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**PECULIARITIES OF CHARACTER AND
ENVIRONMENT
IN THOMAS HARDY'S NOVELS
*A PAIR OF BLUE EYES AND
FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD***

**TĒLU UN VIDES ĪPATNĪBAS TOMASA HĀRDIJA ROMĀNOS
*ZILO ACU PĀRIS UN TĀLU NO TRAKOJOŠĀ PŪĻA***

BACHELOR THESIS

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RIGA 2009

ANOTĀCIJA

Šis bakalaura darbs analizē divus Tomasa Hārdija agrīnos romānus. Pētījuma mērķis ir pierādīt, ka abi romāni *Zilo acu pāris* un *Tālu no trakojošā pūļa* ir līdzīgi. Tie balstās uz tēlu savstarpējām attiecībām. Darba sākumā aplūkota Hārdija morālo un estētisko uzskatu attīstība. Atklājas rakstnieka attieksme pret vidi un izpratne par cilvēciskajām attiecībām. Panāktais efekts ir nolemtības un brīvas gribas pretstats. Darba noslēgumā secināts, ka abi romāni ir līdzīgi.

ABSTRACT

The present Bachelor Thesis analyzes two Hardy's early novels. The goal of this paper is to prove that both novels *A Pair of Blue Eyes* and *Far from the Madding Crowd* are similar. They are based on characters' mutual relationships. In the beginning, the present paper reviews the development of Thomas Hardy's moral and aesthetic views. It shows Hardy's attitude towards the environment and his understanding of human relationships. The achieved effect is a contrast of fate and free will. The Conclusions arrived at the following: both novels are similar.

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INTRODUCTION

Thomas Hardy is one of the most famous 19th century realism writers in English literature. He is well known as the twentieth century poet, as well as the 19th century novelist. Hardy was from Dorset and most of his novels reflect life in that part of the country. Dorset was a spiritual dwelling-place for the writer. Hardy used its old name Wessex in his works.

Hardy wrote very carefully and precisely. The objects of his novels were peasants and landscapes which were well known to him, because the writer had observed them in his childhood.

Marriage and conjugal life was and still is a headache for people. In literature love affairs and marriage problems are widely depicted, therefore it may be used as aids for real life situations. In fact, almost all Hardy's novels are tragic love stories.

The present paper is going to deal with analysis of two Hardy's first novels. The author of the present paper was interested in reading Hardy's first works written in fiction. Both titles *A Pair of Blue Eyes* and *Far from the Madding Crowd* seemed really promising. One of them depicted the rural life in a secluded countryside, but the other one – a romantic relationship.

The Goal

The goal of the present paper is to prove that both novels *A Pair of Blue Eyes* and *Far from the Madding Crowd* are similar novels. They are based on characters' mutual relationships and have a lot of common elements.

Enabling Objectives

In order to achieve the goal, the following tasks have been set forward:

- To reflect Hardy's moral and aesthetic views;
- To demonstrate Hardy's attitude towards the environment and reveal his passions;
- To describe the importance of the rural setting in two novels;
- To emphasize the characters' mutual relationships;
- To contrast phenomena of fate and free will;
- To draw relevant conclusions.

In order to make a complete research it is important to read the writer's biography and to find out his viewpoints and some facts of his life. The research has mainly been based on the analyses of both novels and theory of literature.

The overwhelming interest encouraged the author of this paper to do the analyses of both novels in order to find out resemblances and common details in Hardy's pattern of writing. The novels are of the same kind therefore it is easy to draw several parallels between them. Hardy wrote these books only in a year interval. This is one of the main explanations there is a striking resemblance between the novels *Far from the Madding Crowd* and *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. Both of the novels are romantic stories which are based on a love triangle between the heroine and several suitors. In both works the heroine is really charming. Hardy emphasized in the books that beauty usually goes hand in hand with vanity. Both heroines Elfride and Bathsheba are striking examples.

Although the books have strong resemblances they also have some differences. *A Pair of Blue Eyes* is a tragic love story; the characters of this novel are victims of fate. On the contrary *Far from the Madding Crowd* has a more optimistic tone and it ends happily.

Methods of Research

General analysis of theoretical sources

Characters comparative analysis

Structure of the Work

The present paper consists of the Introduction, four chapters, Conclusions, Theses and References. Chapter one deals with the development of Hardy's moral and aesthetic views. Chapter two demonstrates Hardy's attitude towards the environment and his passions. Chapter three emphasizes characters in various relationships. Chapter four look at the phenomena of fate and free will. Conclusions sum up the results of the research and point out the advantages and disadvantages of it.

CHAPTER ONE

DEVELOPMENT OF THOMAS HARDY'S MORAL AND AESTHETIC VIEWS

In English literature Thomas Hardy is one of the most famous realism novelists of the 19th century, as well as a poet of the 20th century. He is well known as a poet, as well as the 19th century novelist. From his point of view poetry is the highest form of literature. Certainly, poetry was his first love, but his collections did not sell well. Unable to find readers for his poetry Hardy turned to fiction. Nonetheless the writer lived at a time when novel writing dominated. Hardy found out in youth that he could make his living by writing fiction, but not by writing poetry. So Hardy wrote novels for 25 years.

The writer was from Dorset and most of his novels reflect life in that part of the country. The author was emotionally connected with the familiar environment through his whole life. In his novels Hardy used the old name of South West of England that is Wessex. The novel *Far from the Madding Crowd* is the first of Hardy's Wessex Novels. Moreover, it was his first book which gained notice. It was written in 1874 and published in the Cornhill Magazine. Actually, Hardy became a noted writer of fiction. Due to the success of *Far From the Madding Crowd* Hardy turned to writing full time. The success encouraged Hardy to give up his architectural practice and concentrate on writing.

“*Far from the Madding Crowd* ranks very high among the pastoral novels of English literature” (Baker, 1986:48).

Hardy grew up according to a strong religious belief. He was a frequent visitor to church. Furthermore, he was not a formal visitor of Sunday services.

“It is evident Hardy was a punctilious church attender, not only at Sunday morning and evening service, but on most important Saints' days, sure evidence of his upbringing 'in High Church principles'. Many in his prayer book and *Christian Year* form a kind of diary of the church services he attended, the actual church and the dates of attendance” (Gittings, 2001; 77).

Besides in youth Hardy even learned the Bible by heart. He had a plan of a career in the Church for himself.

“His record for these years bears out his own statement that 'he knew the Morning and Evening Services by heart including the rubrics, as well as large portions of the New Version of the Psalms’” (Gittings, 2001:76).

Since his childhood Hardy was an avid reader. He adored the works of Shakespeare, Milton, Scott, and Dumas. In addition, the books widened his mental outlook and influenced

his viewpoints.

“The two books generally taken to mark this revolution in the spiritual life of England are Darwin's *Origin of Species*, published in November 1859, and, perhaps even more immediately influential, the Symposium entitled *Essays and Reviews*, which came out in the following year. Both, in their various ways, struck at the literal acceptance of Bible teaching and biblical infallibility” (Gittings, 2001; 76).

Hardy himself was impressed by these essays and Darwin's new theory. Darwin's theory made revolution not only in the biology; it also included the explanation of human action, thoughts, and culture. The impression of the theory “Natural selection” is well noticeable in Hardy's books. In the novels nature and fate are not the products of a kind-hearted God. Both fate and nature used to play harmful tricks on the characters. As a result there is some natural selection. Hardy demonstrated that man primary is the product of evolution and environment.

“Darwin's famous work, *Origin of Species*, must have drastically undermined his already uncertain religious beliefs. Hardy, who continued to read Victorian thinkers, finally abandoned the Church and orthodox belief” (Mahon, Maureen 1988:89).

Thus, his reading of various authors proved to the writer that there are some problems and issues to which religion does not give a solution.

“Hardy's opposition to the Church was a fundamental one; he was unable to accept the supernatural and redemptive doctrines which are the foundations of Christianity. His gradual development to the skepticism which marked many Victorian thinkers owed much to his studies of the great rationalist philosophers and scientists of the age” (Gittings, 2001:79)

It was towards the middle of the nineteenth century when the scientific climate changed. It was the period of a great improvement. There were a series of discoveries and inventions in technology and medicine. Most of these discoveries challenged religious beliefs. Moreover, there was a definite conflict between science and religion.

The novelties did not leave Hardy indifferent. From Hardy's point of view Christianity partly had lost its purity. Probably the loss of the religious belief was the main reason which caused Hardy's melancholy. Hardy was not a slave of convention he was really brave and modern in his works.

“He was modern enough to take a quite unsentimental, un-Victorian view of life, love and religion” (Swatridge, 1985:90).

It is beyond doubt Hardy did not try to please anybody. He expressed in the books his own points of view. The author even took the liberty of criticizing the Victorian society. Hardy was of the opinion that they lived in accordance with convention but not according to moral principles.

As Swatridge (1985;74) states “The Church appears in Hardy's works as a physical and

a social presence, not as something with anything of spiritual significance.” In both novels Hardy showed the church as a grand building as an architectural masterpiece. It seems only as a shell where once a spiritual creature had lived. In fact, Hardy used the church as a symbol of all the Victorian society which is externally splendid and massive, but internally poor and even empty.

“Two of the buttresses of the old social order were the aristocracy and the Established Church. Hardy clearly regarded both as outmoded institutions which had outlived” (Gittings, 2001:83).

In the middle of the 19th century a church building boom was about in England. More than 300 new churches were built in fifty years. In fact, Hardy’s father was involved in the process and even Hardy as an assistant took part in restoration of several churches. The task was to increase the number of church attenders and to strengthen parish traditions. Nevertheless the writer saw that the new buildings would not solve the problem. He knew that the root of the issue was inside of the institution and not in lack of edifices. Hardy was of opinion that church had lost its function and purity. He criticized the church and people who were linked with it for formality. He made bitter and ironic remarks about the clergy in the novels. Mr Swancourt is a vicar in *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. He is depicted as an immoral, silly, and snobbish person, who has nothing in common with religion. His daughter Elfride revealed a secret and told Stephen the whole truth.

“Well, I write papa's sermons for him very often, and he preaches them better than he does his own; and then afterwards he talks to people and to me about what he said in his sermon to-day, and forgets that I wrote it for him. Isn't it absurd?” (Hardy, 1995).

The portrait of the vicar is really critical and satirical. Hardy tried to point out that religion was gone and the delusion substituted it. In the other novel there is no portrait of any vicar or clergy, but Hardy criticized society for formal going to church. Hardy noted that people took part in public worship not for their own sake, but as if to please clergies. The novelist passed a remark on farmer Oak who symbolizes the rural community.

”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.” (1989:7)

All in all, the writer was of opinion that it was high time for church to regain the internal purity and trust of society.. Church in both novels symbolizes the frame and formality of religion. Mr Swancourt as a vicar serves as a good example. He tries to make a thin excuse for a missing family pray.

”You'll put up with our not having family prayer this morning, I hope?’ we don't make a regular thing of it; but when we have strangers visiting us, I am strongly of opinion that it is the proper thing to do, and I always do it” (Hardy, 1995).

