

THE IMPACT OF SURROUNDINGS ON THE CHARACTERS IN THOMAS HARDY'S NOVELS

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Abstract

The "THE IMPACT OF SURROUNDINGS ON THE CHARACTERS IN THOMAS HARDY'S NOVELS" is to apply the writers' knowledge on literature and to show their interest in reading novels. The writers transferred not only their limited knowledge in analysing novels as literary works but also building the awareness of the importance of reading habit to their students of Unswagati because all of them take the subject of Introduction to English Literature. Reading and analyzing novel is really beneficial for students that both can improve the students reading skill but also their English ability, moreover, they will have the ability in criticizing the novel from different views. In brief, it will also improve their critical thinking. Afterwards, by describing the characters and their attitudes toward each other and how the surroundings influence them, we also learn about their culture. The theory that is used in analysing those novels is from Harvey, Murphy, Klarer, and Lodge. The method that is applied in analysing the characters and the surroundings is descriptive qualitative in which the writers take the data by reading the three novels, explain in details about the characters and the surroundings involved in the story and some other elements supported the completeness of the story.

Key words: surroundings, impact, literary

INTRODUCTION

This research is about the impact of surroundings on the characters as portrayed by Thomas Hardy in his novels. So, the relevance of this study is to see the relation between the characters of the people in that area and the surroundings as Thomas Hardy presents in his novels. As the title suggests the discussion will especially concentrate on the setting, the characters, and the impact of the surroundings on the characters in the novel in question.

In terms of discussing the surroundings, the important things to be

discussed related to this are Time and Place. The two items are of course very important in the relation of their impact on the characters described. The relation between the surroundings and the characters are closely interwoven, as in real life that men are molded by the surroundings where they live. From here we may conclude, from the author's description the impact of the setting or surroundings on the character. The characters of the people involved in the novels are to be discussed, because from what they are the impact of the surroundings may be revealed.

The novels in question are only fiction. However, we may conclude after perusal, how the surroundings influence the characters, otherwise the story does not seem vivid. The characters, though, may be revealed through many ways, among others; the description of the author himself about the characters, the comments of one character on the others and the way themselves say and behave. It will not be surprising, if later, it is found that characters described in the novels are not true to life, since a fiction is a fiction, and the author is at liberty to have the characters he likes for his novels.

Hardy is one of the most outstanding novelists in the English literature. But Hardy has his own place in the world of the English literary critics. Many a critic says that Hardy is a pessimist as shown in most of his great novels. His pessimistic viewpoints in life. Pessimism believes that everybody is predestined and to a certain extent, surroundings very much influence the condition of the people live within them. The themes of many Hardy's novels concern this predestine which, to a limited extent, is true to the real life. The writers has read some of Hardy's novels in which such themes are presented. The novels the writers has chosen have such themes which in her opinion are related to "man proposes, God disposes" and this is the very reason why she has chosen the three novels of Hardy's.

To apply the writers' knowledge on literature and to show their interest in reading novels. The writer would

like to transfer not only their knowledge but also the awareness of the importance of reading habit to their students of Unswagati because all of them take the subject of Introduction to literature. Reading and analyzing novel is really beneficial for students that both can improve the students reading skill but also their English ability, moreover, they will have the ability in criticizing the novel from different views. In brief, it will also improve their critical thinking. It is supported by Moody (1971:6) who states that novel has clear benefit as being written for the general reader and tends to use various kind of languages. While Lodge (2002:4) says that novel is still read until now for its value that contained in itself. Therefore, the writers formulate their research objective as follow :

- a. To show how Hardy describes the characters and their attitudes toward each other and how the surroundings influence them.
- b. To show the writer's appreciation of Hardy's novels in terms of the character and the impact of the surrounding on them.

Research Questions

There are two research questions proposed by the writers such the following formulation:

- a. How Hardy describe the characters and their attitude toward each other and how the surroundings influence them.
- b. How the writers appreciate Hardy's novels in terms of the character and the impact of the surroundings on them.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

There are so many researchers who have analysed the novels either they analysed the characters, the moral values, the plot, the theme, and the influence of the surroundings to the characters involved in the novels, and many others.

The novels analysed in this research are classical literary works category. The writers have special interest in discussing the classical novels due to the writers' background of study for two years joining the literary class during her study before taking linguistics. At that time, reading literary works, and made reports concerning those novels was an obligatory for all students. Reading novels are interesting.

