

THOMAS HARDY

THE NATURE AND EFFECT OF THOMAS HARDY'S  
PRESENCE IN HIS MAJOR FICTION

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS:

                  This thesis examines some of Thomas Hardy's  
major fiction to determine the effect of the author's presence in his  
novels. After briefly discussing this aspect of the early novels,  
the thesis examines the role of the narrator in Far from the Madding  
Crowd, The Mayor of Casterbridge, Tess of the d'Urbervilles, and Jude  
the Obscure.

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## CHAPTER ONE

The novel has been a difficult literary form for critics to discuss intelligently. Because of the novel's relatively brief history, it lacks the background of critical thought which provides a context for the criticism of poetry and drama. Moreover, the changes undergone by the novel in the early stages of its development have compounded the critic's problems. Since no one knew just what a novel was supposed to be, it was difficult to determine what criteria should be used to measure the quality of the work. During the last half century, however, the criticism of fiction has focused primarily on the novelist's technique. A major part of this preoccupation with technique can be attributed to novelists such as Henry James and Ford Madox Ford who, besides employing a different manner of narration, developed theories of the technique of fiction. The critics and novelists who, about this time, participated in the discussion of how novels ought to be written brought about a new stage in the development of the novel, and enhanced its status as an art form.

At the heart of the discussion of the technique of fiction lay the issue of the novelist's use of point of view; that is, the place of the storyteller relative to the story. The narrator, in telling the story, could reveal his presence in the most obvious of ways, such as by addressing the reader directly in his own voice, or by interrupting the

story to comment on elements of the story or even on other subjects. Less blatant, but still tangible evidence of authorial presence appears when the narrator, from his position of omniscience, confides in the reader by telling him what no character in the novel, but only the narrator himself, could know. When the author tells of past events unknown to his characters, or reveals to the reader the secrets in the hearts and minds of his characters, the reader becomes aware of the teller, aware that the story is being told by an omniscient narrator. In the first years of the twentieth century, the critical consensus on this issue was that any such exposure of the narrator was detrimental to the novel. Any element in the story that indicated the presence of the author was judged to undermine the effectiveness of his fiction. This criterion judged harshly nearly all pre-Jamesian novels, including, of course, the novels of Thomas Hardy.

Up to this time, nearly all novels had displayed authorial presence, although in varying degrees and forms. An examination of a few passages by prominent nineteenth-century novelists will show how the question of the author's presence had been handled. To begin the final chapter of Mansfield Park, Jane Austen states: "Let other pens dwell on guilt and misery. I quit such odious subjects as soon as I can, impatient to restore everybody, not greatly in fault themselves, to tolerable comfort, and to have done with all the rest."<sup>1</sup> Here the author, in her own person, addresses the reader, frankly discussing her intentions for the rest of the novel. This statement is, in fact, a rather deliberate attempt to impress the author's personality on the reader. Writing a few years

later in 1818, Sir Walter Scott provides the following information about one of the characters in The Heart of Midlothian:

Few names deserve more honourable mention in the history of Scotland, during this period, than that of John, Duke of Argyle and Greenwich. His talents as a statesman and a soldier were generally admitted; he was not without ambition, but "without the illness that attends it". . . . He was alike free from the ordinary vices of statesmen, falsehood, namely, and dissimulation; and from those of warriors, inordinate and violent thirst after self-aggrandisement.<sup>2</sup>

Scott, in this passage, has told the reader a great deal about the character of John. Since this information obviously comes from an omniscient narrator, Scott has, in effect; revealed himself as the teller of the tale, selecting and disclosing what the reader is to know. Also, although indirectly, he shows the reader his own depth of political and literary knowledge. About forty years later, in Adam Bede, George Eliot discusses the relative merits of two clergymen in the following terms:

And so I come back to Mr. Irwine, with whom I desire you to be in perfect charity, far as he may be from satisfying your demands on the clerical character. Perhaps you think he was not -- as he ought to have been -- a living demonstration of the benefits attached to a national church? But I am not sure of that; at least I know the people of Broxton and Hayslope would have been very sorry to part with their clergyman, and that most faces brightened at his approach.<sup>3</sup>

This passage is part of what turns out to be a debate on the proper role of the clergyman, and here, at the beginning of the discussion, George Eliot draws the reader into the debate and gives him a point of view which she uses as a foil for her own. In such cases, the reader is, of course, quite aware of the author's presence. Although three short passages cannot represent a century and a half of fiction, the attitude

towards the author's role in the novel suggested by these three selections is that adopted by most pre-Jamesian novelists. In other words, most novelists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries considered it part of the storyteller's role to exercise his omniscience by providing background information and telling the motives and thoughts of his characters, and to direct the reader's judgments, and even to discuss such tangential issues as interested him. The new approach to the problem of point of view, however, forbade all such practices on the grounds that they revealed the presence of the teller in the tale.

The champions of the new approach to technique, in presenting an alternative to traditional methods, developed a fairly coherent theory of fiction. The prefaces Henry James wrote for the New York edition of his novels provide the earliest crystallization of this theory. In the preface to The Tragic Muse, he writes:

Processes, periods, intervals, stages, degrees, connexions, may be easily enough and barely enough named, may be unconvincingly stated, in fiction, to the deep discredit of the writer, but it remains the very deuce to represent them, especially represent them under strong compression and in brief and subordinate terms; and this even though the novelist who doesn't represent and represent all the time, is lost.<sup>4</sup>

The distinction between naming or stating on the one hand, and representing on the other, was soon reduced to a catch phrase of advice to writers, "don't tell it; show it". In speaking of The Awkward Age, James points out the similarity to drama of narrative thus rendered:



The beauty of the conception was in this approximation of the respective divisions of my form to the successive acts of a play. . . . The divine distinction of the act of a play -- and a greater than any other it easily succeeds in arriving at -- was, I reasoned, in its special, its guarded objectivity.<sup>5</sup>

Through the dramatic or scenic method, James strove for objectivity in his fiction. Ideally, the story would seem to tell itself and the reader would have no sense of a narrator at work. Of course, this precluded any elements in the telling which exposed the narrator to the reader.

Other novelists and critics, many of them more dogmatic than James, endorsed James' demands for objective, dramatic fiction. In A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, James Joyce has Stephen discuss the issue of impersonality in art in the following way:

The narrative is no longer purely personal. The personality of the artist passes into the narration itself, flowing round and round the persons and the actions like a vital sea. . . . The dramatic form is reached when the vitality which has flowed and eddied around each person fills every person with such vital force that he or she assumes a proper and intangible esthetic life. The personality of the artist, at first a cry or a cadence or a mood, and then a fluid and lambent narrative, finally refines itself out of existence, impersonalizes itself, so to speak. The esthetic image in the dramatic form is life purified in and reprojected from the human imagination. The mystery of esthetic, like that of material creation, is accomplished. The artist, like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails.<sup>6</sup>

The remote position required of the artist here is similar to that taken by any novelist willing to address himself to the objectives dictated by Ford Madox Ford: "The object of the novelist is to keep the reader oblivious of the fact that the author exists -- even of the fact that he is reading a book".<sup>7</sup> This criterion, requiring dramatic, objective

fiction, gained momentum among many critics also. They used it to judge the relative merits of novels, often, it seems, to the exclusion of other important considerations. Percy Lubbock went so far as to state that "the art of fiction does not begin until the novelist thinks of his story as a matter to be shown, to be so exhibited that it will tell itself".<sup>8</sup> The implication, of course, is that any fiction which is dramatically presented, which shows no trace of the author's presence, is artistically superior to fiction in which the author is present explaining, emphasizing, or merely stating information. To dismiss most of the great eighteenth and nineteenth century novels as standing outside the "art of fiction", on the basis of this one aspect of technique, seems now a narrow and presumptuous judgment.

In the last decade or so, critics have looked at the issue of authorial presence with more flexibility, and have shown it to be not quite as clear-cut as had formerly been thought. One of the most eloquent reassessments of the question is Wayne C. Booth's The Rhetoric of Fiction. In this book, Booth points out that the showing-telling distinction, as it had been conceived, is an oversimplification; moreover, he argues that the novelist is present in his work in more ways than had been suspected, and "though the author can to some extent choose his disguises, he can never choose to disappear".<sup>9</sup> Booth, in effect, challenges some of the basic assumptions of the argument for "objective" fiction, opening the way for a reassessment of the whole question. Other critics have framed their opposition to the dogmatic denial of authorial presence in a defence of the omniscient, often present author. W. J. Harvey adopts this approach

in The Art of George Eliot. Speaking of The Mill on the Floss, he defends

the extended intrusion of the author in the opening chapters, the conflation of her past and present selves which creates a more intimate and personal tone than anything else in her work. Some critics have thought this intrusion a flaw (largely, I suspect, just because it is an intrusion), but it seems to me to fulfil its purpose delicately and economically.<sup>10</sup>

The author's presence may be seen as not only permissible, but even essential, as Lionel Trilling argues:

The banishment of the author from his books, the stilling of his voice, have but reinforced the faceless hostility of the world. . . . Surely what we need is the opposite of this, the opportunity to identify ourselves with a mind that willingly admits that it is a mind and does not pretend that it is history or Events or the World but only a mind thinking and planning --- possibly planning our escape.<sup>11</sup>

The work of such critics as those cited above has undermined excessive enthusiasm for the absentee narrator, so that authorial presence in fiction has become an open question again. Consequently, it is possible to consider quite objectively the nature and consequences of the authorial presence in a novel.

Each development in the criticism of the novel provides an opportunity to recall the works of earlier eras and consider them in the light of current critical thought. The aim of this thesis is to examine the technique of Thomas Hardy's fiction, particularly the relationship between the narrator and the stories, and ultimately to draw conclusions about the consequences of this relationship for the effectiveness of Hardy's novels. Neither the demands for an objective, dramatic treatment of fiction, nor the qualifications imposed by more recent critics, can be ignored. Both sides of the debate have made contributions to the

development of the criticism of fiction. However, no preconception or established loyalty will be permitted to take the place of an evaluation, in the context of the novels, of the relationship between the teller and the tale.

Although Hardy has little to say on the distinction between showing and telling, his comments about his aims and methods in fiction tell much about his technique. In specifying the reason for reading fiction, Hardy indicates the goal to which he as a novelist addresses himself: "Our true object in reading fiction is a lesson in life, mental enlargement from elements essential to the narratives themselves and from the reflections they engender".<sup>12</sup> To this end, Hardy presents in his novels what he calls "an impression of life", an impression in that it is bound not to the letter but to the spirit of life. Hardy aims to represent the nature of life so truly that the result will indeed be a "lesson in life" for the reader. The most valuable quality of this lesson is its truth, and to tell this truth is Hardy's aim as a novelist: "It must always be borne in mind, despite the claims of realism, that the best fiction, like the highest artistic expression in other modes, is more true, so to put it, than history or nature can be".<sup>13</sup> Such truth is not seen but felt, and the novelist may communicate it to the reader not only through "elements essential to the narratives", but also through "the reflections they engender".

Hardy's devotion to the truth had a definite influence on his technique, for it led him to concentrate on that method best suited to portraying the truth. In his essay "The Profitable Reading of

Fiction", he states: "A representation is less susceptible of error than a disquisition; the teaching, depending as it does on intuitive conviction, and not upon logical reasoning, is not likely to lend itself to sophistry".<sup>14</sup> The distinction he makes here is based on the fairly practical and, for Hardy, primary concern of presenting a faithful picture of life. In stating that the disquisition may be an unreliable tool for the novelist, Hardy is expressing, from the writer's point of view, the same idea he expressed from the reader's point of view in the passage quoted above; namely, that the "mental enlargement" one gains from reading fiction will come primarily from "elements essential to the narratives".

Besides doubting the effectiveness of authorial disquisition, Hardy questions its appropriateness in the novel. Such intrusions on the narrative had been part of the novel for so long that the reader expected them, yet they seemed to Hardy to be outside the proper method of fiction, in spite of the fact that he included them in his own work. His statement on this issue is understandably equivocal:

Not only may a book be read for these main features, plot and character, the presentation they may collectively be called -- but for the accidents and appendages of narrative; and such are of more kinds than one. Excursions into various philosophies; which vary or delay narrative proper, may have more attraction than the regular course of the enactment; the judicious inquirer may be on the lookout for didactic reflections, such as is found in great lumps in "Rasselas"; he may be a picker-up of trifles of useful knowledge, statistics, queer historic facts, such as sometimes occur in the pages of Hugo; he may search for specimens of the manners of good or bad society, such as are to be obtained from the fashionable writers; or he may even wish to brush up his knowledge of quotations from ancient and other authors by studying some chapters of "Pelham" and the disquisitions of Parson Adams in "Joseph Andrews".