Moreover, Hardy's books reflect the problems of the nineteenth century. Hardy was too extraordinary direct and frank in his works. “His novels bravely challenged many of the sexual and religious conventions of the Victorian age, and dared to present a bleak view into human nature” (Online 7). After all, his directness and braveness caused offence. Hardy's novels were burned in public and not bought by many libraries. The novels were pitiless and tragic in theme that shocked Victorian sentiment and taste. Besides, hostility and criticism came his way. No doubt, it was not easy for the young novelist to go through the dirty criticism. In the novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* Hardy indirectly revealed his pain. The main heroine, Elfride Swancourt, also writes fiction and then comes across the unfair reviewer. She is shocked, but her stepmother tries to soothe the immature lady.

“Critics go on writing, and are never corrected or argued with, and therefore are never improved” (Hardy, 1995).

In fact there is one more common element between the heroine and Hardy. Elfride makes notes for her book like Hardy did.

“I suppose you are wondering what those scraps were?’ she said, as they bowled along up the sycamore avenue. ‘And so I may as well tell you. They are notes for a romance I am writing’” (Hardy, 1995).

Hardy did not sit for hours at home and write fiction or poetry. The daily life and events around were quite impressive. So Hardy frequently made notes like Elfride does in the novel. Usually big ideas struck Hardy unexpectedly so it remained for him to make notes on impropriated things.

“So Hardy went on writing sometimes indoors, sometimes out – when he would find himself without a scrape of paper at the very moment that he felt volumes. In such circumstances he would use large dead leaves, white chips left by the woodcutters, or piece of stone or slate that came to hand” (Hardy, 1962:96).

The author's life was not tragic, but sadness, disappointment, and dissatisfaction were his companions.

According to Mahon, Maureen (1988:16) “Many of the circumstances of Hardy's life also contributed to his sadness: his humble background, a factor inducing discomfort in the snobbish society of Victorian England; personal tragedies such as the death of his friend Moule and his unsatisfactory marriage.”

Hardy grew up in a poor rural community. He was a shy, sensitive, and diffident person,

therefore injustice and common problems were so painful to him. The author's sensitiveness is the main reason for his tragic outlook. Hardy had a stark view of the tragedy and the injustices of human life.

“The deepest causes of Hardy's melancholy lay in his own disposition. Like many artists, he was shy, acutely sensitive, diffident, secretive; such a nature ensured that he was more acutely wounded by the sorrows and disappointments of life than a coarser individual would have been” (Mahon, Maureen, 1988; 17).

Most of his novels are tragic love stories. In the novels the writer reflected his pessimism and sense of injustice. The overwhelming disappointment and sadness run through his books.

“Hardy's was a sad life, in which his gifts received recognition very late, and it is correct to describe his outlook as pessimistic. From his sad outlook, however, he created memorable novels” (Mahon, Maureen, 1988; 17).

All Hardy's works are based on his beliefs. As a result, the writer offered to the reader to see the world from his viewpoint.

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUNDS

In the following chapter we will look at Thomas Hardy's attitude towards the surrounding environment, nature, its vital role in human life, as well as discuss his passion for art, architecture, literature, culture and music.

2.1 Thomas Hardy's Attitude towards the Environment

Thomas Hardy was born on 2 June 1840 in the village of Higher [Upper] Bockhampton in Stanford parish near the town of Dorchester in Dorset County, England.

It was a silent and lonely village isolated from the modern world. He had been close to the nature since his early days. The environment in which Hardy grew up left a deep influence upon him. "His early experience of rural life, with its seasonal rhythms and oral culture, was fundamental to much of his later writing" (Online 3). In fact, Hardy was a child of nature. He expressed his love to nature in his works too. As Mallelt mentions (2004:166) "Hardy is consistently aware of the interaction between the individual and environment, profoundly committed to the power and importance of place, not simply in respect of regional attachment, but for its interactive influence." As a result the setting has a particularly significant role in Hardy's works.

Most of his books are set in the area of the countryside where the author spent his childhood. Dorset was a spiritual dwelling-place for the writer. Hardy hid it under its old name Wessex in his works.

"The word *Wessex* was, until the last quarter of the nineteenth century, a purely historical term defining the south-western region of the island of Britain that had been ruled by the West Saxons in the early Middle Ages" (Kramer 1999:47).

By using it widely in his works, Hardy made revival of the name and even widened its meaning. Hardy wrote collection of Wessex Poems, five Wessex novels. In other words, the writer expressed his love to this area in all forms of literature.

"We have it on his Hardy's own assurance that the Wessex of the novels and poems is practically identical with the Wessex of history, and includes the counties of Berkshire, Wiltshire, Somerset, Hampshire, Dorset, and Devoneither wholly or in part." (Hermann Lea, Thomas Hardy's Wessex , 1913: xvii) (Online 5).

Hardy is a writer, who describes the life of the Wessex countryside with a particular fidelity that have no equal. His writing is topographically specific.

For Hardy it was a region of a particular beauty and atmosphere. The novel *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) is his first book where the Wessex theme begins. As Mallett (2004;135) states “Hardy was a Victorian writer, or at least a Victorian novelist, though critics rarely approached him primarily as a Victorian, preferring to associate him with a rustic, isolated world untouched by history.”

The writer considered himself as a part of the rural community and he was proud of it. Hardy was of the opinion that nature is the greatest teacher for man. Nature with its overwhelming mightiness and roughness teaches a good lesson to people.

“His mode of thinking was rather that of the educated countryman for whom knowledge was to be found in Nature. Nature, as he saw it, was not the soft and gentle product of a kind-hearted God” (Swatridge, 1985; 89).

In Hardy’s novels nature is unfriendly: it plays nasty jokes on characters, but on the other hand it hardens them and strengthens their will. There is one particular way how Hardy expressed his passion for nature in his works. The author regularly created beautiful landscapes in the novels. For example, in the novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes*:

“Stephen walked back to the vicarage through the meadows, as he had come, surrounded by the soft musical purl of the water through little weirs, the modest light of the moon, the freshening smell of the dews out-spread around. It was a time when mere seeing is meditation” (Hardy, 1995).

The landscapes are created from the artist’s point of view; therefore they are really impressive owing to the rich visual and acoustic imagery.

“His Wessex landscapes are so clearly drawn that they too are characters in his novels, quite as much as people who live in them” (Swatridge, 1985: 90).

Hardy created picturesque scenes in the novels and he did it in a masterly manner. In each chapter readers gain a striking visual impression of various landscapes. Actually, in his youth Hardy attended several art galleries in London where he studied paintings and the main masters of that time. Galleries as well as libraries were cult objects to Hardy. These verbally made impressive scenes prove that it is not a dry fact of Hardy’s biography.

“He stayed in London lodgings, studying pictures at the South Kensington Museum and other places” (Hardy, 1962:60).

Moreover, some heroes inherited Hardy’s passion for paintings. The author gave the opportunity to Henry Night to enjoy the abundance of the famous Galleries in Europe.

“Afterwards he remained for weeks in the museums, galleries, and libraries of

Vienna, Berlin, and Paris; and then he came home” (Hardy, 1995).

It is clear that the wealth of European galleries and museums tempted the writer, but so it also remained as an unrealized dream.

“At a more important level, Hardy's study of the painter's art is manifested in his fondness for grouping figures and for creating special effects of lighting and shadows, scale and perspective” (Norman, 1987:67).

”It was so early that the shaded places still smelt like night time, and the sunny spots had hardly felt the sun. The horizontal rays made every shallow dip in the ground to show as a well-marked hollow. Even the channel of the path was enough to throw shade, and the very stones of the road cast tapering dashes of darkness westward, as long as Jael's tent-nail” (Hardy, 1995).

Furthermore, Hardy in particular adored sunrises and sunsets because they were light and colour performances and struggle between light and darkness. Certainly the sunrise and sunset like moonlight scenes are the most striking and vivid in Hardy’s novels.

“The only half of the sun yet visible burnt ray-less like a red and flameless fire shining over a white hearth stone” (1989:112).

In addition, in these books light and darkness have a symbolic meaning. It is important to mention that chapter 37 in the novel *Far from the Madding Crowd* is Hardy’s masterpiece. In this chapter the author depicted a thunderstorm and did it really skilfully. There follow several effects of lighting and shadow. These stirring lightning effects are to the point. Hardy created special atmosphere to the chapter.

”It sprang from east, west, north, south, and was a perfect dance of death. The forms of skeletons appeared in the air, shaped with blue fire for bones. Dancing, leaping, striding, racing around, and mingling altogether in unparalleled confusion. With these were intertwined undulating snakes of green, and behind these was a broad mass of lesser light. Simultaneously came from every part of the tumbling sky what may be called a shout” (1989:289).

No doubt, every reader is under the impression that Hardy was a talented verbal picture maker. Besides, both novels give readers an opportunity to enjoy diversity of scenes.

The facts of Hardy’s biography inform us that in 1862 Hardy went to London where he spent five years. It was both an exciting adventure for Hardy and a turning point in his life. In the capital he worked as an assistant in the architect office. Although Hardy felt very provincial he enjoyed the intellectual life of the capital. In London he attended lectures, galleries, and museums. There Hardy studied architecture and paintings. In the capital Hardy found out that there was a huge gulf between his dreams and their fulfillment. Unfortunately the intellectual world of universities was unavailable for his social class and studies were beyond his means. In 1867 Hardy returned to Dorset emotionally and physically exhausted.

There he worked as an assistant for John Hicks and enjoyed the restoration of several buildings. It was the period when Hardy started to adore and write fiction.

“It was here, in response to Tinsley's request for a serial for the first number of *Tinsleys' Magazine*, that he wrote *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. It was published as a three-volume edition in May 1873” (Kramer, 1999: 39).

“The publication of *A Pair of Blue Eyes* had for the first time revealed Hardy's name to the public” (Gittings, 2001:249).

In addition Hardy's first wife directly and indirectly encouraged his writing. The novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* possesses strong autobiographical elements. The main hero, Stephen Smith is a master mason's son like Hardy was. Stephen is a young and talented architect's assistant who arrives in the countryside to make restoration of the church and falls in love with Elfride.

“This novel is of special interest because of the strong autobiographical parallels between the characters and circumstances of Stephen Smith and Elfride Swancourt and those of Hardy and his first wife Emma Gifford” (Online 4).

In order to emphasize the hero's skills in architecture Hardy was careful in choice of his surname. As a result Stephen's surname, Smith, is a specific and really appropriated to the young master. “It may be noticed that he gave the youth who appears first in the novel the surname of the Professor of Architecture he had been assisting” (Hardy, 1962:90).

It is a striking congruence with the author's biography. In 1870 Hardy as an architect's assistant took part in the inspection of the Cornish church. It was Hardy's first romantic meeting with Emma Lavinia Gifford whom he married in 1874. “Elfride, the heroine, was, as Hardy confessed, based in character and physical detail on Emma” (Gittings,2001:235). There is no room for doubt, the novel mirrors Hardy's own courtship of Emma. It is evident that Hardy reflected in the novel his own recent experience.

Moreover, Hardy as well as the main hero had enjoyed the intellectual world of London. In the novel the author stressed the advantage of the city life. Stephen is a young talented man who very much like Hardy enjoys the intellectual world of London. Hardy demonstrated that cities were centers of culture, education, and entertainment already in the 19th century. Elfride is surprised and points out that the visitor is particularly graceful and smart. Mr Swancourt explains to her that so it should be because he comes from London.

