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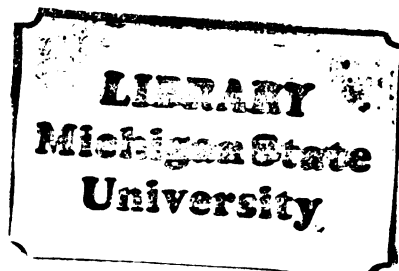
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THOMAS HARDY'S CONCEPTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS  
AND THE NARRATION OF HIS NOVELS

By

Sharon Elizabeth Cogdill

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to  
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## ABSTRACT

### THOMAS HARDY'S CONCEPTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE NARRATION OF HIS NOVELS

By

Sharon Elizabeth Cogdill

Thomas Hardy's novels plot the first coming to consciousness of a character in a basically unconscious world. Consciousness takes the forms of: alienation from nature, society, and self; individuation from the communalities of nature, society, and marriage; and awareness of the consequences of actions, thoughts, and feelings. There are no clear dichotomies between nature and society or between thought and action in this context. Hardy calls this first coming to consciousness "Taking Thought"; it is the most fundamental action a character can make. Having "Taken Thought," characters feel divided from the communal worlds of nature and society and isolated in mental worlds made up of ideas and emotions and their causes and consequences.

Many of Hardy's most important themes and images treat the distinction between the inner world of the conscious character and the outer world of unconscious "Law," whether natural or social. From the conscious character's point of view, there is a discontinuity between perception and reality, but many of Hardy's images assume a unity between the processes of consciousness and the world. In characterization, therefore, Hardy specifies shifting and delicate variations in the interactions of a consciousness with the outside world: dreaming, blindness, and secrecy show a character overcoming external reality from within, by blotting it out; drunkenness and ignorance show the power of the outside world to dim or destroy the inner vision.

Hardy's narration reflects this attention to the dual existence of reality and perception. His novels seem Victorian in their reliable, historicist narrators; his later novels, however, seem post-Victorian because of a more "modern" technique: presenting the inner world of perception by narrating from the character's perspective. This study confronts the false opposition between these two kinds of narration by showing that not only does narration "close" to a character occur early in fiction, many decades before Henry James, but also that authorial commentary is too widespread and complex to be regarded as Victorian or premodern. The perspectives of the story-teller and the characters allow Hardy simultaneously and sympathetically to present perception and the perceived, the individual and the universal, the dream and the reality.

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## Chapter One: Introduction: Consciousness and Individuation

### A. The Problem of Consciousness in Hardy's Fiction

In his fiction, Thomas Hardy concerned himself with consciousness, with its manifestations in people and in the world, and with its impact on the lives of those people. He talks about it directly outside his fiction and, in the voices of his narrators, inside the fiction as well. Most of the social issues presented in the novels depend conceptually on an awareness of the individual and that individual's self-consciousness. During the course of his fiction-writing career, Hardy developed a way of individuating characters by presenting their consciousnesses through the narrative, a technique which is often considered to be the revolutionary invention of Henry James, James Joyce, or Virginia Woolf. Hardy's concern with consciousness even determines the conditions in which his characters live and labor: what is tragic to Hardy about human life is that consciousness is painful. It is painful because the forces at work in the world--historical and biological processes, psychological determinism, and social pressures towards conformity--these forces operate independently of human ideas and desires.

Because of their internal consistency, Hardy thought of these forces as "laws." Biological laws, particularly, and social ones as well, seem immutable to him, and he apparently made the transition from scientific evolution to social Darwinism with no difficulties. In The Life of Thomas Hardy, he records for May 9, 1881:

After infinite trying to reconcile a scientific view of life with the emotional and spiritual, so that they may not be inter-destructive I come to the following:

General Principles. Law has produced in man a child who cannot but constantly reproach its parent for doing much and yet not all, and constantly say to such parent that it would have been better never to have begun doing than to have overdone so indecisively; that is, than to have created so far beyond all apparent first intention (on the emotional side), without mending matters by a second intent and execution, to eliminate the evils of the blunder of overdoing. The emotions have no place in a world of defect, and it is a cruel injustice that they should have developed in it.

If Law itself had consciousness, how the aspect of its creatures would terrify it, fill it with remorse!<sup>1</sup>

Hardy used "consciousness" or one or another of its forms again and again in all his writings, and he seems to have used the word in all of the different ways that it can be used. In this entry about "Law," for instance, "consciousness" seems to refer most directly to the "emotions" which "have no place in a world of defect" and which would arise in "Law itself" if it "had consciousness." "Consciousness" here also suggests an awareness of events and consequences--also, perhaps, self-consciousness. Here, too, consciousness suggests development and evolution. The problems with discussing consciousness in Hardy's fiction, however, merely begin with the definition of the word itself.

Another problem arises when one attempts to discover whether any particular character is or is not "conscious," in any of the relevant meanings of the word. There is no way finally to resolve this question both because of the broadness of the meaning of the term and also because Hardy liked to think in opposites: many characters are conscious compared to vegetable or stellar nature and are not conscious when compared to the most sensitive or thoughtful of other characters. This preference for thinking in what William Blake called "contraries," while often problematical, especially for readers who attempt to organize Hardy's ideas, is also responsible for some of Hardy's best insights and can

explain why he retains both the old-fashioned Victorian narrator and expands in his later novels the newer, more subjective narration which, in its extreme form, becomes stream of consciousness. It also explains why he finds truth in ambiguity and coincidence, as a look at the endings of almost all of his novels will show, for even in so simple a novel as Under the Greenwood Tree the ending is curiously unresolved, the forces which control the characters are so great that they seem to be random, and many of the characters seem less conscious than the bees, dogs, and horses.