Many of the works which abound in appurtenances of this or a kindred sort are excellent as narrative, excellent as portraiture, even if in spite rather than in consequence of their presence. . . . But though we are bound to consider by-motives like these for reading fiction as praiseworthy enough where practicable, they are by their nature of an illegitimate character, more or less, and apart from the ruling interest of the genuine investigator of this department of literature.<sup>15</sup>

Although Hardy allowed expository excursions into philosophy, morality, history, and manners, his conviction of the preeminence of representation as the proper and most effective for the novelist is perfectly clear.

Hardy's statements about his aims and techniques as a novelist help to determine where he stands on the issue of authorial presence. However, to fill out the picture, it is necessary to see how he put these ideas into practice. A survey of the earlier novels shows evidence of various sorts of authorial presence. For instance, in the first paragraph of A Pair of Blue Eyes, Hardy reveals his presence as the omniscient author by telling the reader about the character of the heroine: "Elfride Swancourt was a girl whose emotions lay very near the surface. Their nature more precisely, and as modified by the creeping hours of time, was known only to those who watched the circumstances of her history".<sup>16</sup> A little later in the story, Hardy introduces two letters into the text with only the following explanation: "The young lady glided downstairs again, and whilst she awaits young Smith's entry, the letters referring to his visit had better be given".<sup>17</sup> Because the reader is not told that part of the story in which the letters are written or are read, there must be an interruption in the advancing narrative while they are "given". On these occasions, Hardy interrupts the narrative to interject bits of

information which range from his observation that "A woman must have many kisses before she kisses well",<sup>18</sup> to more profound themes such as the following comment on coincidence:

Strange conjunctions of phenomena, particularly those of a trivial everyday kind, are so frequent in an ordinary life that we grow used to their unaccountableness, and forget the question whether the very long odds against such juxtaposition is not almost a disproof of it being a matter of chance at all.<sup>19</sup>

Although these interruptions cause lapses in the narrative flow, they do develop out of the situation depicted. Not infrequently throughout the novels, Hardy abandons the role of storyteller and speaks to the reader in his own voice; he presents other scenes with no authorial intrusions. This variety in the position taken by the author is fairly typical of Hardy, and indicates that he placed no premium on consistency in this aspect of his writing, but chose that method of presentation which seemed to him best adapted to the material at hand.

Hardy took no dogmatic stand on the issue of authorial presence, and the point of view he adopts in telling his stories does not differ greatly from that of most pre-Jamesian novelists. Nevertheless, the position he takes as the narrator is, to a certain extent, more than convention, for it is influenced by elements particular to his own thought and experience. His beliefs about the human condition and the nature of life were distinctive enough and strong enough to have a bearing on the way he presented the material in his novels; hence they must be considered in an examination of his technique. A great deal has been written about the nature of life in Hardy's universe and about the pessimism

of his vision. His novels do present a picture of life in which the forces arrayed against man in his search for happiness are powerful. The protagonists see their plans thwarted and their dreams shattered. Even novels such as Far From the Madding Crowd, which might be said to have happy endings, picture a universe in which pain and mischance are the rule rather than the exception. Whether happiness can be earned in Hardy's universe, or whether it is arbitrarily given or, as is more often the case, withheld, is still debated by critics.<sup>20</sup> Related to this aspect of his vision is the irony which pervades so much of the action of the novels; the reader is being presented with the ironic discrepancy between what men desire and what they get. The nature of this vision of life, and to a greater extent Hardy's conviction of its truth, have a considerable influence on the manner in which the narratives are told.

If the vision of human life or the "lesson in living" is to have the effect on the mind of the reader that Hardy desires, it will have to be clear and allow of no misconstruing. In many of the situations in the novels there is no question as to where the reader's sympathies lie, or as to the appropriate judgment of a particular event; the narrative action and the behavior of the characters make these clear enough. On the other hand, frequently Hardy is unwilling to let the characters and events stand alone, and to ensure the desired interpretation, he takes on the double role of storyteller and commentator. The interpretations of character he provides often occur early in the novel to direct the reader's response to the character at his first appearance. The first page of Desperate Remedies provides an example:



Grave was handsome, frank, and gentle. He had a quality of thought which exercised on homeliness, was humour; on nature, picturesqueness; on abstractions, poetry. Being as a rule broadcast, it was all three. Of the wickedness of the world he was too forgetful. To discover evil in a new friend is to most people an additional experience: to him it was ever a surprise.<sup>21</sup>

Sometimes the facts of the narrative precede the explanation, as in the analysis of Mrs. Manston's character later in the same novel:

Altogether her conduct had shown her to be what in fact she was; a weak though calculating woman, one clever to conceive, weak to execute: one whose best laid schemes were ever liable to be frustrated by the ineradicable blight of vacillation at the critical hour of action.<sup>22</sup>

In such cases the reader accepts the information without question, as an aid in understanding the characters and interpreting their actions. In a similar way Hardy often provides commentary to explicate a passage of dialogue, as he does in the following comment on a conversation between Smith and Knight in A Pair of Blue Eyes:

Perhaps the most extraordinary feature of this conversation was the circumstance that, though each interlocutor had at first his suspicion of the other's abiding passion awakened by several little acts, neither would allow himself to see that his friend might now be speaking deceitfully as well as he.<sup>23</sup>

These explanations provide the reader with a good deal of insight and information, making it more probable that his judgment of the characters and events will be what Hardy intended.

One aspect of Hardy's vision of life which is particularly important in relation to his technique is his mistrust of appearances or any kind of pretence. Related to this is his antipathy for society, for life at the busy centres of human affairs. The conflict developing from

the individual's attempt to maintain his integrity against the inroads of a false society is at the centre of The Hand of Ethelberta, and plays a lesser but still important part in several other novels. In The Hand of Ethelberta, Hardy shows society corrupting the heroine's family as, when Joey's sister upbraids him for eavesdropping, he answers: "O, 'tis how we do all over the West End. . . . 'Tis yer ignorance of town life that makes it seem a good deal to 'ee".<sup>24</sup> Moreover, Hardy's "villains" are rather more tainted by their contact with society than his corresponding "heroes", who tend to be more ingenuous. Both Clym Yeobright and Grace Melbury find that their season in society yields bitter fruit. Essentially, Hardy portrays society as distorting the true and better nature of his characters, and requiring special attention to appearances. In the following passage, Hardy reveals this attitude towards appearances: "If all hearts were open and all desires known -- as they would be if people showed their souls -- how many gapings, sighings, clenched fists, knotted brows, broad grins, and red eyes should be seen in the market place!"<sup>25</sup> This belief that the truth is often hidden from the closest observer of externals has a bearing on Hardy's concept of his role as a novelist and on the method he employs.

The unreliability of appearances complicates the task of any novelist who, like Hardy, is concerned with the truth of his vision. Hardy saw it as the novelist's commission to probe, to penetrate, and ultimately to find the truth and present it to the reader. The nature of the novelist's task dictates the qualities required by one who would do it well:

A sight for the finer qualities of existence, an ear for the 'still sad music of humanity', are not to be acquired by the outer senses alone, close as their powers of photography may be. What cannot be discerned by eye and ear, what may be apprehended only by the mental tactility that comes from a sympathetic appreciativeness of life in all its manifestations, this is the gift which renders its possessor a more accurate delineator of human nature than many another with twice his powers and means of external observation, but without the sympathy.<sup>26</sup>

One who reads the work of a novelist with this degree of sensitivity can expect to gain "mental enlargement". Hardy further explains the value of fiction written by a man of extraordinary perception:

In the pursuance of his quest for a true exhibition of man the reader will naturally consider whether he feels himself under the guidance of a mind who sees further into life than he himself has seen; or, at least, who can throw a stronger irradiation over subjects already within his ken than he has been able to do unaided.<sup>27</sup>

A novelist, equipped with the necessary insight, can act as a guide to the reader, directing him to an understanding of the true nature of life or a "true exhibition of man".

If the novelist is to perform this function, he must guide not only the reader's eye and ear, but also his judgment. In order to do this, Hardy draws close to his reader, taking him into his confidence. Since the truth of a situation is often quite different from what is suggested by mere observation, Hardy explains in direct terms just what the reader should think of a given character or situation. Moreover, he frequently indicates to the reader that in searching out the truth he must look beyond external appearances. Hardy begins one paragraph of A Pair of Blue Eyes with, "The truth is . . .", and then goes on to explain a certain phenomenon from the narrative. There are numerous statements

in the novels of the discrepancy between truth and appearance; two short passages from The Woodlanders will serve as examples: "Could the real have been beheld instead of the corporeal only . . .",<sup>28</sup> and "A veneer of affectation overlies a bulk of truth. . . ."<sup>29</sup> Convinced as he is that appearance cannot be trusted, and that it is the novelist's task to show the reader the truth, Hardy cannot rely on merely an objective presentation. These convictions naturally place him in a subjective position, a position from which he could confide in the reader and tell him the secrets of his universe.

In this aspect of his technique Hardy was no innovator, but a traditionalist. To a certain extent, his position relative to his readers and his work is a matter of convention; however, it is a position that is strongly reinforced by elements within himself. His concept of the role of the artist, the nature of his vision of life, and his conviction of the truth of this vision have all directed him to this position, and hence influenced the manner of his telling. As a novelist, then, Hardy takes a stance close to the reader as the acknowledged creator of the story and director of the reader's moral faculties. In doing this, he makes no attempt to hide his presence in the story, and the reader is aware of a subjective guide. His is the habit of writing Henry James had in mind when he wrote:

Certain accomplished novelists have a habit of giving themselves away which must often bring tears to the eyes of people who take their fiction seriously. . . . Such a betrayal of a sacred office seems to me, I confess, a terrible crime.<sup>30</sup>

However, Hardy's first loyalty is to the truth, and he communicates his

truth to the reader through methods which are in harmony with his philosophy and his artistic aims. He employs whatever techniques seem most effective in presenting an immediate and powerful impression of his vision of life.

## FOOTNOTES (CHAPTER ONE)

- <sup>1</sup>Jane Austen, Mansfield Park (Boston, 1965), p. 350.
- <sup>2</sup>Sir Walter Scott, The Heart of Midlothian (New York, 1965), p. 376.
- <sup>3</sup>George Eliot, Adam Bede (New York, 1961), p. 178.
- <sup>4</sup>Henry James, The Art of the Novel (New York, 1962), p. 94.
- <sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 110.
- <sup>6</sup>James Joyce, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (New York, 1962), p. 215.
- <sup>7</sup>Ford Madox Ford, Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance (Boston, 1925), p. 199.
- <sup>8</sup>Percy Lubbock, The Craft of Fiction (London, 1921), p. 62.
- <sup>9</sup>Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago, 1961), p. 20.  
Although the whole book looks at fiction as rhetoric, chapter one and chapter eight are particularly pertinent. Louis D. Rubin, in The Teller in the Tale (Seattle, 1967), takes a similar approach.
- <sup>10</sup>W. J. Harvey, The Art of George Eliot (London, 1961), pp. 87-88.
- <sup>11</sup>Lionel Trilling, The Liberal Imagination (New York, 1950), p. 261.
- <sup>12</sup>Thomas Hardy, "The Profitable Reading of Fiction", Life and Art (New York, 1925), p. 60.
- <sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 64.
- <sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 64.
- <sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>16</sup>Thomas Hardy, A Pair of Blue Eyes (London, 1938), p. 1.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>20</sup>One of the most interesting books on this question is Thomas Hardy: The Will and the Way by Roy Morrell. He argues that in Hardy's universe the chances for human melioration and happiness are reduced, but not completely absent.

<sup>21</sup>Thomas Hardy, Desperate Remedies (London, 1951), p. 1.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 189.

<sup>23</sup>Thomas Hardy, A Pair of Blue Eyes (London, 1938), p. 189.

<sup>24</sup>Thomas Hardy, The Hand of Ethelberta (London, 1951), p. 142.

<sup>25</sup>Florence Emily Hardy, The Later Years of Thomas Hardy (New York, 1930), p. 133.

