

## **Thomas Hardy as a Great Naturalist and Pantheism and Philosophy of His Novels**

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### **Abstract**

Thomas Hardy was a great English novelist, early life on his works. He was son of a builder and he build his own career as a great novelist. He himself worked as an architect in his early life for some time, so he received a mixer culture, in which precise notions, the sense of volume and of equilibrium of an architect are joined to a process of artistic refining. This fact had a lasting influence over the plots of his novels. He builds his novels as a mason build a house. The string of every part is calculated, every stone has its place, every crumb of mortar bears its part. The creative works Hardy is governed by a powerful logic- the logic of events infinitely ideal, never moving by the tenth part of a millimetre from its appointed sequence. "The broad sweep of design "goes hand in hand with strict accuracy in detail. Nothing, not even the slightest part is neglected and forgotten. The things and circumstances being as they are changed Hardy stories are forgone conclusion. With nature and, existentialism, pantheism and philosophy of every different kind of the each and every novel. In addition to the features of naturalism in his works, he has some other features, though not contradictory, but is interwoven with literary works with an uneven rate. This paper aimed at the literary style of Hardy novels in terms of naturalistic tendencies that tend to present their subjects with objective scientific positions and with detailed documents, often including frankness and almost hovering around the activities and physical functions that are not usually mentioned in the literature. The paper assumes that these novels do not tend to give great weight to the psychological complexity of characterization, an idealistic direction, a fictional form, or a presentation of an individual personality with a free will to find a very clear literary message. This is the same impression with the novels of Thomas Hardy in one form or another at least with the novels of Emile Zola and some writers of naturalism, Richard Jefferies, W.H. Hudson, Maxwell knight, In contrast to these books, the book of naturalistic tendencies, Hardy tends to show these unnatural tendencies along with his natural

characteristics, but in a balanced manner, where his modern literary sensitivity, which expresses itself in the depiction of loss, alienation and revolution, seems to be a literary enhancement. Clearly in the works of Hardy. The paper sees Hardy's reality as a way of looking at life from its real perspective and portraying it with sincerity and objectivity, in contrast to the romance in which the writer portrays life as he wishes. It is a kind of revolution against the self, idealism, and sometimes ambiguity towards the romantic, but is also a kind of pursuit of literary objectivity and the employment of narrative work through the tendency of naturalism.

**Keywords:** Naturalism, natural character, literary objective, Pantheism, Philosophy, Industrial revolution

His native place is in the lap of nature, the second important fact is that upper Back- Hampton near Dorchester in the neighbourhood of which he has lived a retired and secluded life for practically the whole of his long and busy life, is situated in the lap of nature. He was an imaginative lad, so impression received of nature in his early life stamped his work later on. "Nature" in his novels is very important. It is not just the background in his drama but leading character in it. Sometimes it exercises an active influence on the course of fate and events more often it is a spiritual agent, colouring the mood and shaping the disposition of human beings. He lived among the "sons of Earth" and he described the Sons of the earth. He simply could not choose successfully men from the madding crowd, as his protagonist, character are country bred. His character are plebeian, agriculture people rooted in the British soil. Moreover, just as countryside is sparsely populated, similarly his canvas is not crowded with a large number of characters. Again, the calm and quiet atmosphere of rural life also prevails in his novels.

His stories contain in themselves relics of popular English superstitions which played so large a role in the stories, nature constantly present in Hardy's novel. Nature does not merely exist in Hardy's novel in the form of background to man's action. Of course, we have vivid description of landscape in his novels. But more than that, his landscape has bared, sheer penetrating power and are invested with human signification, winter borne looked and smelt "like Autumn's very brother". It is true to observe that the love which Scott felt for the

Tweed and Morries for scenery of his Thames River, Hardy feels for the heaths and the pasture of Wessex; and he describes these with be denied to us, if we do not know the relationship which exist between the life of nature and that of man. His natural world is on one level the background against which the drama of humanity is incessantly being played. The stage remains while the character continues to come and go. In his novels, nature appears in the form of the Eternal; men die and borne again to witness its grand spectacle. Some of the character as Marty South or Diggory Venn are incomprehensible to us unless we fully realise the background in which they move and are brought up.

Hardy natural world is not merely a background which is passive and life less. On the contrary, it appears as character animated and animating. Unlike Scott, Hardy paints nature not as an inanimate automation but invest it with a personality and an individuality of its own. It must be remembered that Hardy is primarily a poet and he looks at everything imaginatively. Nature in his novels intrudes directly to affect the destinies of other men and women; and like other character of his novels, it also assumes a role and plays its part successfully. In many of his novel's Hardy has given an allegorical interpretation of nature. Such books As The Woodlanders, Under the Green Wood tree and For from the Madding Crowd and heath in The Return of Native are live presences in his books.