“Ay; anybody can be what you call graceful, if he lives a little time in a city, and keeps his eyes open. And he might have picked up his gentlemanliness by going to the galleries or theatres and watching stage drawing-room manners.” (Hardy, 1995).

2.2 Hardy's Passions

Since his childhood Hardy had close relationship with architecture. As it was already mentioned Hardy's father worked as a master mason and builder. The writer helped his father with the architectural drawings already at the age of 16. Later Hardy worked as an assistant for several architects. At the age of sixteen he was taken on as apprentice to John Hicks, an architect in Dorchester. He conducted surveys and excelled as draughtsman, working for Hicks until 1862 when he left for London to work with architect Arthur Blomfield.

In 1870 Hardy abandoned architecture in order to start a writer's career. Though architecture brought Hardy both social and economic advancement. Obviously Hardy managed both: he was a writer and architect at least in his works. Undoubtedly the novels reflect architect's skills and his passion for architecture.

“His architectural skills were readily transferred to his writing career. He built structures out of his poetry and novels. Old and beautiful buildings adorn his pages as they do the landscape he loves” (Mallelt, 2004:164).

In both novels buildings are important objects. Certainly they are architectural masterpieces which are depicted from architect's point of view. Hardy described the smallest detail of them. Usually there is a parallel between the building and the owner of it, therefore each description gives information about the owner. For instance Luxellian is an aristocrat and the owner of a splendid estate. The description of the property tells us about the owner's lifestyle.

“The building, though nothing but a mass of gables outside, has a splendid hall, staircase, and gallery within. The windows on all sides were long and many-mullioned; the roof lines broken up by dormer lights of the same pattern. The apex stones of these dormers, together with those of the gables, were surmounted by grotesque figures in rampant, passant, and couchant variety” (Hardy, 1995).

It is clear Hardy had a great experience in architecture. He had seen and drawn hundreds of edifices. “Hardy had two careers, as an architect and a writer. From the age of 16 to 32 he worked in architecture and his architectural notebook shows him to be an accomplished draughtsman and architect” (Mallelt, 2004:164). Probably the author just chose the most appropriate building for each case and depicted it. It seems the best explanation why the edifices are so real and exciting in Hardy's novels. With no doubt such descriptions assure the writer's skills and knowledge of architecture.

“If Dickens's greatest natural gift was his ear, as Angus Wilson has said, Hardy's was surely his eye; and his keen response to the visible world was of course

sharpened and disciplined by his training and practice as an architect” (Norman, 1987:66).

Certainly Hardy’s experience in architecture left its mark on his pattern of writing more specifically and precisely depicting buildings. The buildings similarly to landscapes are so real that they become characters of the novels quite as much as the people who live in them.

“Weatherbury tower was a somewhat early instance of the use of an ornamental parapet in parishes distinct from cathedral churches, and the gargoyles, were exceptionally prominent -- of the boldest cut that the hand could shape, and of the most original design that a human brain could conceive”(Hardy, 1995).

As it has already been mentioned previously, Hardy was an avid reader. He could read in English as well as in Latin and Greek. In fact books were the main aids of Hardy’s self-education and source of his wisdom. The facts of the author’s biography tell us Hardy inherited the passion for books from his mother.

“She appears to have mollified her troubles by reading every book she could lay hands on. She was an omnivorous reader” (Hardy, 1962: 8).

“The collection of books he acquired in youth and early adulthood and kept all his life speaks not only to his intensive reading and study in those years, but also to the value he placed on the printed word as a pathway into culture” (Mallelt, 2004: 137).

It is striking that the majority of the characters in both novels are fond of books too. For instance Gabriel and Bathsheba like Stephen, Henry and the Swancourts. Obviously Hardy set a high value upon books in the life as well as in his fiction. Above all, most of heroes and heroines in the novels have educated themselves by wide reading. For example, Elfride is a young lady who is keen on books. Her father is sure that the daughter does not need any incentive. “You get all kinds of stuff into your head from reading so many of those novels” (Hardy, 1995).

Henry Knight is the best of his heroes at least all that refers to reading. He is a scholar, essayist, reviewer, and a walking encyclopedia. Actually he is simply unconquerable. Knight is a private tutor and the best friend to Stephen. Stephen is really surprised when he enters Henry’s apartment.

”Cicero called the library the soul of the house; here the house was all soul. Portions of the floor, and a half of the wall-space, were up by book-shelves ordinary and extraordinary” (Hardy, 1995).

Definitely the passion for reading symbolizes the characters’ thirst for knowledge. All in all, schools and education were not available for the whole society in the 19th century. Therefore reading was the only way to education for the poor.

It is important to mention that Hardy had one more passion. In fact his family had a long and strong relationship with music.

“The Hardys had played and sung the music for the Stinsford Parish Church for over a hundred years. They were considered among the best church-players in the neighborhood, Hardy inherited this passionate interest in music: he could tune a fiddle as a lad, play it as a youth at weddings and festivals” (Baker, 1986:5).

No doubt, Hardy was fond of music and so were the main heroes in his works. For instance, the main hero in the novel *“Far From the Madding Crowd”*:

“Suddenly an unexpected series of sounds began to be heard in this place. They were the notes of farmer Oak’s flute” (1989; 19).

Besides, music is passion for both Gabriel and Bathsheba. Gabriel points out that hobby unites them and is the main advantage for the conjugal life.

“Farmers' wives are getting to have pianos now and I'll practice up the flute right well to play with you in the evenings” (1989;35).

Later in some chapters they act as a nice duet. The main heroine in the novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* Elfride is able to sing and play the instrument as well. Her father is proud of his daughter’s talents therefore he suggests that Stephen should enjoy it.

“Ask her to sing to you; she plays and sings very nicely. Elfride sat down to the pianoforte, and began” (Hardy, 1995).

CHAPTER THREE

THOMAS HARDY'S CHARACTERS IN VARIOUS RELATIONSHIPS

In the following chapter we are going to look at various types of relationship among Thomas Hardy's characters. It is very essential to contrast, compare and analyze them internally as well as externally.

3.1 Human and Nature

As it has already been mentioned, Thomas Hardy was born and grew up in the village of Higher Bockhampton in Dorset. He had been close to the nature since his early days. In fact, Hardy was keen on the charm of nature. Evidently he expressed his love to nature in his works too. As the scholar Mahon, Maureen (1988:104) points out, "One of Hardy's major strengths lies in his portrayal of nature."

It is typical of Hardy's novels to have rural setting. Furthermore, the setting in his works is of the essence. In his novels the author depicted rural communities in the smallest detail. Besides, the writer idealized life in the countryside. Hardy was not a philosopher; he did not invent a new world in his works. It is one of the author's peculiarities that he wrote very carefully and precisely. The objects of his novels are peasants and landscapes which were well known to him because the writer had observed them in his childhood. As a result almost all characters in Hardy's books are prototypes of a real person.

The facts of author's biography tell us that Hardy considered himself as a part of the rural community and he was proud of it. He had inherited the ability to take a delight in beauty of the nature. As Baker mentions, "The rich well-watered country-side around sufficiently fed his imagination" (1986:7).

By reading Hardy's works the author of this paper came to the conclusion too that the nature was one of the writer's sources of inspiration. Besides, it is well reflected in the novels. As Mahon, Maureen (1988:104) points out, "He was supremely conscious of the importance of the natural world, which he sees as the source of man's energies, his livelihood and, if properly used, his happiness."

In the novels there is a wide and striking depiction of the importance of nature in human life. Some of heroes have inherited the author's firm conviction. They respect the mighty nature

and are aware of the great importance of it.

The title *Far From the Madding Crowd* already exposes that the novel has a rural setting. Hardy used several methods in order to create the rural setting. In each novel he was very careful about the choice of naming. For example, the surnames of the servants in the novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* are Warm, Labourer, and Mason. The surnames of aristocrats are Luxellian, Troyton, and Knight. In the same carefulness Hardy chose names and surnames for the characters of the novel *Far from the Madding Crowd*. The surnames of the characters – Boldwood, Oak, Poorgrass, and Smallberry are really local, rural and adapted to their occupation as well to the setting.

“The surnames are mainly local and agricultural. Everdene explains itself, as the 'dene' suffix indicates a small valley; Boldwood too is obviously rural, as are Poorgrass, Smallbury ('bury' meaning a town)” (Baker, 1986:14).

In addition, protagonist's surname, Oak, is a striking example. It symbolizes the rural environment and underlines the main characteristics of the hero. Farmer Oak passes through many troubles and miseries, but he remains unshakable, productive, stately, and mighty as an oak. All in all, the names and surnames are adapted to each hero's character. No doubt, it is done with one purpose. Hardy used careful naming in order to create the appropriate atmosphere to the book. According to Baker (1986: 11), “Skilful naming can help to form an atmosphere, appropriate conditions and setting.” Hardy strengthened the rustic atmosphere of the novels by using appropriated similes. The following ones are some of the most originally and successfully used similes:

Drawing up the watch by its chain, like a bucket from a well.
She saw Gabriel's face rising like the moon behind the hedge.
Her face red and moist from her exertions, like a peony petal.
George was walking on behind me with a temper as mild as milk.
Your feet, that they played about under your dress like little mice.
His frosty white hair and beard overgrowing his gnarled figure like the grey moss.

In his books Hardy described in detail the life in the countryside. He depicted daily farming occupations and showed how they change a season after season. “In the novels of Thomas Hardy, time moves rhythmically, in seasons and ages, rather than mechanically, according to watch and even calendar” (Online 5).

It is well known that agriculture is based on hard work and favour of nature; therefore the rural community have close relationship with nature. In other words, nature is farmer's business partner; consequently they work and live with respect for the main player. The protagonists of both novels Stephen Smith and Farmer Oak are typical representatives of the

rural community. They live in harmony with nature. Stephen's occupation is not linked with nature. Therefore his passion for nature is not as huge as Gabriel's. The charm of nature never leaves farmer OAK cold. He lives in harmony with nature. Time after time he stops his daily rush in order to enjoy and adore it.

“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.” (1989:19)

In the novel Hardy emphasized that beauty is as an island for a peasant that helps to forget at least for a moment the daily toil and troubles. Moreover, it helps to regain the strength and inspiration. “Human shapes, interferences, troubles, and joys were all as if they were not (1989:18).

It should also be noted that not the natural environment makes them happy, but their attitude to the natural environment. The author frequently depicted in both novels several rural environment settings. For example, in this splendid autumn scene readers may enjoy the whole palette of colours. Evidently Hardy knew by experience the slightest tinge of each colour and its tone. The following scene assures that Hardy had a delicate visual palate.

“The season was that period in the autumn when the foliage alone of an ordinary plantation is rich enough in hues to exhaust the chromatic combinations of an artist's palette. Most lustrous of all are the beeches, graduating from bright rusty red at the extremity of the boughs to a bright yellow at their inner parts; young oaks are still of a neutral green; Scotch firs and hollies are nearly blue; whilst occasional dottings of other varieties give maroons and purples of every tinge” (1995).

By using his skills in a masterly manner, the writer created beautiful landscapes, from artist's point of view. After all in each case the scene has its function. “How nature plays a part as an active background to human activity is developed in sympathetic background” (Baker, 1986:14).