<sup>26</sup>Thomas Hardy, "The Science of Fiction", Life and Art (New York, 1925), p. 89.

<sup>27</sup>Thomas Hardy, "The Profitable Reading of Fiction", Life and Art (New York, 1925), p. 62.

<sup>28</sup>Thomas Hardy, The Woodlanders (New York, 1967), p. 195.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 154.

<sup>30</sup>Henry James, "The Art of Fiction", The Portable Henry James, ed. Mofton D. Zabel (New York, 1951), p. 394.

## CHAPTER TWO

In his fiction, Hardy uses an omniscient point of view. When he tells what a character is thinking or provides other information that only an omniscient author can know, he reveals his presence as the storyteller. However, it is in the more obvious intrusions that the reader senses the author as being personally present in the narrative. An examination of the comments, judgments, and digressions interjected into the novels will show what these intrusions, by their nature and their purpose, contribute to Hardy's fiction.

To make a judgment as to the positive or negative effect of authorial presence in a novel is extremely difficult. The nature of the problem is easily illustrated. Most sensitive readers would agree that Fielding's expository intrusions into the narrative of Joseph Andrews make a definite contribution to the novel, and constitute an important part of Fielding's art. This same loquacious manner in the works of less skilful or less personally engaging writers, however, would seem to the reader irritating and intrusive. Yet to isolate the factors which make the difference is a difficult critical exercise. To make an evaluation, we must consider whether the situation in the novel is such that commentary may be introduced without seeming unduly disruptive. Besides this, the ideas introduced by the author may vary in their degree of relevance to the developing narrative. Even the reliability of the comments may be questioned if the information provided by the author seems to contradict



what the narrative suggests. In very general terms, any commentary, as an integral part of the novel, should be in harmony with the various elements of that novel. Hence, an evaluation of the author's presence in a novel must be carried out in the context of the novel involved, taking into account the aims of the author as well as other aspects of the novel.

Hardy's first critical and popular success was Far From the Madding Crowd. It is by many considered to be the best of his early works, and serves as a good point of reference. It is essentially a love story in a pastoral setting, depicting the variations of personality and behavior which complicate the relationships between men and women. The narrative shows how people act and react as they search for a happy outcome to the desires of their hearts, and even the minor elements of the novel have to do primarily with love, courting, and marriage. For example, the comments of the rustic country folk often deal with this theme. In one scene Jan Coggan recounts how Levi Everdene, Bathsheba's father, coped with the fickleness of his affection for his wife:

I believe he cured it by making her take off her wedding ring and calling her by her maiden name as they sat together after the shop was shut, and so 'a would get to fancy she was only his sweetheart, and not married to him at all. And as soon as he could thoroughly fancy he was doing wrong and committing the seventh, 'a got to like her as well as ever, and they lived on a perfect picture of mutel love.<sup>1</sup>

Such accounts, plus Coggan's account of his own courting and several humorous references to Laban Tall's domestic problems, keep the issue of love and marriage always in the foreground. Hardy, in all of his novels, attempts to present a true account of human experience; in Far From the Madding Crowd, he focuses primarily on the emotional involvement of men

and women, and most of his intrusions into the narrative have to do, in one way or another, with this relationship.

The comments and observations Hardy interjects into Far From the Madding Crowd cover many topics, ranging from architecture to the behavior of the Olympian gods. When these comments and observations have to do with human behavior, and most of them do, they are frequently linked with character revelation. Hardy interrupts the narrative to present his observation or comment on human nature, and having done so, moves back into the narrative by applying the principle involved to the character or situation at hand. The following passage is typical as it shows characterization growing out of an observation on human behavior, and also because the behavior is that of a person in love:

We discern a grand force in the lover which he lacks whilst a free man; but there is a breadth of vision in the free man which in the lover we vainly seek. Where there is much bias there must be some narrowness, and love, though added emotion, is subtracted capacity. Boldwood exemplified this to an abnormal degree.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, Hardy sometimes begins with the characterization, and develops from it an observation or comment on human behavior, as the following passage illustrates:

Bathsheba invariably provoked the criticism of individuals like Henry Fray. Her emblazoned fault was to be too pronounced in her objections, and not sufficiently overt in her likings. We learn that it is not the rays which bodies absorb, but those which they reject, that give them the colours they are known by; and in the same way people are specialized by their dislikes and antagonisms, whilst their goodwill is looked upon as no attribute at all.<sup>3</sup>

In both cases the authorial comment and the characterization are smoothly combined, with the comment reinforcing the characterization by showing

how true it is to observable human nature. In this way the expository material, which might otherwise seem to stand apart from the main stream of the action, is integrated through its link with the characterization.

This combination of authorial commentary and characterization points to another of the uses Hardy makes in this novel of his comments and observations. Through the addition of commentary, the events of the novel take on an expanded meaning, as the actions of the characters become illustrations of principles of human behavior. The narrative elements of the novel show what happens to Bathsheba Everdene and Gabriel Oak, and Hardy's comments suggest to the reader that these events represent a picture of how people in general behave. On reading of Bathsheba's treatment of Gabriel, a sensitive reader might say to himself, "Ah yes, this is true to life"; but Hardy ensures that the events of the novel suggest their analogues in life by specifying the principles of behavior involved. The following comment on Bathsheba's falling in love with Troy will serve as an example:

Bathsheba loved Troy in the way that only self-reliant women love when they abandon their self-reliance. When a strong woman recklessly throws away her strength she is worse than a weak woman who has never had any strength to throw away. One source of her inadequacy is the novelty of the occasion. Weakness is doubly weak by being new.<sup>4</sup>

From this discussion of Bathsheba's actions Hardy develops a principle of human behavior which is made quite convincing by his logic and the epigrammatic final statement. In a similar way, the following example specifies the truth portrayed in the narrative:

The most vigorous expression of a resolution does not always coincide with the greatest vigor of the resolution itself. It is often flung out as a sort of prop to support a decaying conviction which, whilst strong, required no enunciation to prove it so. The 'No I won't' of Bathsheba meant virtually, 'I think I must'<sup>5</sup>

Sometimes, however, the lesson drawn from the events of the narrative is much more general, amounting really to a maxim on how to get along in life:

It is safer to accept any chance that offers itself, and extemporize a procedure to fit it, than to get a good plan matured, and wait for a chance of using it. Gabriel wished he had not nailed up his colours as a shepherd, but had laid himself out for anything in the whole cycle of labour that was required in the fair.<sup>6</sup>

The principle expressed in the first sentence of the quotation applies to Gabriel's immediate situation; it also applies to the whole novel in that it illuminates one of the essential differences between Gabriel and Troy. Moreover, the reader is conscious that the author is attempting to impress upon him the "lesson in living" that may be drawn from the narrative, and to do this the author generalizes the particular events of the narrative so the reader will see their broader application. This is, of course, consistent with Hardy's aims in writing fiction as discussed in chapter one.

Some of Hardy's comments suggest a broader application than others. The comment may amount to no more than a statement that some particular form of behavior is not unusual. This is the case with the comment on the tone of Boldwood's voice when, at the sheep-washing pool, he first says "Bathsheba": "To say a little is often to tell more than to say a great deal. Boldwood told everything in that word".<sup>7</sup> The chief purpose of these limited generalizations is often to make the behavior seem less

strange. On other occasions the comment explains the behavior of a certain kind of person by stating that what is true of a certain character is true of all those of a similar nature. Boldwood's love for Bathsheba again provides an example:

There was a change in Boldwood's exterior from its former impassibleness; and his face showed that he was now living outside his defences for the first time, and with a fearful sense of exposure. It is the usual experience of strong natures when they love.<sup>8</sup>

The broadest application is found when Hardy presents a generalized picture of human behavior in a particular circumstance. Hardy uses this sort of comment to explain the behavior of his characters. In this way the reader is shown to what degree the particular conforms to the general. Hardy uses the following comment to explain Bathsheba's reaction to Boldwood's marriage proposal:

It appears that ordinary men take wives because possession is not possible without marriage, and that ordinary women accept husbands because marriage is not possible without possession; with totally differing aims the method is the same on both sides.<sup>9</sup>

Used in this way, Hardy's comments and observations reinforce his characterization; they explain the behavior of the characters, and at the same time make it seem more probable by linking it with general patterns of behavior. Also, these interjections remind the reader that what is happening is part of life; in other words, they broaden the scope of the vision of life presented by the novel.

Authorial presence in Far From the Madding Crowd does not often have a direct influence on the reader's judgment of a character.

Naturally, Hardy's expository comments about the characters suggest that the character in question deserves sympathy or pity or scorn; but direct

statements about a character's moral status are not common. Occasionally, Hardy interjects some justification for or explanation of Bathsheba's behavior; for example: "Bathsheba was not conscious of guile in this matter". The behavior of the other characters requires less comment; yet once in a while, Hardy furnishes a word or a phrase to direct the reader's sympathies. When he speaks of the "outspoken honesty" of Gabriel Oak, or says of Troy's voice that "It was the voice of a trickster now", or merely laments "Poor Boldwood", he is guiding the reader's judgment of the characters. Also, he reveals himself as a personality. As the novelist, he is bound to present a true picture of life, as it objectively appears to him; yet in many of his comments he reveals a sympathetic interest in the welfare of the characters, and he seems saddened by their distress. Although he does not constantly maintain this sympathetic relationship with the characters, when he does reveal it, the reader is led into a similar sympathetic position.

The major contribution of the authorial intrusions examined thus far has been in the area of characterization, but Hardy uses these intrusions for quite a variety of purposes. A close inspection of a comment already cited (p. 22) will show that Hardy uses it for several functions at the same time:

We discern a grand force in the lover which he lacks whilst a free man; but there is a breadth of vision in the free man which in the lover we vainly seek. Where there is much bias there must be some narrowness, and love, though added emotion, is subtracted capacity. Boldwood exemplified this to an abnormal degree.<sup>10</sup>

Earlier we saw that Hardy uses this comment to explain Boldwood's behavior in attempting to bribe Troy to leave Bathsheba. The thematic

relevance of the comment is apparent as it shows how different natures react to the impact of strong emotions. Moreover, the principle explained here, that love "though added emotion, is subtracted capacity", foreshadows the outcome of Boldwood's dealing with Troy in this particular situation, as well as preparing the reader for Boldwood's ultimate tragedy. This same comment makes yet another contribution to the novel, this time through its tone. Hardy assumes a tone of objectivity, particularly in the first sentence of the comment. In this way the objective, almost detached, narrator stands as a foil to Boldwood, who at this point is being led to humiliation by his overwrought passion. The difference in the ways Hardy uses his presence in the story can be seen by comparing his cool, almost analytical "We discern . . ." to the lament "Poor Boldwood" mentioned earlier. This one comment, then, has a bearing on several aspects of the novel. Although many of the comments do not have the range of application illustrated here, a close examination of almost any one will show that Hardy uses it for more than one purpose.

As Far From the Madding Crowd progresses, the author's commentary accumulates to make a definite statement on the issue of love and marriage, the central issue in the novel. To understand the function of Hardy's commentary, it is necessary to determine the relationship between this statement and the statement made by the events of the narrative on the same issue. The narrative suggests that neither the unheeding passion which drives Bathsheba to Troy, nor the unnatural desperation of Boldwood's devotion to Bathsheba, is an adequate basis for the happy union of man and wife. By the end of the novel, however, Oak, wiser for his experience and early misfortune, and Bathsheba, mellowed by her suffering, have for each

other a solid lasting love. It has grown out of mutual respect and loyalty, having in it as much friendship as romance. In general terms this is what the events of the novel communicate; and, still in general terms, essentially the same statement is made by Hardy's commentary. Even before Gabriel has proposed to Bathsheba, Hardy has, in his commentary, suggested the possible benefit of this kind of union:

Love is a possible strength in an actual weakness. Marriage transforms a distraction into a support, the power of which should be, and happily often is, in direct proportion to the degree of imbecility it supplants.<sup>11</sup>

And at the end of the story, Hardy, after describing the relationship between Gabriel and Bathsheba, comments that

This good fellowship -- camaraderie -- usually occurring through similarity of pursuits, is unfortunately seldom superadded to love between the sexes, because men and women associate, not in their labours, but in their pleasures merely. Where, however, happy circumstance permits its development, the 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, beside which the passion usually called by the name is evanescent as steam.<sup>12</sup>

Although these disquisitions lack the vividness of the dramatized statement, they bear essentially the same message, and are quite convincing.