It can be said, however, that some characters in Hardy are so much more conscious than the rest of humanity that they have developed a consciousness which makes them different. To be conscious in this way in Hardy is to find that the "crowd," indeed, is "madding." For these characters, consciousness usually develops as a result of experience. In its most simple and essential form, this development may be regarded as a plot, a sequence in which Hardy found meaning: what these characters learn from experience is what they know, and what they know leads them to concern themselves with the question of what to do with the knowledge. This is the plot of those novels which begin with a character who is thoughtless and end with that character's having learned to be thoughtful, like Desperate Remedies, Under the Greenwood Tree, A Pair of Blue Eyes, and Far from the Madding Crowd. Beginning with The Return of the Native, Hardy focuses his novel more centrally on that character who has already become thoughtful. The plot then becomes a tracing of the effects of knowledge in the character who has it and the effects of a knowing character living in a basically unknowing world. The most fundamental effect of the possession of this knowledge in these later novels is that the character is alienated, from the communal consciousness that



Hardy saw in nature and the communal identity that he found in society. Self-alienation occurs in Hardy characters when a character's ties with nature and society are based, as they must be, on intrinsic requirements and conditions, so that, for example, love is based on sexual attraction (nature) and loyalty on civil or religious laws (society). Alienation, in one kind or another, is the form which this act of knowing most often takes in Hardy because what most of these conscious characters do is to keep their knowledge a secret. Secret-keeping alienates Hardy's characters, especially from society, and causes them to develop awareness of themselves as separate identities. Consciousness, then, is a function of personality and a mode of thought: it is innocent rather than artificial, spontaneous rather than calculating or deliberate. To pick extreme examples, it is Sue who is conscious in the way Hardy thinks of it, not Arabella, whose plans and ruses serve the biological forces at work. Sue's position as a conscious character is complicated by the fact that she tries to lose the consciousness she has by trying to return to society and the communal identity.

Two large perspectives each provide different contexts for looking at Hardy's presentation of individual consciousness. One has to do with how fiction changed during the nineteenth century to accommodate greater and greater attention to mental rather than physical action. The other has to do with how intrinsic consciousness is, in Victorian thought, to the problems of human existence and to the best ways of understanding them. Thus, in a way, this paper is about the development of the ideas of individuality, identity, and consciousness, not among the philosophers and scientists of Europe and England, but in the popular arena, where Hardy wrote and was read. Such large perspectives as these cannot be avoided in this discussion because the two major ways in which Hardy

explored the meaning of consciousness have to do with traditions in which Hardy himself plays a relatively small role. The first such tradition concerns the history of narration, and this context will dominate the first three chapters of this dissertation. It is necessary to explore Hardy's narrative in order to understand how his conception of consciousness permeates the essential elements of his craft and also how his means of presentation of consciousness define in some ways his contributions to literature and the novel. The second context, which is assumed in the last three chapters of this dissertation, has less to do with the narrative itself and more to do with social and literary issues--with what are called "themes." Each of these ways of discussing Hardy's presentation of consciousness poses a certain number of critical difficulties, most of which are met by discussing both. It is necessary to include both the narration and the themes because Hardy's ideas and assumptions about consciousness have methodological as well as conceptual implications in his work. The attention to thematic structures can be defended in this day of critical scholasticism because Hardy never gives up in his fiction that authorial, cosmic perspective which allows him to comment directly about his intentions or interpretations in his own work.

Besides introducing the problems of discussing consciousness in Hardy's novels, this chapter will also sketch out the relevant dichotomies and oppositions which dominate any such discussion of this problem in Hardy. Essentially, the dichotomies appear in two forms, narrative and thematic, each of which must at this point be handled separately. The dichotomous elements in Hardy's themes of consciousness will be presented next. The discussion of the conflicting elements in Hardy's narration will be begun in the last section of this chapter. The greatest extended

treatment of the thematic elements in this part of the study is given to the relation between the individual and society, first, and nature, second; in Chapters Five and Six, themes of first coming to consciousness, Hardy's ideas about a split in the modern personality, natural consciousness, secret-keeping, somnolence and wakefulness, and blindness and pre-science will dominate the discussion. To begin with, however, it is necessary to establish some of the dichotomies which are commonplace in Hardy criticism by now and which can be made less paradoxical in a discussion of Hardy's presentation of consciousness. Some of these oppositions are general in nature and at first do not seem to depend on a conception of individual consciousness, like innocence and experience, women and men, rich and poor, reality and corporeality, the spirit and the flesh, and the country and the city. Others of these oppositions are more obviously based on Hardy's interest in human consciousness, like "omniscient" and "subjective" narration, cosmic and personal perspectives, and the individual as it contrasts with history, society, nature, and the cosmos. A consideration of consciousness does not resolve these dichotomies; it merely centers them in Hardy's concern for presenting the double realities of what can objectively be said to be true and what is true to a localized, emotional, particular perceiver.