The Statement of the Problem Basically, the paper studies the phenomenon of Nature and pantheism and philosophy at Thomas Hardy's works in terms of comparing Realism, Zola perspective and Naturalism, as a rival thesis of realism. Realism is, thus, a way of looking at life in its true perspective and its depiction objectivity opposed to romance in which the writer depicts life as he wishes it to be. It is precisely a kind of revolt against the subjectivism, idealism, and occasional vagueness of romanticism; it is also a kind of striving for impersonality, objectivity, verisimilitude, and accuracy and minuteness of details. In an attempt to discover and depict the real, the writers of the realistic school often turn to the present, to the commonplace, to science, to materialism and in consequence to pessimism. It may also sometimes share the romantics' humanitarianism, passion for social reforms and democracy. In England, if not in France, realism has come to be associated with a positive geniality, even at times with sentimentality. Naturalism, as a rival thesis of realism, is however a late development in literature not only in England but also in France.

Thus, nature is an active and potential force in the novels of Hardy. As such Egdon Heath determines the character and dominates the plot of its novel. Clym Yeobright, the hero, is the true child of Egdon. In his moments of prosperity and adversity, he is a part and parcel of Egdon. It sometimes checks the unruly passions of other character. The already existing passion of Eustacia is multiplied by the hatred of this austere power which checks her powerfully from her indulgence in fierce passion. Thus, the life of Egdon and of character that move within its compass are inextricably mixed with each other. As in Tennyson so in Hardy, the poetic feeling and scientific observation are happily blended together. Read Egdon and you will know the nature of its people; read Woodlanders to know the real disposition of the woodlanders. The nature and the inanimate is sentient and it feels and thinks and acts. When Tess confesses her crime, even the furniture bears a mocking shape toward her. Nature plays a part in the plot of Hardy's novels. Most hideous and dreadful acts are perpetrated in its bosom. The wild-eyed heath ponies steal up shadow like to watch the game between reddenmen and Wildeville. The spirit of Egdon Heath determines the victory in same way. Most of the scene in Hardy's novels takes place in the dark. In Egdon says Hardy "night falls earlier than that at the other places and even the day in Egdon is made dusky by the thickness of the forest". It sometimes precipitates the tragedy of those who are not its chosen sons. The tragedy of Mrs. Yeobright, the mother Clym, is a point in illustration. Nature kills with the help of a poisonous serpent one who is already deserted by her son. Egdon, according to Hardy, presents a face upon which time makes but little impression. Being the manifestation of the supreme self, it is not subject to any other any changes; the varying seasons cannot disturb the unruffled silence of its woods. Hardy is against the device of "Pathetic fallacy" "for nature is untameable and is not amiable to the changing moods of its people as it used to be with Tennyson. Sometimes it may represent itself through an individual. The spirit of Egdon is personified in the form of Diggory Venn who, within its territory is present everywhere and sees everything that happened there.

The American naturalists, however, markedly differ from one another in their respective style and temperament. Crane, for example, is a parodist impressionist, while Norris follows the genteel tradition but consciously exploits the forms and the subjects founded by Zola, Dreiser is a romantic realist. While Anderson with the most exquisite style, tenderly penetrates into the buried life until his social zeal dilutes his effectiveness.