Hardy was neither a pioneer nor discoverer of a new technique. Such a method had already been a commonplace in Shakespeare's tragedies. As I. L. Baker states, “In this early novel there are clear indications of his firm grasp of the potentialities of this treatment of a sympathetic bond between humankind and the universe, the relentless detached cosmos” (Baker, 1986:15).

“The sky was clear – remarkably clear - and the twinkling of all the stars seemed to be, but throbs of one body, timed by a common pulse” (1989:17).

As a result, the readers gain the image that the characters and nature are as a whole organism, as if there were invisible bonds among them. “Yet the landscapes behave in universal ways and are symbols of the forces that act upon all of us wherever and whenever we live” (Swatridge, 1985; 91).

Moreover, these picturesque scenes are visual backgrounds, which have informative function. By using this method, Hardy reflected the heroes' internal world. Hardy informed the reader indirectly and directly about the character's thoughts and emotions. In this method such elements as sunrise, fog, cloud, snow, storm, blossom, and bird song are used as symbols. For example, a scene, which symbolizes the internal conflict.

“A peculiarity was observable beneath her. A green field spread itself on each side of the hedge, one belonging to the glebe, the other being a part of the land attached to the manor-house” (Hardy, 1995).

In these lines Hardy reflected the heroine’s internal conflict. The green field symbolizes Elfride’s emotions. She was absolutely embarrassed. In fact she came in conflict with herself and did not know what to do. One internal voice encouraged her to run away with Stephen in order to become engaged secretly, but the other voice prevented her from doing so. In other cases the same symbols give some hints to a careful reader for what will happen later. For instance, “She went down to Oak’s house just after sunset, guided on her way by the pale primrose rays of a crescent moon a few days old” (1989; 274).

In this sentence a few days old moon is used as a symbol. According to the moon calendar it is the best time for sowing. Thus the author gave a hint to careful readers that Bathsheba’s action would be really successful and generous. Numerous of such examples can be found in both novels. These striking examples show that Hardy created the impression successfully that there is a strong correspondence between nature and humanity. Nevertheless, Hardy’s pattern of writing is so powerful and skilful that it should be read carefully. By creating marvelous panoramic landscapes, Hardy revealed his poet’s skills and artistic talent for colour. All in all, these masterly depicted scenes of wild life add emotional power to the novels. “The spotty lights and shades from the shining moon maintaining a race over his head and down his back in an endless gambol” (1995).

For Gabriel nature simultaneously is art and tool. Hardy reminded us that rural community is very independent, but the livelihood depends on the nature, therefore rural community has a pagan dignity to the nature. Certainly, peasants have strong connection with nature. Farmers have their skills how to collaborate with it. For example, they can take God’s hints. “He stood and carefully examined the sky to ascertain the time of night from the altitude of the stars” (1989:19).

This is not the only ancient ability that Gabriel has. He can also predict what kind of weather it will be. He saves Bathsheba’s harvest by predicting a downpour. Here Hardy used an old belief and created the rural atmosphere. Furthermore, superstition is a part of life in the countryside. “He knew what this direct message of the Great Mother meant. It was Nature’s second way of hinting to him that he was to prepare for foul weather” (1989: 263).

Gabriel does not have six organs of sense. He manages it through observing the behaviour of animals and insects. “The creeping things seemed to know all about the later rain

and little of interpolated thunder-storm” (1989:264).

At the same time the majority of the characters behave as if they were as blind as a bat. They even sneer at Oak’s pessimistic weather forecast. This comparison may be interpreted as a hint for the readers to be all eyes.

3.2 The Human Society

As it has already been mentioned in the previous chapter, Hardy spent his childhood in the countryside. He was taught according to the rural principles, manners, and customs. He was just used to live rural life style. The facts of the writer’s biography tell us that in 1862 Hardy went to London where he spent five years. There he had to get used to completely different living conditions. In the capital Hardy met harshness of life. This personal experience widened his mental outlook. Moreover, there the writer discovered a new world of which he was not aware. The country life is something completely opposite to the city life. Without doubt, the new living conditions were not acceptable to Hardy.

“Either because of working hard in London, or as the result of too many pressures, Hardy’s health began to suffer from nervous debility” (Mahon, Maureen, 1987: 9).

Surely, the writer suffered from the lack of his previous living conditions. It is not superstition, but it is the law of physics that explains the fact that environment has an influence on us. It seems that Hardy’s personal experience made the writer compare the values on which both town and village life were based and to find out the true worth of country life. Hardy was a member of rural community; therefore from his point of view it symbolized something pure and fair.

“Hardy believed that there was something noble and disciplined, even grand, in man’s association with the soil, that the rural community had an integrity and self-sufficiency which urban life had lost or was losing” (Baker, 1986:13).

The author’s own strong conviction encouraged him to perpetuate the village life of the 19th century in several novels. Both books reflect a comparison of both communities. The characters of the novels are divided into two groups. Members of one group are participants of the urban community, but the participants of the other group are members of the rural community. There is no space for doubt; they are representatives of two completely contrasting worlds.

The main hero, farmer Oak, is a typical participant of the rural community. Hardy

specifically created and depicted the heroes of the novel. The writer directly revealed even the smallest detail of their characteristics. As a result, the novels have strength of clarity, which excludes any obscurity and puzzle. Therefore, the characters are so alive and believable in the books. “The characters are quickly made positive and real, and their strongest characteristics are clearly and simply revealed and emphasized” (Baker, 1986:30).

Farmer Oak is a man of firm character. He is and remains the same person through the entire novel. Gabriel is a hard worker with unconquerable will and patience. “He was a man whose moral colour was a kind of pepper and salt mixture” (1989:5).

Gabriel’s character traits are his wealth. Exactly his characteristics helped him to win the keen competition and to achieve the goal. “He is idealized in that it is difficult, almost impossible indeed, to find some human fault or frailty in him” (Baker, 1986:34).

The country life is based on hard work. Moreover, toil is the foundation on which the life of the rural community stands. Therefore diligence is a grand virtue for them. Both Stephen and Gabriel are participants of the rural community. They are toilers and they prove it in action. Peasants should work hard every day. It does not matter whether it is Monday or Sunday. Of course, they do not have holidays or vacation. On the contrary, city life is absolutely different. “Visitor, you know say, in your holidays all you town men have holidays like schoolboys. When are they?” (1995).

Both Gabriel and Stephen are toilers. They are going to do anything to prove it and to please the lovers. For illustration, Stephen finds out that he can neither ride nor handle the horses, but he is eager to learn to do it. “Miss Swancourt, I’ll learn to do it all for your sake; I will, indeed” (1995).

Gabriel does not promise property and fine things to Bathsheba. “When we be married, I am quite sure I can work twice as hard as I do now” (1989:34). No, he does not ridicule Miss Everdene. Gabriel underlines that he is going to express his feelings in action, but not in love phrases.

Both lovers, Bathsheba and Gabriel, like Elfride and Stephen, are representatives of two opposite communities. They are even members of opposite classes. For instance, Gabriel is a modest, shy, and poor shepherd, but Bathsheba is a pretty, vainglorious, and wealthy mistress. Hardy depicted them as two extremes that meet. “He saw her from bird’s-eye view as Milton’s Satan first saw paradise” (1989:24).

The protagonists have their weak points too. They are very bashful persons who lack delicate manners. They are clumsy and plain as all inhabitants in the countryside. Stephen and

Gabriel are even too shy for men. They feel so little and trifling beside their heroines.

“He too was embarrassed when she attentively watched his cup to refill it, Elfride became better at ease; furthermore he accidentally kicked the leg of the table, and then nearly upset his tea-cup, just as schoolboys did” (1995).

“Oak had nothing finished and ready to say as yet and not being able to frame love phrases. Yes his shyness, which was so painful as a defect” (1989:31).

Actually, it is common for all the rural community; they are all timid, modest, artless, and patient human beings; therefore they do plain living. Certainly, the environment takes part in creating their characteristics. The overwhelming universe and nature with its immeasurable might makes to the rural inhabitant the impression that he is a tiny, trivial creature. “But love, life, everything human seemed small and trifling in such close juxtaposition with an infuriated universe” (1989:273).

In other words, their high respect for the nature makes them be natural and humble. In addition, practical approach is very important for the rural community, but fashion and style are of little importance. “So the barn was natural to the shearers, and the shearers were in harmony with the barn” (1989:159).

It is obviously depicted that they have a plain way of life. Hardy showed in the novel the conflict between the traditional and the modern lifestyle. The life in the countryside and the aristocratic life in town are really contrasting. The people of the local community even laugh at the aristocratic world which thrives in cities because it seems to them so funny and ridiculous. “In comparison with cities Weatherbury was immutable. No contrast between ancient and modern. In London twenty or thirty years ago are old times” (1989: 159).

In the book Hardy spoke ironically of the aristocratic and boastful urban community. It is a paradox: they boast of goods when there is not much to boast of. For instance, Miss Everdene is a striking example. She attempts to make an impression of a wealthy mistress, but she does it in an artificial way. The servants are shocked and cannot understand Bathsheba’s action. “It seems her old uncle’s things were not good enough for her. She has bought all, but everything new” (1989:146).

In the novel representatives of the urban community are depicted as victims and hostages of covetousness cult. Unfortunately, the goods which should serve to them are cult objects. The greedy appetite encourages them to live beyond their means. By making an impression of a good well-off mistress, Bathsheba ruins the farm and her husband Troy helps her to do it. It is ridiculous that they do not realize that money and property have a vanishing value. Hardy vividly indicated where the lack of morality was leading humanity. The materialists have better relationship with things than with people; therefore they act regardless

of ethics and morality.

Frank Troy is a newcomer in Weatherbury, but he is an invader too. Troy ignores and even endangers the local atmosphere and traditions. “I am for making this place more modern” (1989:257).

Frank Troy symbolizes the urban world; therefore his aggressive action can be interpreted as the fact. The urban world constitutes a menace for the rural environment and community.

“Intrusion of this urban life into the stable rural scene disturbed temporarily and even tragically the even tenor of agricultural life until it was eventually modified, adapted to suit the small community” (Baker, 1986:13).

It is commonplace in Hardy’s novels that the disaster almost always comes from town. “God was palpably present in the country, and the devil had gone with the world to town” (1989: 163).

All in all, Hardy had a presentiment that urban life should dominate in the world and it claimed the unique rural life. Probably his own anticipation encouraged Hardy to eternalize rural England in books before it was adapted.

In his novels Hardy depicted the movement from the countryside to cities. In the 19th century the development of technologies and infrastructure promoted migration. Hardy lived when it was the time when the railway age began in England. In the novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* the writer pointed out that railway really increased the mobility in the country. Several heroes used railway services. For example Stephen and Elfride went to the city by train. “In three minutes the train had moved off, bearing away with it Stephen and Elfride” (1995).

Hardy’s novels show evidence of contrasting difference of communication in cities and villages. Members of higher class are travelling round the world while cities are beyond reach to rural community. Stephen seizes the opportunity and goes to India. Night even travels to the continent where he visits a dozen countries.

“He turned to Austria, became enervated and depressed on Hungarian and Bohemian plains, and was refreshed again by breezes on the declivities of the Carpathians. Then he found himself in Greece” (Hardy, 1995).

