeth-Jane, in the guise of the firmity woman and Donald Farfrae who overthrew him and led him to his pathetic end;

Thomas Hardy was neither a proto-feminist nor a misogynist; he was for a genderless society wherein one can behave without constraints in relation to prescribed gender roles. To approach the theme of androgyny in Hardy's fiction, queer theory represented by Judith Butler turned out to be the most relevant theoretical tool. Butler supports the instability of gender, its being a mere performative act. Gender is enacted, and Ethelberta, Eustacia, Sue, Jude, Bathsheba and Gabriel merely enacted gender, and experience it as a cultural practice, not as an innate behavior.

This thesis aimed to explore another avenue that turned out to be topical. The world is no longer enslaved by dichotomies as it used to be before; society is becoming gender-neutral through dress, language, etc. Thomas Hardy was a modernist, and a writer ahead of his time. Despite the weight of the Victorian society which was so powerful through its editors, its exacting readership and its Grundyism that blurring and mixing gender was the only solution for a writer whose *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* amounts among the biggest successes in English literature.

Glossaries of Key Terms

Some of these terms do not necessarily appear in the thesis, but are closely related to it.

Agency: The power to adapt and sometimes to thrive in difficult situations.

Androgyny: The integration of traits considered to be feminine with those considered to be masculine.

Androgyne: Individual who assumes characteristics that are not limited to either of the two traditionally accepted gender classifications, masculine and feminine.

Androcentric: A view or theory that is male-centred.

Berdache: In many Native American tribes, a person considered of a third sex who contains the spirit of both the male and the female; often called a “two-spirit” person.

Binary pair: Considered to be a central organisational principle within much Western intellectual thought, which involves depicting social phenomena in matched pairs. Generally, the phenomena paired in this way are attributed different values, even being construed as oppositional. The two categories of a binary pair, such as men and women, are not merely regarded as distinct and opposed; they are also put into a hierarchy in which one is typically cast as positive and the other negative.

Bisexual: Capable of desiring people of more than one gender, or a person who identifies as potentially desiring people of more than one gender. ‘Bisexual’ has also been given other meanings, such as someone who has two gender identities.

Butch: Masculine or macho dress and behaviour, regardless of sex or gender identity.

Continuum: A continuous series in distinction to dualisms categorizing irreconcilable oppositions, such as gay/straight.

Cross-dressing: The adoption, fully or partially, of the clothes normally identified as belonging to the opposite sex.

Doing gender: The notion that gender emerges not as an individual attribute, but something that is accomplished through interaction with others.

Double standard: The idea that men are allowed to express themselves sexually and women are not.

Drag (Dressed As a Girl): Wearing clothes considered appropriate to the other sex.

Dualism: Opposition between two distinct entities; for example, male/female or straight/gay.

Expressive role: Associated with the expectation that the wife–mother maintains the family through child rearing and nurturing.

Female: One of the two main physical sexes.

Feminine: The gender role assigned to females (also woman).

Feminism: An inclusive worldwide movement to end sexism and sexist oppression by empowering women.

FTM: Female-to-Male transsexual. Used to specify the direction of a change of sex or gender role.

Gay: Males who desire only other males, the characteristic of same-sex male attraction.

Gender: Social, cultural, and psychological traits linked to males and females that define them as masculine or feminine.

Gender Dysphoria (GD) or Gender Identity Disorder (GID): Dissatisfaction with one’s gender (masculinity or femininity) which is in conflict with one’s physical sex. The term is usually restricted to those who seek medical and surgical assistance to resolve their difficulty.

Gender pluralism: Several different gendered personalities within one psyche.

Gender queer: Combinations of (usually oppositional) gender and sexual orientation characteristics.

Gender Reassignment Surgery (GRS): Term used in the UK for Sex Reassignment Surgery (from male to female or vice versa).

Gender roles: The expected attitudes and behaviors a society associates with each sex

Gender socialization the process by which individuals learn the cultural behavior of femininity or masculinity that is associated with the biological sex of female or male

Hermaphrodite: Traditional term for a person having both male and female sexual characteristics and organs; now often called an intersex person.