An examination of what the narrative and the commentary each has to say on the same issue will further illustrate the concurrence of the two. On the issue of Bathsheba's marriage to Gabriel, both narrative and authorial commentary make a statement. The narrative has shown Bathsheba involved in two relationships, neither adequate to support a permanent union. The narrative has also shown Gabriel to be free from the excesses characterizing Troy and Boldwood, and Bathsheba to be mellowed by her experiences. However, some of the statements about



Bathsheba provide a moment's pause. If it remains true that Bathsheba "had never taken kindly to the idea of marriage in the abstract as did the majority of women she saw about her",<sup>13</sup> and that "she had too much understanding to be entirely governed by her womanliness, and too much womanliness to use her understanding to the best advantage",<sup>14</sup> then their marriage, although certainly of the lasting sort, will not be altogether free from discord. Now in the commentary, Hardy describes the combination of good fellowship and love, which characterizes the relationship between Bathsheba and Gabriel, as "the only love which is strong as death". However, Hardy had no illusions about marriage, as may be seen from the cynical tone of the following comment:

It may have been observed that there is no regular path for getting out of love as there is for getting in. Some people look upon marriage as a short cut that way, but it has been known to fail.<sup>14</sup>

Both the narrative and the commentary indicate that Bathsheba and Gabriel will be happy together. Indeed, Hardy seems to intend that marrying Bathsheba should be the reward for Gabriel's patience and perseverance. However, the final words of the novel show how the issue is left, as Joseph Poorgrass observes:

I wish him joy o' her; though I were once or twice upon saying to-day with holy Hosea, in my scriptural manner, which is my second nature, "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone." But since 'tis as 'tis, why, it might have been worse, and I feel my thanks accordingly.<sup>15</sup>

Although both the narrative and the commentary suggest some reason for Joseph's misgivings, they also provide assurance that the love between Bathsheba and Gabriel will prevail.

Hardy uses his presence in Far From the Madding Crowd for a

number of different purposes, but in most of his intrusions he is directing the reader to make the desired response. The commentary which accompanies the characterization is used sometimes to explain motivation, sometimes to make the characterization more probable, and sometimes to influence the reader's judgment of a particular character. Other comments that are not directly linked with character broaden the scope of the novel by introducing such elements as architecture, Olympian gods, and the beauty and fury of nature. In these intrusions Hardy is present as a personality, and often he seems detached and analytical in contrast to the passion of the characters. The diversity of interest and knowledge indicated by the references and comments introduced extends the horizon of the novel, and encourages the reader to think in terms of time and space far beyond the few seasons and the pastoral setting that border the action of the novel. Hardy has made similar use of his presence in the earlier novels, and in the later novels he continues, with some changes and refinements, to use his presence in much the same way and for many of the same purposes. Each novel, however, is different, and makes different requirements of the author and the reader. Consequently, Hardy varies the nature and emphasis of his intrusions to stress the individual appeal of each of the novels.

In some ways The Mayor of Casterbridge is a different sort of novel from Far From the Madding Crowd, and because of this the authorial intrusions in it have different purposes to serve. To begin with, The Mayor of Casterbridge is a briefer, more concentrated novel than Far From the Madding Crowd, focusing the reader's attention on the man and the town referred to in the title. The novel is dominated by the character of the

protagonist, Michael Henchard, and deals primarily with the causes and consequences of his actions. Other characters in the novel are carefully delineated, but none of them is presented with the depth and thoroughness of Hardy's portrayal of Henchard. Henchard's career, as traced in the narrative, provides examples of several particular qualities of life. One, the irony of human experience, was suggested in Far From the Madding Crowd as well as in other earlier novels; another, the tragic element in human experience, is also present in novels from the earlier part of Hardy's career, particularly in The Return of the Native. In The Mayor of Casterbridge, however, the tragic and the ironic aspects of life are closely linked and presented in a more sustained manner than in any of the earlier novels. Most of Hardy's comments and observations in The Mayor of Casterbridge have to do with the central issues; with the nature of life as it is pictured in the story, and with the character of the protagonist.

In The Mayor of Casterbridge, as in Far From the Madding Crowd, much of the authorial commentary is linked with character delineation, with the characterization of Henchard and Elizabeth-Jane attracting the bulk of the commentary. In the case of Henchard, Hardy has used his presence in the novel to develop and maintain the reader's sympathy for Henchard, for much of the impact of the novel depends on just this reaction. Only insofar as the reader can be brought into sympathy with Henchard will the account of his life and death seem to be of consequence. In Henchard, Hardy has designed a character with whom most readers feel a bond of sympathy. He is not so villainous that he outrages us, nor so virtuous that he wearies us; he is portrayed as one of the many who would be better than he is. Hardy's mistrust of appearances, discussed

in chapter one, is as applicable to a man's character as to any other aspect of life. Hence, in portraying Henchard, Hardy explains aspects of his character which are not outwardly apparent. The complete picture of Henchard includes both the obvious and the obscure, and Hardy uses his presence in the novel to ensure that the reader sees the complete picture. This is true of the other characters in the novel also, but none of them is as complex or as interesting as Henchard; hence none requires as much comment and explanation. Besides Henchard, Elizabeth-Jane is the only character fully delineated. Because her role is essentially passive, much of the time she acts as a foil to more active and passionate characters. Hence, although Hardy often describes her reaction to the developments in the narrative; her behavior seldom requires much explanation or evokes commentary.

The authorial comments accompanying the characterization of Henchard are of various sorts, but most of them have the effect of softening the sternness suggested by his actions. In some cases Hardy's comment makes a direct appeal for the reader's sympathy. The following passage, which accompanies the description of Henchard's melancholy on discovering that Elizabeth-Jane is not his daughter, is an example:

"For the sufferings of that night, engendered by his bitter disappointment, he might well have been pitied. He was like one who had half fainted, and could neither recover nor complete the swoon".<sup>16</sup> Other comments present an explanation of Henchard's behavior. These explain to the reader the cause of a vicious thought or act, so that the reader, by gaining a fuller understanding of Henchard, is enabled partly to forgive him. At one point it occurs to Henchard that he might

discourage Farfrae's interest in Elizabeth-Jane if he were to tell Farfrae that she was the child of no proper marriage. Hardy's comment here softens the selfishness of the thought:

There is an outer chamber of the brain in which thoughts unowned, unsolicited, and of noxious kind, are sometimes allowed to wander for a moment prior to being sent off whence they came. One of these thoughts sailed into Henchard's ken now.<sup>17</sup>

Often a mere word or phrase interjected by Hardy has the same effect. When Lucetta is near death, Henchard is the only person who knows where her husband, Farfrae, may be found; yet he cannot convince anyone of his sincerity. At this point Hardy interjects "But alas for Henchard; he had lost his good name".<sup>18</sup> Here, where Lucetta and Farfrae are most obviously in distress, Hardy, using a phrase with a proverb-like ring, directs the reader's attention and sympathy to Henchard. Although these interjections do not alter the gravity of Henchard's actions, they do show him in a more charitable light. Consequently, he becomes for the reader more an object of pity than of censure.

In his comments on the other characters in the novel, Hardy uses the approach used so often in Far From the Madding Crowd. He links the specific behavior of one of his characters with the general pattern of behavior of others of a similar nature. The following passage combines characterization and commentary as it explains the change in Elizabeth-Jane's behavior when her mother's remarriage to Henchard elevates her social position: "Her triumph was tempered by circumspection; she had still that fieldmouse fear of the coulter of destiny despite fair promise, which is common among the thoughtful who have suffered early from poverty and oppression".<sup>19</sup> In a related manner, Hardy characterizes Farfrae by

excluding him from a particular class of people. Hardy explains Farfrae's reaction to Lucetta's death in the following way:

There are men whose hearts insist upon a dogged fidelity to some image or cause thrown by chance into their keeping, long after their judgment has pronounced it no rarity -- even the reverse, indeed; and without them the band of the worthy is incomplete. But Farfrae was not one of those.<sup>20</sup>

This sort of comment, used occasionally in The Mayor of Casterbridge and frequently in Far From the Madding Crowd, is only once used in conjunction with Henchard. When explaining why Henchard consulted Mr. Fall, the weather-prophet, Hardy observes "He was superstitious -- as headstrong natures often are".<sup>21</sup> Whereas Gabriel, Bathsheba, and Elizabeth-Jane are several times discussed in terms of the general group they represent, Henchard is almost never presented to the reader in this context. Instead, Hardy compares him to particular individuals such as Cain and Samson, or to an animal such as a buffalo, a tiger, or more frequently a lion. The result is that Henchard is more individualized, and his experience, in its depth and intensity, becomes a unique exaggeration rather than an ordinary representation of human experience.

Much of the force of The Mayor of Casterbridge comes from its appeal as tragedy. "The Mayor of Casterbridge approximates, as perhaps no novel before or since has approximated, the experience of tragedy in its olden, in its Sophoclean or Shakespearean sense".<sup>22</sup> Hardy uses his presence in the novel to intensify this experience of tragedy, particularly to characterize Henchard as a tragic hero. To suggest the tragedy in Henchard's experience, Hardy compares him to other heroes of tragic dimensions. Job and Samson and Faust are all named. As Henchard's

experience is associated with theirs, it takes on greater significance and participates in the continuing human tragedy represented by these figures. Besides these references, certain other comments and observations by the author emphasize the element of tragedy in the novel. The events of the narrative show Henchard plagued by the results of his own faults, not by an unjust society. Hardy's famous quotation from Novalis, although it is applied directly to Farfrae, reinforces this interpretation. Hardy explains Farfrae's business success by stating "But most likely luck had little to do with it. Character is fate, said Novalis, and Farfrae's character was just the reverse of Henchard's".<sup>23</sup> Hardy's comments and the references he introduces increase Henchard's proportions as a hero and underscore the tragic aspect of life depicted in the narrative.

The vision of life presented in The Mayor of Casterbridge, as has just been pointed out, emphasizes the tragic side of human experience. Added to this there is an element of irony that plays a major part in the events of the novel, and which Hardy emphasizes in his comments and observations. One of the best examples of Hardy using his presence for this purpose is found when Henchard, immediately after insisting that Elizabeth-Jane change her name from Newson to Henchard, discovers that she is not really his daughter: "This ironical sequence of things angered him like an impish trick from a fellow-creature. Like Prester John's; his table had been spread, and infernal harpies had snatched up the food".<sup>24</sup> Another example shows that the irony exists not only as an accident in the sequence of events, but even in the principles governing these events. Hardy interjects the following comment when explaining why Henchard, after

his misfortunes, could not make another start:

But the ingenious machinery contrived by the Gods for reducing human possibilities of amelioration to a minimum -- which arranges that wisdom to do shall come pari passu with the departure of zest for doing -- stood in the way of all that. He had no wish to make an arena a second time of a world that had become a mere painted scene to him.<sup>25</sup>

Hardy's comment here shows how the tragic and ironic aspects of life have combined to frustrate Henchard. The image of the arena suggests the combative nature of Henchard and of life as Hardy saw it; even the elevated tone used here contributes a feeling of the consequence of the condition described. In the narrative, the irony and tragedy are woven together, forming a basic part of Hardy's vision of life in The Mayor of Casterbridge. His comments and observations call attention to these aspects of life when they turn up in the story, and also suggest their implication in the rest of the novel and beyond.

In The Mayor of Casterbridge, Hardy attempts to portray a complex character and several particular aspects of life. Insofar as he uses his presence in the novel to direct the reader's response to Henchard, and to point out or explain the tragedy or irony in life, the commentary employed is an essential part of the novel. Not all of Hardy's intrusions play so critical a part. When a situation or event suggests it, Hardy goes on to make the appropriate generalization. From some examples of Elizabeth-Jane's modest behavior, Hardy concludes that "To keep in the rear of opportunity in matters of indulgence is as valuable a habit as to keep abreast of opportunity in matters of enterprise".<sup>26</sup> Such observations, although present in The Mayor of Casterbridge, do not turn



up nearly as frequently as in Far From the Madding Crowd. The various forms Hardy's presence takes in The Mayor of Casterbridge tend to concentrate the reader's attention on elements in the novel rather than spread them to other subjects.

