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Wessex in the Selected Works of Thomas Hardy and John Cowper Powys

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Z á s a d y   p r o   v y p r a c o v á n í :

Bakalářská práce se věnuje zkoumání regionální identity Wessexu ve vybraných krátkých povídkách Thomase Hardyho. Analýza díla bude vycházet z obecné teorie identit, především identity regionální. Ta bude aplikována na dobovou literaturu, tj. pozdně viktoriánské období, a sílící tradici regionální literatury. Hardyho pojetí regionální literatury a zkoumání regionu bude zasazeno do odpovídajícího literárního kontextu a bude konfrontováno s přístupem J. C. Powyse. Je samozřejmostí, že práce bude vycházet z dostatečně obsáhlé kulturně historické analýzy daného období, která bude konfrontována s literární analýzou primárních zdrojů. Literární analýza se zaměří jak na zobrazení krajiny, tak na zachycení postav "typických" pro Wessex.

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Poděkování

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the description of Wessex in the selected short-stories of Thomas Hardy and in the novel *Wolf Solent* by John Cowper Powys. It provides theoretical background on the topic of regional identity, historical background and literary context of the two authors. Subsequently, it analyses selected literary works of Thomas Hardy and John C. Powys and provides evidence of their resemblance. Lastly, it demonstrates via examples the aspects of Powys's and Hardy's works in which they differ.

Key words: Wessex, landscape, literary character, regional identity, Thomas Hardy, John C. Powys.

Anotace

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá vyobrazením Wessexu ve vybraných povídkách Thomase Hardyho a v románu *Wolf Solent* od Johna Cowpera Powyse. Tato práce je rozdělena na teoretickou část, která definuje termín regionální identity, zařazuje Powyse a Hardyho do literárního kontextu a popisuje historické období ve kterém tito dva autoři žili. Dále tato práce analyzuje některá jejich vybraná literární díla a pojednává o názorech, kteří tito dva autoři sdílí. V neposlední řadě tato práce s pomocí ukázek dokazuje, v čem se Powysova a Hardyho díla liší.

Klíčová slova: Wessex, krajina, literární charakter, regionální identita, Thomas Hardy, John C. Powys.

Table of Contents

Introduction

The primary focus of this bachelor thesis is an analysis of Wessex in the selected literary works of Thomas Hardy and John Cowper Powys. The area of Wessex is therefore analysed in terms of its landscape and inhabitants. In other words, the topic of this paper is a regional identity of a literary world of two aforementioned authors.

Regional identity is built on historical sources and represents crucial means of understanding a specific culture. The identity of a region is usually depicted as a generalisation of personal traits of its inhabitants and their traditions, customs, occupations, clothing, language and dialect; not to leave out typical weather and a depiction of landscape and geography and its effect on the surroundings. Regional literature reflects on author's own feelings about a region and its social, cultural and ethnic distinctiveness as well as the distinctiveness of its landscape. All of these aspects define a region, but they should not be considered as separate units, since they affect each other and they create and thus complete the whole picture of the region. Of course, words such as 'traditions,' 'customs' and 'community' are very commonly used to describe a region. Regional identity cannot be neglected when examining any region. In fact, it should be considered an essential part of analysis when attempting to understand and fully appreciate any writer who dedicated his time to describe or exalt their own region with all its beauty.

This bachelor's thesis examines literary works of Thomas Hardy and John Cowper Powys regarding their depiction of Wessex. Wessex is a fictional region in the south and south-west England, created by Thomas Hardy and later adopted by John Cowper Powys. In Hardy's own words, Wessex is "partly real, partly dream-country,"[1] which he named after the medieval Anglo-Saxon kingdom and set in the late Georgian and early Victorian England of the 19th century. However, even though Hardy and Powys wrote about the same partly fictitious Wessex, their writing style and their focus was not so similar. In fact, many critical studies, educational books and expert articles were written about the ever so popular Wessex of Thomas Hardy. Unfortunately, John Cowper Powys is not as renowned as Thomas Hardy concerning their similar interest in the regional literature of south-west England. Therefore, this paper will provide a detailed character study as well as an analysis of typical traits of Hardy's short-stories and put into perspective Hardy's description and general view on Wessex in comparison to Wessex as Powys describes it. Since Hardy was the creator of the fictional Wessex region and

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[1] Thomas Hardy, *Far from the Madding Crowd* (England: Penguin Books, 1994), 6.

Powys only 'borrowed' it for some of his novels, the analysis is primarily based on Hardy's short-stories or "minor novels,"[2] as he calls them in his prefatory note to *A Changed Man and Other Tales,* which are then compared to Powys's novel set in Wessex called *Wolf Solent.*

This paper is divided into two main parts, theoretical and practical, and each part consists of three chapters, some of which are further divided into sub-chapters. The theoretical part consists of characterisation and definition of regional identity, Victorian England and the Industrial Revolution, as well as the literary context connected with Hardy and Powys. The practical part focuses on the analysis of Wessex characters and geography and then compares the similarities and differences between Hardy's and Powys's Wessex.

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[2] Thomas Hardy, *A Changed Man and Other Tales,* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1913)

Historical Background of Thomas Hardy and John Cowper Powys

Thomas Hardy and John Cowper Powys both lived in the 19th and the 20th century. However, Hardy was born in 1840 and died in 1928 whereas Powys was born in 1872 and died in 1963. Therefore, they could be categorised as contemporary writers, but Powys's first novel was published one year after the death of Thomas Hardy. It also must be taken into account that Hardy lived most of his life during the Victorian era with its very strict rules and morals while Powys lived through the first and second world war, as well as in a different country. To clarify, Hardy never left the United Kingdom while Powys lived more than thirty years in the United States of America. All of these differences had an impact on their lives and their literary work.

This part of bachelor's thesis takes into consideration the similarities as well as the differences of Hardy's and Powys's lives and puts forth the instances where their opinions and motives were shared. This chapter is divided into two subchapters, each dealing with the historical background of one author, since Powys spent a considerable part of his life in the United States of America. The first subchapter is more focused on Hardy's life and the second is centred on Powys's life.

Thomas Hardy

Thomas Hardy was born in 1840, three years after the coronation of Queen Victoria, who ruled until 1901. She was succeeded by her eldest son, Edward VII, who ruled for nine years, after which the throne was inherited by his son, George V. The strict rules of Victorian society, together with scientific discoveries, inventions, and a rise of great towns affected Hardy's life, opinions and literary works. As an illustration, the Victorian society viewed small towns and countryside hamlets with their few inhabitants as inferior and insignificant, as is insinuated by the nickname "rotten boroughs."[3] Hardy, who was raised in the hamlet of Upper Bockhampton in the parish of Stinsford in the county of Dorset, disliked and criticised this general degradation of British countryside. It is the primary reason for his creation of Wessex short-stories, novels and poems – to enhance the beauty of countryside and improve its reputation in the minds of British people.

The Victorian era introduced social values, beliefs and strict morals which marked the official politics emphasizing the strong reaction against the French Revolution. The Victorian

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[3] Maria Frawley, "The Victorian Age, 1832–1901," in *English Literature in Context,* ed. Paul Poplawski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 410.

morality included a transformation of the British people into polite, decent, orderly and prudish Victorians. They valued religion, morality, marriage, and took pride in the industrialisation and the progress of modernisation among other things. An external and sometimes superficial or deceptive appearance of dignity and decency became popular during that time, as well as the desire to be viewed as a genteel person.

Moreover, the Industrial Revolution is one of the main reasons for a major increase of popularity of regional literature. Its foundations were laid in the late 17th century and the first half of the 18th century. The United Kingdom, a world superpower with many colonies and naval dominance which enabled international trade, was more technologically and scientifically advanced than most countries at that time. The rudiments of the Industrial Revolution which began in the United Kingdom can be seen for example during the Napoleonic Wars at the turn of the century. At that time, the United Kingdom was one of the main suppliers of weaponry to nations that joined forces against France.

As was stated above, the Industrial Revolution began in the United Kingdom, owing to a patent for the steam engine by Scottish engineer James Watt in 1781. A refinement of the steam engine enabled the development of new technological innovations in the late 18th century. The most significant innovations associated with the industrialisation are for example power-looms, cotton gins, spinning jennies, spinning mules and other machines. These innovations gave rise to a new method of production. A transition from hand-made to machine-made production began and with it came an idea of manufacture. As a result, factories soon surpassed workshops, because factories were superior in terms of spatial capacity, technology, usage of time-saving machinery, number of products made and working conditions. Maria Frawley mentions that after the New Poor Law of 1834 workhouses were used as a part of rehabilitation of poor people who were able to work. A premise was that it would reduce the expense of poverty relief system.[4] Additionally, the creation of factories resulted in growing demand for high-quality machines which was one of the reasons for a development and an advancement of mechanical engineering.

Apart from the creation and development of new industries, such as the electric power industry or the automotive industry, the 19th century was also a time of many important scientific discoveries. Science in general had a more important role in people's lives. Biology, chemistry, psychology, physics and medicine were all enriched by new theories and discoveries to which many scientists contributed. For example, Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*

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[4] Frawley, "The Victorian Age, 1832–1901," 412.

presented a revolutionary concept of evolution and it soon became one of the most discussed topics in the world. Aside from Charles Darwin, there were other important scientists who made their own contribution to the scientific sphere. The names Dmitri Ivanovic Mendeleev who formulated the Periodic Law and the periodic table of elements, Marie Skłodowska Curie and Henri Becquerel and Pierre Curie who jointly discovered radioactivity, and last but not least Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch who laid the foundations of microbiology, bacteriology and immunology are all connected to 19th century. The 19th century, and particularly its second half, was abundant with inventions. For instance, the telephone, the lightbulb, the dynamo, the photograph, the stethoscope, and many other objects are considered commonplace in the modern world, but it must be mentioned that they all have been invented or discovered during the Industrial Revolution. Furthermore, the 19th century also introduced a radical change of transportation in the form of a railway.

As Maria Frawley writes, railway lines were opened in the first half of the 19th century, and the railway rapidly spread throughout Britain.[5] Thus, the railway was built and with it came a facilitation of distribution of printed texts resulting in an expansion of the so-called print culture, which stands for any form of a printed text or a visual communication. Literacy rates increased and the mass reading public was born in the Victorian age, because printed texts were cheaper and more widespread. The railway also facilitated commerce, travel and transportation.