Heteronormativity: Expresses the view that within social life heterosexuality is constructed as a compulsory norm and non-heterosexualities are constructed as deviant.

Heterosexual : term invented in late nineteenth century to describe what was seen as a totalizing masculine identity determined by opposite-sex desire; invented as the opposite of the homosexual as an identity.

Homosexual: Describing sexual desire for a person of the same sex.

Homosexual: Term invented in the late nineteenth century to describe what was seen as a totalizing masculine identity determined by same-sex desire; as adjective, denotes such desire.

Instrumental role: Associated with the expectation that the husband–father maintains the family through earning income.

Intersex: Contemporary term for person combining male and female sexual characteristics and organs; often used in place of the traditional term hermaphrodite.

LGBT: An inclusive term for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people who show a wide range of attitudes and behaviors related to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Machismo: Among Latinos, associating the male role with virility, sexual prowess, and the physical and ideological control of women.

Male: Person born biologically male as opposed to female; also used to describe behavior of males attributed to innate biological qualities.

Manhood: State of achieving and continuing the ideal behaviors prescribed by society for adult men.

Manliness: Quality of performing the script set by society for male behavior.

Marianismo: Among Latinos, associating the female role with female over male spiritual and moral superiority and glorification of motherhood.

Masculinist: Advocating male superiority and dominance.

Masculinity: Ideal script set for men by society; also “masculinities” as the plural to indicate the various forms that masculinity may take.

Middle-class morality: Ethos developed by the bourgeois; includes sexual puritanism, compulsory marriage, and the work ethic.

Other In psychoanalytic theory ‘the other’ and otherness are central to the development of the self. The self requires ‘difference’ – the other – to become a formed presence, indeed to become a (social) human being. The other (that which is not-self) must be differentiated and cast out from the self for the infant to become a distinct person. In psychoanalysis, the other (not-self) is suppressed in the unconscious and represents the continuing uncertain boundaries of the self. The other is both not entirely separate from the self and rejected by the self. This psychoanalytic theory of the individual self is strongly linked in Gender and Sexuality Studies with the individual’s incorporation into the hierarchically organised social realm. ‘Others’ (those supposedly different from oneself or one’s social group) in social life are once again not entirely separate (they shape one’s social self-definition) and at the same time are often demonised and rejected. The other represents ambiguity and anxiety in the self and society, at least in current social contexts. Gender and Sexuality

Studies consider ways in which the self/ other distinction may be unsettled and re-imagined within the individual and within society.

Performativity: Deriving in large part from the work of Judith Butler, in Queer Theory and in Feminism, performativity refers to the profoundly socially constructed character of gender and sexuality. Gender and sexuality are conceived as the product of endless citation and reiteration of certain normative categories (such as man or heterosexual), rather than as formed out of an already existent biological basis. Subordinated categories (including woman, lesbian, homosexual) are no less socially framed and hence do not inevitably amount to resistance to normative categories or categorisation. There is no 'real' underlying source or essence of gender and sexuality in notions of performativity.

Queer Theory: Is typically focused upon the question of individual identity, and upon cultural/symbolic and literary/textual issues. Queer Theory aims to destabilize identity through the construction of a supposedly 'inclusive', non-normative (almost invariably non-heterosexual) sexuality and a simultaneous dismantling of gender roles. Queer Theory sees identity as thoroughly socially constructed and as internally unstable and incoherent.

Second-wave feminism: The popular designation for the feminist movement in the West during the 1960s, 1970s and even 1980s, to distinguish it from feminist thinking and politics developed in earlier times (first-wave feminism). Popular renderings of 'Feminism' often presuppose the politics of Liberal feminism during this second wave. However, in feminist writings the second wave refers to at least four main directions: Liberal, Radical, Marxist and Socialist feminisms.

Self-made man: man who has risen from low social rank through his own efforts; in distinction to a man who possesses wealth and position through inheritance or through the rank of his birth family.