In both The Mayor of Casterbridge and Far From the Madding Crowd there are occasional evidences of clumsiness in Hardy's manner of presenting material. These are not the familiar comments or observations of the author, although they do remind the reader of the author's presence. One section of dialogue between Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae in The Mayor of Casterbridge, is presented in the following way:

He. - 'You like walking this way, Miss Henchard - and is it not so?' (uttered in his undulatory accents, and with an appraising, pondering gaze at her).

She. - 'O yes. I have chosen this road latterly. I have no great reason for it.'

He. - 'But that may make a reason for others.'

She (reddening). - 'I don't know that. My reason, however, such that it is, is that I wish to get a glimpse of the sea every day.'<sup>27</sup>

Although the dramatic technique suggests the primness and conventionality of the dialogue, it is so unexpected here that it draws the reader's attention away from what is being said. It is the more disconcerting because it is not maintained through the conversation, as Hardy returns to a conventional rendering of dialogue, without the italics for the speaker's name and without the stage directions. More intrusive are the poetic selections Hardy sometimes inserts in the novels. In Far From the Madding Crowd, the sound of the horse bearing Laban Tall and the news of Boldwood's fate is described as follows:

At last, when they were all weary, the tramp of a horse was heard in the distance --

First dead, as if on turf it trode,  
Then clattering on the village road  
In other place than forth he yode.<sup>28</sup>

Although these lines of poetry do maintain the suspense for a few seconds, they cause an unnecessary interruption, and seem too affected for the situation in the narrative. There are in these two novels, indeed in all of Hardy's novels, occasional lapses in the smooth advance of the story. Although there are not enough of these to damage the novels seriously, they are irritating when they do occur.

In Far From the Madding Crowd, the author's presence is most noticeable in the observations and comments Hardy interjects. Although most of these deal with the main theme of love, the somewhat diffuse nature of the novel provides an opportunity for commentary on a variety of issues. On the other hand, The Mayor of Casterbridge has fewer instances of this sort of comment, and Hardy's presence is most apparent in his explication of the character of Michael Henchard, and in his comments on the tragic and ironic aspects of life. In this case the author's presence plays a more integral part in the novel, and interferes less with the narrative than when its function is primarily to provide extension or reinforcement of themes suggested in the events. The difference in the authorial presence in the two novels parallels the essential differences between the stories. The Mayor of Casterbridge is a briefer more concentrated novel, and Hardy's presence in it makes it an even more intense study; whereas Far From the Madding Crowd has more variety of incident and character, with Hardy's comments stimulating the reader to reflect on the issues raised in the narrative.

## FOOTNOTES (CHAPTER TWO)

- <sup>1</sup>Thomas Hardy, Far From the Madding Crowd (New York, 1968),  
p. 74.
- <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 256.
- <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 169.
- <sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 211.
- <sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 158.
- <sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 51.
- <sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 144.
- <sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 139.
- <sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 148.
- <sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 256.
- <sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 34.
- <sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 439.
- <sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 306.
- <sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 43.
- <sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 445.
- <sup>16</sup>Thomas Hardy, The Mayor of Casterbridge (New York, 1968), p. 445.
- <sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 129.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 307.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 186.

<sup>22</sup>John Paterson, "The Mayor of Casterbridge as Tragedy", Victorian Studies, III (December, 1959), p. 172.

<sup>23</sup>Thomas Hardy, The Mayor of Casterbridge (New York, 1968), p. 117.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 319.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 305.

<sup>28</sup>Thomas Hardy, Far From the Madding Crowd (New York, 1968), p.

### CHAPTER THREE

More than any other single work Tess of the d'Urbervilles made Hardy's reputation as a novelist. It is probably the best known of Hardy's novels, and is considered by many the high point of his achievement in fiction. Yet in many ways it is surprising that Tess is as fine a novel as it is. The plot is a common one, found in various forms in folk tales and legends. In it, an innocent, beautiful peasant girl is forced by the poverty of her family to make her own way in the world. She is seduced by the rakish son of her employer, and spends the rest of her life enduring the consequences of this seduction. Neither of the men in Tess's life develops much individuality. The villain, Alec d'Urberville, is too much of a stage villain, and Tess's husband, Angel, although not as stereotyped as Alec, is something of a conventional prude. Of these rather commonplace ingredients Hardy makes a great novel. In Tess, the melodramatic events in the life of a milkmaid become compellingly significant; the pathetic is raised to the level of the tragic; misfortunes and accidents in Tess's career become symptoms of cosmic disorder, and narrow-mindedness becomes an indictment of an unjust society.

In the previous chapter it was argued that the use Hardy makes of his presence in a novel is determined by aspects of that particular novel and by the response Hardy hopes it will evoke. In Tess, Hardy uses his presence to channel the reader's responses to the characters and events,

increasing their dimensions and making Tess the powerful novel it is.

Of course, Hardy's presence alone does not make a great novel of Tess, but it does make an important contribution. There is in Tess a greater frequency of authorial commentary than in any of Hardy's other novels. Moreover, the tone Hardy assumes in his comments in Tess is different from that used in the earlier novels; the reflective tone so often exhibited in the other works has, in Tess, changed to one of indignation, even revolt. The number and the tone of the comments make the reader aware of the author's conviction and sincerity, and indicate the seriousness of his intention.

If Tess is to have the impact on the reader Hardy desired, the reader must be convinced that the characters in the novel are in themselves significant. This is, of course, particularly true of Tess herself, the more so because of her inauspicious background and social position. To prepare the reader to accept a simple country girl as a tragic heroine, Hardy comments on the dignity of the country folk, and on the variety and intensity of their lives. This is one of Hardy's favorite themes, one that is developed in varying degrees in such novels as Far From the Madding Crowd and The Woodlanders. In Tess, although this theme is present in the events of the developing narrative as well as in the author's comments, Hardy's stand is most obvious when he speaks in his own voice; for example when he states that

Mary besides Angel have learnt that the magnitude of lives is not as to their external displacement, but as to their subjective experiences. The impressionable peasant leads a larger, fuller, more dramatic life than the pachydermatous king.<sup>1</sup>

Hardy even insists that any advantage in beauty that the ladies of social refinement might claim is really the product of "Art":

A peasant girl but very moderately prepossessing to the casual observer in her simple condition and attire, will bloom as an amazing beauty if clothed as a woman of fashion with the aids that Art can render; while the beauty of the midnight crush would often cut but a sorry figure if placed inside the field-woman's wrapper upon a monotonous acreage of turnips on a dull day.<sup>2</sup>

This comment opens the whole question of appearances, suggesting that true beauty, like true morality, is often misjudged by conventional attitudes. In these cases, Hardy has used his own voice to reinforce the statement made by the narrative, to convince the reader that a lower social standing should not prevent the characters from developing an interesting and complex individuality.

Clare's stay at Talbothay's Dairy dispels his prejudice against the country folk, and it is enlightenment in this area which provides the narrative base from which Hardy argues for the dignity of the rustics. What Angel learns becomes part of Hardy's argument; for example, Angel's experience

had taught him how much less was the intrinsic difference between the good and wise woman of one social stratum, and the good and wise woman of another social stratum, than between the good and bad, the wise and foolish, of the same stratum or class.<sup>3</sup>

From Tess's simply expressed but deeply felt emotions Angel learned that "what are called advanced ideas are really in great part but the latest fashion in definition -- a more accurate expression, by words in logic and ism, of sensations which men and women have vaguely grasped for centuries".<sup>4</sup> Here, Hardy's views are smoothly incorporated into the development of

Angel's character and the events of the narrative. Although any sensitive reader would recognize that Hardy approved of the change in Angel, the realization he comes to is still a necessary part of the developing plot, since this alteration must take place before Angel can even consider marrying Tess.

This account of Angel's broadening outlook is reminiscent of Hardy's essay "The Dorsetshire Labourer", written eight years before Tess. In fact, in the novel Hardy has copied verbatim the section from that essay in which he condemns the stereotyped misconception of the farm labourer, nicknamed Hodge. In this passage Hardy explains that such a figure cannot be found, that

He has been disintegrated into a number of varied fellow-creatures -- beings of many minds, beings infinite in difference; some happy, many serene, a few depressed, one here and there bright even to genius, some stupid, others wanton, others austere; some mutely Miltonic, some potentially Cromwellian; into men who had private views of each other, as he [Angel] had of his friends; who could applaud or condemn each other, amuse or sadden themselves by the contemplation of each other's foibles or vices; men every one of whom walked in his own individual way the road to dusty death.<sup>5</sup>

The expository nature of this paragraph is partially disguised by its natural development from the situation in the narrative. Still, the passage is clearly another part of Hardy's attempt to explain away any prejudices the reader might have against unsophisticated country folk. The complex structure of the sentence, and Hardy's use of balance and parallelism suggest the rhetorical purpose. Moreover, many readers would recognize in the passage an echo of Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard", and for them the sentiment of that poem reinforces Hardy's argument.<sup>6</sup> In this case, Hardy has used his presence



in the novel to make the point that the quality of the experiences of the conventional farm-folk is not inferior to that of the more sophisticated. If the reader accepts this, then the characters and events of the novel can bear the significance Hardy hopes they will carry.

Hardy achieves a similar result by showing the reader that the humble and the great bear the same relationship to the universe. Hardy's account of Tess's first view of the dairy at Talbothay's, and his comment on this scene provide an example:

. . . the sun, lowering itself behind this patient row, threw their shadows accurately inwards on the wall. Thus it threw shadows of these obscure and homely every evening with as much care over every contour as if it had been the profile of a Court beauty on a palace wall; copied them as diligently as it had copied Olympian shapes on marble façades long ago, or the outline of Alexander, Caesar, and the Pharaohs.<sup>7</sup>

Hardy's observations here show the indifference of the cosmos to the power and achievement of men, suggesting some of the vanity of man's endeavours and linking the humblest labourer and the proudest conqueror in their mortality. Such comments reduce the exclusiveness of the traditionally heroic, helping the reader to see in the uncultivated the potential for significant experience.

What Hardy does for the country-folk as a class, he also does for Tess as an individual. Some aspects of the characterization of Tess present her strong sensitivity without interrupting the narrative. During one of his first conversations with Tess, Angel Clare recognizes that "she was expressing in her own native phrases -- assisted a little by her Sixth Standard training -- feelings which might almost have been called those of the age -- the ache of modernism".<sup>8</sup> In the next paragraph, as Hardy

goes on to comment on these "feelings", he further characterizes Tess as an extraordinary girl:

Still, it was strange that they should have come to her while so young; more than strange; it was impressive, interesting, pathetic. Not guessing the cause, there was nothing to remind Angel that experience is as to intensity, and not as to duration. Tess's passing corporeal blight had been her mental harvest.<sup>9</sup>

Also, by linking Tess's thoughts with those of such thinkers as Jeremy Taylor and Saint Augustine, Hardy shows that she is sensitive to the same issues that have haunted the best minds of history. At the end of "Phase the Second", for example, Hardy says of Tess that "She had Jeremy Taylor's thought that some time in the future those who had known her would say: 'It is the -th, the day that poor Tess Durbeyfield died'; and there would be nothing singular to their minds in the statement".<sup>10</sup> Such comments suggest that Tess has thoughts and emotions unusual for one of her age and station in life.

In one sense, what happens to Tess is peculiar to her and to her place in society; however, Hardy often points out that her experiences are shared by much of humanity. Inasmuch as Tess's experiences link her with the whole race, or in some cases the female part of it, they are not inferior to the experiences of the more worldly and sophisticated. Often Hardy intrudes in the novel to direct the reader to think of Tess's experiences as representative. In describing Tess's attitude towards her new way of life at Talbothay's, Hardy states that "The irresistible, universal, automatic tendency to find sweet pleasure somewhere, which pervades all life, from the meanest to the highest, had at length mastered Tess",<sup>11</sup> and soon after reinforces this idea with another observation:

"Let the truth be told --- women do as a rule live through such humiliations, and regain their spirits, and again look about them with an interested eye".<sup>12</sup> On another occasion, when contemplating the results of Tess's experience with Alec at Trantridge poultry-farm, Hardy makes the following observation:

But it had not been in Tess's power -- nor is it in anybody's power -- to feel the whole truth of golden opinions while it is possible to profit by them. She -- and how many more -- might have ironically said to God with Saint Augustine:  
'Thou hast counselled a better course than Thou has permitted.'<sup>13</sup>

Throughout the novel, Hardy uses his presence to generalize Tess's experiences, to point out that her misfortunes do represent the afflictions which in most cases accompany the human condition. Hardy has shown that Tess, as a member of the rural working class and as an individual, is capable of intensely human and varied experiences which are, in Hardy's opinion, rich enough to be the subject of a tragic novel.