The achievements of industrialisation were officially introduced at The Great Exhibition held in Britain for the duration of five months in 1851. Thousands of objects were on display in the Crystal Palace, ranging from household equipment and different types of machinery to fine arts. According to Maria Frawley, the symbolic beginning of a consumerist way of life can be traced back to the 1850s and The Great Exhibition. With so many inventions designed mainly to make lives easier, people started to spend their money on commodities and consequently to hunger for money.[6] Consumerism and capitalism spread swiftly through Britain and Thomas Hardy's reaction was to create his Wessex stories. His compulsion to capture the beauty of countryside and rural lifestyle arose, because he feared that regionality and traditions would cease to exist as the consequence of the mass urbanisation and modernisation.

To illustrate, Thomas Hardy's short stories never mention any new machinery or scientific discoveries. In fact, it seems that he makes it his priority to mention that the landscape of the setting was beautiful, untamed and uncultivated by human hand. He specifically states

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[5] Frawley, "The Victorian Age, 1832–1901," 403.

[6] Frawley, "The Victorian Age, 1832–1901," 418.

that the landscape remained static, with the obvious exception of changing seasons, mainly in his short-story *The Melancholy Hussar of the German Legion:* "Here stretch the downs, high and breezy and green, absolutely unchanged since those eventful days. A plough has never disturbed the turf, and the sod that was uppermost then is uppermost now,"[7] or in *The Three Strangers* story: "Among the few features of agricultural England which retain an appearance but little modified by the lapse of centuries (…)."[8] This description of an unchanging nature induces a picture of a time long before the industrialisation and modernisation.

Nevertheless, the urbanisation and technological advancement did not completely eliminate agriculture nor the life in the countryside. According to Christopher Harvie, the industrialisation created an increasing demand for manpower. The Great Britain at that time, however, was only sparsely populated, so people were actually encouraged to have children. Consequently, the overall British population increased twofold between the ages 1780 and 1831.[9] As a consequence of the growing population, landed proprietors started to grow potatoes in large quantities, thinking they would make great profit. Their selfish thinking resulted in production of a sufficient amount of food for people living in the cities. As Philip Davis states in his book, almost 30% of British population lived in cities at the beginning of the 19th century, and by the year 1851 around 50% of people lived in cities.[10]

London became the world's first metropolis in the course of British urbanisation and its increasing population. However, British urbanisation was more centred on port cities and cities with high concentration of trade than on industrial cities. The trade with foreign countries and with British colonies was approved of and highly encouraged, which resulted in increase of smuggling. The British were getting rich because of trade and smuggling of cotton, slaves, tobacco, corn and machines. As Kenneth Morgan writes, the amount of exported goods has risen by 200% since the 1780s.[11]

On the other hand, industrialisation and urbanisation did not entirely have a good impact on society. Philip Davis explains the struggles and problems of people living in the cities which were not yet transformed to accommodate them:

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[7] Thomas Hardy*, Wessex Tales* (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd, 1952), 45.

[8] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 3.

[9] Christopher Harvie, "Revolution and the Rule of Law (1789-1851)," in *The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain,* ed. Kenneth Owen Morgan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 423–424.

[10] Philip Davis, *The Oxford English Literary History, Volume 8: 1830–1880, The Victorians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 13.

[11] Harvie, "Revolution and the Rule of Law (1789-1851)," 424.

The new steam-powered industrial organisation created social problems which there was as yet no corresponding civic organisation designed to remedy: problems of housing and the use of space; problems of public health, sanitation, sewerage, ventilation, paving, and water supply, in the face of cholera, typhus, and consumption; problems concerning working conditions, the regulation of commerce and education.[12]

Nevertheless, Thomas Hardy in his short stories does not address these problems connected to mass urbanisation. Instead, his Wessex stories are solely focused on life in the countryside. As a matter of fact, loneliness, solitude and seclusion from society are key parts of Hardy's Wessex.

To conclude, the British society was significantly changed in the 19th century by urbanisation, substantial increase in population, new machines, technological progress and scientific discoveries. Nonetheless, Hardy's Wessex seems to remain unchanged by any of that. It is a testament of Hardy's love of English countryside in which he grew up, and its 'simple' life, unaffected by changes of society and its problems.

John Cowper Powys

The United States were undergoing a major change because of the industrialisation and it is debatable whether Powys was lamenting the modernisation that took place in the United Kingdom or the one in the United States, since he was living in the United States at the time he was working on his *Wolf Solent.* On the other hand, the novel is set in Ramsgard, Wessex, which is in the United Kingdom, so it is possible that Powys was dreading the change that could have happened in his home country while observing the decay of countryside through which he travelled in the United States.

Powys did not write in his autobiography the year when he moved to the United States, since he did not consider the information significant. However, he did write that when he travelled from the United Kingdom, he felt as though he commenced some kind of an exciting and very important, even life-saving quest.[13] At first, he often and on regular basis returned to the United Kingdom, practically going back and forth between the two nations. However, as years passed, he began to spend more and more time in the United States. According to the *Descents of Memory, The Life of John Cowper Powys,* Powys started to live in the United States

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[12] Philip Davis, *The Oxford English Literary History,* 13.

[13] John C. Powys, *Autobiography* (London: Faber and Faber, 2013), Chapter 10, https://read.amazon.com/?asin=B00HP600BG.

in 1905.[14] He was married to a Catholic woman who remained in the United Kingdom, while he stayed in the United States. Powys had a stream of lovers while he was away from his wife, including Frances Gregg and Phyllis Playter. He eventually wanted to establish a long-term relationship with the latter, but his wife obviously refused to divorce him. The theme of infidelity is present throughout the *Wolf Solent,* particularly in the character of Lord Carfax who admitted having been a lover of Wolf's mother.[15]

According to Morine Krissdottir, Powys was a man suffering from many phobias, counting his fear of people, fear of his own shadow and most of all fear of his own 'manias'. Powys was a 'sworn hater of dreams', since they often contained his repressed obsessions and neuroses, his 'manias.'[16] He tried many things to cure himself of these manias, including tapping his head on stones and trees while praying to deities, taking long walks, and writing his own autobiography in which he confesses through the character of Wolf of some of the thoughts that haunted him since his childhood. Furthermore, Wolf in *Wolf Solent* is a character who is similar to Powys not only in personality, but also in his determination on living his life partially in an imaginary world in which people behaved as he wished them to. This led Powys to have problems since real people were not willing to act according to his fabricated script.

Powys starts *Wolf Solent* with a preface, in which he explains that "writing a preface to this book entitled *Wolf Solent* is like writing a commentary on my whole life as it was, as it is, and as it probably will be, before I die,"[17] which means that he knowingly imprinted his own personality into the book and its characters. He shares opinions with the main character on modern innovations and science, as well as his attraction to women younger than himself. For this reason, the novel partially functions as his own autobiography. The novel is a result of Powys's homesickness and real-life experience. It is even plausible that the beginning of the novel was Powys's own unfulfilled desire to return to England on the pretext of being dismissed from work, since Powys was feeling homesick at that time.

John Cowper Powys was majorly influenced by and was interested in the concepts of psychology and philosophy of life, consciousness and Sigmund Freud's structural model of the psyche, as is obvious in the preface of *Wolf Solent*. Mindful reader can read in-between-lines

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[14] "Descents of Memory, The Life of John Cowper Powys," Powys-society, posted 2012, http://www.powys-society.org/john%20cowper%20powys%20descents%20of%20memory.htm.

[15] John C. Powys, *Wolf Solent* (London: Macdonald, 1961), 592.

[16] Powys-society, "Descents of Memory, The Life of John Cowper Powys."

[17] John C. Powys, "Preface," in *Wolf Solent* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1929; London: Macdonald & Co., 1961), V.

of Powys's contemplations that he ruminates on the moment when the unconscious becomes conscious and whether people are even able to discern the difference between the two, as is indicated in the following excerpt:

> Here we do approach the whole mysterious essence of human life upon earth, the mystery of consciousness. To be conscious: to be unconscious: yes! The difference between these is the difference between life and death for the person, the particular individual, with whom, whether it be ourself or somebody else, we are especially concerned.[18]

Powys then goes on to elaborate the false idea of unconsciousness being equal to death. In addition, he conveys his opinion on the conception of life after death. He believes that when he dies it will be the very end of his being and he is content with that.[19]

To conclude, Powys's contemplative nature is shown in many of his literary works and is ever-present in his language. This is further affirmed by an American anarchist and feminist Emma Goldman, who appreciatively describes Powys in her autobiography as a libertarian and a firm believer in free expression.[20] However, even though Powys lived in the United States for more than three decades, his love for his homeland never ceased or decreased. Additionally, he felt betrayed by both the American and the British society which accepted and exalted industrialisation, and so he wrote about the countryside, its timeless attractiveness, and its superiority over any human being in its beauty and simplicity.

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[18] Powys, "Preface," V.

[19] Powys, "Preface," VII.

[20] Emma Goldman, *Living My Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc., 1931), 489.

Literary Context

Similar to the previous chapter, this part of the bachelor thesis is divided into two sections. Each of them provides a brief summary of Hardy's and Powys's writing career, deals with some recurring themes of their works, classifies their literary genre, and lists some of the other authors who wrote about similar themes or topical issues.

Thomas Hardy

Hardy was a versatile writer, author of novels, poems, short-stories and one drama. However, according to *The Life of Thomas Hardy*, Hardy thought of himself primarily as a poet. He loved writing poetry, and even more so after his novels *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure* have not been very well received by public. In fact, they were both denounced as immoral. This criticism provided him with a reason to abandon writing novels and return to writing poetry.[21] Gwyneth Roberts and G. Thornley note that Hardy's poetry "does not suggest that life is a bitter tragedy; Hardy knows that life is hard, but also that man has the strength to bear its hardness and go on living."[22] In contrast, Gilinsky states that in Hardy's novels and short-stories his criticism is portrayed as pessimism bordering on despair, especially in case of his criticism of social complacency and false morality.[23] These sources only prove that Hardy was able to communicate his views on life and society in many different ways.

Hardy's poetry, just as his other works, "shows great joy in the natural beauty of the world."[24] In fact, Hardy's reaction to the Boer War and the Great War has mostly taken the form of poems. Of course, some of his short-stories refer to the Napoleonic Wars, especially *The Tradition of Eighteen Hundred and Four.*

Thomas Hardy was a critical realist and a naturalist. This categorisation is proved in his literary works in which he depicts characters facing or unsuccessfully trying to struggle against brutal reality. Those attempts are unsuccessful because, as G. Roberts and C. G. Thornley

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[21] Michael Irwin, "Introduction," in *Thomas Hardy* (Wordsworth Editions, 1928; Wordsworth Editions, 2007), X–XI.

[22] J.C. Thornley, Gwyneth Roberts, *An Outline of English Literature* (Hong Kong: Longman Group UK Limited, 1984), 183.

[23] J. Gilinsky, L. Khvostenko, and A. Weise, *Studies in English and American Literature and Style* (Leningrad, 1956), 236–237.