Certainly these modern opportunities of mobility were available only to the rich urban community because the infrastructure was built around and among the cities. In the novel Hardy juxtaposed traffic in villages and cities. The situation in such a secluded spot as Endelstow is absolutely different. This village is far away from railways therefore only horses

provide the mobility. “Lightly they trotted along the wheels nearly silent, the horse's hoofs clapping, almost ringing, upon the hard, white, turnpike road” (1995).

In the same way in the novel *Far from the Madding Crowd* Hardy opposed mobility in the countryside to cities. In this novel Hardy reflected the time when villages were isolated and the horse was the main vehicle for rural community. Actually it was only for the rich; the poor were walking.

“Bathsheba was sitting listlessly in the second seat of the gig, whilst walking beside her in farmer's marketing suit of unusually fashionable cut was an erect, well-made young man” (1989; 274).

Completely different situation is in cities. The urban community does not face such traffic issues. For instance, Troy takes the opportunity and lives in another continent for a while.

”He ultimately worked his passage to the United States, where he made a precarious living in various towns as Professor of Gymnastics, Sword Exercise, Fencing, and Pugilism” (1989:368).

No doubt, cities tempted especially young and talented people already in the 19th century. In the novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* Stephen like Hardy takes an advantage of the possibility to live in London in spite of poverty.

“It has become a normal thing that millionaires commence by going up to London with their tools at their back, and half-a-crown in their pockets. That sort of origin is getting so respected” (1995).

As a result, the migration from the countryside to cities explains that the origin of aristocrats and urban community is rural.

It is interesting that Hardy depicted two comparisons simultaneously. The comparison of the communities can be interpreted as a comparison of two classes. In reality, the rural community symbolizes the toiling class, but the town community symbolizes the upper class. As Mahon, Maureen (1988:49) states “Many of his novels show evidence of strong class feeling the selfishness and triviality of the upper classes and sincerity, altruism of ordinary people, especially the rural poor.”

From Hardy’s point of view, in the 19th century the division of the society into classes was very popular, as it was the period when people were slaves to convention and they gave a great importance to the class position and social status. Hardy was a participant of a working class; therefore he was a victim of this unfair classification. The author evidently was against

these destructive barriers. He was of the opinion that the division into classes endangered equality, morality, and humanity. In other words to Hardy it seemed as an archaic convention. In the novels the differences of class have nothing natural, therefore they are shown as artificial human made products. Unfortunately, the division into classes is based on superficial evaluation of the society. As a result, it is an unfair and disrespectful evaluation of the human being. Aristocrats are handled with care and respect, but participants of the lower class are treated with disrespect.

Of course, it is immoral that there are unequal treatments. Stephen Smith is the character who enjoys this immorality. Stephen arrives in the village from London. Elfride and her father are of the opinion that Stephen is a Londoner and aristocrat. They handle Stephen with kid gloves.

“The table was spread with the materials for the heterogeneous meal called high tea – a class of refectory welcome to all when away from men and towns, and particularly attractive to youthful palates. The table was prettily decked with winter flowers and leaves” (1995).

Out of respect to him they both do the best. Unfortunately the hospitality and friendship between Stephen and the host does not last long. Everything collapses because the truth comes to light. In fact Stephen is a peasant’s son, who works in the capital as an architect’s assistant. Mr Swancourt is a real snob; therefore the truth shocks him. “And any man, on discovering what I have discovered, would also do as I do, and mend my mistake; that is, get shot of him again, as soon as the laws of hospitality will allow.”(1995) Mr Swancourt demands that Elfride should immediately stop any relationship with Stephen. Elfride is surprised, she cannot conceive father’s drastic change of mind and attitude towards the visitor. “But he is the same man, papa; the same in every particular; and how can he be less fit for me than he was before?” (1995).

Stephen and Gabriel are participants of the working class, but their sweethearts are members of the superior class. As a result, class position makes problems in marriage to the protagonists in both books. The protagonists are rejected and abused for being of lower origin. Nevertheless, their will and passion are stronger than borders among classes. In fact, Gabriel and Stephen demonstrate the volatility of class position.

It is common in Hardy’s novels that the heroes and heroines are the poor and humble. Evidently the lower class gains Hardy’s affection. The individuals of this class are head and shoulders above the members of the upper class. Simultaneously it is a paradox and truth, the lower class is better than the well educated and cultivated upper class.

As a result, the author highlighted the advantages of the rural environment. Surely, it is

the mighty nature which teaches the peasant to live according to integrity and honesty. Their morality is already established in daily relationship with animals and nature. All in all, by depicting the individuals of working class in such a realistic manner, Hardy proved that they were whom he understood them to be and with whom he sympathized. “The lower classes in his books are shown as possessing greater humanity, kindness, and truthfulness than these in a higher social position.” (Mahon, Maureen 1988:90)

Hardy set a good example by depicting the main hero in *Far from the Madding Crowd*. “Farmer Oak had one and a half Christian characteristics too his humility, and a superfluous moiety of honesty” (1989:36).

It is obvious in all 57 chapters that these are not just nice words. Gabriel is the hero who lives and acts according to high moral principles. As a result, he is head and shoulders above the aristocrats. The portraits of the wealthy and cultivated are usually critical and satirical because they lack humanity and truthfulness.

3.3 Mutual Relationships

From the author’s point of view, the world is based on the relationship between male and female. A family is as a small cell of which the humanity is built up. Everybody has a task to find a spouse in order to have a family. A successful marriage is our aim. In order to achieve the aim people should take in account many facts. Marriage and conjugal life used to be and still is a headache for people. In literature love affairs and marriage problems are widely depicted; therefore it may be used as aids for individual situations. In fact, in the end of Victorian period, the novel was considered not only the form of entertainment, but also a primary means of analyzing and offering solutions to social problems.

After all Hardy met with failure in marriage. Emma Lavinia Gifford was his first wife whom he married in 1874. It was an unsatisfactory and childless marriage. In 1914 he remarried to Florence Dugdale his secretary. Probably Hardy’s own experience enabled him to write about love issues in his works. In fact, almost all Hardy’s novels are tragic love stories. “In all of Hardy's great novels there are frustrating, imprisoning marriages that may reflect his own first marriage. Though these relationships may seem almost 'sexless' to the modern reader, they are nevertheless quite believable.” (Online 5) Bathsheba and Troy in *Far from the Madding Crowd* are victims of such an imprisoning marriage. Hardy noted that effect of such marriage certainly is pessimistic. Inevitably it lead to suffering for both partners thus nobody is

obtainer. As it was mentioned above the novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* mirrors the author's own romantic relationship. As Mahon, Maureen (1988:94) mentions "In Hardy's novels love is the crucial ground on which men and women stake everything."

There is a striking resemblance between the novels *Far from the Madding Crowd* and *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. Both of the novels are love stories which are based on a love triangle between the heroine and several suitors. Thus the novels reflect the main issues of mutual relationships. In both works the heroine protagonist is extremely lovely and pretty lady.

As the title *A Pair of Blue Eyes* reveals, the heroine is the owner of a pretty face.

"She appeared in the prettiest of all feminine guises, that is to say, in demi-toilette, with plenty of loose curly hair tumbling down about her shoulders. One point in her, however, you did notice: that was her eyes. In them was seen a sublimation of all of her; it was not necessary to look further: there she lived" (Hardy, 1995).

Not less attractive is the heroine in the other novel. Bathsheba Everdene is depicted as a princess in the fairy tale. "She was a girl with a peculiar vernal charm" (1989:7).

Heroines' physical appearance is a marvelous gift from the nature. Hardy demonstrated in the novels the importance of the appearance in woman's life. On the one hand, the charm is a magnet which assures the attention. On the other hand, the author depicted those pretty heroines in such a way to show how hard it was to be very attractive. Wherever Bathsheba is, whatever she does, she always catches men's eye. In addition, it is a heavy tryout for her to live as on stage. Her maid tries to console the mistress. "Man be such a terrible class of society to look at a body" (1989: 102). Elfride faces the same issue in the city. All men paid attention to her. Her stepmother is surprised and little jealous as well. "How the men stare at you, Elfride!" said the elder lady." (Hardy 1995)

Bathsheba is exhausted and depressed by such attention and staring eyes. Many people dream to have such appearance as Bathsheba and Elfride do, but few of us know that there is reverse of each medal. Hardy emphasized in the books that beauty usually goes hand in hand with vanity. Both heroines Elfride and Bathsheba are vivid examples. Although Elfride is conscious of her weak point, she tries to excuse herself. "If I really seem vain, it is that I am only vain in my ways, not in my heart. The worst women are those vain in their hearts, and not in their ways" (Hardy 1995). Gabriel at once notices Bathsheba's charm and her vanity as well. "But she has her faults and the greatest of them is vanity." (1989:9).

"On the one hand, Hardy praises female endurance, strength, passion, and sensitivity; on the other, he depicts women as meek, vain, plotting creatures of mercurial moods. As a young man, Hardy was easily infatuated, and easily wounded by rejection. Often he describes his bright and beautiful heroines, many drawn from such real-life figures as school-mistress Tryphena Sparks" (Online 5).

There is one more common element that unites the main heroines of both novels. Elfride and Bathsheba are fond of riding. They have the same hobby.

”Elfride exclaimed triumphantly, 'You have never seen me on horseback. Oh, you must!' 'See how I can gallop. Now, Pansy, off!' And Elfride started; and Stephen beheld her light figure contracting to the dimensions of a bird as she sank into the distance, her hair flowing” (Hardy, 1995).

”Soon there appeared in view an auburn pony with a girl on its back. Gabriel's eyes had scarcely been able to follow her. The pony seemed used to such doings, and ambled along unconcerned. The performer seemed quite at home anywhere between a horse's head and its tail” (1989:24).

Certainly both novels are romantic stories which have several parallels, but there are some varieties. *A Pair of Blue Eyes* is a tragic love story, but *Far from the Madding Crowd* ends happily. Both books have a similar beginning. The main heroes Stephen and Gabriel fall in love with the pretty heroines at a glance, but they are rejected.

Stephen and Gabriel are participants of the working class, but their sweethearts are members of the superior class. As a result, class position makes problems in marriage to the protagonists. The main heroes are rejected and abused for being of lower origin. It seems for Mr Swancourt that her daughter is too good for her poor and humble lover, Stephen. He demands that Elfride should stop the relationship with Stephen.

“He, a villager's son; and we, Swancourts, connections of the Luxellians. He is the son of one of my village peasants, but now I am to make him my son-in-law! Heavens above us, are you mad, Elfride?” (Hardy, 1995).

Gabriel faces the same issue. He and Bathsheba are as extremes because there are many social barriers between them. At once Bathsheba rejects him and explains the main reason for her action. “You should certainly not think of doing at presents, to marry a woman with money who would stock a larger farm for you than you have now” (1989; 49).

Hardy wrote in his books about the 19th century society. At that time traditions allowed marriages between participants of various classes. In fact the customs were more favourable to a man than to a woman. The protagonist in the novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* Stephen is aware of such a possibility; therefore his marriage with Elfride is hopeful.

”I know men all move up a stage by marriage. Men of her class, that is, parsons, marry squires' daughters; squires marry lords' daughters; lords marry dukes' daughters; dukes marry queens' daughters. All stages of gentlemen mate a stage higher; and the lowest stage of gentlewomen are left single, or marry out of their class” (1995).