In relation to classical literary works such as *The red Badge of Courage*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Oliver Twist*, *McBeth*, *The Tale of Two Cities*, and the most famous one is *Romeo and Juliet* that had been filmed few years ago but it became a legend until now. In this case, the writers would like to expose two previous research related to the research executed by the writers.

Wuthering Heights

The first previous research that will be explored is a classical literary work entitled "Wuthering Height" by Emily Brönte . It was firstly published in 1847. The setting was centred in two houses, namely : Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. In brief, it can be stated that this essay discusses how characters in the novels can often move from physics; landscapes as well as moral landscapes. Therefore, the setting

in the novel relates to the temperaments of the characters.

The Great Expectations

In this novel, each character selects his or her own space which in turn, the environment also individual character. This push-pull relationship among the characters and their space adds complexity and realism. In conclusion, characters of the novels can be defined by their chosen environment as stated by Dickens in very simple narrations of appearance and personality.

The Components of of the Novel

Novel is a kind of literary work. It is known that novel is longer than a short story. As the name suggests, a short story only potrays a short event that is not too complicated. On the other hand, the novel usually describes something that is much more complex. But readers who are motivated to know more about its complexities will be more curious to know the end of the story. Smiley (2005:15) defines a novel as an experience that takes place within the border of writing, prose, narrative, length, and protagonist. This definition is supported by Klarer (2004 :10) who states that :*"although traditional epics are writtenn in verse, they clearly distinguish themselves from other forms of poetry by legth, narrative structure, depiction of characters, and plot patterns are called novel."* There are five essential components of the novel as stated by namely : plot, character, setting, conflict, and resolution.

Types of Character:

1. Protagonists : Most often, protagonist is the main character. 2. Antagonist : A character or force that opposes the protagonist. 3. Major character : Major characters will show up a lot, and they may fall into one of the other categories. 4. Minor character - Often provides support and illuminates the protagonist. 5. Static character - A character that remains the same. Static characters don't change. 6. Stereotypes : Stereotypes are often the lazy way for an author to fill up a book. 6. Dynamic character - A character that changes in some important way. 7. Foils : Foils are there to help compare and contrast another character. 8. Characterization - The choices an author makes to reveal a character's personality, such as appearance, actions, dialogue, and motivations. 9. Dummies- it helps to give information to the reader. 10. Dimensional - Characters who are well-rounded and exist.

Characters can play a main or a minor role in the story. Main characters are more complex and essential to the story line, while minor characters tend to be flat and remain unchanged throughout the story.

Plot. Plot can be defined as series of events, or actions that build the story. In brief, it can be stated that plot is talking about what happens in the story. Therefore, a plot of a novel should have a clear beginning, middle and end. Generally, the structure of plot consists of : Exposition, complication, climax, and resolution (Klarer :2004:7).

Setting. The setting is the location where the actions take place. The location

and the environment with its surroundings should be described clearly in details, thus it can picture the scene.

Conflict. In our real life, we often find a conflict, even in a small group like a family such a conflict between husband and a wife; a mother in law with daughter or son in law; etc. This is due the differences in their view, culture, belief, goal, custom, family background and many others. Therefore, as defined by Fisher (2000:1): "*a conflict is an incompatibility of goals or values between two or more parties in a relationship, combined with attempts to control each other and antagonistic feelings toward each other*". This is also supported by Pia and Diez (2007:2) who state that "*conflict is a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values, or goals.*"

Resolution. Resolution is the way the problems or conflicts are resolved and come into a conclusion.

The Impact of Surroundings

To define the world surroundings, two definitions will be put up: "*the general effects of all that is in neighborhood of a person or thing; the condition under which a person or thing exists*". (Hornby: 1958: 1294). While Bernard says that surroundings are : "*enviroming circumstances, conditions, etc*". (1982 : 687). Thus, according to the two definitions above, it may be concluded that whatever surround is called surroundings. It may consist of other people with whom he mixed up with all their attitudes and behaviors, the situation of the place or area where he lives with its implications and the cultural

lives in which he is involved with their condition.

As to the year, Thomas Hardy, in his novels, does not say anything, he only mentions months and seasons. But it may be said that the time he refers to in his novel is of course not the 20th century. It may be the later of part of the 18th century or the earlier part of the 19th century. Nothing remains. Neither does the place used as the location of the novel, especially in England, where the Industrial Revolution has changed everything. It goes with out saying what Wessex before was not like it is now.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As has been previously mentioned, the reseach methodology that is applied in this research is undoubtedly, the only way of collecting data for this kind of paper is reading. Therefore, the method of collecting data for this paper is also book-research which including the technique of treating the books and the technique of imbibing information.