#### B. Individuation and Dichotomies in Hardy's Fiction

Although certainly not the only way to think of individuation, most writers seem to regard it as somehow a separation from the natural--or from Nature, the unconscious. But individuation is also a separation from the community of other human beings. The interrelations among the modern ideas of individuation, nature, and community make a discussion

of any one of them enormously complex. Hardy seems modern in this way, since there is no such thing as a completely natural person in his fiction, no natural character such as might have been imagined by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Emily Brontë, Mark Twain, or Herman Melville. Hardy's more "natural" characters live, in fact, in communities--among groups of people who hold traditions, histories, and dependencies in common. And they identify themselves in terms of their roles in the community; their most consistent element is, in fact, their communal identities. Some of these characters, especially among the rustics, seem unique and highly individualized, like the Cantle menfolk and Susan Nunsuch in The Return of the Native, Tranter and Dick Dewy in Under the Greenwood Tree, and Joseph Poorgrass and Jan Coggan in Far from the Madding Crowd.

The members of this rural population, who are "so local in feeling or manner," are drawn from Hardy's conception of the "Dorsetshire Labourer," whose history he traced in his 1883 essay.<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, Hardy finds that experience causes these workers to lose their individuality, especially as a group: "They are," he says, "losing their peculiarities as a class."<sup>3</sup> This change in the character which the popular press called "Hodge" is, as Hardy recognized, one of the results of greater economic freedom. As Hardy also recognized, an appreciation of "their personal charm" is aesthetic rather than humane in nature and requires the perspective of "romantic spectators":

That seclusion and immutability, which was so bad for their pockets, was an unrivalled fosterer of their personal charm in the eyes of those whose experiences had been less limited. But the artistic merit of their old condition is scarcely a reason why they should have continued in it when other communities were marching on so vigorously towards uniformity and mental equality. It is only the old story that progress and picturesque do not harmonise. They are losing their individuality, but they are widening the range of their ideas, and gaining in freedom. It is too much to expect them to remain stagnant and old-fashioned for the pleasure of romantic spectators.<sup>4</sup>

It appears that, from Hardy's point of view, the "individuality" and the "peculiarities" which these workers lose are lost by them as a "class." This is precisely what happens to this class in his fiction, and the uniqueness of these characters in the novels depends largely upon class characteristics. Hardy's conception of these characters who seem to us to be straightforward and natural is in fact not a conception of simple, natural individuals, but a conception of rustic community in which similar characters of different names show up again and again.

This is not to suggest, however, that Hardy considered close connections to nature and society, or community, simple and primitive--for to enter into a discussion of Hardy's presentation of society is to be faced with a very complex issue. Essentially, in Hardy, society takes three forms. For one thing, the society of the rural communities lies at the heart of his rendition of Wessex. This is the society which preserves traditions and ancient occupations and costumes. This is the society whose disintegration Hardy chronicled. Second, there is also the society of urban London and Paris, and of the larger communities in Wessex like Melchester, Budmouth, and Christminster. In this "society," personal interactions are determined and controlled by the rules of etiquette, linguistic sophistication, and prescribed behavior. And finally, there is society as a whole, the human community. Hardy's "natural" characters have a kind of communal intelligence which makes others' perspectives accessible to them; because of this his conception of social relationships is central to any understanding of his idea of individuality. Society is seldom set in direct opposition to nature in Hardy, in spite of what the critical literature might suggest, because all of his characters live in social worlds whether or not they also feel their connections to nature.

The difficulties inherent in generalizing about this aspect of Hardy's fiction become apparent when even so competent and comprehensive a critic as Walter Allen is unable to take it all in at once. His view of Hardy is typical of many scholars who see society in Hardy in only one of its forms. Allen focuses almost exclusively on the rustics and their novels, but he does not see even them in relation to the changes Hardy saw in humanity--and in consciousness in humanity. What Allen is thinking of when he says "social life" is the society of the urban Victorian upper classes, the society known first for its rules of behavior and emphasis on manners:

Hardy was attempting something very different from the aims of most novelists. The art of the novelist who sets out to display human beings in the context of social life must be one of constant differentiation and discrimination between characters. But social life as we find it depicted variously in Jane Austen, Thackeray, Trollope, George Eliot, and James, scarcely exists in Hardy. His characters stand in relation to other things, the weather, the seasons, a traditional craft. He sees his characters much as Scott does his, first in their generic aspects; thus, before he is anything else, Giles Winterborne is the peasant good with trees, Gabriel Oak is the shepherd, Tess the dairymaid. Individuality, as such, is not at all what he is after; what concerns him most in human beings is their response to the deep-rooted passions, above all sexual love.<sup>5</sup>

There is no doubt that Hardy is deeply concerned with the realities of the human basis in nature, but, for Hardy, the fact that some characters are unconscious of any conflict between their desires and their needs and some are quite conscious--always, in Hardy, painfully conscious--of them is the key to it all. As other readers have seen, Hardy's concern with social status and economic freedom is an absolutely essential part of his fiction.<sup>6</sup> What is more, while he is clearly always concerned with the universal qualities of his characters, it is also clear that all of Hardy's important characters exist in historical as well as occupational terms. Giles Winterborne is a leaseholder unfairly and

unnecessarily turned out; Gabriel Oak is a shepherd becoming a landowner. Tess is the representative of a family whose decline makes her both the oppressor and the victim, the aristocrat and the dairymaid.