Nevertheless, their will and passion are stronger than borders among classes. In spite of the defeat, Stephen and Gabriel continue the courtship. Besides it is well known that love will creep where it may not go. No doubt, social barriers are barriers only in man's mind, but not

to love. Certainly love is uncontrolled; it obeys neither laws nor traditions. As a result anybody can fall in love with anybody. Moreover, the process may last for a long time or be as sudden and unpredicted as a thunderbolt. Two rivals in the novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* meet with these contrasting ways. "Stephen fell in love with Elfride by looking at her: Knight by ceasing to do so. When or how the spirit entered into him he knew not" (Hardy, 1995).

Hardy emphasized in the novels that there is one more peculiarity which makes love be a tricky thing. We can fall in love but cannot jump out of it. In other words, it is almost impossible to cease loving somebody. "It may have been observed that there is no regular path for getting out of love as there is for getting in" (1989:42).

Hardy assured that love is a mighty driving force. Of course, Gabriel is in passion for Miss Everdene and this fact gives him an impulse for his fanaticism and further action. Gabriel comes to a decision at once. "I will make her my wife or upon my soul I shall be good for nothing" (1989:23). These are not just nice words. Farmer Oak has a firm character, he keeps his word.

As a result, Gabriel is in competition with many adorers and it is a keen competition. The greatest of his competitors are the possessive William Boldwood and the greedy, materialistic Frank Troy. No doubt, it is a great advantage that Gabriel's and Bathsheba's love is based on mutual help. Miss Everdene saves Gabriel from a burning hut, but later Gabriel extinguishes Bathsheba's barn which is on fire.

It is typical of both novels that couples are approximated by accidents.

"In the coming novel, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, the enormous thunderstorm, during which Bathsheba helps Gabriel Oak to cover the ricks in her farm, draws together their characters into a deeper relationship that pervades the second half of that book. In *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, the point is reached in the chapters where Knight slips over the cliff, and is rescued, after his agonizing ordeal, by Elfride's improvised rope of underwear." (Gittings, 2001;241)

There is one more striking example which demonstrates that Hardy is very careful in the choice of naming. Farmer Oak's Christian name is Gabriel. In fact, it is the name of one of the archangels. The choice is to the point. The name and surname are really appropriate for the protagonist's character traits. "He is idealized in that it is difficult, almost impossible indeed, to find some human fault or frailty in him" (Baker, 1986:34).

Gabriel as a deliverer follows Miss Everdene till the wedding. On the contrary with other adorers Gabriel chooses a better way of expressing his love to Miss Everdene. He

neither promise his property, nor buries Miss Everdene with love phrases. Gabriel knows that it is better to do well than to say well. He expresses his emotions in the action. Hardy assured indirectly that emotions and feelings are beyond words. “He is generous, but always and throughout to Bathsheba in his energy and time and good advice” (Baker, 1986:37).

In other words, the protagonist devotes his life to Bathsheba. Gabriel is simultaneously a lover, shepherd, supporter and adviser for her. He does not choose the shortest way, but it is the most successful way. It is a rough road to her heart; therefore it takes for Gabriel so much time and effort. Actually, Bathsheba’s whims, pride and vanity are the greatest hindrances for Gabriel. As the result, she behaves as half blind.

“He wins, at long last, not through the passion or burning ardour which cannot last, but by proving his moral integrity, his steadfastness, his patience and resilience” (Baker, 1986:36).

Of course, at last Bathsheba understands the true worth of such a real lover as Gabriel. Farmer Boldwood is a prosperous, but emotionally unsteady bachelor. He differs from other men by showing nonchalance to Miss Everdene’s beauty. After all, he catches Bathsheba’s eye. Miss Everdene is really surprised to meet such a personality. From her point of view, he is a black sheep of the society. “But there was one man who had more sense than to waste his time upon me.” (1989; 101) In a word, Boldwood seems an interesting figure for Bathsheba. She is both surprised and offended. Her vanity and whim lead her to the fault. The heroine determines to teach a lesson to Boldwood regardless of consequences. “What fun it would be to send it to the stupid, old Boldwood and how he would wonder” (1989:106).

She plays a nasty joke on him by sending a love letter in Valentine. In other words, she adds oil to fire. Bathsheba kills two birds with one stone. She incites Boldwood’s emotions and causes a headache to herself. Consequently, it costs her much trouble. The more admirers Bathsheba has, the more difficult it is for her to select the best of them. Among the adorers Bathsheba is as a corn among millstones. She feels awful and blames fate for causing the misery. “Love is misery for women. I shall never forgive God for making me a woman and dearly am I beginning to pay for the honor of owning a pretty face” (1989; 216).

It is beyond doubt that Bathsheba caused problems for herself. The nasty joke she plays on Boldwood is an unconsidered, reckless action which is based on Bathsheba’s whim. All in all it makes the reader agree with the narrator. “Of love as a spectacle Bathsheba had a fair knowledge, but of love subjectively she knew nothing” (1989; 112).

Yes, this letter is an unsuccessful joke, despite that Boldwood understands it as a true

invitation for a love affair. Therefore, it provokes his emotional explosion. He can neither imagine nor believe that Bathsheba did it in fun. Boldwood is stubborn and sensitive, he does not stop by the first rejection; there follows proposal after proposal. In other words, he bothers Bathsheba and adds misery to her life. It remains for Bathsheba to regret her mistake which caused this trouble through the whole life.

“If I had never played a trick upon him, he would never have wanted to marry me. Oh, if I could only pay some heavy damages in money to him for the harm I did, and so get the sin off my soul that way!” (1989; 237).

As Mahon, Maureen (1988: 93) states “Hardy’s individuals expect a great deal from love, but they are frequently disappointed.” Usually, the character visualizes that his/her sweetheart is the ideal which does not correspond to reality. In other words, they are under impression that the lover is perfection. The heroes are overwhelmed with their emotions and imagination; therefore the choice is not based on common sense. Wrong choices make us declare that love is blind. Actually, emotions and feelings make us act imprudently. Unfortunately the heroes make choices without regard to friend’s advice. Even the servants gave warning to Bathsheba. “Do not trust him mistress: I ask you not to trust him so” (1989:211).

All in all, peer’s suggestions are ignored. The true facts are disregarded because they may fade the model of the sweetheart. No doubt, everybody’s beloved is a saint. Even Gabriel does a romantic idealization; therefore he cannot bear criticism. “Now you mind this! None of that dalliance-talk that smack-and-coddle style of yours about Miss Everdene. I do not allow it” (1989:117).

William Boldwood, being more emotional, feels the injustice keenly. He reacts according to his emotional explosion; he acts tragically indeed. Boldwood kills Troy because he cannot bear Troy’s attitude and behaviour to Miss Everdene.

There is one more hero’s fault that is widely reflected in the novels. They fail in love because they judge by appearances. The depiction of such characters as Troy, Bathsheba, and Elfride underlines that all that glitters is not gold. Thus Hardy demonstrated to readers that frequently appearance is misleading.

Mr Swancourt is proud of his daughter’s pretty appearance. From his point of view it is the main guarantee that she will marry the wealthiest man. “With your good looks, if you now play your cards well, you may marry anybody. Of course, a little contrivance will be necessary” (1995).

Sergeant Frank Troy is a selfish, spendthrift deceiver, adventurer, and heartbreaker, who is embodied in a handsome lad. Hardy exposed to readers what kind of person Troy was already in the first episode. The conversation with Fanny reveals the truth. "What girl are you? Oh, Frank do not you know? Your wife, Fanny Robin" (1989:96). This conversation near the barracks between Troy and Fanny makes an impression to the reader that Troy is a pretender and swindler. Both his appearance and words are deceptive. He used to pretend and flirt and indeed he does it really skilfully. "Thank you for the sight of such a beautiful face. I have never seen a woman so beautiful as you. Take it or love, be offended or like it" (1989:172).

Fanny Robin leaves home and safety in order to follow Troy who promises her love and wedding. Poor Fanny is pregnant and dies tragically in childbirth, in Casterbridge workhouse. Hardy used a whole chapter for describing Fanny's suffering. In order to emphasize human cruelty and indifference he compared human being with animal. It is paradox the dog is Fanny's supporter.

„She became conscious of something touching her hand; it was softness and it was warmth. She opened her eye's, and the substance touched her face. A dog was licking her cheek resting her two little arms upon the shoulders of the dog, leant firmly thereon, and murmured stimulating words" (Hardy, 1995).

She is not the only girl who walks into his snare. Frank Troy is a greedy materialist who behaves regardless of morality and ethics. In other words, he is a hostage of greed and his appetite comes with eating. The more he has the more he wants. Frank has a romantic relationship with the charming Fanny, but in spite of that, he starts flirt with Bathsheba Everdene. "And I would rather have curses from you than kisses from any other woman" (1989:89). From his point of view, love is like gambling; therefore he is interested only in cup-board love. For the love of the property he is ready to marry Miss Everdene. "There is she with plenty of money, and a house, and horses, and comfort" (1989:391).

Bathsheba without regard to peers' suggestions agrees to be married with a liar and pretender Frank Troy. She is dazzled as all individuals who are in love. Bathsheba is under emotional influence. For her Troy is a manly, well-educated person of the upper class. Later Frank himself exposes to Bathsheba through his action that he loves the property, but not her. Bathsheba regrets the marriage and finds out the cause which made her act so unreasonably. Certainly it was her emotional strength which led Bathsheba to this unsuccessful marriage. "And then, between jealousy and distraction, I married him!" (1989: 268). "There was nothing on earth I so longed to do as to repair the error. But that was not possible" (1989:381).

Hardy conspicuously showed that cup-board love anyway goes hand in hand with loveless marriage. “The real sin lies in thinking of ever wedding a man you do not love honest and true” (1989: 378). Hardy spoke ironically of situation when people lack the morality and as a result, they value goods higher than a human being. “In the novels there is an observable marked stress on infidelity and betrayal” (Mahon, 1988:93).

This issue is widely depicted in both novels. The heroes and heroines of the novels possess these vices. Of course, Troy is the main betrayer and swindler who acts as a heartless creature. It can be easily noticed that extremes meet. Usually the faithful persons are betrayer’s victims. So exactly it happens in Hardy’s books. For instance, Fanny and Bathsheba walk into Troy’s snare. Both Elfride and Henry possess betrayal and infidelity. As a result several love affairs and friendships are ruined.

The infidelity and vanity make Elfride see the world in dark colours. Unfortunately she interprets Stephen’s action suspiciously. Elfride is angry and jealous because Stephen has had a too long conversation with a mason. “Anybody would think he was in love with that horrid mason instead of with...” (1995). Besides, the lack of information encourages Elfride to offend Stephen for sending love letters and having a sweetheart. “You wrote a letter to a Miss Somebody; I saw it in the letter-rack” (1995).

Jealousy overcomes Elfride and makes her behave ridiculously. Unfortunately from her viewpoint it is an offence that Stephen has a friend indeed. Elfride’s whims do not allow sharing lover’s heart with anybody.