In searching the data for this paper, some references are of course used major references for the present paper are divided into two divisions. First for theoretical approach and second for the analysis. Theoretical approach is mainly based on: a). Sukarma K., who wrote *Bunga rampai Ilmu Sastra*. This book contains about Thomas Hardy's works in general and his life, education, philosophy and his viewpoint. The analysis is of course based on the following novels as mentioned in the Introduction:

- a. Far from the Madding Crowd
- b. The Return of the Native
- c. The Mayor of Casterbridge

Those theories are also supported by Bennet and Royle who are also discussing about the characters in the novel and also the plot, theme, the setting and level of credibilities. Some other books are also used to discuss about the characters either British and American literature. Though the writer does not carry out the comparison between British and American literature, but the writer is in the opinion that reading that kind of book is a good source to support the data of the research.

The Steps to Analyze Novel

As we know that characters are the most important part of the story or a novel. They are able to drive the plot and the story forward. Mostly, the auhor often uses the character to generate the theme of the story. It is one element of literature that is most analyzed because through the characters we can see the author's intention. When we are going to analyse or make a critical analysis on the characters of a novel. It can be formulated briefly that the steps to analysing the characters are as follows :

First : Identifying the characters
Second : Describing the characters
Third : Explaining the characters.

Data Collection

Based on the above explanation, the way to collect the data is reading books, then by using the theory of how to analyze the novels, the writer try to reconize the characters involved in three novels, the plot, the settings, the theme and some other things that influence the development of the story. In collecting the data , the writers use

qualitative study that is due to the main aim of the research is to analyze the characters and how those characters are influenced by their surroundings.

In this research, the writers use library research as the technique for collecting data. Library research as explained in www.ehow.com July 20th, 2015 that library research is the study about the theory, organization, and dissemination within a library. Thus, the writers read the three novels as had been mentioned above and some other books that support the theory. Those three novels are the main books to be analyzed.

The sources of the data taken from three titles of Hardy's novels as had been stated above: *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *The Return of the Native*, and *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analyses of the data, the elements contained in the three titles of Hardy's novels are drawn as follows:

4.1. Far from the Madding Crowd

As it was mentioned above, the discussion of the novels will be performed according to their appearance in publication. Therefore, *Far from the Madding Crowd* comes first in discussion. Hardy started to work on this novel in the spring of 1873 (Robert: 1959: 79). This novel is considered by critics as a novel of astonishing confidence, and a major work of the author. This novel, though, first appeared as serials in *Cornhill* and the novel displays throughout the excitement and assurance

of a writer who has been given his great opportunity to write a serial story.

In chapter I of the story, Gabriel Oak is shown to us with his average features of simplicity. Hardy tries to inform the readers that Gabriel Oak cares for his fellow beings and is capable of judging them. The story continues by meeting Gabriel Oak with the female leading character, Bathsheba Everdene by chance. This meeting is continued by Oak's observing the girl and the girl rescues Oak from fire. Oak falls in love with the girl and at last proposes her but is rejected and promises not to ask Bathsheba anymore.

Tragic happening befalls Gabriel Oak and he is forced to go to look for a job. Once again he meets Bathsheba in a different position and situation. The nature of the meeting is different; Bathsheba as the employer and Gabriel Oak is the employee. From now on the story develops. Bathsheba's vain behavior and attitude against Gabriel Oak is getting worse due to their position, but Gabriel Oak remains not only as a good employee but also as a true friend. Oak has to witness Bathsheba's arrogance, caprice and coquettishness. His composure as a man is admirable.

Bathsheba, out of her foolishness and caprice, fools Boldwood and he trusts Bathsheba for what she says on a valentine card. Bathsheba then meets Francis Troy, a handsome sergeant. She falls in love with him without realizing that he is a bad character. For Troy, she is a second easy victim. Bathsheba, ignoring Boldwood's flaming love and Gabriel Oak's honest love, has decided to marry Troy. She has chosen a wrong

man, deceived by the appearance only without judging the character.

Gabriel Oak proves to be a true friend, warning Bathsheba against Troy whom Gabriel Oak considers a bad character and hypocrite. But as we know in reality, it is futile to give advice to someone who is not only stubborn but also in a crazy love. Then Troy's wickedness is uncovered, that he has deserted a girl named Fanny who dies in childbirth. Both Troy and Bathsheba not only regret, but she considers that her marriage between her and Troy is finished.