In Hardy's comments on the nature and purposes of fiction, discussed in chapter one, he expressed the hope that his works would provide "mental enlargement" by showing the reader a true picture of life. In Tess, this vision of life is presented primarily in the description of the heroine's experiences, which the reader is directed to consider as representative. Often Hardy goes one step further, specifying the characteristics of life exemplified in his narrative. Time and again throughout the novel, Hardy, in bitter tones, tells the reader that life is a painful experience. After describing the plight of the Durbeyfield children, dependent on improvident parents for their well-being, Hardy states that "Some people would like to know whence the poet whose philosophy is in these days deemed as profound and trustworthy as his song is breezy and pure, gets

his authority for speaking of 'Nature's holy plan'.<sup>14</sup> Frequently in the novel Hardy interjects such observations on the nature of human experience:

In the ill-judged execution of the well-judged plan of things the call seldom produces the comer, the man to love rarely coincides with the hour for loving. Nature does not often say 'See!' to her poor creature at a time when seeing can lead to happy doing; or reply 'Here!' to a body's cry of 'Where?' till the hide-and-seek has become an irksome, outworn game.<sup>15</sup>

Men are too often harsh with women they love or have loved; women with men. And yet these harshnesses are tenderness itself when compared with the universal harshness out of which they grow; the harshness of the position towards the temperament, of the means towards the aims, of to-day towards yesterday, of hereafter towards to-day.<sup>16</sup>

The bitterness of Hardy's tone, almost as much as the content of the comments, suggests the calamitous nature of life represented by Tess's misfortunes.

As Hardy draws the reader's attention to the unhappy conditions that plague life on this "blighted star", it is natural that the reader should look for some explanation of this condition in the account of Tess's misfortunes. Both the pathos of the events and the authorial comments on the events create in the reader a desire to know why such things happen. In his comments and observations Hardy presents several possible answers to the questioning reader. Many times in the novel, Hardy suggests that an inauspicious course of events has in some way been directed by fate. Early in the novel he says of Tess that "She had hoped to be a teacher at the school, but the fates seemed to decide otherwise", and upon her arrival at Flintcomb-Ash he states that "There seemed to be no help for it; hither she was doomed to come". In other situations Hardy accuses society of intensifying Tess's suffering. In the following discussion he speculates on what might be Tess's situation in the absence

of social censure:

Moreover, alone in a desert island would she have been wretched at what had happened to her? Not greatly. If she could have been just created, to discover herself as a spouseless mother, with no experience of life except as the parent of a nameless child, would the position have caused her to despair? No, she would have taken it calmly, and found pleasure therein. Most of her misery had been generated by her conventional aspect, and not by her innate sensations.<sup>17</sup>

Shortly after this Hardy again suggests society's part in causing Tess's distress: "But for the world's opinion these experiences would have been simply a liberal education". Of course, Hardy places a measure of the responsibility at the feet of the individual concerned. When Tess fails to carry through her plan to petition Angel's parents for help, Hardy observes that "She went her way without knowing that the greatest misfortune of her life was this feminine loss of courage at the last and critical moment". In some comments, Hardy, instead of attempting to explain the reason for suffering, mentions the inadequacy of religion to provide an explanation or a remedy for human tribulation. When Tess is seduced by Alec, Hardy comments

But, might some say, where was Tess's guardian angel? where was the providence of her simple faith? Perhaps, like that other god of whom the ironical Tishbite spoke, he was talking, or he was pursuing, or he was in a journey, or he was sleeping and not to be awakened.<sup>18</sup>

The bitterness of the question and the irony of the answer show how ineffectual the assurances provided by religion seem to Hardy. In all of these comments and observations Hardy suggests, and sometimes rejects, various explanations for the painful nature of life. These comments prompt the reader to apply the same questioning attitude as that adopted

by the narrator.

On some occasions Hardy seems self-conscious about his presence in the narrative. The comments made at such times are often presented not as the author's own, but as those of a certain portion of the population which Hardy refers to as "some people". These comments are introduced: "Some people would like to know . . .", or "Might not some say . . .", or "Some people might have cried . . .". Once, when speaking of Angel Clare, Hardy even denies that the opinion attributed to the vague "some" is the same as his own: "Some might risk the odd paradox that with more animalism he would have been the nobler man. We do not say it".<sup>19</sup> In spite of Hardy's denial, the opinion expressed here and the opinions expressed in other comments so introduced are in harmony with the general philosophy he presents in the novel. Opinions introduced this way would seem to come from some objective source outside the novel, hence would seem free from any prejudices the narrator might have about characters and situations of his own inventions. Moreover, by attributing such ideas as the possibility of Angel being ennobled by more "animalism" to this vague "some", Hardy may be attempting to protect himself from the outraged reaction of "respectable" readers. In these cases, Hardy suggests a particular response to the reader without committing himself to it. In this way the question is left open; the reader cannot ignore the suggested opinion, yet is more likely to make his own response than he would be if the opinion were expressed as the author's conviction. Nevertheless, it seems a clumsy contrivance when compared to the smooth way many of Hardy's comments are incorporated into the novel.

In a discussion of the effect of Hardy's intrusions it is necessary to consider the placing of these intrusions in the narrative. In some cases the timing of an intrusion makes an important contribution. When Tess first meets Alec, Hardy interjects two paragraphs of commentary emphasizing the importance of this meeting, and suggests its fateful consequences in terms of "anxieties, disappointments, shocks, catastrophes, and passing-strange destinies".<sup>20</sup> In this situation Hardy does not wait for a natural break in the narrative flow, but interjects his comment right at the time of the event; hence the comment is most effective in emphasizing that particular event. On the other hand, commentary is often found at natural breaks in the story, such as at the beginning or the end of one of the phases or movements in which the book is written. In fact, the first three phases conclude with comments by the author. At the end of phase one, entitled "The Maiden", instead of a description of the seduction, the reader finds a discussion in indignant tones of the injustice of it. Here Hardy is able to avoid a very delicate part of the narrative, and at the same time suggest a response to this important event. In the final sentence of his comment Hardy speaks in general terms of the significance of what has happened to Tess: "An immeasurable social chasm was to divide our heroine's personality thereafter from that previous self of hers who stepped from her mother's door to try her fortune at Trantridge poultry-farm".<sup>21</sup> Similarly, Hardy is present at the end of phase two. In the final chapter of the second phase Hardy describes Tess's reactions to her experiences and adds a good deal of his own commentary, ending the chapter and that phase with an explanation of Tess's "invincible

instinct towards self-delight". Phase three, like phase one, ends with a comment on the importance of what has just transpired and a hint as to what will follow: ". . . something had occurred which changed the pivot of the universe for their two natures; . . . A veil had been whisked aside; the tract of each one's outlook was to have a new horizon thenceforward -- for a short time or for a long".<sup>22</sup> In such instances Hardy takes advantage of a natural break in the narrative to talk to the reader about what has happened and what is about to happen, and to give the reader himself a chance to reflect. The comments may also help to bridge a time gap, as they do at the end of phase one when about three months pass before the narrative is resumed. They also suggest that the phases are all linked together in an almost inevitable chain of events. Comments pointing out the importance of events and suggesting their consequences appear more frequently in the first part of the novel, as Hardy directs the reader's attention to those early events that shape Tess's destiny. In choosing the place to interject a comment, Hardy controls the pace of the novel, and can use the pause in the narrative for emphasis or explication, or for any of the other uses he makes of his commentary. In this way, the timing of the intrusions, as well as their content, is used by Hardy to direct the reader's responses to the various elements of the novel.

Tess makes its greatest impact on the reader's emotions; still, there are certain elements in the novel which make a strong appeal to the reader's mind. Although the themes presented in the narrative suggest certain philosophic questions, it is chiefly Hardy's editorial comments



that direct the reader to make a thoughtful response, and maintain the reflective tone of the novel. These comments form a context for the events of the story, and as the reader follows the action of the plot, he naturally thinks of the events in terms of the concepts provided by the authorial comments and observations. Hardy submits the following as part of his discussion of why Tess should attract Alec rather than a more suitable lover:

We may wonder whether at the acme and summit of the human progress these anachronisms will be corrected by a finer intuition, a closer interaction of the social machinery than that which now jolts us round and along; but such completeness is not to be prophesied, or even conceived as possible.<sup>23</sup>

Both the questioning manner of the presentation and the speculative, abstract nature of what is said contribute to the reflective tone of the novel.

Hardy's references to the beliefs of various poets and thinkers also encourage the reader to think and question. Chapter fifteen begins with just such a reference and Hardy's comment on it: "'By experience,' says Roger Ascham, 'we find out a short way by a long wandering'. Not seldom that long wandering unfits us for further travel, and of what use is our experience to us then?"<sup>24</sup> Several times in Tess Hardy follows this pattern, citing an "authority" only to dismiss it when it is disproved by the events of the novel, which he offers as a true representation of life.

Hardy provides another example in his description of Tess's distress:

. . . to Tess, as to not a few millions of others, there was ghastly satire in the poet's lines --

Not in utter nakedness

But trailing clouds of glory do we come.

To her and her like, birth itself was an ordeal of degrading personal compulsion, whose gratuitousness nothing in the result seemed to justify, and at best could only palliate.<sup>25</sup>

By suggesting that the poet's vision is mocked by the experience of millions of people, Hardy would certainly outrage some of his readers. In such comments, Hardy challenges popularly held opinions and beliefs, and intentionally provokes controversy. In these comments, in the references he introduces, in choosing expressions like "an unsympathetic First Cause", and even in the angry or reflective tone of his voice, Hardy goads his readers into thinking seriously about the issues discussed.

In his preface to the 1892 edition of Tess, Hardy wrote: "Let me repeat that a novel is an impression, not an argument".<sup>26</sup> If we accept this, then we should not look for the consistency and precision of a logical argument in the statement made by the novel. An impression is based more on inspiration and insight than on logical reasoning; hence it would be more appropriate to ask whether Hardy's observations have the conviction of inspiration, than whether they form a consistent, logical thesis. This approach, however, is in some ways unsatisfactory. The authorial interest in philosophic issues stimulates the reader's intellectual faculties, and encourages him to examine what he reads, to determine whether it does make any sense or order of the issues treated. Moreover, the reader is moved by the pathos of Tess's suffering to look for a reason or an explanation of why this should be. Hardy's discussion of individual responsibility, social responsibility, and the influence of fate does not provide an adequate answer, and sometimes even seems contradictory. The reader finds himself in the same quandary that prompts Tess to say to Angel: "I shouldn't mind learning why --- why the sun do shine on the just and the unjust alike. But that's what

books will not tell me".<sup>27</sup> That Hardy does not provide answers for all the questions raised in the narrative and in the commentary, may seem frustrating for the reader inasmuch as the thoughtful tone of so much of the novel might lead him to expect some definite statement on the issues raised. On the other hand, even without presenting definite answers to these questions, Hardy probably succeeds in presenting to the reader "a lesson in living". Moreover, some of these questions are unanswerable, and this is the reason for much of the bitterness and sadness that is evident in the content and tone of Hardy's comments.