There can be no denying that Hardy was deeply concerned with the ways in which people come to represent classes or categories in society or nature. It is, however, to ignore the context for the foreground to see, as Allen does, Giles, Gabriel, and Tess only as "generic" representatives of their occupations, just as it is to see them, as David Cecil does, "as representatives of a species, and in relation to the ultimate conditioning forces of their existence"; Hardy's "subject," Cecil says, "is not men, but man. His theme is mankind's predicament in the universe."<sup>7</sup> The mistake both these readers make is in insisting on a resolution of the conflict or dichotomy between the individual and the "generic aspects" of that individual's socioeconomic class (in Allen's case) and the individual and the "representatives of a species" (in Cecil's.) Tess is clearly representative of many things, not the least among them her temporary position as dairymaid. The conflict arises in Tess's and Hardy's perception of her both as an individual and as a representative figure: there is, in other words, a conflict inherent in the status of any individual who has an identity both as an individual and as a member of a social or natural class. This conflict takes the form of consciousness in Hardy's fiction when the character comes to realize, as Hardy puts it for Jude, "the flaw in the terrestrial scheme, by which what was good for God's birds was bad for God's gardener."<sup>8</sup> In Tess's case, this conflict is expressed when she sees herself both as an individual and as one in a long line of others who share either her family history or her personal victimization: "Because what's the use of learning that I am one of a long row only--finding out that there is set down in some old

book somebody just like me, and to know that I shall only act her part . . ." (Ch. XIX, p. 162).

In any of its forms, society to Hardy is hierarchical, it has "storeys," and social class boundaries are instrumental in defining relationships among characters (The Woodlanders, Ch. XXX, p. 260). His almost obsessive interest in the love between a working-class man and an upper-class woman, the poor man and the lady, is widely recognized. Hardy's first novel, unpublished and destroyed and therefore largely an instance for conjecture, was in fact called The Poor Man and the Lady and dealt directly with this issue. But there are others: novel after novel and story after story present one or another form of this version of the Cinderella story. In a few cases, there is a clear class difference between the lovers: Swithin St. Cleeve and Lady Constantine in Two on a Tower; Lord Luxellian, Stephen Smith, and the young Jethway, and Elfride Swancourt in A Pair of Blue Eyes; in A Laodicean George Somerset and Paula Power, and, in the subplot, the separate and unrequited affairs of Charlotte de Stancy and the Captain. In most of the rest of the novels, the distance between the man and the woman is more a matter of attitude and education than of any real class distinction: Dick Dewy and Fancy Day in Under the Greenwood Tree; Gabriel Oak and Bathsheba Everdene in Far from the Madding Crowd; Bob and John Loveday and Anne Garland in The Trumpet-Major; and Giles Winterborne and Grace Melbury in The Woodlanders. Although most, by count, describe the problems of the lower-class male aspiring upwards, some important works--The Romantic Adventures of a Milkmaid, The Hand of Ethelberta, The Well-Beloved, the Fanny Robin subplot of Far from the Madding Crowd, and, of course, Tess of the d'Urbervilles--present the opportunities of working-class women to escape the drudgery and poverty of their class and misfortune by marriage.



By setting his characters in the context of an economically structured society as well as in the context of a morally and historically complex nature, Hardy explores the means and effects of social mobility. In spite of the impressions left by the hopelessness of Jude's dreams of education, his enslavement to the disadvantages of his class is the exception in Hardy. Michael Henchard, Grace Melbury, Alec d'Urberville, and Gabriel Oak find little resistance to their movement up--or down--the social ladder. What is noticeable is that, for almost all of Hardy's highly individualized characters, social class boundaries are far less restrictive than natural attractions and antipathies, and even less decisive than random coincidence.

Tess of the d'Urbervilles and Jude the Obscure explore the problems of social classes in more complex ways than any of the novels preceding them, especially early ones like The Hand of Ethelberta and Desperate Remedies which lack the later novels' complexities and ambiguities. In the case of Tess, the boundaries between classes are blurred by hereditary titles and the question of inherited nobility. The boundaries, such as they are, are further blurred--as they are by marriage--by the opportunity which the nouveau riche have to buy ancient names to dignify their fortunes. Although the line Hardy draws between the social classes can be as sharp as the extreme differences between squalor and luxury, there is also a constant shifting of some characters between these extremes. These characters develop a kind of social ambiguity as they move up and down socially, by virtue of their moral rewards and punishments, their material wealth and poverty, and their intellectual and emotional dreams and defeats. In Jude Hardy questions the very basis of social and economic class distinctions and seems to argue that nobility is a matter of personal qualities. By his nature, Jude is deserving of the kinds of

opportunities available only to those of the upper classes. Hardy makes two kinds of class distinctions in this novel: one is between the moneyed class and the working class, to which all the characters belong and to whom the doors of Christminster are closed; the second distinguishes the poor from the middle class. Hardy's point against the disparity in opportunity offered to those of different classes is sharpened when he allows Arabella admittance, if temporarily, to the middle class and denies Jude anything but a kind of canonization as the patron of lost causes, and a kind of employment as the tutor of St. Slums.

One characteristic of Hardy's individualized characters is a kind of experience with humanity which allows them to generalize their understanding of people beyond social and economic classes and beyond the patterns of country or city values. They see themselves, that is, not only as individuals but as members of a class. What Hardy's characters get from their individual experience of the world is a broadening of their understanding of human experience. Most of his early and comic characters learn the lesson in small, and the price is cheap--few die for what they learn. In fact, what they learn about humanity--and, usually about human suffering--gains them admittance into the community, which is, as D. H. Lawrence saw, the refuge from individual experience.