Troy is perhaps upset and confused and he is likely to be afraid of public opinion because of Fanny's tragic happenings. Then to erase the trace he pretends to be drowned in a bay and disappears for a while. Troy disappearance opens a chance for Boldwood to win Bathsheba's heart. But on sudden he comes up at a Christmas party given by Boldwood in honor to Bathsheba. It can be imagined how disappointed Boldwood is, and when Troy treats Bathsheba roughly, Boldwood finds an excuse to shoot Troy dead and Boldwood is sent to prison for this. It can be predicted then that a big chance for Gabriel Oak opens and at the end of the story Gabriel harvests golden yield for good seed he has sowed.

The Characters

The characters discussed here will be major characters. However, there is one character will be touched upon, since this one contributes much to the development of the story. The character meant is Fanny Robin. The characters

will be discussed in terms of their appearance or rather to their significance in the story. They are : a. Bathsheba Everdene, she is a woman of mixed nature. She is strong, but sometimes frail, she is smart but sometimes foolish and very impulsive. b. Gabriel Oak as his name suggests is strong and sturdy. He is very honest and faithful, but he is sometimes so honest that he seems stupid and sometimes hurting. At the end of the story, Gabriel is rewarded for his faithfulness. c. Boldwood, Bathsheba describes him as "*a very good-looking man*". d. Francis Troy, he surely has a bad character, that not only does he hurt and destroy other characters, but also leads to his unnatural death, shot by the desperate Boldwood. e. Fanny Robin; Fanny trusts a man too much, and for this she suffers. Fanny trusts a wrong man, Troy, a man of no conscience. She yields herself to him, when she is pregnant, Troy deserts her and marries her mistress Bathsheba.

The Setting

The setting for this story is Wessex, which in that time was a district of the scattered fields and farms. Bathsheba herself is the young mistress of a farm called Weathebury. The year is not clearly stated, but the story is begun in December. Months like May, June, July, etc. , are mentioned and so are the seasons like spring, summer, autumn and winter. The story perhaps takes place, as the title suggests, in a remote place in Hardy's own native country, and in this novel, Hardy wants the readers to view his beloved native country and the types of people who inhabited it.

Level of Credibilities

It is only natural that after or while reading a novel, we try to compare what happens in the story the reality that we experience in life. We know that this novel is a fiction which means that this story is compared by the great capability of the expression of the writer, but of course the story cannot be separated from what the author has in view about the experience that such a thing has happened in true life. The story in general concerned is relatively true to life. The characters of Bathsheba for example might exist in all periods of time. As for Gabriel Oak, a question may be asked, "Is there really a man like him?". And this is really a crucial question. Gabriel Oak is a type of a good man, but he is too good to be true. At the beginning of the story and the middle of it, Gabriel Oak is considered of no having pride.

Boldwood is difficult to guess. He is a man of split character. He can be good and patient, but he can also be dangerous and desperate. A man like him, though, many can be found in real life. Especially nowadays, there are many people like Troy, taking advantage of other people's weaknesses. Troy has the same character as the bad soldiers of nowadays, having no other qualifications except army matters, fooling young girls and deserting them after has got what he has wanted and sometimes rough to get what he wants. Such types of man will usually end like the fate of men of Boldwood's type, in prison or tragic life and even death.

The Theme

Every author has something to say or has some message in writing his story. This message in brief, is understood as the theme of the story or the message is seen in the theme. The theme of *Far from the Madding Crowd* is actually simple; the reward for wickedness is sufferings or even death, while patience, perseverance and bravery are the path by which we may reach our goal. In short, every thing we do is in proportion to what we shall obtain. Or if we have to use 'cliches' "Good turn deserves another or Crime does not pay" which means that goodness is for goodness and you will get nothing. For crime but put punishment. It is simply to the readers' satisfaction that Troy has to deem the evil he has done by his tragic death.

The Impact of Surroundings towards the Characters

It has been previously mentioned that surroundings means the occupants of a tertian area and everything exists in that area. When the impact of surroundings on the characters discussed, the discussion will be on the influence of the situation of the vicinity towards the character, the influence of one character towards the other and even the character's influence towards him/herself. Situation and condition of a particular area, to a certain extent, will influence the development of one who lives there, which I the long run becomes the custom done by the occupant living there. And as the results of the conflict between he and his conscience and the norms and the tradition of the surroundings, he has to die a tragic death.