[24] J.C. Thornley et al., *An Outline of English Literature*, 183.

observe, Hardy believed that the best way of life is to calmly accept the adversity of fate.[25] Hardy often criticised morals of the Victorian society, but also some of the laws passed during the Victorian era, as suggested in his *Wessex Tales:*

> Enclosure Acts had not taken effect, and the banks and fences which now exclude the cattle of those villagers who formerly enjoyed rights of commonage thereon, and the carts of those who had turbary privileges which kept them in firing all the year round, were not erected.[26]

The Enclosure Acts, as is explained in *The Making of Modern Britain,* were passed to establish a new and better way of farming through "the enclosure of the open fields to form compact farms."[27] As Jarman and Derry elaborate, the effect on the poor, and especially the farmers, was great, since they were deprived of the untilled land which has been used by common people as a pasture for animals, and its vegetation as timber and firewood.

Hardy's naturalism can be summed up by a well-known French writer Jean de La Fontaine who expressed a thought that a person often meets their destiny on the road they took to avoid it.[28] This is especially true for Hardy's characters, whether it be Phyllis trying not to be alone or in an unsatisfying marriage in *The Melancholy Hussar* and eventually winding up alone for the rest of her life*,* or Matthäus in the same short-story who tries to run away from his lonely and unhappy life in the army and ends up being shot as a deserter. Hardy's short-stories usually end in a disaster, a cataclysm of desperate action backfiring on the characters, resulting in them being in a worse state than at the beginning. The naturalistic determinism is also prevalent in Hardy's manner of description. He usually draws a portrait of a landscape as if it is the only unchanging and immutable factor. Hardy applied the fact that nature is an uncontrollable agent which can change and affect many lives – either for better or for worse. Therefore, the lives of Wessex people are predetermined not only by their gender, occupation and social status but also greatly by their natural surroundings.

To conclude, Hardy's works are abundant with strong sense of reality, its unfairness and uncaring nature and its tragic consequences. In fact, there are only few short-stories that stray from the realistic and naturalistic features, and probably only one which does so without irony. The one is the story of *The Withered Arm,* in which an event of Rhoda's dream seems to have consequences in real life.[29] Other 'supernatural' short-stories criticise the popularity of a ghost

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[25] J.C. Thornley et al., *An Outline of English Literature*, 131.

[26] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 99.

[27] T. K. Derry, T. L. Jarman, *The Making of Modern Britain* (Norwich: Jarrold & SonsLtd., 1970), 60.

[28] Norman Shapiro, trans., *The Complete Fables of Jean de La Fontaine* (University of Illinois Press, 2010), 209.

[29] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 77–81.

story of Victorian England. On example of an ironic supernatural short-story is for example *The Fiddler of the Reels,* which contains a character who seemingly has supernatural powers that he practises via his violin. One of the major characters of *The Fiddler of the Reels* is Car'line, who cannot stop dancing to the tune he plays on his violin, and she "would have given anything to leave off; but she had, or fancied she had, no power, while Mop played such tunes."[30]

In general, Thomas Hardy's writing style has ample recurring themes, such as an importance of fate and coincidence, physical and mental seclusion from society, a tragic conclusion of the story, a subtle yet ever-present influence of the landscape on the lives of its inhabitants, an unavoidable destiny, and lastly, an implied criticism of the Victorian society including the issue of woman oppression.

An interesting fact is that Hardy's stories are sometimes written in ich-form in which Hardy figures as the supposed main character, but only features at the beginning. The stories begin with a paragraph or two in which Hardy coincidentally encounters a person, the narrator, who tells him his or her recollection of some event. Such is the case of *The Tradition of Eighteen Hundred and Four* and of *The Melancholy Hussar of the German Legion,* the first one being a recollection of Solomon Selby and the second of Phyllis Grove. The following excerpt is an illustration copied from *The Tradition of Eighteen Hundred and Four*:

> The occasion on which I numbered myself among his audience was one evening when he was sitting in the yawning chimney-corner of the inn-kitchen, with some others who had gathered there, and I entered for shelter from the rain. (…) We who knew him recognized it in a moment: it was his narrative smile. Breaking off our few desultory remarks we drew up closer, and he thus began: –.[31]

Hardy's intermediary of narration then proceeds to recount the event in an impersonal tone and detached manner, which is one of the features of Hardy's work and of realism.

Another crucial aspect of Hardy's short stories is that they are usually set at the beginning of the 19th century – before the Victorian era and the peak of the Industrial Revolution. For example, *The Three Strangers* story is set in the March 28, 182–.[32] Another example is *The Tradition of Eighteen Hundred and Four,* which is set sometime in the 1803, 1804 or 1805.[33]

Furthermore, as was written above, one of Hardy's recurring themes in his Wessex stories is related to status of women in the Victorian society. Women were, as Maria Frawley

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[30] Thomas Hardy, *Life's Little Ironies* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1922), 170.

[31] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 33.

[32] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 4.

[33] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 34.

states, disadvantaged economically, legally, politically and educationally. Besides that, women were believed to be weaker by nature, prone to disease and debility.[34] Men could earn money, power and status, whereas women had to marry them in order to have the same status, which means that status was passed down from a man to his wife. Hardy's strong disagreement with this attitude towards women manifests in his short-stories. For instance, Hardy addresses the "Woman Question" in his story *The Withered Arm,* where Rhoda Brook has a child with Lodge even though they are not married. She suffers hardship because the father of her son is nor willing to support or raise his offspring because the boy is an illegitimate child and partially also due to a class difference of the parents. There is double standard of the position of the father and the mother in the society. Rhoda is ostracised by other people, even though Lodge is not. The only person who is not judgemental about her past is, ironically, Gertrude, as the new member of the local society. Similar fate of a woman suffering because of her illegitimate child can also be seen in Hardy's novel *Tess of the d'Urbervilles.* In *The Withered Arm,* it can be most markedly observed at the very beginning, when the son and his mother have a conversation about son's encounter with his father: "'What did he say or do?' 'Just the same as usual.' 'Took no notice of you?' 'None.'"[35]

Another part of the women plight of the Victorian age is also shown too on the character of Rhoda in *The Withered Arm.* She is a hardworking outcast who lives a simple life with her son, and at the same time she lacks any education and therefore is prone to naivety and gullibility. She is superstitious and fears witchcraft as can be seen in the following example, which takes place after Gertrude tells Rhoda about the withered arm:

> She had named the night and the hour of Rhoda's spectral encounter, and Brook felt like a guilty thing. The artless disclosure startled her; she did not reason on the freaks of coincidence; and all the scenery of that ghastly night returned with double vividness to her mind. 'O, can it be,' she said to herself, when her visitor had departed, 'that I exercise a malignant power over people against my own will?'[36]

Rhoda's character is an illustration of poor educational opportunities for women. Her immediate conclusion to the strange coincidence is that she possesses some supernatural powers about which she did not know until that moment.

There are more examples of women's hardship in Hardy's work, since he himself was indignant about the suffering of women, the poor, the working class and the general decline of

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[34] Frawley, "The Victorian Age, 1832–1901," 415.

[35] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 74.

[36] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 81.

rural life. Other authors who sympathised with Hardy's opinions were William Thackeray, who shared Hardy's negative opinion on Victorian society, marriage – which they both believed led to unhappiness – and hypocrisy, and Anthony Trollope, who was interested in social and gender issues. Trollope even invented a county called Barsetshire for his series of novels called *Chronicles of Barsetshire*. Of course, one author who was greatly influenced by Hardy's works is John Cowper Powys who regarded Hardy as one of the most skilled writers of all times.

John Cowper Powys

Similar to Hardy, Powys was a versatile and productive author of novels, poems, short-stories, philosophical texts, critical essays, an autobiography and even one drama called *Paddock Calls.* Primarily*,* Powys was a philosopher who led lengthy discussions with several prominent philosophers, such as Bertrand Russell and William Durant.[37] Among Powys's contemporary writers are highly praised authors Theodor Dreiser and D. H. Lawrence, the first being Powys's friend and the second his source of inspiration.[38]

Although Powys lived in the United States, it never really became his home. He frequently returned to the United Kingdom in his thoughts, in his literature and in person. As a proof, he is associated rather with the English writers than with the American ones. J. Gilinsky characterises authors such as Powys or D. H. Lawrence as individualists, pessimists and cynics in their writing styles. In addition, Powys was a critical realist and his works are marked with disillusion and scepticism. As for American society and its authors, Gilinsky is convinced that Powys was affected by the philosophy of decay, which was in opposition to the progressive advancement of the time.[39]

Additionally, Powys was an exceptionally thoughtful and meditative person and his novels are thought-provoking as well as imaginative. His major recurring themes are criticism of modernisation and industrialisation, fatalism, questioning religion, questioning the meaning of life, and taboos concerning sexuality, such as infidelity, incest and homosexuality.

John C. Powys's opinion on certain writers says a lot for his personality, education and literary style. For instance, he claimed that Thomas Hardy together with Walter Scott are the best novelists in the world. He stated that he revelled in reading books since his childhood, or in his own words: "My own life on earth has resembled Solent's in being dominated by Books.

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[37] Powys, *Autobiography,* Chapter 10.

[38] Powys, *Autobiography,* Chapter 10.

[39] J. Gilinsky et al., *Studies in English and American Literature and Style,* 320–321.

I used to read Sunday after Sunday in the Big School Library(…)."[40] Apart from being a writer and a teacher at a university, he was linguistically talented, having been a translator of Russian and French works as well as an enthusiastic reader of Latin. His love for literature and language showed itself in his appreciation for poetry, of which his favourite authors were William Shakespeare, John Milton and Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus).

Even before publishing *Wolf Solent,* Powys was a successful writer of philosophical texts such as *The Meaning of Culture* and *The Philosophy of Solitude.* He was an admirer of Hardy and so he, too, mixed fictitious and real geography in his novel. Most of the plot of *Wolf Solent* is set in a fabricated townlet of Ramsgard in the county of Dorset. The setting is based on places which Powys knew from his own experience, having lived in Dorchester, studied in Sherborne and having had a grandmother in Weymouth.

Wolf Solent is centred on the life and love affairs of the main male character of the same name. The whole story is based on Wolf's character and his personal morals and beliefs. It is the first novel of Powys's Wessex novels, the others are *A Glastonbury Romance; Weymouth Sands* and *Maiden Castle*. The four novels are not connected plot-wise or character-wise. One thing they have in common is the fact that they are set in Hardy's South Wessex.

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[40] Powys, "Preface," VII.

Region and Creation of Wessex

The first part of this chapter is focused on an explanation of the term 'regional identity' and of a description of a regional novel. The second part contains several possible yet unconfirmed reasons why Thomas Hardy created a fictitious region of Wessex rather than writing about the real countryside of his home land.