That Hardy's conception of society is inimical to the free and productive flowering of the individual is, of course, the insight upon which Lawrence based his "Study of Thomas Hardy." The tragedy, Lawrence says, in Hardy's novels, arises when an individual, "a real, vital, potential self," "suddenly bursts the shell of manner and convention and commonplace opinion, and acts independently . . . ." <sup>9</sup> This is a tragedy precisely because these characters "subscribe," as Lawrence says, "to the system" of conventional mores "in themselves":

From the more immediate claims of self-preservation they could free themselves: from money, from ambition for social success. None of the heroes or heroines of Hardy cared much for these things. But there is the greater idea of self-preservation, which is formulated in the State, in the whole modelling of the community. And from this idea, the heroes and heroines of Wessex, like the heroes and heroines of almost anywhere else, could not free themselves. In the long run, the State, the Community, the established form of life remained, remained intact and impregnable, the individual, trying to break forth from it, died of fear, of exhaustion, or of exposure to attacks from all sides, like men who have left the walled city to live outside in the precarious open.

This is the tragedy of Hardy, always the same: the tragedy of those who, more or less pioneers, have died in the wilderness, whither they had escaped for free action, after having left the walled security, and the comparative imprisonment, of the established convention.

Lawrence's sympathy clearly lies with the individual, and Lawrence's own unalloyed rejection of the safety society offers shows how ambivalent Hardy really is about individual freedom. In most of Hardy's best novels, to get specific, the price of acting individually and perceiving consciously is high, exacted as it is upon both peace of mind and life itself. Clym and Sue survive, but without sanity. By finding peace before she dies, Tess is a rarity in Hardy, for the list of characters who do not is long and touches almost all of the important novels: Elfride Swancourt, Fanny Robin, Eustacia Vye, Viviette Constantine, Michael Henchard, Giles Winterborne, and Jude Fawley. Clym Yeobright, Angel Clare, and Jocelyn Pierston undergo symbolic death and survive, diminished, beyond the events of their novels. Like Angel, Jocelyn is reborn into peace of mind after a period both of nearly fatal illness and of hallucinatory insanity. Angel is the least damaged of these three characters who begin again after symbolic deaths, because Tess dies for his and 'Liza-Lu's future as well as for the expiation of her own guilt. Strictly speaking, therefore, all characters who survive in Hardy's novels do so by joining the community. This seems terribly destructive in the

cases of Sue and Clym, but for characters like Diggory Venn and Angel Clare it means safety, which appears in the form of a commitment to the future. This is because the story of the species, the universe, is not a tragic one--Arabella's survival is the triumph of the universal. The tragic story is the story of the individual who is self-aware, who is conscious.

In Hardy's most important novels, those characters who are educated into a community join one which is dominated by social change, but human society is also the locus for tradition and long-standing ideas. Hardy's characters find roots in society as well as in nature--they have connections to roads and buildings as well as to forests and heaths.<sup>10</sup> Like the natural world, the social world provides Hardy a physical and moral setting for action. Every novel has its natural setting with major geological and topographical features explicitly described; every novel also has its social setting, with traditions and buildings made the subject of dialogue and action. Buildings, especially, in Hardy, but also all architectural constructions, are like geographical phenomena: they have age and strength and become features of the landscape. Some human constructions, like the Weatherbury barn and the old Roman roads, seem to belong in nature in that, in Hardy's presentations in the novels, they are essentially immutable. Other human constructions last for centuries, but do so by changing as the community which supports them changes. In general, as a matter of fact, the emphasis in Hardy is not on the building of such structures but, if anything, on their rebuilding and restoration. Existing buildings, like existing nature, define the a priori physical reality in which the events of the characters' lives take place; existing traditions define a priori mental reality for them. Hardy's characters are made aware of social change in their

traditions and in their buildings.

Like society, nature for Hardy is extremely complex and best viewed from more than one perspective. Essentially, Hardy sees nature from two potentially opposing points of view--the human and the cosmic perspective, or, as he calls it, "the celestial point of vision."<sup>11</sup> It is generally thought that Hardy's cosmic point of view is never really presented until The Dynasts, but of course it exists in various forms throughout his fiction. The cosmic perspective shows up as a narrative technique--a way Hardy has of putting his characters in the context of human or natural universals. It also appears in thematic form, directly, in Two on a Tower. It is the human rather than the cosmic perspective, however, which lends tragedy to the characters whose dreams are shattered and which lends feelings and history to the earth itself. There is no clearer example of this separation between universal and human natures than Egdon Heath, a conception of universal nature so intense that many readers see it, as Lawrence did, as a characterization or personification.<sup>12</sup> As nature, of course, the heath is impassive and has no feeling for the personal dramas acted out on its face and under its influence. Both the astronomical universe of Two on a Tower and the more terrestrial universe of The Return of the Native present perspectives--backdrops, one could say--against which the human history is cast. Similarly, the amazingly wasteful fertility of the forest in The Woodlanders serves as a contrast to rather than as an illumination of the usually erratic and unproductive actions of the characters. It is quite interesting that, although the stellar universe and the vegetable world of Two on a Tower and The Woodlanders are notable for their changes and regular variations, Egdon Heath never changes. This is interesting because Hardy clearly regarded change in the light of post-Darwinian

conceptions of natural change--conceptions which saw important change occurring to the species of animate or to the whole of inanimate nature. And just as Copernicus and Galileo threatened the conception of the importance of man with their conceptions of heliocentric astronomy, so did Darwin threaten the importance of the individual in his conceptions of evolutionary development. Hardy's way of justifying both the understanding of history in Darwinian terms and the value of the individual was to separate them from each other and regard them as two distinct, mutually exclusive and simultaneously possible perspectives.