Steinbeck, as an engaging experimentalist, tries every new form with a great skill. Farrell, on the other hand, deeply enters a segment of American life which he loves as much as he hates. It is with an extraordinary particularity that he records the life of a place and an era, with a painful intensity in his personal involvement into it but also in his public protest against it. In spite of their differences, these American naturalists have nevertheless come to share a new concept of physical-social process. Naturalistic Features in Hardy's Works Expressing truly, Thomas Hardy is neither a true naturalist in the strict French sense of neither the term, nor a true realist in strict Victorian sense. His comparatively modern mind under a Victorian exterior makes Hardy follow a middle course. He is not too conservative to throw off bias Victorian background completely, nor is he radical enough to go wholly by his modern sensibility. It seems that he is a realist in so far as he is a Victorian and a naturalist in so far as he is a post Victorian. But whether he is Victorian or not, Hardy's realism and naturalism, far from acting in rivalry or producing any duality, seem to cooperate and coalesce to produce the same end, the end being the futility of human endeavour; and this combination, again, is significant in that it gives rise to a peculiar modern note in him. For, Charles Morgan says that "a predominant modern note is one of futility and vertigo. As a realist, Hardy is made to see into the "heart of a thing", and to reproduce what he sees by means of his imaginative reason, what he reproduces by virtue of his imaginative reason is invariably human predicament. As a naturalist, Hardy seems to move from cause to effect, showing the gradual disintegration of the hero or heroine who is the victim of multiple circumstances and is led to his or her tragic destiny. Thus, whether Hardy is Victorian or post-Victorian, realist or naturalist, a deep tragic sensibility is the central that everywhere. Realism and naturalism seem to overlap in him. However, in the context of his modernism, it is important to look upon him more as a naturalist than as a realist. So, naturalism gives not merely a sense of loss. The features of naturalism discernible in Hardy include the predominance of heredity and environment; a causal sequence of narrative assertion; rigid deterministic plot; characters with strong animal drives; unpleasant and often uncongenial settings; the reduction of the protagonist into a pawn of multiple compulsions, and the inevitability of his misery, suffering and annihilation. Some other features of probable naturalistic origin are faithful posture of the primitive corner of England; the state of social transition from the old method to the new method of production; and the expression of comparatively radical view are also available in the Wessex novels. Both heredity and environment have been given a prominent role in the Wessex novels in general and in the major Wessex novels in particular. Hardy seems to have

been fascinated by the idea of heredity and environment in as much as acting and reacting on each other, they provide the staple of tragedy in the lives of Hardy's protagonists. Heredity gives them a character which make them a total misfit in the environment in which they are placed, while acme ethers are forcibly fitted into their environments, though not without the attendant pain and hardships of fighting a lost battle. The first group comprises such figures as Eustacia, Wildeve, Henchard, Giles, Tees, Jude and Sue, while the second group include Bathsheba, Oak, Cly Yeobright, Thomasin, Venn, Elizabeth, Grace and Dr. Fitzpiers, the unwelcome and painful interaction of heredity and environment leads Hardy's men and women to smart under a sense of loss; they are made alienated and they at times break into rebellion. A common charge against Hardy is that his novels abound in chance events, accidents or coincidences. No doubt, of chances, accidents or co-incidences occur frequently in Hardy, but we need not take a very serious view of them for a number of reasons; life itself is not free from such irony of circumstances;

Hardy's chances or accidents do not put too much strain on our credulity; and they are bound to serve to some extent the Hardlan thesis of the omnipotence of the malevolent destiny. Again, a close study of the Wessex novels is bound to give us the impression of a causal sequence of narrative assertion instead of the dominance of mere chances, accidents or coincidences. Nothing appears to have been forced, and the various incidents are bound together by cause-and-effect relation incident arises from another which appears to be Duffin rightly observes His coincidences are not forced they are always explicable, and sometime not! In the exposition of every novel, Hardy prepares our reception of an introduction to the main characters. In the development of action, the central characters are found engaged in an unending struggle with their destiny or with forces beyond their control, and gradually the climax is reached. In the denouement, the fall of the hero or the heroine is found complete, being the logical outcome of earlier events or the natural consequence of earlier causes. Hardy, as a naturalist, seems to apply the principle of science to literature to demonstrate that every event must have a cause, and that nothing comes out of nothing. Hardy's prominent men and women are slighted, blighted and injured by their respective circumstances. They are given to suffer a sense of loss and alienation, and it naturally inspires in them a rebellion much to the distaste and disapproval of the time they belong to. Since Hardy tends to follow the causal sequence of narrative assertion, his plot is naturally deterministic, if not rigidly deterministic. Hardy's prominent men and women are often incapable of adjustment to their respective situation due not only to their heredity and environment but also to their fatal

interaction. They can throw off neither their heredity nor their environment; nor can they stop the unpleasant interaction of their heredity and environment. Eustacia, Wildeve, Henchard, Tess, Jude and Sue are perhaps the best examples of this scheme and condition of life. Theirs is a life lived in long drawn misery, agony, frustration, anxiety ending in death. Their infinite sufferings give them the dimension of a tragic world in which they can only taste the bitterness of a comparatively modern sense of loss, alienation and revolt. To present such a sad and somber theme as this, the plot cannot but be deterministic and tragic. Further, Hardy's prominent men and women are a pawn to multiple compulsions, and in consequence most of them are either doomed to death or those who finally survive are left with a broken heart. In *Far from the Madding Crowd*, Sergeant Troy entices Fanny Robin, forces upon the innocent maiden the motherhood of an illegitimate child, but ultimately abandons her and marries Bathsheba. But immediately after Fanny's death, Troy suffers from a mental remorse which is too deep to be easily overcome and in consequence he deserts Bathsheba for a number of years. The Wessex novels in general and *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *The Woodlanders*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure* in particular record, among other things, the state of transition in society from backward forms of production to modern ones. These novels chart the changes and disorders in the Southern English Communities,