Regional Identity

Keith Snell, an academic historian, asserts that the identity of a region is created by the social, cultural and ethnic distinctiveness of its inhabitants and the distinctiveness of its landscape. He states that regional fiction describes people living in the region, their lives, customs, social and blood relations and dialects, among other things. Snell also notes that usually regional fiction contains a detailed depiction of its setting and features characters of middle-class or working-class origin.[41] All of the mentioned aspects define the region, but they should not be considered as separate units, since they affect each other and complete the general picture of the identity of a region.

In addition, Snell's view on regional novels is directly applicable to Hardy's works:

> Many regional novels use region or place in crucially important ways, to explain or interpret, to develop characterisation, to indicate how character grows out of certain occupied localities, how people respond to particular circumstances and environments, to evoke good and evil through landscape contrasts, or to intensify mood or convey a sense of irony.[42]

In *The Three Strangers,* the Fennel family is used to living at an elevated domicile of Higher Crowstairs and knows that:

> The grand difficulty of housekeeping was an insufficiency of water; and a casual rainfall was utilized by turning out, as catchers, every utensil that the house contained. Some queer stories might be told of the contrivances for economy in suds and dish-waters that are absolutely necessitated in upland habitations during the droughts of summer.[43]

Therefore, as Snell observes, the Fennels respond to a rainfall by making use of the rain water either for drinking or for washing. In the same story, the region and especially its natural

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[41] K. D. M. Snell, "The Regional Novel: Themes for Interdisciplinary Research," in *The Regional Novel in Britain and Ireland, 1800–1990,* ed. K. D. M. Snell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1.

[42] K. D. M. Snell, "The Regional Novel," 35.

[43] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 8.

phenomena are utilised to express the mood of the story, as in the case when the first stranger, the escapee criminal, arrives at the cottage: "By the time that he had arrived abreast of the shepherd's premises the rain came down, or rather came along, with yet more determined violence."[44]

In Powys's case, Snell is correct in interpreting the regional fiction as a product of nostalgia, partial recollection, regret, recognition and reconciliation,[45] since Powys wrote about the south of England in which he grew up and which missed dearly while staying in the United States:

That smell of pigs' urine, mingled, just as it was a year ago, with the smell of the flowering hedge, gave him a thrill of delicious sadness, and all Dorset seemed gathered up into it. Little wayside cottages, fallen trees, stubble-fields, well-heads, duck-ponds, herds of cattle visioned through the frames of shed doors – all these things flooded his mind now with a strange sense of occult possession. They were only casual groupings of chance-offered objects, but as they poured pell-mell into his memory, …, he felt that something permanent and abiding out of such accidents would give him strength to face the ink-stained classroom – to face the days and days and days – without his 'mythology' and without Christie![46]

In conclusion, in both Hardy's and Powys's works nature and the landscape plays a part of an active agent of the story.

The Reason Behind Creation of Wessex

Many people believe that most writers embody the personality of a character they are writing about or that writing from first-hand experience is more credible than writing from one's imagination.[47] This is especially true of writers of regional literature. Thomas Hardy was for example inspired by folk tales, which he collected and tried to write down without any changes to them. In fact, in a preface to one of his collections of short stories, he makes a correction to one of his previously published stories, *The Withered Arm*, as he has been reminded by his friend that Rhoda Brooks, one of the main characters of the story, dreamt of an incubus that persecuted her during daylight and while being outside and not, as Hardy originally wrote, at night. The incubus even attacked Rhoda, so she threw it off of herself,

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[44] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 8.

[45] K. D. M. Snell, "The Regional Novel," 43.

[46] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 606–607.

[47] "Are life experiences crucial for a writer? Without much real life experience, can a writer write excellent books," Quora, date of publication October 10, 2014, https://www.quora.com/Are-life-experiences-crucial-for-a-writer-Without-much-real-life-experience-can-a-writer-write-excellent-books.

which resulted in the distinctive markings on its and her friend's arm. In the preface, Hardy therefore asks readers to:

> (…) correct the misrelation, which affords an instance of how our imperfect memories insensibly formalize the fresh originality of living fact – from whose shape they slowly depart, as machine-made castings depart by degrees from the sharp hand-work of the mould.[48]

In the preface, Hardy criticises human forgetfulness which is in his opinion inevitable and regrettably unavoidable. This determination to keep folk tales unchanged only proves Hardy's dedication to the truth and his appreciation for region and all that is connected to it, which can be seen also in his other works.

Furthermore, one could easily ask a question – why would Thomas Hardy create a fictional region, when he could have just as easily written about actual regions – and the answer can only be only guessed at. Suzanne Johnson Flynn, associate professor at Gettysburg College, states that the combination of sparse population and a lack of a railway station in Dorset in the south-west England meant that not much about the region was known to people. This meant an opportunity for Thomas Hardy to create his own region using common knowledge while drawing on both his personal experience and imagination. Suzanne Flynn also claims that the appeal of Hardy's works lays mainly in the topics which he chose to write about. He addressed many serious issues that were topical at that time, e.g., clash of science and religion and philosophy, social classes or the destructive effect of industrialisation on rural communities.[49]

One possible reason for Hardy's reluctance to write about the real south-west England could be explained via using an example of another author, namely Betty MacDonald. Betty MacDonald claimed in court that her novel, *The Egg and I,* was not entirely autobiographic, when she was being accused by her neighbours, the Bishop family, of writing a libellous characterisation of them in her novel. In the end, she was able to win her case. According to Paula Becker, author of Macdonald's biography, Betty's argument against the lawsuit was that "the only living people depicted in her book were herself and members of her family (…). She said she had not known the Bishops well and had never

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[48] Hardy, *Wessex Tales*, 6.

[49] "Hardy and the Creation of Wessex," Public Gettysburg, accessed January 14, 2018, http://public.gettysburg.edu/academics/english/hardy/land/wessex.html.

seen some of the plaintiffs until they appeared in court."[50] As a matter of fact, many other authors had the same problem as Betty MacDonald, such as Kathryn Stockett, whose name is mentioned in an article by Lianne Tan on how to avoid literary lawsuits by e.g. writing a disclaimer.[51] Therefore, it is hardly unbelievable that Thomas Hardy would change some aspects of his Wessex stories in order to avoid potential future problems.

Another, and more probably more plausible explanation is residing in the fact that Hardy simply wanted places 'relocated' in order to create better stories, or to provide more appropriate settings for his stories. One frequent feature of his stories is undertaking a journey. For this, Hardy sometimes invented places and fabricated the distances between them, in order for his characters to experience a long or a short journey. He uses the description of landscape and weather to intensify or communicate to the reader the atmosphere of the occasion. For example, in the *Withered Arm,* Rhoda and Gertrude travel to meet and consult an outcast, a man who could possibly cure Gertrude's arm. Their journey is physically demanding, since they have to:

> climb into the interior of this solemn country, which stood high above the rich alluvial soil they had left half-an-hour before. It was a long walk; thick clouds made the atmosphere dark, though it was as yet only early afternoon; and the wind howled dismally over the slopes of the heath.[52]

To conclude, Hardy's real reason for creation of Wessex remains a secret. However, there is one thing more important than the reason behind its creation, and that is that Hardy wrote his Wessex stories to change the general negative opinion of the Victorian society on the English countryside.

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[50] Paula Becker, *Looking for Betty MacDonald: The Egg, the Plague, Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle, and I* (University of Washington Press, 2017), 121–122.

[51] "Literary Lawsuits: Lessons in Publishing Law," Legal Vision, posted June 20, 2016, https://legalvision.com.au/literary-lawsuits-ii-lessons-in-publishing-law/.

[52] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 87.

Characters and Symbolism

This chapter provides an analysis of Hardy's and Powys's literary characters, who live in or temporarily stay in Wessex. Firstly, some of Hardy's characters are defined and described according to the theory of literary archetypes via analysing their behaviour, manner of speech and their opinions. Secondly, there is an in-depth analysis of Powys's main male character and his personal development throughout the book. Lastly, as several characters of Hardy's and Powys's Wessex have symbolic names which in some ways allude to their fate or personality, this chapter will also focus on symbolism hidden in names.

Hardy's Archetypes

Writer J. J. Jonas produced a definition of twelve archetypes which usually appear in literature. Her categorisation is based on a research by Carol S. Pearson on theories of psychologists such as C. G. Jung and James Hillman. Jonas's archetype is a series of distinctive aspects of personalities which define their behaviour, their goals and ambitions, their virtues and vices etc. The twelve archetypes are: the innocent, the orphan, the warrior, the caregiver, the seeker, the lover, the destroyer, the creator, the ruler, the magician, the sage and the jester.[53]

Some of those archetypes appear in Hardy's short stories. Firstly, the innocent, which is defined as a character who is loyal, trusting, naïve, hoping, faithful and sometimes oblivious. The innocent fears abandonment and wants to remain in safety. The innocent can be spotted in Hardy's *Melancholy Hussar*, and it is Matthäus Tina. He dislikes the army, has no interest in fighting and wants to be home in safety:

> 'I should have disappeared from the world some time ago if it had not been for two persons–my beloved, here, and my mother in Saarbrück. I hate the army. I care more for a minute of your company than for all the promotion in the world.'[54]

Tina is loyal to his home country, to his mother and to Phyllis. He is also naïve and optimistic, especially when he comes up with a plan to flee from the army and persuades Phyllis to go with him. His monologue starts with: "'I came here against my will; why should

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[53] "The Twelve Archetypes," Uiltexas, Accessed June 21, 2018, http://www.uiltexas.org/files/capitalconference/Twelve_Character_Archetypes.pdf.

[54] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 55.

I not escape?'"[55] then he proceeds to explain his plan of rowing away across the English Channel to a French coast, and ends with: "'The rest is easy, for I have saved money for the land journey, and can get a change of clothes. I will write to my mother, who will meet us on the way.'"[56] Matthäus is confident in his plan and thinks he will be finally happy and free, he is oblivious to the consequences if he were to be caught, and even denies the idea of failure in the simple statement that 'the rest is easy.'