Sex: Male or female as defined by biology; contrast to gender as the social construction of what is appropriate for each sex.

Sexism: The belief that the status of female is inferior to the status of male.

Sexologist: Person working in the field of sexology.

Sexology: Field applying the methods of science to sexual desire and sexual practices; developed in late nineteenth-century Europe.

Sexual Orientation: A term which refers to whom one is affectionally and sexually attracted, usually based on gender and sex characteristics.

Social Constructionism: The rejection of universalist, biological accounts of human being in favour of cultural or social accounts. Social Constructionist theories resist the idea of any set or fixed content (essence) to identities, but also refuse the Postmodern antagonism to identity. Social constructionists stress culturally and historically specific variations and complexity in relation to identity rather than broad, often more abstract notions of fluidity/instability. For example, gender and sexuality are not, within this framework, a matter of in-built, pre-existent identity differences but of particular forms of identity constituted through hierarchical social relations analogous to class relations and founded upon concrete material oppression in social life.

Third sex: a sex that cannot be categorized as male nor female; used, for example, in late nineteenth-century Europe for men feeling desire for other men or for the berdache in some Native American cultures.

Transgender: Umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity (sense of themselves as male or female) differs from that usually associated with their birth sex.

Transsexual: Person who seeks to live or does live as a member of the opposite sex particularly by undergoing surgery and hormone therapy.

Transvestism: The action or practice of dressing in clothes primarily associated with the opposite sex.

True Womanhood: The Victorian standard for women to subscribe to the virtues of piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity.

Two-sex model: Belief that only two sexes exist, male and female.

Uranians: Name adopted by elite late nineteenth-century men in England who felt homoerotic desire; derived from Greek goddess Urania praised as patron of man-boy erotics in Plato's *The Symposium*.

(Beasley, 2005, Monro, 2005, Sussman, 2012, Lindsey, 2015)

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Annex

Remote Supervisor's Comment on the Draft Thesis Prepared by Mr Youcef Hatem

I have reviewed a complete draft of this thesis and these are my comments on it. The thesis covers a great deal of ground and I would say that it demonstrates a high level of familiarity with the existing scholarship. The candidate has read widely in the relevant historical, literary and theoretical literature and shows that he knows how to manage large bodies of material. He demonstrates awareness of the historical and cultural variants that have shaped multiple ideas of androgyny, and is careful to differentiate the concept from others that may be confused with it. For the most part, terms and theoretical concepts are used consistently. All of these are important qualities.

In its approach to specific texts by Hardy, the most original element in the thesis lies in its analyses of the male characters in particular. Michael Henchard in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, for example, has not been widely considered in the context of gender identities, and in addition it is helpful that the thesis extends its commentary beyond the most well-known of the novels to include some of the less familiar (and less critically considered) novels like *A Laodicean* alongside the novels already widely subjected to gender-based analysis, such as *Jude the Obscure*. The careful choice of texts for discussion provides an opportunity for some more original analysis. While I do not always agree with the critical interpretations, and in particular with some of the comments on the female characters, it is more important that the thesis makes its own argument and supports it appropriately with evidence from the text. On the whole, the candidate is able to do that effectively.

The quality of the writing in English is variable. In some places it is very good, but in others much less so. It is not clear to me how much that matters in the examination of a thesis at your university. Consequently, I leave it to the candidate and to his local supervisor to consider how much more attention should be given to this aspect of the thesis.

At this stage, the thesis needs a thorough edit. There are numerous errors and inconsistencies of presentation (for example, in the italicisation of titles, punctuation, layout, and typeface). There are also some more substantive errors; for example, the important nineteenth-century figure Havelock Ellis is referred to as 'Ellis Havelock.' Very careful attention is required to ensure that the thesis is as accurate and consistent as possible.

So, in summary, I would say that the difficult and demanding intellectual work on the thesis has been done, but that the candidate still has to face up to the detailed and time-consuming work of making it fully readable, not only for its examiners but also for all others who may go on to read it.

Professor Penny Boumelha, FAHA
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