To Hardy, nature can be found not only in the physical presence of Egdon Heath and outer space, but also in the forces of evolution which operate in the world. Hardy felt that humanity was evolving: and during the period in which he wrote fiction he believed that human evolution was perceptible, both in the mass and in individuals. Among his characters, evolution manifests itself in individuals who, though still clearly human and therefore not radically different from other humans, are different both physically and psychically from those who have not yet changed. This distinction between physical and psychical evolution is not absolute in Hardy; while the evolved characters from his early fiction have changed physically, it is clear by the end of his fiction-writing career that the significant change is the psychic one. In its outward form, this evolution appears in novel after novel in characters whose faces and bodies, as do George Somerset's, bear "contradictory testimonies to his precise age" (A Laodicean Ch. I, p. 37). This characteristic shows up in Stephen Smith in A Pair of Blue Eyes, in Christopher Julian in The Hand of Ethelberta, in Clym Yeobright, in both George Somerset and William Dare in A Laocidean, in Swithin St. Cleeve in Two on a Tower, in Tess, in Jocelyn Pierston in The Well-Beloved, and, of

course, in little Father Time. The cause of this physical difference is, as Hardy says about Somerset, "the advance of juvenile introspection," as it makes its difference both in the individual and in the species (Ch. I, p. 5).

Hardy's description of Clym's face is worth quoting in full for its summarizing in greater detail of many smaller passages, including the more dramatic passage describing little Father Time's arrival at Jude and Sue's house. Hardy begins the third book of The Return of the Native, in a chapter significantly entitled "My Mind to Me a Kingdom Is," focussed on Clym's face:

In Clym Yeobright's face could be dimly seen the typical countenance of the future. Should there be a classic period to art hereafter, its Pheidias may produce such faces. The view of life as a thing to be put up with, replacing that zest for existence which was so intense in early civilizations, must ultimately enter so thoroughly into the constitution of the advanced races that its facial expression will become accepted as a new artistic departure. People already feel that a man who lives without disturbing a curve of feature, or setting a mark of mental concern anywhere upon himself, is too far removed from modern perceptiveness to be a modern type. Physically beautiful men--the glory of the race when it was young--are almost an anachronism now; and we may wonder whether, at some time or other, physically beautiful women may not be an anachronism likewise.

The truth seems to be that a long line of disillusionive centuries has permanently displaced the Hellenic idea of life, or whatever it may be called. What the Greeks only suspected we know well; what their AEschylus imagined our nursery children feel. That old-fashioned revelling in the general situation grows less and less possible as we uncover the defects of natural laws, and see the quandry that man is in by their operation.

The new lineaments which will get embodied in ideas based upon this new recognition will probably be akin to those of Yeobright. The observer's eye was arrested, not by his face as a picture, but by his face as a page; not by what it was, but by what it recorded. His features were attractive in the light of symbols, as sounds intrinsically common become attractive in language, and as shapes intrinsically simple become interesting in writing. (Bk. III, Ch. i; pp. 197-98)

There is, then, meaning in the change in physical appearance; by reading Clym's face, one knows not his momentary thoughts and feelings but his

"perceptiveness."

Little Father Time also has a face which suggests the future to Hardy--not his own future, however, but that of humanity. Although his relationship to physical human evolution is clear from his appearance and from what the doctor says about "boys of a sort unknown in the last generation," what is significant about him is what he sees, what he understands and thinks of, his world view--his consciousness (Pt. VI, Ch. ii; p. 406). Unlike the more familiar kind of children, who "begin with the contiguous, and gradually comprehend the universal," little Jude

seemed to have begun with the generals of life, and never to have concerned himself with the particulars. To him the houses, the willows, the obscure fields beyond, were apparently regarded not as brick residences, pollards, meadows, but as human dwellings in the abstract, vegetation, and the wide dark world. (Pt. V, Ch. iii; p. 334)

In spite of her more ordinary appearance, Mrs. Yeobright also has a consciousness which can be conceived in this way. She, too, sees the generalities of the particulate world, just as she sees Clym as an insect at work, however ineffectually, in the nature defined by Egdon Heath. While her special generalizing perception lets, or makes, her see the fundamental truth of things, it does not give her any special understanding or knowledge of important particulars in her life. She dies ignorant of Eustacia's real relationship to Wildeve just as little Father Time dies not knowing how mutable Sue's pessimism can be.

The fate of the individual in this world of abstract and generalized reality which some characters can see is Hardy's central concern, especially in his tragedies--and what makes them tragedies is that this fate has meaning. It means, for one thing, that the less thoughtful and discriminating person has a greater chance for survival, even though that person may have no idea of the truth. It also means that



sensitivity is a liability in the biological world of such survival, and not the virtue it is thought to be in the more physically gentle worlds of Jane Austen and Henry James. Action, in Hardy, loses its effectiveness as thought is broadened by perception: "limitation, and not comprehensiveness, is needed for striking a blow" (Far from the Madding Crowd Ch. XL, p. 306).