Another archetype used in Hardy's Wessex is the seeker – Phyllis in the *Melancholy Hussar.* Jonas identifies the seeker as a perfectionist, who always seeks the 'right' solution. The seeker is always true to himself, but on the other side he flees from problems. Phyllis is torn between her love for the foreigner and her 'duty' towards her father and her promise to marry a man from a local and respected family. This indecision between her love and the 'right' solution is a typical behaviour of the seeker. Phyllis is true to her herself regarding her feelings, as written in this extract, which takes place after Phyllis's decision not to pursue her love and rather fulfil her promise: "But she knew well enough who had won her love. Without him her life seemed a dreary prospect." Phyllis's decision also results in one of the most heart-breaking passages of Hardy's short-stories: "her promise must be kept, and esteem must take the place of love. She would preserve her self-respect. She would stay at home, and marry him, and suffer."[57]

Third archetype which appears in Hardy's stories is the destroyer, which is partially similar in behaviour to Dr. Grove, Phyllis's father. The destroyer is characterised by self-destructive behaviour, such as addictions, compulsions or activities that undermine career success. He can become angry and harm others physically or mentally. Dr. Grove is described as a man, who abandoned his career, his medical practise, in order to have more time for his hobby of meditation and pondering about metaphysical questions. As the time goes, he becomes more and more secluded from society and more irritable. At one point, Phyllis realises that "her position in her father's house was growing irksome and painful in the extreme; his parental affection seemed to be quite dried up."[58] He is often angry with Phyllis for meeting with the hussar and at one point he tells her that she will move to her

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[55] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 56.

[56] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 56.

[57] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 60.

[58] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 56.

aunt's for the duration of the presence of the foreigner. He is unsupportive and makes Phyllis miserable, which nudges Phyllis into her primary decision to leave the country.

The last important character of *Melancholy Hussar,* Humphrey Gould, represents the archetype of the fool, or the jester. The jester tries to enjoy life and he trusts in the process. He lives in the moment and tends to be irresponsible, play cruel jokes or con artistry. Humphrey is engaged to Phyllis, and maintains the engagement in indifferent and disinterested letters. However, his letters sometimes imply that he does not regard the engagement as definite.[59] After several months he arrives at Phyllis's house just to tell her that he is already married to someone else and to ask Phyllis to put a good word for him in order to appease his father.

The fourth example of archetype is Rhoda who represents the orphan at the beginning of the *Withered Arm*, and gradually becomes the caregiver. She is at first obsessed with Gertrude and hopes to be back together with Lodge. She is victimised by the society for having an illegitimate son. She is pained by Lodge's ignorance of her and their son. She is also resilient and feels powerless in her situation as a lover replaced by a younger and more beautiful woman. Interestingly, Hardy's choice of words is very accurate and honest, since he describes Rhoda as "supplanted."[60] However, as the story continues and Rhoda gets to know Gertrude better, she suddenly realises that her judgement of Gertrude was biased and unfair, thinking that "this innocent young thing should have her blessing and not her curse."[61] Rhoda's character development is so profound, that even though she is convinced that she is the culprit who caused Gertrude's withered arm, she agrees to help Gertrude to find out who caused it and how to cure it. At that point, Gertrude is basically the only person in the neighbourhood who does not judge or avoid her. "Again the dread seized her that something to do with her fierce act in the dream might be revealed, and her character in the eyes of the most useful friend she had ever had be ruined irretrievably."[62] Although Rhoda's feelings are of utter dread, fear and sadness of potentially losing her only friendly companion in life, she decides to help Gertrude nonetheless in order to ease her suffering. This change from obsessed and judgemental, irritable woman to a caring selfless friend is very poignant.

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[59] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 53.

[60] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 77.

[61] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 79–80.

[62] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 86.

On the other hand, Gertrude is progressing and evolving in the opposite direction as her 'ailment' worsens. She becomes the warrior, a person who is determined to confront his weakness or fault. The warrior often tries to reach his goal using immoral and unethical means. Gertrude, in order to regain her beauty, becomes more and more desperate in her actions. She learns that what might cure her ailment is called a blood-turning, which is a process in which the afflicted person touches the neck of a recently hanged person. In the end, she is ruthless even in her nightly prayers, thinking: "O Lord, hang some guilty or innocent person soon!"[63] Hardy aptly described her misery and desperation in one sentence: "It is no overstatement to say that by the end of the last-named month Gertrude well-nigh longed for the death of a fellow-creature."[64] And when the hangman told her that he always waits with the execution in case a reprieve comes, her reaction was "O–a reprieve–I hope not!"[65] She did not care whether the hanged person was innocent or guilty, she was selfish because she wanted to regain the affection of her husband.

The last analysed archetype is the sage. It is an archetype which appears often in Hardy's short-stories. In *The Withered Arm,* it is the Conjuror Trendle. He is an old man living in solitude and seclusion from society and who allegedly possesses some supernatural powers. He, as the sages are prone to do, denies the fact to avoid deception. Trendle is sceptic towards his wisdom. He is knowledgeable and wise, though he remains sceptical towards his apparent prowess, as can be observed in this exclamation: "'You think too much of my powers!'"[66] and in this passage and Trendle's joking statement:

> Indeed, he affected not to believe largely in his own powers, and when warts that had been shown him for cure miraculously disappeared–which it must be owned they infallibly did–he would say lightly, 'O, I only drink a glass of grog upon 'em at your expense–perhaps it's all chance.'[67]

The irony with which he dismisses the idea of possessing any special power is actually Hardy's own opinion on the supernatural.

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[63] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 96.

[64] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 96.

[65] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 102.

[66] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 93.

[67] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 88.

Wolf Solent in *Wolf Solent*

There are certain differences between how Powys and Hardy introduce characters. Hardy usually describes them through their actions, their occupation, their upbringing and also describes the landscape of the place they live in as a symbolic reason for their behaviour. Short-stories provide only limited space for establishing a deep characterisation, so he had to be precise and write only the essential or basic information about the character's past, their dreams and fears. His description and narration is unbiased and matter-of-fact.

On the other hand, Powys introduces his characters through the eyes of the main character, Wolf Solent. Wolf himself is introduced via his emotions, opinions and manner of speaking and thinking. He is an introverted meditative man, just as Powys himself, who is of course biased and sometimes prejudiced when meeting other people, as is the case of his encounter with Selena. Wolf's mother often defamed Selena: "Wolf had heard his mother for twenty-five years utter airy sarcasms at her expense,"[68] and so he has an inaccurate opinion on Selena's character and appearance. When they finally meet in person, he is at first loyal to his mother's view, maybe unconsciously viewing Selena in negative way, as is evident from this excerpt: "one marked quality of her ugliness was the dusky sallowness of her cheeks combined with the ghastly pallor of her upper lip, which projected from her face very much as certain funguses project from the brown bark of a dead tree,"[69] and "she can't be able to meet a single stranger anywhere without giving them a shock like this."[70]As they spend more time together, however, he corrects the opinion and actually thinks that Selena's personality and his mother's description of it differ in so many ways, that it makes him "wonder if all women, whether flippant or otherwise, were personal to the point of insanity in their judgements of one another. What his mother had told him was not even a caricature of Selena Gault. It referred to another person altogether."[71] This example shows that Wolf was overcome with prejudice at first, but then he was able to see through this false image in his head and appreciate Selena for her intellect, her caring nature and her respectability.

Another thing in which Powys and Hardy differ is goals and ambitions of their characters. Hardy's characters live in pursue of some unachievable desire, usually they want to be married and loved and happy. However, this desire for happiness often clashes with

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[68] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 13.

[69] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 15.

[70] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 12.

[71] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 20.

something that is superior to it – be it some kind of moral restraint, or their duty and responsibility towards family, as is shown in the *Melancholy Hussar*. In contrast, Powys's characters only want to enjoy life to the fullest, they want to live in the moment. One example which sums this up is of Wolf's father, who in his final hours told everyone who would listen to him that: "'Christ! I've enjoyed my life!'"[72] Powys's characters have no desire for status or money, since many of them are outcasts of the Victorian society, such as the character of Mr. Urquhart, who is a homosexual.

Wolf has a credo which he expresses at the very beginning: "'I don't care whether I make money. I don't care whether I get fame. I don't care whether I leave any work behind me when I die. All I want is certain sensations!'"[73] Wolf not only revels in the 'status quo' that is his impenetrable life and his dream is to enjoy life just as his father apparently did. Wolf is partially a fatalist, as is evident in this example: "not only had he no ambition for action; he had no ambition for any sort of literary or intellectual achievement."[74]

A crucial insight into Wolf's character provides an understanding of the series of events which follow his departure from London. In London, he lives a furtive, private life, he is isolated and secluded from society and from reality. His imaginary world plays a major role in his life, as he is for example imagining talking to his dead father:

> He looked down into William Solent's empty eye-sockets, and the empty eye-sockets looked back at him. Steadily, patiently, indifferently they looked back; and between the head without a nose looking up and the head with so prominent a nose looking down, there passed a sardonic wordless dialogue. 'So be it,' the son said to himself. 'I won't forget. Whether there are plantains or whether there aren't plantains, the universe shan't fool me.' 'Fool me; fool me,' echoed the fleshless skull from bellow.[75]

This horrific image of his dead father follows him throughout the story, and he sometimes imagines 'conversations' between the two of them.

Moreover, Wolf is a person who lives his life partially in the privacy of his own mind due to his 'mythology.' The 'mythology' is his device which he uses as a way of sinking into his soul, a meditative state which he was capable of since his early childhood, much to his mother's disapproval: "his mother had often rallied him about it in her light-hearted way, and had applied to these trances, or these fits of absent-mindedness, an amusing but rather indecent

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[72] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 19.

[73] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 7.

[74] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 8.

[75] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 18.

nursery name."[76] Wolf is introverted and meditative, and he unknowingly predicts the conclusion of the novel at its very beginning. As he travels to Ramsgard to start a new life, he wonders and thinks about the upcoming change. He is used to live in a state that almost no real thing can penetrate, that is the reason why Wolf ponders whether the change "would be able to do what no outward events had yet done – break up this mirror of half-reality and drop great stones of real reality – drop them and lodge them – hard, brutal, material stones – down there among those dark waters and that mental foliage."[77] The dark waters allude to the 'still' state of his mind, very calm and placid, undisturbed. Additionally, the mental foliage alludes to a hedge or an imagined barrier between Wolf and the real world, his mind is his safe refuge. At one point, he realises that he is only 'half-living,' thinking that "perhaps I've never known reality as other human beings know it (…). My life has been industrious, monotonous, patient. I've carried my load like a camel."[78] Wolf is scared of something or someone breaking his mental barrier of 'safety', and tries to calm himself down, thinking that: "What if this new reality, when it does come, smashes up my whole secret life? But perhaps it won't be like a rock or stone…perhaps it won't be like a tank or lorry or an aeroplane…"[79]

However, his fears are proved to be right at the end, when his inability to decide or to resolve the chaos that his life has become results in his absolutely passive acceptance of fate. He simply continues to live and the only change from his former self is that he has lost his ability of 'mythology' which provided him with a safe shelter from reality. His 'mythology' was his way of life, his inviolable existence. At the end, Wolf finally understands the misery of life, rather than fears it as he did at the beginning. He imagines this life as "meeting Jesus Christ in the shape of the man on the Waterloo steps,"[80] where the man on the Waterloo steps is an unknown person whom Wolf met once and whose appearance struck Wolf as absolutely devastated and miserable. The fact that Wolf imagines Jesus as miserable suggests that he thinks life and reality is unescapable and must be continued even though there is no joy in it. Wolf then tells his imaginary Jesus that he's living a secret life, implying that he still tries to run to the safety of his imagination when faced with difficulties, shouting at Jesus that his secret life consists of "running away from the horrors!"[81] Afterwards, he quickly calms down, consoling

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[76] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 7.