4.2 The Return of the Native

This novel belongs to what is called Wessex Novels which was published in 1878. This novel belongs to Hardy's Wessex Novel because the setting used in this novel is Wessex. The story starts with a description of Egdon Heath, on a Saturday in November. It begins with a mystery that is a woman who attracts the reader because her identity is concealed. When the woman disappears, many people take her place. These people come to build the traditional Fifth of November bonfire, as they watch the fire, they talk about the marriage that day of Thomasin, Mrs Yeobright's niece, and Wildeve and also about the arrival of Clym, Mrs Yeobright's son. At the end of the story, Thomasin gets married to Diggory Venn and Clym becomes a preacher.

The Characters

The characters discussed in the present discourse will only be the major ones, as was done previously. There is though, one minor character discussed, since this character is considered to be the link in the development of the plot, that is Diggory Venn. The order of the character discussed here is a little different from the previous one. The characters of the present novel discussed are according to how big their contribution is in the development of the story. Below are the characters involved in the story

a. Clement Yeobright (Clym) : he is strong minded, but a little slow in making final decision. He may be said to be the leading character of the novel, since he is the very native who returns to Egdon Heath from Paris. Clym and his mother have a different view on Eustacia's personality. This time Clym is also unshaken. **b.**

Eustacia Vye: She is a beautiful, young woman of mixed blood. She feels different from and superior to the young women around her. She likes a flashy life. Because of this, though, her life ends up in ruin. She is a stubborn young woman who never listens to any other's appeal and always wants to have her own way done. **c. Damon Wildeve** ; he is regarded by others as a man who made a good start in life but has come down. He was an engineer and now is an innkeeper. But this occupation suits him perfectly. Wildeve's conduct is as bad as Eustacia's. he is dishonest to his wife. His life style is very impulsive. He never thinks of any other's feelings. **d. Mrs Yeobright**; Clym's mother is "well-known respected widow of the neighborhood of a standing family which can only be expressed by the word genteel". Although her husband is a small farmer she herself is a curate's daughter. Therefore, she is respected in her village. **e. Thomasin Yeobright**, she is gentle, young and innocent but treated rough by circumstances. She is very normal and conventional in her views and in her personality. Her husband cheats her by having secret love affairs with Eustacia. She remains loyal to her husband and she is never rude even when she rejects Venn's offer of marriage. **g. Diggory Venn**, he is not a leading character of the story but to discuss him is necessary since he serves as the connector in developing the plot in the novel.

About his personality, he may be said as persistent, resourceful, hard-working, and prudent. But for all his appearance in the story he is known less than the other characters. Not even his marrying Thomasin lessens the mystery.

In terms of setting *Returns of the Native* is the same as *Far from the Madding Crowd*, in the sense that year is not mentioned. What is mentioned in the story is the names of months, days and dates like: November, September, the fifth of November, the sixth of September, Saturday are prevalent. In terms of places, this novel uses the same area that is Wessex. Wessex is the area which is bordered to the north by Bristol channel. This area is fertile and is full of hills and rivers and very suitable for the setting like the story concerned which has idyllic scenery. But happenings are centred in Egdon Heath; yet some places like Rainbarrow, Shadwater Weir, Weathburry, the English channel and even Paris are mentioned. But perhaps Egdon Heath tends itself very well to the kind of the story and very suitable for almost all of the characters' attitude and behavior.

Level of Credibilities

After reading the story, nothing deviates so much from real life that may be experienced by anyone at all. Clym for example, at a glance, may be a little strange. He leaves a flashy life in Paris where he has successful business there and goes back to his native place only to change his profession to become a school teacher to the poor and ignorant there. But in real life there are many Clyms who realize that life is worth living not from materialistic point of view but from other view points. As for Eustacia, the case is just the same. For example Eustacia marries basically not for love but for her wish to leave her native village to go to a bigger, and when her

wish comes to ruin she feels disappointed and up to something worse. Therefore, Eustacia cheats her husband and makes some rendezvous with her former lover, but then when everything goes wrong, and she cannot find a solution to the problem she takes a short cut by committing suicide.

Mrs Yeobright is not quite different from mothers of nowadays who are against their children's ideals by always saying 'for your own good'. Old and young generations tend to have different opinions on certain things and lead to quarrels. She also opposes her son's marriage to Eustacia very strongly. But it is known that for a young man there is always a time, when he does not want to listen to anyone's advice, especially when he is in love.