”You think of him night and day, ever so much more than of anybody else; and when you are thinking of him, I am shut out of your mind. You think always of him, and like him better than you do me! And I don't like you to tell me so warmly about him when you are in the middle of loving me” (1995).

In these lines Hardy assured that jealousy and vanity cause drastic changes. Elfride acts as a spoiled teenage girl who cannot see the difference between a lover and a friend.

Certainly Stephen is proud of his friend, Henry Night. Moreover, he is not only a friend indeed. Henry is Stephen’s private tutor, adviser, and idol.

“You shall know him some day. He is so brilliant — no, it isn't exactly brilliant; so thoughtful, nor does thoughtful express him, that it would charm you to talk to him. He's a most desirable friend and that isn't half I could say” (1995).

Contrary to Elfride, Stephen is faithful and he supposes that his sweetheart is not less faithful. Stephen’s optimism provides a hopeful look into the future. He has a plan to leave Elfride for their own sake. He goes to earn more money in India. ”Love is faith, and faith, like a gathered flower, will rootlessly live on” (1995).

Actually Stephen is very naive. He is sure that their love affair is firm and his absence is just a trifle to it. Furthermore, it is not the first absence for the lovers. From Stephen's point of view the next absence will be as harmless as the previous one. Besides, he sends love letters to Elfride in order to strengthen the relationship between them.

“Love frequently dies of time alone, much more frequently of displacement. With Elfride Swancourt, a powerful reason why the displacement should be successful was that the new-comer was a greater man than the first” (1995).

By the side of the instructive and piquant snubbing she received from Knight, Stephen's general agreeableness seemed watery; by the side of Knight's spare love-making, Stephen's continual outflow seemed lackadaisical.

Hardy demonstrated in his works the injustice in the treatment of the women.

“People always say and we know very well women scarcely ever jilt men: it is the man, who jilts us” (1989:103).

“As a realist, Hardy felt that art should describe and comment upon actual situations, such as the heavy lot of the rural labourers and the bleak lives of oppressed women. Though the Victorian reading public tolerated his depiction of the problems of modernity, it was less receptive to his religious scepticism and criticism of the divorce laws” (Online 5).

Neither males, nor females are faultless, but obviously Hardy sympathizes more with his female characters. The heroes of both novels criticize and even scold women for being wrong. For example, Night scolds Elfride for wrong behaviour. “A noble woman must be as honest as a noble man. I specially mean by honesty, fairness not only in matters of business and social detail, but in all the delicate dealings of love, to which the licence given to your sex particularly refers” (Hardy 1995).

Boldwood expresses his criticism of Fanny for falling in love with swindler Troy. “A silly girl, silly girl” (1989: 124). It is strange that men characters do not realise that they are and do even worse. For instance, Night reminds of and demands from Elfride high moral principles. He is a child who pretends to be a teacher. Night makes a double misery. He steps between two lovers and deceives both of them. No doubt he acts as a thief who takes advantage of Stephen's absence.

According to Mahon, Maureen (1988:98), “It is noticeable that Hardy's women characters are often more interesting than the men. Hardy had a strong feminine strain in his nature which gave him an ability to understand the emotional reaction of women. It is probable, too, that the naturally weaker position of women in the world also inspired in him sympathy for their situation.” Readers should also take in to account the fact that women were limited to a very few, easily recognizable social roles in the 19th century. Hardy gave unusual

independence and freedom for Bathsheba in the book. “However, the novelist reveals his sensitivity towards the situation of women in his society by showing Bathsheba's all too-modern conflict between the desire for marriage and that for individuality and independence” (Online 5).

The writer sympathized with women because marriage is an important issue to a female. For example, marriage can be as a trap for them. “He was a feminist, highly critical of the social conventions that could make marriage a prison for a woman” (Swatrigge 1985:89).

Some members of the public consider that a woman becomes husband's property after a wedding. Besides, Hardy marked that inequality is the main problem in marriage. Some people still live in accordance with archaic convention; therefore the daughters are married off. Elfride's father is a slave to the convention and he respects the old tradition. Mr Swancourt acts as a despot he ignores Elfride's emotions and opinions. The poor lady feels as a prisoner who should follow strict orders. “Being a woman, and not a child, I may, I think, have a secret or two” (Hardy, 1995).

He rejects Stephen for his low origin. In fact he is of opinion that Elfride's lover should definitely be of an aristocratic origin.

”You would always be known as the wife of Jack Smith the mason's son, and not under any circumstances as the wife of a London professional man. It is the drawback, not the compensating fact that is talked of always” (1995).

In fact, Hardy reminded to readers one more truth: love can be neither bought, nor forced. Boldwood tries to settle some love problems with money. He offers a sum of money to Troy, but he fails. “Marry, Fanny, and I will pay you well now” (1989: 248). Unfortunately people take the marriage as the opportunity to improve their economic position and social status. For example, Mr Swancourt is a snob and he is interested in the deal which steadies his position in a higher class. As a result he seizes the opportunity and marries a rich widow.

“Yes, Elfride, she is wealthy in comparison with us. Elfride, I am past love, you know, and I honestly confess that I married her for your sake.” (Hardy, 1995)

Everybody dreams of having a wealthy spouse, but few of us realize that the person can be inwardly rich. “But what between the poor man I won't have, and the rich man who won't have me” (1989:83). Bathsheba gets what she wanted, when she understands the true worth of morality. Bathsheba is an inconsistent character her way to a loving marriage is like a pilgrimage which teaches her to value human qualities. She goes through hardship to the stars. Both Gabriel and Bathsheba go through bright and dark times side by side. Every day which

is spent together is a good lesson for them. This long time gives them an opportunity to find out even the smallest detail of each other's characteristics. "There was that substantial affection which arises when the two who are thrown together begin first by knowing the rougher sides of each other's character, and not the best till further on, the romance growing up in the interstices of a mass of hard prosaic reality" (1989: 427). In spite of that both lovers are as extremes. Bathsheba and Gabriel find the happy medium. Certainly their marriage stands on a steady foundation which consists of mutual feelings and concession. Hardy pointed out that marriage is the union which should be based on the mutual feelings and decision. "Compounded feeling proves itself to be the only love which is strong as death that love which many waters cannot quench, nor the floods drown" (1989:429).

All in all, Hardy gave a hint that there is no need for any hastiness in marriage because the true love does not rust, and all comes to him who waits. The stream of time washes away all that is excessive and redundant, but only truth remains. Bathsheba experiences several failures in love including even a loveless marriage, but these failures enlighten her. At last she realized that the sweetheart whom she was looking for is there beside her. "I was the first sweetheart that you ever had, and you were the first sweetheart I ever had" (1989:425).

The novel ends happily – both lovers, Gabriel and Bathsheba, get married. Nevertheless, the happy ending is reached by sorrows and tragic events. Fanny and Troy died, but Boldwood is in prison.

CHAPTER FOUR

FATE AND FREE WILL

It is an everlasting question whether people always have an opportunity to behave according to their free will or we are hostages of the fate. This is a question which probably has disturbed the minds of men since the world began to think. It is not easy to find an exact answer to this question. So many people, so many beliefs. In the final chapter of the present paper we will discuss the problems mentioned here more closely. By the way, it is not easy to convince people that there are several answers to the same question. There are cases when people use the verity "Man proposes God disposes." And there are situations when we say "Every man is the architect of his own fortune." Probably the truth is based on both of these verities.

4.1 Victims of Fate

Regarding the raised issue, even Hardy had his own beliefs and his novels are reflections of them. According to Mahon, Maureen (1988:9) "His belief was that human beings were the products of evolutionary and environmental forces over which they had virtually no control, being possessed of, at the most only a limited degree of free will."

The novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* is the reflection of Hardy's pessimistic belief. The characters of the novel are victims of destiny. Their lives are a struggle against the fate. In other words, it is the fight with their shadow.

"Like the great tragedies of fifth-century Athens and Elizabethan England, Hardy's Novels of Character and Environment convey a strong sense of fatalism, a view that in life human actions have been predetermined, either by the very nature of things, or by God, or by Fate" (Online 5).

Stephen Smith falls in love with Elfride Swancourt, at a glance, but he is rejected. Stephen has a firm will and he has a plan how to settle the problem. "Yes; I was thinking I could go over and make a little money, and then come back and ask for her" (1995).

It is a quite hopeful beginning of the novel. However, later hopefulness vanishes by each line of the book till the tragic ending. As Mahon, Maureen (1988: 9) emphasizes "In spite of people's efforts to do good their happiness and achievements or lack of them, depended mainly on chance and senseless circumstances."

The novel is based exactly on this theory. All the characters of the novel are ruined

because the fate triumphs over them. None of them is despondent or irresponsible. For example, Stephen is a firm, determined, and conscientious youth. He does the best what he can to marry Elfride, but, as it later appears, everything is in vain. In this book the problem is that the lack of characters' happiness and achievement depend on a chance and unfavourable circumstances, but not on their action. Evidently the novel is Hardy's exaggeration of pessimism. It is really terrible to find out that all characters in spite of their effort and diligence are ruined.

Stephen is a miserable victim of fate. He struggles hard and does it for love's sake. He goes abroad in order to earn money and then to marry Elfride. Actually, fate plays a bad trick on him while Stephen is abroad. It is a strange coincidence, that Stephen's best friend Henry Knight is simultaneously Stephen's rival, Elfride's lover and her stepmother's kinsman. Thus fortuity brings together Stephen's sweetheart and best friend. When Stephen returns from India he finds that his life is an evil nightmare. "Stephen appeared to have a more than previous consciousness of the intense cruelty of his fate at the present moment" (1995).

No doubt, Elfride and Night became lovers not by accident. It is the result of their own action. Both Elfride and Night are betrayers. They act without regard to moral and aesthetic principles. Although Night knows that Elfride is his friend's sweetheart, he acts as a rival. Even worse, he acts as a thief who takes an advantage of Stephen's absence. Henry simply sacrifices the friendship in order to gain love affair.

On the one hand, the matter of chance adds unpredictable turns to the novel and increases the exertion. Hardy employed chance coincidence as more than a mere device of plotting in this novel. On the other hand, it is really pessimistic and boring to read such a novel where ninety-nine percent depend on the matter of chance. For illustration, the poor widow Jethway as a detective follows on Elfride's heels. Certainly, it always happens so by accident that Elfride does everything under Jethway's eye.

The reader soon loses the interest of reading when it is not a problem to predict what will happen next. Without doubt, everyone knows the life on earth has an element of accident, but not in such a proportion as in this novel. The reader has the impression that the heroes are marionettes controlled by wicked God. Hardy has been criticized that the use of coincidents and accidents is overdone in his books.

It seems that even Hardy considered that he had overstated with pessimism in the novel. Probably the novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* was as a draft for a more successful novel. Only a year later Hardy published an absolutely different novel *Far from the Madding Crowd*.

4.2 Characters' Will

On the contrary, the novel *Far from the Madding Crowd* has an optimistic tone. The strength of the optimism lies in the will of the characters. The protagonist Gabriel shows how much he can achieve through his own effort and will. He is a person of a firm character who does not stop at the first failure or accident. "In Hardy's best novels, it is characters themselves, who are ultimately responsible for their own destinies: character, indeed, is fate" (Mahon, Maureen 1988:100).