[77] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 9.

[78] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 9.

[79] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 9.

[80] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 598.

[81] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 598.

himself: "It's all right. It's absolutely all right."[82] His life is crumbling and yet he clings to the only straw of hope which he can find, and that is the calmness and peace of nature, of which he is extremely conscious and to which he is inwardly connected. As he is walking in the nature, he sees an immense field of buttercups and he visualises it as:

> stretching from Glastonbury to Melbury Bub and from Ramsgard to Blacksod, as if it were itself one of the living personalities of his life. 'It is a god!' he cried in his heart, and he felt as if titanic hands, from the horizon of this 'field of Saturn,' were being lifted up to salute the mystery of life and the mystery of death.[83]
>
> He avoids facing his problems until the end of the story and so the novel ends with an

anti-climax, Wolf's bathetic closure in form of a thought that: "'I shall have a cup of tea.'"[84]

Symbolism in Names

Hardy's characters sometimes have symbolic names, and they usually have a biblical connotation. Those names allude either to their personality, their future or past. The following examples of meanings behind names are taken from an online source concerning the meanings and origin of given names created in 1996 by Mike Campbell.

Firstly, Hardy's 'Gertrude' is a name of Germanic origin meaning a spear of strength.[85] This could be an indication of her determination and strength of mind and character, as Trendle remarks when he explains the blood-turning: "'There is only one chance of doing it known to me. It has never failed in kindred afflictions,–that I can declare. But it is hard to carry out, and especially for a woman.'"[86] After which she simply asks for more information, then quickly makes up her mind and is purposeful and resolute in her decision to try absolutely anything to improve her situation.

Secondly, the name 'Job' in *The Tradition of Eighteen Hundred and Four* is of a Hebrew origin and means persecuted or hated.[87] It is a name of a man in the Book of Job in the Old Testament. The Biblical Job was a righteous man who endured many hardships while tested by God. This can be understood as a parallel to Hardy's 'Job', who is a sergeant in the Sixty-first

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[82] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 598.

[83] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 612.

[84] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 622.

[85] "Gertrude," Behind the name, accessed May 28, 2018, https://www.behindthename.com/name/gertrude.

[86] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 93.

[87] "Job," Behind the name, accessed May 28, 2018, https://www.behindthename.com/name/job.

foot[88] and who actually sees and overhears Napoleon Bonaparte on the English coast planning a disembarkment and a surprise attack of his army. Afterwards, Job feels compelled to inform his officers as soon as possible. Unfortunately, since Napoleon's army never came to England, his officers probably did not believe him, and neither did anybody else, as Hardy writes: "Thanks to the incredulity of the age his tale has been seldom repeated."[89]

Similarly, in the *Melancholy Hussar* Hardy seems to have been especially careful while choosing the names. Firstly, there is Humphrey's surname 'Gould'. This family name is possibly an allusion to Humphrey's character, as he desired to have a higher status, as is suggested in the following example:

> The king, as aforesaid, was at the neighbouring town, where he had taken up his abode at Gloucester Lodge; and his presence in the town naturally brought many county people thither. Among these idlers–many of whom professed to have connections and interests with the Court–was one Humphrey Gould.[90]

The surname could also be ironically given due to Humphrey's poverty, as is neatly expressed here: "the said Gould being as poor as a crow."[91]

A second name of the *Melancholy Hussar* with a symbolic meaning is 'Phyllis.' The story behind the name is that 'Phyllis' from Greek mythology committed suicide out of her love for Demophon, and afterwards was turned into a tree.[92] This name has several important meanings in Hardy's universe. Phyllis is of course suffering after the execution of her love, which is even hinted at at the very beginning: "Her life was prolonged twelve years after the day of her narration," the verb Hardy chose is particularly interesting, since it implies that she only continued living, without any joy, and that an earlier arrival of death would have been a mercy to her soul. This is also a connotation to the tree from the mythology, meaning that Phyllis's whole life was afterwards forlorn and apathetic, much as the tree which obviously has no emotions. Neither of them is concerned about the world around them, the tree growing wherever it wants and Phyllis uncaring about society.

Last, and presumably the most conspicuous is a character of 'Christoph,' Matthäus's friend and fellow soldier. The name has a Greek origin, its meaning is 'the bearer of Christ.'[93]

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[88] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 36.

[89] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 40–41.

[90] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 47.

[91] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 48.

[92] "Phyllis," Behind the name, accessed May 28, 2018, https://www.behindthename.com/name/phyllis.

[93] "Christopher," Behind the name, accessed May 28, 2018, https://www.behindthename.com/name/christopher.

Christians created a legend about a Saint Christopher, a patron of travellers, which says that he was a giant who helped travellers across a river that was dangerous to ford. One day, a child came to St. Christopher, asking for help. As St. Christopher carried the child, he felt the child's weight grow immensely. When he reached the other shore, the child revealed himself as Jesus and told St. Christopher that when he carried him, he also carried the weight of the whole world on his shoulders.[94]

Hardy's Christoph is a man whose plot-wise appearance is only when plotting and implementing his and Matthäus's plan to desert from the army and return home to safety using a boat to sail across the English Channel. The similarity of their actions in helping others across water is clear. The resemblance of St. Christopher and Hardy's Christoph is even more pronounced with his full name: Christopher Bless.

On the other hand, Powys's characters usually do not have symbolic names. The only exception is the main character Wolf Solent, whose name provokes reader into thinking of the namesake animal, which is similar to Wolf in its solitude and non-binding nature, and also provides a connection between Wolf and nature. Furthermore, Wolf's surname could be a wordplay on 'solitude' and 'sole.' There is also a character named 'Darnley Otter,' although there is no apparent connection to the animal. Maybe Powys was just amused by the idea that "if it was to be in Darnley Otter's company that Wolf's free hours were to pass, they would pass very harmoniously indeed,"[95] or by this dialogue: "'How is Mr. Valley, Roger?' he asked, 'I haven't seen him since before the Otter wedding."[96] As a matter of fact, after moving to New York to a house at Phudd Bottom, Powys jokingly named a hill under which his abode was situated 'Mr. Phudd.'[97] Powys often liked to give silly or nonsensical names to characters and settings. He even liked to point it out, as is the case of the three cats owned by Selena Gault in *Wolf Solent*.[98]

Selena Gault becomes a mother-figure to Wolf only after their first meeting, and it is partially because of her intellect and partially of her respectability and demeanour. She owns three cats, a grey, a black and a white. Their names are Matthew, Luke and Mark. When she tells Wolf those names, she adds with a laugh that "'I've never had a John (…) and I never

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[94] "St. Christopher," Catholic, accessed June 2, 2018, https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=36.

[95] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 23.

[96] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 603.

[97] Powys-society, "Descents of Memory, The Life of John Cowper Powys."

[98] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 15.

will.'"[99] The allusion to the four evangelists is apparent. What is more interesting, though, is the fact that Selena – and Powys – separated the evangelists according to the well-known fact that Matthew, Luke and Mark described Jesus as a man, though a son of God. They wrote of his deeds as miracles, and of him as a messiah. Their Gospels are called synoptic, whereas John's Gospel is called theological, since he describes Jesus as a God walking among people in human form, a God who performs miracles which John calls signs of God's presence on Earth.

In conclusion, there are many symbolic references in Hardy's and Powys's works, which only proves their intellectual side of their personalities and their love of picturesque depiction.

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[99] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 15.

Wessex and Its Landscape

There are many differences between Hardy's and Powys's Wessex. Firstly, Hardy's setting is at the beginning of the 19th century, before the peak of the modernisation during the Victorian era. On the other hand, Powys's setting is of Great Britain at the turn of the 19th century. This means that Powys's characters experience the change of industrialisation first-hand, and this theme is constantly recurring. The difference is that Hardy chose to write about pre-industrial times in order to ameliorate the countryside in the eyes of the Victorian society whereas Powys wanted to point out the destructive and dangerous nature of the new inventions and modernisation by writing about their unecological features.

Secondly, their appellation of places in their stories is also approached differently. Powys usually used the real names of cities and counties, especially of those which were of little or no importance for the characters in his novel. Such is the case of places through which Wolf travels on his journey to Ramsgard. Powys used the real West of England Main Line from London to Exeter as well as the real names of places in which the train stopped.

The primary setting of Powys's *Wolf Solent* is called 'Ramsgard' and it is modelled after Sherborne, in which he spent much of his childhood. In contrast to Powys's partial usage of real names, Hardy created the whole area of Wessex and placed the setting of almost all his works in it. Particularly interesting is Hardy's choice of the names of Wessex locations. Ever since Hardy's creation of Wessex, people have been interested in its geography. There exist many sketches and maps, some of which are published in the printed version of his novels, which attempted to locate the towns and hamlets of Hardy's works on a map, based on their description and distances between them. Hardy himself authored some of the maps. Those maps helped other people who authored studies centred on the places of Hardy's Wessex and their real-life counterparts. Even nowadays, his readers are still puzzled as to the supposed model towns for Hardy's locations. Therefore, there are many lists that try to match real and invented names. One of the lists, provided by a website about Dorset, suggests that many of the fictional names are actually wordplays on real town names. As an illustration, Preston is Hardy's Creston; Tintagel is Hardy's Dundagel; Evershot is his Evershead; Bere Regis is Kingsbere in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*; Hazelbury Bryan is Nuttlebury etc.[100] At the same time, S. Gatrell writes in *Thomas Hardy's Vision of Wessex* that "we know now that Hardy was visualising

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[100] "Wessex Novel, Placenames," Dorsetshire, last modified August 5, 2014, http://www.dorsetshire.com/hardy/hardy_placenames.html.

