

Chapter Eight

CONCLUSION

Thomas Hardy and O.V.Vijayan belong to entirely different space-times and socio-cultural backgrounds. To a certain extent they become the chroniclers of the torrential flux of the socio-cultural scenarios of their times. They could make deep forays into the truth of their characters, and situations that surrounded and overwhelmed them.

Their simultaneous involvement and alienation from the ongoing pageant of life, equipped them with the unassailable and impregnable veracity and reality of existence. In all spheres of the heterogeneous phenomena of life, what unites the Male protagonists of Hardy emerging from their intrinsic Victorian contours and the Male characters of Vijayan deeply entrenched in the Indian ethos, is their total adumbration of the Male Ego.

In an ethical system, conceived and conditioned entirely by the dictates of the Male Ego, the woman increasingly finds herself an outsider. As she passes through various phases of life, she finds its each aspect perused and overseen by the Male hegemony. To her horror and dismay, she realises the futility of rebelling against the bastions of male supremacy and domination.

Jude the Obscure and Khasakinte Ithihasam revolve around the Male protagonists whose attitudes and perceptions are entirely different. In Jude the Obscure, the Male Ego takes care to see that female ethos and identity are shaped according to his dictates. But in Khasakinte Ithihasam, the Male Ego reveals its total disregard and contempt for the female consciousness. The novels, despite their differences in the perception of life, reveal a marked similarity and contrast in the ruthless assertion of the Male Ego over the oppressed female psyche and self.

Return of the Native and Gurusagaram offer a contrast between the Male protagonists, who live under the perennial illusion of being intellectually emancipated men. In a bid to create a world of their own insubstantial fantasies and dreams, both Clym and Kunjunni must violate the contracts, they have signed with women. Both the novels offer the apathetic spectacle of women being cast aside, and their very survival thrown to the mercy of men.

The Male Ego systematically defeats the intelligent but feeble attempt made by a lone woman in Far From the Madding Crowd. The novel could be seen as an exploration and study of the different versions of the Male Ego. As Bathsheba ties knots with Gabriel Oak towards the apparently happy end of the novel, it turns out to be the final assertion of the victorious Male Ego over the female world. If the female rebellion is inefficacious in Far From Madding Crowd, Prajapati, the male tyrant in Dharmapuram virtually finds no threat to his relentless onslaught against women. He along with his accomplices transforms Dharmapuri into a brothel, violating the sacred laws of existence.

When Michael Henchard of The Mayor of Casterbridge epitomises all aspects of the Victorian masculinity and arrogance against the female victims, the Male characters in Pravachakante Vazhi, unleash an orgy of tyranny against the weaker sex. Narayanan, Sujan Singh and Joseph, make a virtual mockery of the sacred laws of

marriage. They never pay any heed to the pangs and agonies of the women folk they have abandoned on the roadside to success in life.

A comprehensive analysis of Tess of the d'Urbervilles and Thalamurakai reveal the fact that the Male Ego is a Socio-Psychological phenomenon that defies the geographical, time and cultural milieus. The Male actors invoking the family title to justify its domination over the female world in Thalamurakai are nothing but a latter day replay of the act of the Male Ego's idiosyncratic pursuit of the dubious family title in Tess of the d'Urbervilles for the same cause. Both novels reveal the picture of the Male Ego's flagrant violation of all ethical principles, while staking its claims over the weaker sex and their aspirations.

The kaleidoscope of Hardy's novels is the Victorian England, whereas Vijayan greatly confines himself to the Palakkad countryside and sometimes portrays the political fiefdom of New Delhi. Their characters live in situations, which are culturally, socially and ethically different from each other.

But from the close reading and analysis of these novels, it could be inferred that the Male Ego is one of the basic traits, which is as old as humanity. It defies all boundaries of space, time and ethnicity. Even in this advanced state of civilisation, it continues to remain alive and prominent in various forms and aspects.

Thus, it may be concluded that Thomas Hardy and O.V.Vijayan, the two great Masters of the medium of novel, despite all differences in the Space-Time Continuums and the socio-cultural milieus, resurrect a world, where the unbridled insolence and Domination of the Male Ego continues to be the unassailable fact and truth.