Though Hardy nature commands a colossal power, perhaps second to the almighty if there be any, yet nowhere does Hardy suggest that it can become a transcendental force as it was for Wordsworth or for Shelley. The letter writers were in need of personal god but Hardy tries to discover universal god whom he finds as cruel or at least indifference and as opposed to the benevolent god of Wordsworth or the rewarding god of Browning. This perhaps accounts for Hardy's blindness to see anywhere "Nature's holy plan". On the contrary he observes that a constant struggle for existence is going on in these forests again as opposed to Wordsworth's optimistic conception, Hardy's view of nature is truly sad and pessimistic. He does not see the existence of some spirit in these forests and again unlike Wordsworth, he does not draw the extreme inference that "every flower enjoys the air it breathes". Similarly there is no touch of Wordsworth's mysticism here. Nature to him is not the incarnation of some "brooding spirit" "that lives and moves and influences all thought and action, compelling to pay homage to it."

Though Hardy is primarily an artist and his novels are mainly the artistic expression of his ideas drawn from experience of life, we should call him an artist with a definite



philosophy of life. How so many times ever he may say that he lays down no definite system to account for the constitution of the universe, he does so and does it constantly. His first essay in fiction, *Desperate remedies*, which is immature and melodramatic, the philosophic attitude which has come to be associate with Hardy name become more and more clearly defined. It strongly colours the fabric of his greater novels and it would be impossible to understand these without examining his philosophy. Hardy conception of life essentially tragic. He is one of those who think life by no means a boon. For him Happiness is but an occasionally episode in the general drama of pain. His attitude to life is melancholic and depressive. He hates life inversely. He does not think it worth living. He perceives it in the grip of cruel, blind and oppressive unknown will, “Like flies to wanton boys are we to the gods, they kill us for their sport, chances in its purely malevolent aspect enters our life and spoils it, brings trails and tribulation, sorrow and sufferings, pain and agony in its train, what is the use of being a play thing, a toy, in the hands of mischievous “president of immortals. As regards the dictum, Character is destiny, he thinks that man is what he is because of his environment and ancestry and these in turn are determined by our fate. Fate is overruling, overpowering and irrepressible so in his ideas “our destiny is our character”.

His philosophy has left its deep impression upon all the aspects of it's his creative work; His subject is human life. He sees human beings less as individual than as representatives of a species, and in relation to the ultimate conditioning force of their existence. his subject is not men but, His theme man's predicament in the universe. in structure all novels become morale dramas in which the conflicts of will, impelled by passion predominate. And in the plots of his novels, invisible, undesirable – unexpected inexplicable change plays an important role. All his protagonist has family likeness because almost all of them are moral, good, brave, bold and heroic in their fight against fate. All the ends and trails of his novels are one and the same in spirit. man is crushed by the irrepressible tyrant fate, as grave is his philosophy so serious is the atmosphere of his novels. Adverse effects of his philosophy on his novels. To be brief, his philosophy sometimes spoils his plot and limits his range of character, themes and subjects. To be frank, sometimes we do feel that Hardy is excessive in his relentless flogging of gods.

## **Conclusion**



Thus nature, in Hardy is usually indifferent but it is not always so. Sometimes it is inspired with a boundless love for those who are its chosen sons. It may be cruel and indignant to some who oppose it but it is also mild and tolerant. The human aspect of Hardy writing cannot be made known to us unless we study closely his view of nature. To get an intimate knowledge of its human significance a through study of Egdon Heath indispensable. He has his clearest views about Nature, and he fully pays the debt which he owed to it for being brought up in its lap; and what he realised from it as a child. He set forth here as a man. Accordingly, Hardy has chosen a setting, no matter whether rural or urban, but which is not only in itself dull and depressing but also unpleasant and unfavourable to the most of his prominent men and women endings. This may be quite clearly manifested by Hardy throughout his novel as he made much effort to describe nature, social condition and conflicts of people from among the middle and lower classes paying special attention to women's cause in terms of the search for self-steam, justice and equality. It is perhaps interesting enough to remark that the works of Hardy largely under the influence of realism as an artistic and literary movement which the Victorian age witness and which was itself the outcome of the combination of classicism with all its reasons, discipline, symmetry and order together with romanticism with all its emotion fantasy reverie and vivid imagination.

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