Weymouth when writing of Creston."[101] On the other hand, many sources agree that Hardy's Casterbridge is an image of Dorchester or that Mellstoke is in fact called Stinsford.[102] Steve Wallis even wrote a book with enclosed photos of the counterparts of the places of Hardy's works. Wallis seems to be relatively confident that his information is correct. For example, he included photo of Blandford Forum, which he pairs with Hardy's Shottsford Forum.[103] There are many towns and hamlets in Hardy's short-stories, however, their names are not crucial to the story, so they often remain unnamed, as is the case in the *Melancholy Hussar and the German Legion:* "the King chose to take the baths yearly at the sea-side watering-place a few miles to the south,"[104] in which the exact location of the sea-side resort remains unknown and giving it a name is avoided throughout the story: "Yet all the while King George and his court were at his favourite sea-side resort, not more than five miles off."[105] However, it can be deduced that the story takes place during the reign of king George III who, according to Rachel Knowles, often visited the sea-side resort of Weymouth in Dorset.[106] Generally speaking, although the settings of Hardy's Wessex stories are undoubtedly of great interest to some enthusiasts, the names of individual towns and hamlets are not so important plot-wise as the distances between them and the landscape of the countryside surrounding them.

To conclude, Hardy usually invented names of towns and hamlets. In case he wanted to use a real town as a model for his Wessex town, he too changed its name. This way he invented Casterbridge, which is based on the real town of Dorchester in Dorset and which is used as a setting for the end of *The Withered Arm* and as the principal setting of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* novel as well as the short-story *A Changed Man*.[107] Casterbridge is also used as a destination for the second stranger in *The Three Strangers.*[108] Similarly, Anglebury is

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[101] Simon Gatrell, *Thomas Hardy's Vision of Wessex* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 5.

[102] "Thomas Hardy and Dorset," The World Travels, theworldtravels, accessed May 12, 2018, https://www.thewordtravels.com/thomas-hardy-and-dorset.html.

[103] Steve Wallis, *Thomas Hardy's Dorset Through Time* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2013), https://books.google.cz/books?id=XDOoAwAAQBAJ&pg=PT113&lpg=PT113&dq=hardy's+towns&source=bl &ots=GJC8LkTTvr&sig=xTe8qgQmaW7X9flFeOQw2Axzqw8&hl=cs&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi-7_CN4_HbAhUMG5oKHb34Ds4Q6AEIWzAJ#v=onepage&q=blandford&f=false.

[104] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 46.

[105] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 47.

[106] "George III in Weymouth," Regency History, posted July 27, 2012, https://www.regencyhistory.net/2012/07/george-iii-in-weymouth.html.

[107] Hardy, *A Changed Man,* 6.

[108] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 12.

mentioned at the beginning of *The Withered Arm,*[109] and is supposedly modelled after Wareham Town in Dorset. On the other hand, Powys does not hide the fact that his literary locations are associated with their real-life counterparts. He explains in the preface that the main locations of his novel are modelled after Sherborne, Yeovil, Dorchester and Weymouth.[110] Additionally, in *Wolf Solent* are mentions of towns such as Swanage, Lulworth and Poole,[111] which do exist and are named identically.

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[109] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 69.

[110] Powys, "Preface," V.

[111] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* I.

Important Features

This chapter deals with some of the features associated with Hardy's and Powys's writing. Some of the typical features of Hardy's Wessex stories include the topic of coincidence and seclusion whereas Powys rather focused on the tenacity of nature and he enjoyed incorporating animal metaphors into his narration. Furthermore, both of them addressed prejudice, passivity and fatalism of their characters. They also had the same opinion on the dangers and negative impact of industrialisation.

Firstly, just as Powys focused on the self-imposed mental seclusion of Wolf Solent, Hardy wrote about the involuntary mental seclusion as well as physical seclusion. The combination of the two is probably best demonstrated on the character of Rhoda in *The Withered Arm*, who is ostracised by society for giving birth to an illegitimate child. The only one who is willing to talk to her is ironically Gertrude, whom Rhoda cannot stand at the beginning. Rhoda's physical seclusion only deepens the feeling of loneliness and isolation. When she goes home for the evening with other milkmaids, her "course lay apart from that of the others, to a lonely spot high above the water-meads, and not far from the border of Egdon Heath, whose dark countenance was visible in the distance."[112]

Furthermore, the topic of landscape and nature is undeniably connected with animals. Surprisingly, animals do not feature often in Hardy's works, and when they do, their importance is only in the picturesque portrayal of the countryside. On the other hand, *Wolf Solent* is abundant with metaphors likening animals to various things. Powys seems to be almost obsessed with animal metaphors in this novel. His metaphors are usually vividly described, such as the case of the earth likened to a frog: "…an image of the whole round earth! And he saw it bleeding and victimized, like a smooth-bellied, vivisected frog."[113] Another representative example is of Wolf's emotions likened to a snake: "he felt himself watching this other self, this leaping giant, with the positive satisfaction of a hooded snake, thrusting out a flickering forked tongue from coils that shimmered in the sun."[114] Animals are present even in names of some of the characters like Wolf or Darnley Otter.

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[112] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 70.

[113] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 4.

[114] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 5.

Hardy's Fate and Coincidence

To begin with, although there is a difference between fate and coincidence, in Hardy's works the two are closely related and usually combined. Fate is usually defined as a result of an event or series of events. The key phrase which can be applied to fate is that an action is always followed by a reaction. On the other hand, a literary coincidence is a plot device through which – in Hardy's works – the unavoidable fate is realised. The trouble with coincidence is usually to be found in its plausibility or probability. Some authors use coincidence out of shear laziness, to avoid thinking up a reasonable explanation why something is happening where there is none. Therefore, some coincidences feel forced. However, Hardy's combination of fate and coincidence is well thought-through and even if the event seems at first as if it is forced, once readers start to think about the events that preceded it, they will have to acknowledge that Hardy's fateful event, which is sometimes misinterpreted as coincidence, can have in fact its conditions hidden in the subtext. Hardy uses coincidence as a clever plot device which introduces a radical change in the expected direction of the story and sets in motion the 'wheels of fate'.

To demonstrate, an example could be taken from *The Three Strangers,* where three strangers arrive at the same cottage on the same night. All of their lives, although they are not aware of it, are entangled in one way or other. The first stranger is an escapee criminal who was sentenced to be hanged the next day. The second stranger was the hangman who was on his way to Casterbridge to hang the escapee. The third was a brother of the criminal who wanted to say goodbye to him. So far, the plot of *The Three Strangers* seems to be ill-conceived and implausible. However, one must consider the fact that the cottage is situated nearby a crossing of two paths, one of which leads to the county town Casterbridge, as is said in this part of the story: "the only reason for its precise situation seemed to be the crossing of two footpaths at right angles hard by,"[115] This means that all travellers had to walk by the cottage.

The second reason why the strangers met in the cottage is that there was no light to illuminate the treacherous and dangerous path which led across hills and valleys, and a person who was not familiar with the landscape could easily get lost in the darkness or get hurt. This is described at the end of the story, when all men go searching for the supposed criminal:

> They descended in all directions down the hill, and straightway several of the party fell into the snare set by Nature for all misguided midnight ramblers over this part of the cretaceous formation. The 'lanchets', or flint slopes, which belted the escarpment at intervals of a dozen yards, took the less cautious ones

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[115] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 3.

unawares, and losing their footing on the rubbly steep they slid sharply downwards, the lanterns rolling from their hands to the bottom, and there lying on their sides till the horn was scorched through.[116]

Thirdly and most importantly, rain was pouring down on that fateful night, which made the thought of resting in the warmness of the cosy cottage very tempting. This is the coincidence of the story, the unpredictable occurrence, and it is no surprise that it took form of an uncontrollable natural phenomenon:

> The level rainstorm smote walls, slopes, and hedges like the clothyard shafts of Senlac and Crecy. Such sheep and outdoor animals as had no shelter stood with their buttocks to the winds; while the tails of little birds trying to roost on some scraggy thorn were blown inside-out like umbrellas.[117]

Of course, writing a plausible combination of fate and coincidence can be tricky. Even Hardy sometimes could not provide a satisfactory explanation for some cases. Such is probably the case of *Melancholy Hussar,* where Phyllis and Matthäus decide to run away to Saarbrück. They arrange a secret meeting and on that evening Phyllis arrives there first. Unpredictably, Phyllis's fiancée Humphrey in a coach almost passes by her on his way to her house, but then he stops nearby. He is accompanied 'conveniently' by a friend, with whom he starts talking about going to Phyllis's and bringing her a gift, while the two of them wait for a man who will take them to their destination. As Phyllis listens to her fiancé, she realises that she needs to return home because she owes Humphrey the courtesy which he showed to her by believing in her innocence and fidelity. The conversation of the two friends is as follows:

> 'Have you got her present safe?' 'Phyllis's? O, yes. It is in this trunk. I hope it will please her.' 'Of course it will. What woman would not be pleased with such a handsome peace-offering?' 'Well – she deserves it. I've treated her rather badly. But she has been in my mind these last two days much more than I should care to confess to everybody.'[118]

This coincidence is peculiar and it completely changes the ending of the story. Of course, after overhearing their discussion Phyllis thinks that Humphrey still wants to marry her, despite his lack of passion. She returns home, only to find out that he brought her a gift of piece-offering in order to take back his marriage proposal, since he is already married to someone else, and also to persuade Phyllis to help him reconcile with his father. The bitter conclusion of the story is then even more pronounced when Phyllis's love is captured and executed.

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[116] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 24.

[117] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 4.

[118] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 59.

In general, landscape is an essential part of Hardy's stories, as it majorly influences the lives of the people living there and provides an opportunity for coincidence, which results in either positive or negative outcome. To elaborate, as has been mentioned above, Hardy uses landscape and nature as a phenomenon which cannot be tamed, and so it can be unpredictable. For example, it can hurt people if they are careless, as is the case of *The Three Strangers.*[119] On the other hand, Powys usually describes nature as an agent which can only improve things, e.g. when he describes the workhouse: "The edifice was rather less gloomy than such erections usually are, owing to the fact that some indulgent authority had permitted its façade to be overgrown with Virginia creeper."[120] This is a major difference between their approach to nature and landscape of the setting, since Powys describes nature as indestructible in its perseverance, even when faced with the modernisation and "tyrannous machinery"[121] of the industrialisation.

The Approach to Industrialisation and Modernisation

Hardy's and Powys's disapproval of scientific development, new innovations and technologies was bordering on disfavour, which became evident especially in the *Wolf Solent* novel, in which Wolf suddenly launched a lengthy diatribe against modern civilisation in the middle of a history lesson.[122] This sentiment towards modernisation is repeated many times throughout the novel, but probably most vividly at a moment Wolf sees a modern invention polluting the air, when he travels away from a city to a countryside:

> (…) he caught sight of a powerful motor-lorry clanging its way along a narrow road, leaving a cloud of dust behind it, and the sight of this thing gave his thought a new direction. There arose before him, complicated and inhuman, like a moving tower of instruments and appliances, the monstrous Apparition of Modern Invention.
> He felt as though, with aeroplanes spying down upon every retreat like ubiquitous vultures, with the lanes invaded by ironclad motors like colossal beetles, with no sea, no lake, no river free from throbbing, thudding engines, the one thing most precious of all in the world was being steadily assassinated.[123]

This example is exactly how Powys and Hardy viewed the industrialisation, disapproving and almost hateful, both rightfully afraid that the countryside would deteriorate

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[119] Hardy, *Wessex Tales,* 24.