Evidently, Gabriel is a striking example. His patience, diligence, and determination serve as a firm foundation on which the successful life is built up. He is consistent and round character. Gabriel passes through sorrows and miseries, but despite that, he remains unshakeable. Regardless of various circumstances Gabriel always sees his way to do. First he falls in love with Bathsheba, but he is rejected. Then Bathsheba moves to another village, but she is always in Gabriel's mind. Accidentally he loses the flock, everything he had. There follow sorrow after sorrow. It is the worst thing that may happen to a young shepherd. In spite of his desperate condition he remains unshakeable and patient. On the one hand, his life is ruined, but, on the other hand, it is a fateful turning-point. It is the end of Gabriel's farming in his own farm, but at the same time it is the beginning of serving. Despite of painful emotional experience, Gabriel is externally firm and turns over a new leaf. Certainly, he cannot imagine where the road takes him. As Mahon, Maureen (1988:91) points out, "It follows that, in Hardy's novels, fate can bring good fortune as well as bad fortune."

Due to several coincidences, by chance Gabriel finally arrives in Bathsheba's farm. Surely, it is the best fortune for both of them that Gabriel becomes a shepherd in Bathsheba's farm. After all, it is the finger of Destiny that it happens so. Bathsheba inherits the farm from her uncle. On the one hand, it is a good fortune for her to have such a large possession, but, on the other hand, it causes misery for her. Actually, she is not able to run the farm. Bathsheba is not cut out for it. She is the mistress like a bull in a china shop. She ought to be grateful to God for sending her such an adviser, assistant, and supporter as Gabriel. Obviously, for Gabriel it is not a business deal, but just a mission. It is Gabriel's free will to express his tender passion through diligence. In reality, his serving is not self-humiliation because Gabriel

serves for a noble cause. No doubt, all he does may be called altruism. "I have danced at your skittish heels, my beautiful Bathsheba, for many a long mile, and for many a long day" (1989; 419).

Besides, Bathsheba is not a hostage of fate either. At least, all that refers to her love matters; she has a free will. She always has at least the opportunity to choose between the good and evil. Unfortunately there is a huge difference whether it is the free will of whim and pride or of common sense. It is beyond doubt, Bathsheba's pride and vanity forced her to reject Gabriel at the beginning of the novel. "You should certainly not think of doing at present, to marry a woman with money who would stock a larger farm for you than you have now" (1989; 49).

The same vice leads her to the next failure. She plays a nasty joke on Boldwood. In fact, it is an accident that Bathsheba runs across Troy. But the fateful decision to be married with Troy is based on her whim and first impression. Later Bathsheba confessed that marriage was a reckless action based on her whim.

"And then, between jealousy and distraction, I married him" (1989:274).

All in all, nobody forces Bathsheba to do wrong. Bathsheba herself makes decisions. At last she realizes the true value of an inwardly rich person and makes a decision following her common sense. She finds that she cannot live without Gabriel's love and support. Finally, they both celebrate wedding. Fate and matter of circumstances bring this happy ending. William Boldwood, being more emotional, feels the injustice keenly. He reacts according to his emotional explosion, he acts tragically indeed. Boldwood shoots Troy for bothering and humiliating Bathsheba. Fate plays such a tragic trick. One rival is dead the other in prison. Fate gives an opportunity to Gabriel to fulfill the dream.

In the end, the wedding is combination of their free will and correspondence of favourable circumstances.

CONCLUSIONS

It is common knowledge that Hardy's works reflect rural life in the 19th century. Therefore, it is typical of Hardy's novels to have a rural setting. As a result, setting has a particularly significant role in Hardy's works.

The author of the present paper was interested in reading two of Hardy's first novels and to find out some more common peculiarities in his writing.

Both titles *A Pair of Blue Eyes* and *Far From the Madding Crowd* seemed really promising. One of them promised rural life in a secluded countryside whereas the other – a romantic relationship.

As the analysis of both books turned out, the novels are resembling and even more romantic than the reader anticipated. In fact, in both novels Hardy reflected a love affair and marriage problems. The novels were written only in a year's interval. Probably therefore they have so many common elements and are really alike.

The goal of this paper has been to prove that both novels *A Pair of Blue Eyes* and *Far from the Madding Crowd* are similar novels. They are based on characters' mutual relationships and have so much common.

The novels are of the same kind; therefore it is easy to draw several parallels between them. There is a striking resemblance between the novels *Far from the Madding Crowd* and *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. Both of the novels are love stories which are based on a love triangle between the heroine and several adorers. In both works the heroine is a very charming lady. Hardy emphasized in the books that beauty usually goes hand in hand with vanity. Both heroines Elfride and Bathsheba are striking examples. Vanity is the greatest fault which the heroines possess.

Both of the protagonists face the same issue. Class position makes problems in marriage to Stephen and Gabriel. The main heroes are rejected and abused for being of lower origin. Nevertheless, protagonists' will and passion are stronger than borders between classes.

There is one more hero's fault that is widely reflected in the novels. The characters fail in love, because they judge by appearances. Hardy emphasized in the novels that appearance usually is misleading. Hardy demonstrated in his works the injustice in the treatment of women. The male characters handle women so as if they were members of the lower class. The writer sympathized with women because marriage is an important issue to females. Evidently Hardy emphasized that marriage is the union which should be based on mutual

feelings and decision.

Although the books have a common plot, setting and resemblances there are some differences. The most substantial of them is that the novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* possesses strong autobiographical elements. It is based on writer's own experience, more particularly, on his first romantic meeting with Emma Lavinia Gifford whom he married in 1874. *A Pair of Blue Eyes* reflects Hardy's pessimistic belief. The novel ends tragically. The characters of this novel are victims of fate. Their lives are a struggle against the fate. On the contrary *Far from the Madding Crowd* has a more optimistic tone and it ends happily. None of characters is a victim of fate in this novel. The success and happiness of the characters depend on their action and free will, and correspondence of favourable circumstances.

It is important to take in account that this is the analysis only of two of Hardy's first novels. Both of them were written in a chronological order. Probably *A Pair of Blue Eyes* was a framework of the next novel. All in all, these peculiarities and resemblances concern only two not very famous novels. In order to find out Hardy's pattern of writing in a more general way, it is important to continue analysing numerous other works of the same author. All in all, the author of the present paper is interested in reading and analysing some books written by Hardy at later stages of his life. Certainly such a comparison would point out Hardy's progress of writing.

THESES

1. Hardy grew up according to a strong religious belief. He was a frequent visitor to church. In youth Hardy even learned the Bible by heart. Since his childhood the writer was an avid reader. He adored various authors. In addition, the books widened his mental outlook and influenced his viewpoints

2. Hardy himself was impressed by Darwin's new theory. Darwin's theory made revolution it also included the explanation of human action, thoughts, and culture. The impression of the theory "Natural selection" is well noticeable in Hardy's books. In the novels nature and fate are not the products of a kind-hearted God. Hardy demonstrated that a human being is the product of evolution and environment.

3. Hardy's novels have a rural setting. The novels reflect Hardy's passion for nature. Setting has a particularly significant role in Hardy's works. Most of his books are set in the area of the countryside where the author spent his childhood. Dorset was a spiritual dwelling-place for the writer. Hardy hid it under its old name Wessex in his works.

4. There is one particular way how Hardy expressed his passion for nature in his works. The author regularly created beautiful landscapes in the novels and he did it in a masterly manner. Therefore readers have a striking visual impression of various landscapes. The landscapes have an informative function.

5. The novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* possesses strong autobiographical elements. The main hero, Stephen Smith is a master mason's son like Hardy was. Stephen arrives in the countryside to make restoration of the church and falls in love with Elfrida at a glance. The novel is based on writer's own experience, more particularly, on his first romantic meeting with Emma Lavinia Gifford whom he married.

6. Hardy's experience in architecture left its mark on his pattern of writing. Obviously Hardy managed both: he was a writer and an architect at least in his works. Undoubtedly, the novels reflect architect's skills and his passion for architecture. In both novels buildings are important objects. Moreover, they are architectural masterpieces which are depicted from

architect's point of view.

7. Hardy was an avid reader. He could read in English as well as in Latin and Greek. In fact books were the main aids of Hardy's self-education and source of his wisdom. Obviously the writer set a high value upon books in the life as well as in his fiction. Most of heroes and heroines have the passion for books too.

8. Hardy used several methods in order to create the rural setting. In both novels he was very careful about the choice of surnames of the servants. There are striking examples in the novels mentioned above. The names are really local, rural and adapted to the characters' occupations, as well the setting.

9. Both books reflect a comparison of the rural and urban community. Some characters are participants of the rural community, but some are members of the urban community. Hardy was a member of the rural community; therefore, from his point of view, his characters symbolized something pure and fair.

10. It is interesting that Hardy depicted two comparisons simultaneously. The comparison of the communities can be interpreted as a comparison of two classes. In reality, the rural community symbolizes the working class, but the town community symbolizes the upper class.

11. It is a commonplace in Hardy's novels that the heroes and heroines are poor and humble. Evidently the lower class gains Hardy's affection. The individuals of this class are head and shoulders above the members of the upper class. Hardy spoke ironically of the aristocratic and boastful urban community. In his books he sympathized with the lower class.

12. Almost all Hardy's novels are tragic love stories. There is a striking similarity between the novels *Far from the Madding Crowd* and *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. Both of the novels are love stories which are based on a love triangle between the heroine and several admirers.

13. In both works the heroine protagonist is a very pretty lady. Both Elphride and Bathsheba have the same whim which leads them to misery. Hardy emphasized in the novels that beauty

usually goes hand in hand with vanity.

14. In the novels the protagonists face the same issue. Class position causes them problems in marriage. Both Stephen and Gabriel are rejected and abused for being of a lower social standing. Nevertheless, protagonists' will and passion are stronger than borders between classes.

15. Neither male, nor female is faultless, but obviously Hardy sympathizes more with women. The heroes of both novels criticize and even scold women for being wrong. Nevertheless, male characters do even worse. Hardy expressed in his works the injustice in the treatment of women. The writer sympathized with women because marriage is an important issue to them.

16. There is one more hero's fault that is widely reflected in the novels. They fail in love, because they judge by appearances. The depiction of such characters as Troy, Bathsheba, and Elfride underlines that all that glitters is not gold. Hardy reminded in the novels that frequently appearance is misleading.

17. The novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* is the reflection of Hardy's pessimistic belief. The characters of the novel are victims of destiny. Their lives are a struggle against the fate. In this book the problem is that the lack of characters' happiness and achievement depend on a chance and unfavourable circumstances, but not on their action. Evidently the novel is Hardy's expression of deep pessimism.

18. On the contrary, the novel *Far from the Madding Crowd* has an optimistic tone. The strength of the optimism lies in the will of the characters. The protagonist Gabriel shows how much he can achieve through his own effort and will. Moreover, none of the characters is a victim of fate in this novel. The success and happiness of the characters depend on their action and free will.

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Dokumentārā lapa

Bakalaura darbs „Peculiarities of Character and Environment in Thomas Hardy's Novels *A Pair of Blue Eyes* and *Far from the Madding Crowd*” („Tēlu un vides īpatnības Tomasa Hārdija romānos *Zilo acu pāris* un *Tālu no trakojošā pūļa*”) izstrādāts LU Moderno valodu fakultātē.

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