Thomasin has her own right in real life. She is an angel who thinks that good turn deserves another. Because of her honest love for her husband, Wildeve she is unshaken. Her love for her husband remains, though her husband cheats her by coming to Eustacia secretly. And it is still believed that good man is always rewarded. Therefore, at the end of the story, she is one of the survival who lives happily.

Wildeve is a type of a young man who is dishonest to his wife. Since the beginning, it seems that he does not actually love Thomasin heartily. Therefore, whenever and wherever he has a chance he always comes to see Eustacia, even when he is already married. Marriage, a sacred contract, does not inhibit her from secret love. For him a woman who is not his wife is more important than his own wife. He is

always impulsive, he has no feelings for others. Therefore, for all his proceedings he has to deem by his own life, drowned while trying to help Eustacia. Diggory Venn, a minor character but serves as a link in the development of the plot has a unique character. And at the end of the story, he gets married to Thomasin and they have a happy union.

The Theme

Almost in all Wessex novels Hardy creates almost equal themes that is, fate is above anything and good deserves another. Both Eustacia and Damon Wildeve, youth who cannot refrain themselves have to sacrifice their lives for something they think right but generally believed to die in vain. Thomasin is already predestined to be Diggory's wife. However long the path she has to walk, before at last she comes to the destination, but if it is already predestined she finally gets married to Diggory. Diggory is also in the same case, twice is he rejected, but because he is already predestinated to become Thomasin's husband, he finally gets married to Thomasin. In brief, fate plays an important role in Hardy's Wessex novels in general and in *The Return of the Native* in particular.

The Impact of Surroundings on the Characters

It is previously said that surroundings (man, condition, and situation, vid. previous discussion on this matter) has a great impact on the character. At first example, look at Mrs. Yeobright; being poor herself, she appreciates materialistic success above

anything. Like the poor in general, always appreciates riches. So someone's condition may make a certain impact in someone's appreciation on certain matters. Therefore, she has a conflict with her son not only viewing materialistic success but also on judging a good girl to make a good wife.

In general, young generation and old one have always a different view on certain viewpoints. Such kind of things happens due to the difference of period of time. And if time changes, things tend to change. Custom change, tradition may change, viewpoints may also change as the result of change of condition and situation of the atmosphere of the place, both because of outside influence or the impact of social change happens within the environment of the place concerned or the change of the people of the related place. As for Eustacia the impact comes from within herself. She may have a personality complex. She comes from mixed origin. She feels different from all others living in that area even she feels superior to other girls in that place because she is a captain's granddaughter. Damon Wildeve is conditioned by two factors; the first is from within himself. He is the girl's focus and he can flirt accordingly. And the second he is conditioned by his surroundings. He is innkeeper. And an innkeeper tends to meet people of different characters. Therefore, Wildeve is the black sheep in the story from whom other people's misery and his come or as the result of his bad proceedings.

He treats his wife badly by his dishonesty. He makes Clym miserable by his secret love to his wife. He causes Mrs

Yeobright's death indirectly, because when Mrs Yeobright comes to visit her son Clym, Eustacia does not open the door, because at that time Wildeve is in with her and Mrs Yeobright has to go back home, when on the way she is bitten by an adder and dies. He also causes Eustacia's death indirectly. Thomasin, a young woman who is gentle and easy to educate, is a good personality. She is a good personality. She is self-conscious and experience makes her a good young woman and makes herself a good wife.

4.3. The Mayor of Casterbridge

The third novel to be discussed is *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. In this novel which will be seen later, fate plays a very important role in the development of the plot. Thus, this novel is not very much different from the previous two. From the next discussion, the uniqueness of the novel in question will be obviously seen. The story starts when there is a market at Weydon Priors in Upper Wessex at the end of a late summer day in the year 1826. Henchard comes to the market with his wife Susan and their daughter Elizabeth-Jane. In the market Henchard gets drunk and while he is drunk he offers his young wife for sale to the highest bidder.

A sailor, Newson, buys Susan. Feeling disgusted with her husband, Susan goes off with the sailor after she has thrown her wedding ring to Henchard. When Henchard comes to and he finds Susan's wedding ring and the sailor's money in his pocket now he realizes that what has happened is not a dream. He goes off, first to the church to

swear not to touch any alcohol for 20 years. He wanders until he reaches Casterbridge and after a few years he becomes the Mayor of Casterbridge. When 18 years have passed, Susan and Elizabeth-Jane come back in the searching for Henchard, because she is told that her relation with Newson is illegal. Newson is reported to have been lost in a trip to Newfoundland. At the same time a young man, Farfrae comes to Casterbridge and answers to Henchard's advertisement for a manager of corn department. One day Elizabeth-Jane meets Lucetta and they become friend. Lucetta is very good to Elizabeth-Jane and she does not realize that Lucetta was Henchard's former lover. And then Elizabeth-Jane moves to stay with Lucetta. This leads to Farfrae's acquaintance with her and finally marries her.