[120] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 16–17.

[121] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 4.

[122] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 2.

[123] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 3.

in response to the glorious and exalted modernisation. Furthermore, Powys's Wolf puts himself in opposition to the "tyrannous machinery invented by other men,"[124] because somebody has to be defiant. Wolf imagines himself as a protective god-like figure, an important fighter for the betterment of humankind.

Hardy's and Powys's shared dislike of the progressive society was the crucial main force which drove them to write about Wessex, its countryside and people living lives of 'simple' pre-industrial times. Contrary to Hardy's love for countryside in which he lived almost his whole life, Powys felt nostalgia for his home in Dorset most keenly when he was abroad in the United States, and so his first Wessex novel is a work of nostalgia and homesickness combined with an admirable memory.

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[124] Powys, *Wolf Solent,* 4.

Conclusion

The similarity of Wessex in the selected literary works of Thomas Hardy and John Cowper Powys is not well-known, mainly due to the fact that Powys as an author is sadly not very famous. Be that as it may, Powys's Wessex novels bear many resemblances to Hardy's short-stories. One of the similarities of their narration is its conclusion. Even though both authors had different opinions on what is their character's goal or ambition in life, their characters nevertheless end up unhappy and their dreams remain unfulfilled.

However, not only their works are similar. Their lives and opinions were alike. For example, their shared disapproval of industrialisation and Victorian morality, which led both of them to write either subtly hinted or blatant criticism on either of those topics. Both of them viewed nature as a 'superior' agent which is uncontrollable and unpredictable. They exalted it and put emphasis on its importance in the lives of their literary characters, especially on the ways it could affect their fates.

One crucial difference between their views on nature is that Powys wrote about its influence on characters more on the level of spiritual or inward connection, whereas Hardy viewed nature and landscape as a principal uncontrollable agent which can change lives of his characters for the better or for worse.

Even though both of the analysed authors were born in the United Kingdom and chose to write about the same region, Powys spent a considerable part of his life in abroad, that's why in his novel readers can sense his feelings of nostalgia and homesickness. Hardy's nostalgia derives mainly from missing the pre-industrial state of the south-west English countryside.

Another key point of this paper lies in the description of some of Hardy's and Powys's characters. The major difference is that characters of Hardy's short-stories rarely change because a writer of a short-story does not usually have enough space to develop his characters or provide more detailed insight into their personalities, depending on the length of the short-story. However, Powys's novel provides more space for character development.

In conclusion, the works of both Hardy and Powys feature the signs of naturalism and critical realism. They both described the same region of the United Kingdom which they created in order to express their opinions on life, religion, society, industrialisation, marriage, happiness. All in all, they both believed that even though life is harsh, it is worth living, and this thought undeniably penetrated into the characters of their works.

Resumé

Cílem této bakalářské práce je analyzovat Hardyho a Powysovo styl a formu psaní a porovnat je. Tato analýza se hlavně zaměřuje na postavy figurující ve vybraných jednotlivých dílech, jejich názory a chování. Dále klasifikuje literární postavy na základě teorie archetypů. Práce analyzuje způsob líčení krajiny a přírody Wessexu ve vztahu k jednání a charakterovému vývoji postav. Také se zabývá odlišnostmi, které lze nalézt v dílech zmiňovaných autorů.

Tato bakalářská práce je rozdělena na dvě hlavní části, teoretickou a praktickou. Každá z těchto částí je dále rozdělena na tři kapitoly. Teoretická část je hlavně zaměřena na zařazení obou autorů do historického a literárního kontextu, a také na charakteristiku regionální literatury a definici regionální identity. Praktická část vychází z rozboru několika vybraných povídek ze sbírek Thomase Hardyho, a porovnává je s románem *Wolf Solent* od Johna Cowpera Powyse.

První kapitola se věnuje zařazení Thomase Hardyho a Johna C. Powyse do historického kontextu jejich rodné země v souvislosti s jejich literární tvorbou. Hlavní zaměření této kapitoly je na průběh průmyslové revoluce a její dopad na životy lidí na venkově. Důraz je kladen také na důvod, proč Hardy vytvořil krajinu, která je nedotčená vynálezy 19. století. Tato práce také vysvětluje, že na Johna C. Powyse neměl jeho dlouhodobý pobyt ve Spojených Státech nijak velký vliv, kromě toho, že se mu stýskalo po domově, a tak napsal svůj román *Wolf Solent,* jehož děj se odehrává na venkovském jihu Anglie. Oba autory fascinovalo téma přírody a její vliv na lidi, kteří v ní žijí. Také oba kritizovali striktní morální zásady Viktoriánské společnosti, mezi nimi například falešné chování a přetvářka, nebo také omezující přístup společnosti k ženám.

Druhá kapitola zevrubně seznamuje čtenáře s literární kariérou obou autorů a jejich zařazení do literárního směru. Také vyjmenovává některé z autorů, kteří sdíleli jejich názory na společnost nebo na industrializaci.

Ve třetí kapitole je sestavena definice termínu regionální identity a jsou vyjmenovány různé literární prvky, které si člověk spojí s regionální literaturou, jako je například detailní popis krajiny a způsob života jejích obyvatel. Určitou roli hraje i determinismus, jakým způsobem příroda dokáže ovlivnit životy obyvatel. Důležitá část Hardyho i Powysova líčení je nekontrolovatelná podstata přírody, která způsobuje náhody mnohdy vedoucí k fatálním důsledkům, protože příroda v jejich dílech není pasivní ale aktivní činitel. Dále se kapitola zabývá možnými důvody, proč Hardy vytvořil Wessex a proč ho Powys použil pro svá díla.

Jedním z důvodů je snaha o zachování krajiny nedotčené průmyslovým vývojem a pokus o změnu názoru Viktoriánské společnosti, která se dívala na venkov s opovržením. Dalším možným důvodem je snaha vyhnout se případnému právnímu napadení v souvislosti s konkrétním místem nebo jeho obyvateli.

Kapitolou *Charaktery a symbolismus* začíná praktická neboli analytická část práce. Tato kapitola je rozdělena na tři podkapitoly, první z nich se věnuje archetypům, druhá poskytuje podrobný rozbor hlavní postavy románu *Wolf Solent,* a poslední je věnována symbolice jmen. První podkapitola nejprve kategorizuje Hardyho postavy na základě teorie archetypů podle J. J. Jonase, který rozděluje základní typy na dvanáct kategorií podle chování a charakterových rysů těchto postav. V kapitole jsou uvedeny příklady některých archetypů ve vybraných dílech Hardyho povídek, jako jsou například pečovatel, sirotek, mudrc a bojovník. Následující podkapitola je věnována charakteru Wolfa Solenta, jehož lze popsat jako introvertního muže, který si vytvořil způsob vnímání reality, kterou nazývá mytologie a pomocí které se vyrovnává s realitou. V průběhu románu o tuto schopnost přijde, a aby se s tím vyrovnal, tak svou pozornost obrací k přírodě, kterou intenzivně vnímá všemi svými smysly.

V podkapitole která se zabývá skrytým symbolismem ve jménech se potenciální čtenář může dozvědět, že oba autoři vychází především z Bible a biblická jména jim pomáhají dokreslit charakteristiku postav.

Pátá kapitola porovnává přístup Hardyho a Powyse k pojmenovávání lokací v jejich dílech. Zatímco Hardy si většinu jmen vymyslel a stvořil tak zcela novou mapu jižní Anglie včetně odlišných vzdáleností mezi městy, Powys obvykle používal reálné názvy míst pro ty lokace, které nebyly nijak zvlášť důležité v jeho románu *Wolf Solent,* a vymyslel si název místa, ve kterém se odehrává většina děje, a to je Ramsgard.

Poslední kapitola pojednává o typických rysech jejich literárních děl. Jedním z nich je například fyzická a mentální isolace či odloučenost od společnosti. Powys tuto isolaci vytváří jako záměrnou a dobrovolnou volbu, pomocí které jeho hlavní postava je schopna se vyrovnat s krutostí reality. Na druhou stranu Hardyho postavy jednoduše akceptují svou odloučenost jako nutnost a součást života.

Dále se tato kapitola zabývá tématem osudu a náhody. Toto téma je spíše spojeno s Hardyho povídkami, jelikož v nich hrají stěžejní roli oba tyto prvky. Jako naturalista věřící v determinismus, Hardy využívá osudovou předurčenost jako jeden z hybatelů děje. Hardy záměrně nechává své postavy čelit osudu, ačkoli je tento boj předem prohraný, a zároveň využívá přírodní živly jako další aktivní činitele ovlivňující děj a mnohdy poskytující nečekaný

dějový zvrat, který však nelze nijak předpovědět ani změnit. U Powyse je spojitost s přírodou ještě více evidentní díky jeho metaforám, které přirovnávají různé objekty i lidi ke zvířatům.

Z podrobné analýzy vybraných povídek Thomase Hardyho a románu *Wolf Solent* od Johna Cowpera Powyse vyplývá, že jejich postavy, které jsou záměrně situovány do prostředí anglického Wessexu, jsou také tímto prostředím ovlivňovány, přičemž u Thomase Hardyho je důraz kladen na to, že děj jeho povídek se odehrává před zavedením většiny vynálezů průmyslové revoluce do praxe a jeho region tedy zůstává nedotčen soudobými stroji a mechanizací. Naproti tomu Powys, který se narodil přibližně o dvě generace později než Thomas Hardy, již v mládí zažil negativní dopad průmyslové revoluce na prostředí venkova, což také velmi často ve svém díle zmiňuje a kritizuje.

Výsledkem této práce je zjištění, že kromě zasazení svých literárních děl do stejného venkovského prostředí, Powys a Hardy se oba věnovali kritice Viktoriánské společnosti, diskriminaci žen v této společnosti a jejím morálním zásadám, které oba považovali za příliš omezující a krátkozraké. Právě proto také zdůrazňovali čistotu a nedotčenost venkovské krajiny. Oba také často psali o nenaplnitelných snech a tužbách svých postav, jelikož oba byli stejného názoru, že v životě čelíme mnoha dobru i zlu a jedno bez druhého neexistuje. Oba vyznávali krédo že život je těžký a jediné co s tím můžeme udělat je ho prožít.

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