To Hardy, then, in summary, people exist both as individuals and as parts of the mass of humanity. A character's individuality depends on two kinds of human development. The first is simple: an adult character requires "particularizing" in Hardy's fiction in a way which a child normally does not. The church choir in Two on a Tower, for example, has "small producers of treble, who had not yet developed into such distinctive units of society as to require particularizing" (Ch. II, p. 17). Second, Hardy is clear that the development of a sense of an inner world in a character is a sign of that character's "evolution" as a human beyond and away from "the great mass of bustling mankind, little given to introspection . . . ." <sup>13</sup> More often than not, this inner world which a character develops or discovers with consciousness is that wilderness which Lawrence so vividly describes as existing outside "the walled security, and the comparative imprisonment, of the established community." The wilderness these characters live in exists purely in their minds, as a result of their thought and as a result of whatever independence they achieve from community standards and conceptions. This is true even of Clym and Eustacia; the wilderness of the heath on which they live is modified considerably by Thomasin's pragmatic, unimaginative sense of her surroundings and by the narrator's own sense of its indifference. <sup>14</sup>

The kind of advanced thought which distinguishes characters like

these is, most typically, an extension of their experience--which, in Hardy, must be mental experience to be profoundly important, regardless of whether the experience and change happen to a class or to an individual. For the women, experience is largely sexual, even in the earliest and most conventional novels; self-consciousness appears in these characters as a result of experience which is hidden, kept secret, from other characters. This kind of experience causes an essential change in the personalities of these characters. The only course of action open to the women of the early novels is to hide the evidence of the change, especially if they want to marry; the need to be secret puts them into a conflict with themselves and with characters whom they love which is ultimately alienating. This is not to suggest that Hardy condemns women who have had this kind of experience. Sexual attraction in Hardy is clearly a function of biological--one might say, of Darwinian--forces. What Hardy finds to be of importance in sexual attraction are its consequences.

The fact that this character keeps the experience a secret becomes part of the experience itself which then is necessarily the loss of her innocence, both physical and mental. The sexual nature of this experience becomes more and more explicit in the later fiction; but even at its most explicit, the sexuality is also a metaphor for a more general kind of experience. In this way, Hardy compares a lack of individualizing experience to sexual and emotional virginity; there is, in the same way, a clear relationship between the presence of individualizing experience and sexual and emotional complexity.

For the men, the metaphor Hardy uses for individualizing experience and inner reality is the dream, a mental phenomenon which marks a radical distinction, a separation, between what characters see and what they

want to see in the same way that secrets separate characters from each other. The separation is purely a matter of consciousness. The plots of the novels may be regarded as the stories of characters' consciousnesses. Essentially, Clym Yeobright's story is that of a man whose dream is shattered, and its destruction is his destruction. The same is true of Giles Winterborne and Jude Fawley. The shattering of the dream is the effect of experience on the dreamer. It is possible to overstate the differences between Hardy's male and female characters. Hardy seems to have been concerned less directly with the differing effects of experience on men and women than he was with these effects on conscious people of certain personalities, with particular histories and situations. Henchard's story, for instance, is the one most completely about secrets: he keeps his secrets, builds his precarious public facade, and loses everything when the knowledge is finally made general. Jocelyn Pierston, too, in The Well-Beloved, makes an interesting exception to Hardy's different conceptions of women's and men's inner worlds. Not until he gives up his quest for the ideal woman does his face bear the marks of "the mutually destructive interdependence of spirit and flesh," as Clym's does (The Return of the Native Bk. II, Ch. vi; p. 162). Jocelyn keeps his preternatural youth because his thoughts and feelings are only of his inner world; and experience does not change him because what happens in the world outside Jocelyn's mind is not mental experience. He does not age normally until his inner and outer worlds come into immediate confrontation. Like the individual in society and nature, inner and outer worlds form a dichotomy in Hardy which must be preserved rather than resolved by the reader. Only a character can resolve the conflict between inner and outer worlds, and those who survive in Hardy do so by accomodating both rather than by choosing between them. Those

characters whose lives are tragic deny--or are forced to deny--one world or the other.

### C. The Narrative Forms

Hardy's concern with the role of the individual in relation to society and nature dominates his fiction, both directly in thematic content and indirectly in his technique of narration. Hardy was quite obviously not alone in his attention to this problem, for, in many ways, it is clear that as a problem this idea also dominated his culture. Two important manifestations, for example, of the Victorian definition of the role of the individual appear substantially unchanged in Hardy's fiction as themes. First, there was then as there is now a lively debate on the relative bona of the individual and the society; in Hardy, clearly, such questions of moral relativism as Tess's purity and Sue's marriage are forms of this debate.<sup>15</sup> Another important manifestation of the Victorian concern for the individual appears obvious to us now in the long and complex sequence of public and legal acts for the reform of education which made it available to members of the working classes and separated it from the church. This shows up in Hardy, not only in its obvious forms in Jude and Tess, but almost constantly in the reading the characters do or have done, the nearly absolutely complete penetration of literacy into Wessex, the flow of writing produced in letters, telegrams, inscriptions on walls, tombstones, milestones, and so forth. A relatively high degree of education is the hallmark of his most sensitive protagonists and is one of the prerequisites for social mobility in his novels.