The reader's attempts to find some order or pattern in Hardy's comments in *Tess* are further frustrated by the way Hardy uses certain terms. We would not, in a novel, expect to find words like "fate" or "nature" defined, but we would expect that their meaning should be made clear by their context. One of the most troublesome terms Hardy uses in *Tess* is "nature". On two occasions Hardy speaks of the unhappiness resulting from the love the other milk-maids, Marian, Izz, and Retty, had for Angel. He says that "They writhed feverishly under the oppressiveness of an emotion thrust on them by cruel Nature's law",<sup>28</sup> and that "they were simple and innocent girls on whom the unhappiness of unrequited love had fallen; they had deserved better at the hands of Fate".<sup>29</sup> It seems that both "Fate" and "Nature's law" are being held responsible for the same suffering, and we wonder whether Hardy is using two different terms to refer to the same force. This interpretation is reinforced when Hardy states that "Nature does not often say 'See!' to her poor creatures at a time when seeing can lead to happy doing",<sup>30</sup>

for he goes on to explain this unhappy situation in terms of the "crass obtuseness" and the "maladroit delays" of events, terms that have a fatalistic ring. When Hardy refers to "shameless Nature" or "the vulpine-slyness of Dame Nature", the force he is describing is clearly antagonistic; yet its role is not always the same. In explaining Tess's low spirits, Hardy states that they were "based on nothing more tangible than a sense of condemnation under an arbitrary law of society which had no foundation in Nature".<sup>31</sup> Nor is this the only comment in the novel which suggests that much human suffering is caused by the disparity between the rules of society and the laws of nature. In these situations, it is not the laws of nature, but the rules of society which are being blamed for the suffering. Because, in Hardy's comments, nature seems at one point indifferent, almost antagonistic, and at another sympathetic to Tess's search for happiness, it is that much more difficult for the reader to make sense of the message presented in the author's intrusions. This criticism does not, of course, destroy the novel; yet, it cannot be dismissed entirely on the grounds that Tess is a work of fiction, and hence not subject to the rules governing logical arguments. The authorial interest in, and discussion of the concepts and principles illustrated in the story expose the novel to criticism which might otherwise be invalid.

In spite of this weakness Tess is a great novel, and Hardy's presence contributes to its greatness. In the commentary, the observations, and the other evidences of the author's presence, the reader sees a reflection of Hardy's personality. In Tess, Hardy shows himself to have a philosophic turn of mind plus considerable erudition. In the space

of one page at the beginning of chapter fifteen, he quotes Roger Ascham, Saint Augustine, and Jeremy Taylor. Many of his comments reflect a compassionate nature which can, however, be aroused to indignation or bitterness by the unpleasant truth he has to tell. For the most part, the reader feels himself under the guidance of one who is in touch with the more grievous elements of life, one who sees clearly the complexity and the tragedy of the human condition, and who presents his vision in a compassionate, sympathetic manner. The emotional impact of the narrative makes the issues more significant and gives them life; Hardy uses his presence to direct the reader's attitude towards what is presented, to develop and explore the issues, and to relate the events to the larger realm of human experience. In this way Hardy's presence makes reading the novel a richer experience, an experience which provides just the sort of "mental enlargement" Hardy always attempts to supply.

## FOOTNOTES (CHAPTER THREE)

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d'Urbervilles (New York, 1967), p. 178.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 251.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 190.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 147.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 140.

<sup>6</sup>Lines 56-60 in particular are echoed in Hardy's disquisition.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 126

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 147.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 147.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 124.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 125.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 384.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 110.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 277.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 91.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 176.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 401.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., Preface, VII.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 149.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 171.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 254.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 315.

## CHAPTER FOUR

When Jude the Obscure was published in 1895, the reading public was familiar with Hardy's fatalism and his tragic vision of life. Moreover, in Tess, they had seen him as a critic of many of the conventional aspects of society. Nonetheless, Jude generated a violent response from readers and critics alike. More than anything else, it was Hardy's frank treatment of the sexual issues in the story that caused the storm, and prompted critics to condemn its "immorality" and "coarseness". This seems ironic now, as most current readers would probably agree with Hardy's own assessment, that Jude "makes for morality more than any other book I have written".<sup>1</sup> Jude "makes for morality" by telling the story of the conflict between sensitive, passionate natures and the cruelty of conventional institutions. Many of the pleasanter elements, such as the quaint rustic characters and the realistic descriptions of landscape and customs, which lent charm and vitality to Hardy's other novels, even to the tragic Tess, are not to be found in Jude. Also, the plot is developed without much of the suspense, the unraveling of mystery, and the dramatic revelation that characterize his other novels. Jude is, as Hardy states in the preface to the first edition, an account of "a deadly war waged between flesh and spirit".<sup>2</sup>

In Tess, Hardy speaks out against narrow morality, but primarily he attempts to present a view of life which would provide mental enlargement, or a lesson in life. In Jude, however, Hardy aims more specifically,



condemning particular abuses. To do this he often uses elements essential to the narrative: the plot, the characters, the dialogue. Jude is, in fact, close to being an expository essay whose argument is developed through the traditional techniques of fiction. It is a tribute to Hardy's skill as a novelist that Jude is as interesting and as artistic a novel as it is, considering the polemical load he asks it to carry. There seems little doubt that, in spite of Hardy's denials, he intended that Jude should outrage many of his readers, for it dealt with issues that were already made controversial by the production of Ibsen's plays in England and by the famous Parnell case. Jude is set apart from Hardy's other novels both by the degree of its concern with topical social issues, and by its use of the narrative elements of the novel to present its statement on these issues.

Although the plot, characters and dialogue of Jude are used by Hardy to express various ideas, he continues to express himself in the point-blank manner of interjected comments and observations. In these intrusions, he may discuss one of the themes of the novel, comment on the direction or development of the plot, explain the behavior of a character, or use his presence in any of the ways already illustrated from other novels. For example, Hardy makes the following comment on the initial frustration felt by young Jude in his studying: "Somebody might have come along that way who would have asked him his trouble, and might have cheered him by saying that his notions were further advanced than those of his grammarian. But nobody did come, because nobody does . . ."<sup>3</sup>

The gloomy finality of the last statement suggests the tragic outcome of

Jude's aspirations even more vividly than Hardy's early comments in Tess foreshadow Tess's calamities. Later in the novel, when Jude first kisses Sue, Hardy indicates the importance of the event, stating "The kiss was the turning point in Jude's career".<sup>4</sup> And when Jude looks for work in a Christminster stone-mason's yard, Hardy makes this observation about the stones that lay in the yard:

These were the ideas in modern prose which the lichened colleges presented in old poetry. Even some of those antiques might have been called prose when they were new. They had done nothing but wait, and had become poetical. How easy to the smallest building; how impossible to most men.<sup>5</sup>

Here Hardy introduces what he calls "the modern vice of unrest" by using the Christminster buildings as a foil for the emotional turmoil of Jude. In these passages and in others like them, Hardy is using his presence in Jude in the same manner and for the same purposes as in the other novels.

In spite of this similarity, there are several aspects of Hardy's intrusions in Jude that are noteworthy, the first having to do with his comments on Sue. In the other novels Hardy's comments on the thoughts or actions of a character often generalize the specific behavior of the characters, making the action seem more plausible, and adding to its significance by broadening its application. In this way, Bathsheba becomes a representative of all strong-willed women; Gabriel Oak behaves like all patient men; and Tess's sorrows are those of a whole class of society; often, Hardy suggests, of all humanity. Similarly, Jude is described as being "like all newcomers",<sup>6</sup> or "like enthusiasts in general".<sup>7</sup> Sue, however, is never referred to in this way; at least, not in the first part of the novel. Her behavior and her feelings are hers alone until Hardy

reaches the sixth and final phase of his account. It is only when Sue has rejected her freedom of thought and emotion and become conventional, that Hardy generalizes her behavior. An example of this occurs when Sue makes an incomplete confession to Phillotson of her final meeting with Jude:

"She had been intending to say: 'I called him my darling love'. But, as a contrite woman always keeps back a little, that portion of the scene remained untold".<sup>8</sup> Earlier in the novel, when Sue was first married to Phillotson, she made a similar incomplete confession of indiscretions she committed with Jude. On this occasion, although Hardy draws the reader's attention to the omission in her confession, he says nothing to generalize her behavior. In this way Hardy does not compromise his characterization of Sue as a highly individual and quite unusual person; and the generalization, when it comes, emphasizes her change to conventionality.

In his novels, Hardy often uses his presence to reinforce the various themes presented in the narrative. Since, in Jude, there are four weddings, two divorces, and two abortive attempts to marry, it is not surprising that many of Hardy's interjected comments have to do with marriage and its effects on those involved. In Far From the Madding Crowd, Hardy included many comments and observations on a similar theme, but with the difference that these were more often about courting and flirting and the general behavior of men and women towards each other; whereas in Jude, Hardy comments more directly on the contract and institution of marriage. Moreover, the comments in Far From the Madding Crowd are usually not as bitter in tone as those in Jude. For example, in Jude, after reporting the marriage vows taken by Arabella and Jude,

Hardy, with wry irony, observes that "What was as remarkable as the undertaking itself was the fact that nobody seemed at all surprised at what they swore".<sup>9</sup> Later in the novel, Hardy describes Arabella and Mr. Cartlett at the Wessex Agricultural Show in the following manner: "And they left the tent together, this pot-bellied man and florid woman, in the anti-pathetic, recriminatory mood of the average husband and wife of Christendom".<sup>10</sup> The bitterness and cynicism of these remarks suggest the attitude to matrimony Hardy presents in Jude, and are reminiscent of the tone of some of his severest comments in Tess. These intrusions form a continuous thread of commentary, keeping their theme before the reader and sustaining a cynical tone.

Even without these intrusions, the reader would notice the issues presented and the moral questions arising from the narrative. The instructive purpose of the novel is suggested by a note entered in Hardy's journal a few years prior to the publication of Jude: "April 28. A short story of a young man --- 'who could not go to Oxford' --- His struggles and ultimate failure. Suicide. There is something in this the world ought to be shown, and I am the one to show it to them".<sup>11</sup> Inasmuch as this is the original idea that grew into Jude, it is apparent that Hardy's purpose is at least partly didactic. Moreover, in the postscript to his preface, Hardy uses the term "fable" to describe Jude, further indicating its exemplary nature. As already mentioned, even the narrative elements of the novel serve the instructive purpose, and as they do so, the reader becomes aware of the author's presence in them. For example, often the dialogue between Sue and Jude becomes little more than a vehicle by which Hardy's ideas are presented to the reader. The conclusion Jude draws at

the end of a long speech on parenthood will serve as an example: "That excessive regard of parents for their own children, and their dislike of other people's, is, like class feeling, patriotism, save-your-own-soulism, and other virtues, a mean exclusiveness at bottom".<sup>12</sup> Hardy uses the following speech, one of Sue's many on the subject of marriage, to further debate a key issue:

If the marriage ceremony consisted in an oath and signed contract between the parties to cease loving from that day forward, in consideration of personal possession being given, and to avoid each other's society as much as possible in public, there would be more loving couples than there are now.<sup>13</sup>

Sue's speech here expresses the same cynicism and uses the same syntax as the comments Hardy himself interjects. As the voice of the narrator merges with the voices of the characters, it loses some of the distinctiveness which Hardy uses in other novels as a foil to the voices of the characters. This, of course, allows Hardy to place more emphasis on the ideas he is dealing with, but, unfortunately, at the expense of characterization. Speeches such as the one cited above, and there are many in *Jude*, lack the spontaneity of natural dialogue. They are so weighted with polemics, and their syntax is so formal that the reader feels he is listening to a lecture rather than a conversation.

The reader becomes even more aware of Hardy's polemics in the dialogue when the narrative situation does not require the clarification or elaboration provided in the speeches. Occasionally such speeches occur where they are not only unnecessary, but even improbable. In the final phase of the novel, Jude, with his family, returns to Christminster. The fact that he does return with his early dreams shattered makes its own

statement on his course of action. But Hardy adds to this the unlikely development of Jude, with a pregnant wife and three children, addressing a long speech to a crowd of people who are standing in the rain to watch the academic procession. Jude's speech here continues for a page and a half, with only two brief interruptions. The first sentence from three of the paragraphs of the speech will show the general tone and content of what he has to say:

It is a difficult question, my friends, for any young man -- that question I have to grapple with, and which thousands are weighing at the present moment in these uprising times -- whether to follow uncritically the track he finds himself in, without considering his aptness for it, or to consider what his aptness or bent may be, and reshape his course accordingly.

.....  
However it was my poverty and not my will that consented to be beaten . . . .

.....  
I may do some good before I am dead -- be a sort of success as a frightful example of what not to do; and so illustrate a moral story.<sup>14</sup>

Here Jude is commenting on his own career in much the same way Hardy himself often comments on the history of some other character. At one point, Jude is even detached enough to imagine that he might "illustrate a moral story". Although it is natural that Jude's return to Christminster should prompt him to reflect upon the direction of his life, the length and tone of his discourse as well as its narrative context make it difficult to accept as a natural development in the story. However, what Jude says provides an appropriate drawing together of themes before the final phase of the action. At this point, and in this novel, it is more important to Hardy that the speech should fit the thematic context than that it should seem a convincing narrative development.