Susan is sick and family dies, but before her death she writes a letter not to be opened till Elizabeth-Jane's wedding day. The letter turns to read that Elizabeth-Jane is actually not Henchard's daughter but Newson's. Farfrae's business gets more flourished and Henchard goes bankrupt. Their rivalry more intense and leads to serious enmity. Lucetta dies and Farfrae marries Elizabeth-Jane where her real father Newton is present. Henchard is sad and despaired and he goes off only to die in a hunt, lonesome and alone.

The Characters

The characters discussed for this novel will be due to their chronological appearance and only leading characters will be treated. All characters will be

discussed as follow :

a. Michael Henchard, he is strong and energetic. He has good points in his character, but they are contrasted sharply with his bad qualities. But he is also rash and impulsive in dealing with people, though he is honest and generous and wants to make up for what he has done to Susan.

b. Susan; Susan's character is a little vague. She is simple and innocent. Perhaps Hardy makes Susan's character vague on purpose; so that the focus will remain on Henchard. Susan has suffered an outrage which is difficult to put with.

c. Elizabeth-Jane; a tough girl, who even though she suffers from poverty and from the loss of her father Newton and her mother Susan resigns herself to study and self-betterment.

d. Donald Farfrae; is a young Scotsman, thin and frail. But despite of this he is charming, witty and having a lot of good humour. Donald Farfrae is very clever at business and knows to appeal other's interest. His character may be contrasted to the character of Henchard in the way that Donald cannot truly accommodate a grudge or wish to be vengeful. And such character actually suits that of Elizabeth-Jane.

e. Lucetta Templeman (Le Sueur); she may be considered rather flighty, flirtatious and indiscreet. Her character is nothing to compare with that of Elizabeth-Jane. She is always preoccupied with clothing, comfort, fashions, and sophisticated light joking. She is rather snobbish after gets married to Donald Farfrae when he becomes the mayor of Casterbridge. In short, she is lack of depth in personality.

f. Newson; His character is known from Susan and Elizabeth. She comments on

him that he is a kind, jovial man. He has a forgiving nature, for example, he refuses to punish Henchard for lying to him. His other trusting nature is shown when he departs without even visiting the cemetery. Yet he is thoughtful of others. The story of his being lost at sea is a kindly deception by which he will give Susan the freedom to return to Henchard.

g. Jopp Jopp is a dark character who has no wit, business sense of honor. He is vengeful and eager to see an enemy suffer. His function in the novel is to serve as a villainous which bridges for villainous behavior for others.

Of the three novels discussed only the present novel that mentions year. So time-setting of this novel is mentioned at the beginning of the story: "*before the nineteenth century had reached one-third of its span*". (1971:1). This is the only difference of the novel. As to the place, this novel also describes the rustic life of Wessex countryside. Places in this are also mentioned like : Casterbridge (which becomes the central focus place of novel), Durnover Moor, Budmouth, Weydon Fair, Bristol, London, Cahring Cross, Weatherburry. Thus some places mentioned in the previous novels are mentioned again.

Level of Credibilities

Culture practiced in a certain area depends on many factors. Period of time plays a very important part in this matter. Henchard, for example, after wandering here and there, strike at a good fortune and position rich and becomes the mayor of Casterbridge seems to be unbelievable except in a story, there are, though, some

people coming from a poor family become the heads of the government. In this case what happens to Henchard is very justifiable, even if rarely happens.

Susan is described to have a heart of good, loyal woman, who is always attached to one man, even if the husband treats her unfairly. There are many women like Susan in this world, though. As for Lucetta, there are many women who only think of worldly happiness and try to get what she wants without thinking of other people's feeling. Elizabeth-Jane, like Susan is hit by chance and good fate, but in addition to this the wish for self-betterment plays also an important role in the course of her life. She starts with her mother coming to Casterbridge. They live not quite an abundant life. Then her mother comes back to her former husband, their life is not so difficult anymore. She has the wish for self-betterment. Therefore, her life does not go from bad to worse but from good to better. And when the story ends, she and Farfrae live a happy life.

Farfrae marries Lucetta is only forced by fate to walk the path which is predestined. He never bears any grudge at any one at all. And afterwards, he realizes that if Lucetta did not die, his life would not so happy with her. And since the beginning that he falls already with Elizabeth-Jane. He finally marries Elizabeth-Jane and lives a happy life.

The Theme

The theme of this novel has still a close chain to the previous two and true to what many critics have said about Hardy: pessimism. In addition, that man

seems to be the arbitrary and almost always malign workings of the universe, and blind chance upon the destinies of man. Also it seems that a good turn deserves another still holds. Evil brings pain and suffering upon the character who has done something wrong upon someone who is only the victim of the situation and there is no escape to that except in a day-to-day acceptance of life.

The Impact of Surroundings towards the Characters

The story happens in 1826 and the countryside of Wessex is the place for the setting. The situation is of course very different from nowadays. And the way of life, the way of the people think is not the same. As it is said in the story, for example, Henchard is a very young husband. Even at that time, young age is not considered good for marriage. It is not justifiable. Young men are not wise enough in making decision, difficult to find any way out in hard time, because of their immaturity and less experience. In this case of Henchard, he feels miserable and regrets because he is too young for a husband and when he feels that his marriage is not successful, he puts the blame on his wife and when he is drunk he finally sells his wife but according to his wife, this is not for the first time Henchard treats his wife badly.

Susan being too young to be a wife, does not know what to do in a difficult time opinion is different towards the relationship between husband and wife. Wives are considered as things which may be bought and sold. Therefore, Susan after being sold follows the buyer because she must have

someone to depend on. When Elizabeth-Jane grows up, time has changed and get different from the time experienced by her mother, Susan. Elizabeth-Jane realizes that someone's life depends on his/herself. If someone's life wants to become better, she/he has to change her/himself. Therefore, Elizabeth-Jane undertakes to learn for self betterment. When Henchard in becoming the mayor, might be due to good luck, Farfrae is different. Farfrae, in becoming the mayor, is through his hardworking and intelligence.

People have chosen him to become the Mayor because of something (influence, etc) coming his personality. As for Newson surroundings do not influence him so much. Something for within is bigger than that from outside him. Therefore, it may be summed up that surroundings may influence characters in bad or good impacts or even sometimes has only a little effect or nothing at all.

Three books of Hardy's Wessex novels have been previously discussed one by one. It is considered necessary to find some similarities and differences of the novels in question. The theme of the three novels in general is similar, that is fate. Fate plays an important part in the three novels. Although there are some characters at the end of the story who live happily, the novels may be classified under the category of tragedies, on the account of many other characters' suffering in the course of the story.

Talking about the characters, in each book, there is always one character either male or female disloyal to his/her partner. As for the setting, the three

novels belong to the Wessex novels which mean that the place used for the setting is Wessex area. And as for the time, only *The Mayor of Casterbridge* which mentions the year that is 1826, while the names of months and seasons are mentioned in the three novels.

As for the plot in all the novels there is always one character who serves as a link. From the point of verisimilitude the novels resemble one another to a certain extent, and have a lot of similarities in real life. About the impact of surroundings on the characters is not very much different from one novel to another.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

After having studied three of Hardy's novels, the writers come to a conclusion that Hardy's novels are worth reading because they present almost all human emotion and reaction towards unfavorable fate. Although the theme of the three novels discussed is unavoidable fate from whatever point of view to fight it. It is due to the environment, the people who have already a steadfast opinion and opposite wills but through Hardy's skillful writing talent the story develops into beautiful, interesting plots, in the sense that the reader can follow the story very easily and after reading the novels the readers are able to recollect the course of the story.

As for the setting in the three novels Hardy uses the same area: The Wessex Countryside. And Hardy in his description of the countryside has proved that he is a great novelist. For the characters, Hardy skillfully suits each of them to the background – either the

background of their life or their educational background which the reader can conclude from the way they speak or the comments of one character to the other or from the description of the author himself. In brief, the writer can say that Hardy is a great novelist and the book discussed are great novels.

The writers are in the opinion that English literature, novels in particular is better introduced to High School students because of the following considerations:

1. English literature may give a wider horizon to the students.
2. The students through reading, may build their characters by seeing and analyzing the characters of the novels.
3. The students may be entertained by reading sound novels, and their language skills may develop more quickly though reading the novels, those are in the term of reading, understanding and vocabulary building.

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