The more Hardy uses the dialogue of the characters to communicate his themes, the less the characters seem to exist as characters in their own right. Although Sue, Jude, and Phillotson suffer from this treatment in varying degrees throughout the novel, it is Father Time whose individuality is most inhibited by the role he is required to play. So often when he speaks, he merely echoes ideas and tones that seem as much Hardy's as his own. When Sue first meets him, she asks whether she and Jude look like his father and mother. He answers "Well, yes; 'cept he seems fond of you, and you of him".<sup>15</sup> Later at the flower show, he comments "I should like the flowers very much, if I didn't keep on thinking they'd be all withered in a few days".<sup>16</sup> These comments convey ideas that Hardy has expressed in many novels and in various ways, often in his own voice; in Jude, Father Time is one more method Hardy employs to communicate his ideas.

Hardy further evidences his presence in Jude in the many quotations he introduces. Most noticeable are those that he selects to introduce each of the six parts of the novel. These eight quotations, (he uses two for "Part Second" and "Part Sixth",) come from such diverse sources as Ovid, Browning, and the Apocrypha. Some of these introduce the general issue treated in that part, such as the following quotation introducing "Part First": "Yea, many there be that have run out of their wits for women, and become servants for their sakes. Many also have perished, have erred, and sinned, for women. . . . O ye men, how can it be but women should be strong, seeing they do thus? --- ESDRAS".<sup>17</sup> This foreboding prelude to "Part First" introduces an issue that is the basis of Jude's involvement with Arabella and which remains important throughout the novel. The

quotation introducing "Part Fifth" points to the basic conflict in the novel, the conflict between flesh and spirit: "Thy aerial part, and all the fiery parts which are mingled in thee, though by nature they have an upward tendency, still in obedience to disposition of the universe they are overpowered here in the compound mass the body. M. ANTONINUS (Long)".<sup>18</sup> These references are, like Hardy's own comments, a way of channeling the reader's attention. Since most of them deal with the issues and themes developed in the novel, they direct the reader to think of the events in such terms. By quoting such writers as Milton, Ovid, and Sappho, Hardy increases the significance of the issues discussed, and suggests that they are general truths of life transcending Jude's historical moment.

Besides these introductory quotations, quoted material is often introduced into the body of the novel. Hardy uses such references to endorse a stated opinion, to enrich description, or to present an objective voice. For instance, in describing the landscape about Shaston, Hardy quotes the poetry of Drayton and William Barnes. More often the quoted material is incorporated into the dialogue, as Sue and Jude in particular frequently season their speech with quotations. Much of Sue's behavior is controversial, and as she discusses and defends her actions, she sometimes cites authorities. This further reveals her intellectual approach to issues that arise, and suggests that such unconventional behavior may be defensible. These quotations also tend to formalize the dialogue and emphasize its rhetorical purpose, as may be seen in Sue's quotation from J. S. Mill: "Sue continued: She or he, 'who lets the world, or his own portion of it, choose his plan of life for him, has no need of any faculty than the ape-like one of imitation'".<sup>19</sup> Some of



the quotations are more disruptive, and although ostensibly introduced by one of the characters, they stand apart from the main action as much as if Hardy had introduced them himself. For example, before Jude goes to sleep on his first night in Christminster, he imagines that he hears the memorable words of some of the more famous sons of the university. What he hears includes quotations from Robert Peel's speech on the Corn Laws, an excerpt from Cardinal Newman's "Apologia", plus selections by Richard Steele, Matthew Arnold, and others. This collection of famous quotations has several effects. It suggests that Jude might be unrealistic in aiming at such heights from his humble position; it provides a counterpoint for his immediate concern of finding employment; and incidentally, it establishes that Christminster is Hardy's version of Oxford, for those quoted all attended Oxford, and the one quotation which is introduced as a eulogy to Christminster is really Matthew Arnold's paean to Oxford beginning: "'Beautiful city! so venerable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our country . . .'"<sup>20</sup> Hardy adds his own comment here to underscore the irony of such extravagant praise for an institution that was never kind to Jude, stating that the speaker "afterwards mourned Christminster as 'the home of lost causes', though Jude did not remember this".<sup>21</sup> Hardy uses these quotations in much the same way as he uses his own comments and those quotations which he introduces himself.

Even a casual reader of Jude can hardly help noticing the frequent Biblical references in the novel. As Hardy questions the relevance of traditional religion, he uses these references in a variety of ways. For

example, Hardy makes several references to the story of Samson and Delilah to illuminate the relationship between Jude and Arabella; and certainly Jude's weakness and Arabella's trickery are paralleled in that story. When Jude lives at Christminster, he stays in a suburb inauspiciously named Beersheba, which is the name of the place where the outcast Ishmael and his mother Hagar dwelt when Ishmael was replaced by Abraham's legitimate son. In these cases, Hardy lets the Biblical context of the name Beersheba and of the story of Samson and Delilah make its comment on the characters and events in the novel. Even in naming Jude, Hardy may have had subtle ironic intent, for the Epistle attributed to the Apostle Jude is a warning against heresy and false doctrine, a teaching that is not endorsed by the themes of the novel. Moreover, Jude, on several occasions, draws a parallel between his career and that of Christ, as when "He considered he might so mark out his coming years as to begin his ministry at the age of thirty -- an age which much attracted him as being that of his exemplar when he first began to teach in Galilee";<sup>22</sup> and in fact Saint Jude is traditionally considered the brother of Jesus. This parallel between Jude and Jesus becomes heavily ironic in the light of the events of Jude's career. Besides such references as these, the characters, particularly Jude, often quote scripture in their speech.

Although the many Biblical references help to keep the issue of religion prominent in Jude, they did nothing to endear the novel to clerics and other defenders of traditional religion who were among the most vocal critics of Jude. Hardy's criticism of conventional religion,

evidenced in Arabella's brief conversion and elsewhere in the narrative, often make it necessary for him to quote sacred writings. However, the situation into which these passages are introduced often profanes their religious nature. For example, Jude, while intoxicated, is bribed by the price of a glass of liquor into reciting the Nicene Creed in Latin to a tavern full of inebriates who have no appreciation for the creed or for Jude's pathetic situation. Similarly, Jude's death-bed lament beginning "Let the day perish wherein I was born . . ." <sup>23</sup> is mocked by the interrupting cheers of the crowd watching the Remembrance festivities. In fact, many of the allusions to religion suggest the same frustration and anger that Jude expressed when Sue returned to orthodoxy: "I am glad I had nothing to do with Divinity -- damn glad -- if it's going to ruin you in this way". <sup>24</sup>

Someone reading Hardy's novels in the order in which they were written might, after finishing Tess, have quite definite ideas about the sort of fiction Hardy writes. To such a person, Jude would seem strange, possibly even upsetting. The external action which provides the narrative direction in the other novels, is de-emphasized and partly replaced by philosophical movement, and what the characters think becomes as important to the story as what they do. The main field of action becomes the minds of the characters; Sue changes from a freethinking rebel to a conventional woman, Jude moves from orthodoxy to cynicism, and even Phillotson progresses towards a surprisingly enlightened position on the true nature of marriage before he backslides. Some of the ways in which Jude differs from the other novels are the result of Hardy's

attempt to translate philosophical and spiritual issues into living actions and characters. For one thing, his presence is more evident in the conceptual account of Jude than in the external action of the earlier novels. The plot, characters, settings, and dialogue are brought to bear on the themes of the novel; hence the reader meets Hardy in the narrative elements of Jude much more than in the same elements of the earlier novels.

Although Hardy's presence in the narrative elements of Jude is less immediately obvious than in his direct interjections, it does have a strong bearing on the total effect of the novel. The shape and pattern of the plot show through the action of the novel, and in its parallels and counterpoints the reader sees Hardy emphasizing themes, particularly the theme of the conflict between reality and illusion. For example, the scenes showing Jude's first meeting with Arabella and his first meeting with Sue are suggestively similar. Because Jude and Arabella are physically separated by a stream, "they walked in parallel lines" to a bridge; Jude and Sue are separated by Sue's reluctance to meet at the spot of martyrdom, hence "they walked in parallel lines" before meeting. In the account of Jude's meeting with Sue, the reader senses Hardy's presence directing him to reflect on another such meeting. Perhaps the most obvious manipulation of events for a thematic purpose is Jude's excursion to Kennetbridge to meet the composer of a hymn that had much impressed him. Expecting to find a kindred spirit, Jude is disillusioned to discover that the "composer" has given up hymn writing because it is not profitable, and has become a wine merchant. Because this incident is separate from the central plot and has an obvious bearing on the theme of reality destroying

illusion, it seems to unfold not as a natural development of the plot, but as part of Hardy's polemic on this theme.

Hardy's didactic use of the various elements of the novel has, to a certain extent, compromised their effectiveness in their artistic role. Some of the dramatized situations fail to come to life because the lively give and take of natural dialogue is stifled by the weight of the concepts and issues it must carry. The plot also creaks under the huge load of controversial issues Hardy has managed to work into it. Even the settings are often presented in conceptual rather than concrete terms; for example, while Jude is still a child at Marygreen, without realizing the significance of his words, he introduces Christminster by calling it "The heavenly Jerusalem", and by stating that "The tree of knowledge grows there". All of this illustrates a different approach to the elements of the novel, and the source of the change is the alteration in the vision of life presented in Jude. Of all Hardy's novels, only Jude is truly pessimistic; here all that is best in man is defeated. Both Jude's idealism and Sue's brave enlightenment are destroyed; even the combination of reason and charity that prompts Phillotson to free Sue is finally corrupted. Moreover, these defeats are without purpose and without dignity. In Jude, the vision is more bleak and the tone more cynical than in any of the other novels. There is still a story, but the characters are submerged by the critical conflict of the issues and philosophies which, in this novel, receive the bulk of the author's attention. In spite of this, Sue and Jude survive as characters; Jude is one of the most memorable characters in Hardy's fiction, and Sue is fascinating and unusual. But the urgency

that holds the reader comes primarily from the ideas; for it is, as Hardy says, "a deadly war".

In Jude, the reader recognizes Hardy both in his direct commentary and in the obvious influence he exerts on the other aspects of the novel. It is impossible to separate the narrative from the narrator, for his convictions and his personality are imprinted on every part of it. Jude presents to the reader aspects of Hardy's personality that are not apparent in the earlier novels, but which are hinted at in Tess. In his direct statements in Tess, as well as in the events of the narrative, Hardy makes some strong claims. He finds no evidence of order or justice in the universe; he suggests that the conventional attitudes to marriage are quite arbitrary, having no basis in nature; he finds in religion no help in facing the problems of everyday living. In Jude, Hardy reaffirms his stand on these issues; but, as he goes on to deal with other issues, he reveals other aspects of his personality. By directing our attention to the inequality of educational opportunities and to the stifling effect of the laws on marriage and divorce, he reveals a strong social conscience. Also, to his first readers, he must have seemed to be a man of modern interests, for he dealt with problems of the current "will not to live" and of "the modern vice of unrest", with the problems arising from the sexuality of his characters, and with the difficulties that the legal and moral aspects of marriage impose upon them. This concern with topical issues is balanced by his sense of the timelessness of Jude's tragedy. In Jude, the reader feels himself directed by an angrier and more cynical man, and by one more insistent on his themes

than in any of the earlier novels. Hardy's attack on marriage, Oxford, and conventional religion struck at institutions that had, for generations, been the cornerstones of society, and pious readers would see these attacks as the works of a radical. Certainly some of the reaction to Jude indicates that many considered Hardy a destructive influence. Some of the issues are no longer very topical, others are as controversial today as they were when Jude was published. The present day reader is still disturbed by the tragedy of shattered dreams and unfulfilled aims, and still feels himself to be under the direction of one who has a special vision of the plight of mankind, one who is convinced of the validity of his vision and is saddened by it.

## FOOTNOTES (CHAPTER FOUR)

<sup>1</sup>Florence Emily Hardy, The Life of Thomas Hardy (New York, 1965), p. 280.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas Hardy, Jude the Obscure (New York, 1966), Preface, p.v.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 225.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 91.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 92.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 411.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 306.

<sup>11</sup>Florence Emily Hardy, The Life of Thomas Hardy 1840-1928 (New York, 1965), p. 207.

<sup>12</sup>Thomas Hardy, Jude the Obscure (New York, 1966), p. 283.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 268.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 336-337.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 288.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 307.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 13.



<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 265.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 418.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 362.

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