Another set of methods for approaching this problem of the

individual which Hardy inherited comes to him through the fiction of the period. Hardy uses both a commenting, omniscient narrator and narration which expresses the consciousness of a character by speaking, as it were, indirectly in that character's voice. Both of these forms of narration are in some ways completely conventional, having appeared in novels before Hardy's; in other ways they are new and take on added importance as the literary historian identifies Hardy's place in their development and moves beyond Hardy to the present forms of narrative fiction. This seemingly paradoxical assessment is matched by another: of the two forms Hardy finds the most valuable, the "intrusive" one hearkens back to the early Victorian novelists and the other suggests those who follow Hardy. The one which looks back takes the form of the omniscient narrator and the other is "close" narration, the general form of which stream of consciousness is an extreme form. This paradox is in fact a dichotomy which is intrinsic to Hardy's conception of human reality and which Hardy internalized as the opposition between the Darwinian conception of the universe and the faith in the more spiritual value of the individual. It is also the dichotomy between the human perspective and the cosmic one, since "close" narration is the form Hardy employed to demonstrate the perspective of the individual character as distinct from other characters and the authorial voice is the cosmic perspective, the generalized locus of knowledge and values for which beliefs have no consequences or repercussions. There is a general development from novel to novel in Hardy's use of close narration: the passages become more frequent and more lengthy with each succeeding novel; there is, however, no concomitant abatement in his use of the histor, the authorial voice. The more Hardy wrote fiction the more uncompromising the split between the two perspectives became.

It is surprising that, in spite of all the interpretation Hardy has generated, there has been little significant discussion of his experimentation with third-person narrative devices and their effects.<sup>16</sup> This is due in part to the apparent stability a term such as "omniscient narrator" implies--few Victorian novels are analyzed by way of narrative technique, even though we know that some of the great novelists of the era took great pains with how their meanings were expressed. This critical lacuna is also due in part to the attention paid to the more obviously different work done by the writers in the generations which immediately follow Hardy, like Henry James, Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence, James Joyce, and William Faulkner. This kind of critical attention does in fact exist in one form for Hardy--and for other Victorian novelists--in the very useful and competent essays describing the revisions that their manuscripts underwent from draft to draft, but these observations do not appear to take any part in the more general studies of, for example, Hardy and his artistry.<sup>17</sup> His development as a writer of narrative is in part the refinement and subtilization of narrative technique from the time he began writing novels until the time he returned to the full-time writing of poetry. Neither Jude the Obscure nor The Well-Beloved represent the perfection or completion of Hardy's experimentation with narration. Ignoring for the moment his poetry, however, they do represent the furthest Hardy goes in his attempt to narrate characters' own perceptions of their stories. The generations of writers after Hardy developed both the general idea of experimentation and the particular devices far beyond Hardy's most radical passages. Just as he did not "perfect" any of the forms he experimented with, Hardy also did not invent any of them. Examples of them all--and sometimes examples far more sophisticated than can be found in his minor novels--can be found in the

works of Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, and George Meredith, to name only the most influential among the Victorians.

To speak precisely about the role of the narrator in the development of the novel, it is important to distinguish between the different narrative devices so that their changes, and the reasons for their changes, can be traced. The greatest difficulty lies in the fact that description of narrative devices is necessarily impressionistic, for the value of narrative devices depends upon their effect upon the reader. Most fundamentally in a writer such as Hardy, there is one "voice"--the fictional voice of the author--and all other impressions of variation are the result of one or another narrative technique. It seems, for example, in reading Hardy's fiction, that his narrator has moments when it intrudes significantly into the reader's awareness and moments when it is there only negatively, and we are not aware of "Hardy's" consciousness but of one of his characters'. For simplicity's sake, however, I propose to speak for the moment not of the stream of narration, its entirety--probably the major force of unity in Hardy's novels--but of the different "voices" he uses to achieve the different effects. Such a distinction will permit a fuller analysis of Hardy's thematic and mimetic concerns, especially with regard to consciousness, than is possible without it; and this analysis, of course, will implicate the unity of Hardy's narrative more strongly than will either a discussion of the thematic attention to consciousness or of the narrative expression this theme seems to demand from Hardy.

A problem which exists in describing matters such as these is vocabulary--what terminology to use and how to delimit the meaning of the items in the vocabulary. "Voice," "point of view," and "register," to begin with, are all common metaphors for the same rhetorical effects.

"Point of view" is the most widely used of the three, and it has two sets of meanings depending on whether it is defined loosely, referring generally to attitudes someone--the narrator, a character, the reader--has about the events of the story, or whether it is defined in the more traditionally academic way, referring to one of the three narrative modes: omniscient, first-person, and epistolary. These genre-like distinctions in narrative fiction have caused more problems than they solve to any but the most elementary discussions of them. The difficulties which Sir Alexander Raleigh has in his brief description of them continue to appear in modern critics' analyses, even though Raleigh was clearly limited in what he could describe to what he had read of only the very earliest of English novels. In his 1894 The English Novel: Being a Short Sketch of its History from the Earliest Times to the Appearance of Waverly, the subject comes up in the introduction to Samuel Richardson's "Method of telling a story by way of letters."<sup>18</sup> His discussion of the omniscient narrator, "a sort of diable boiteux," fades quickly into what is to him the more important first-person narration, in which the technique is "to put the whole story in the mouth of the principal character."<sup>19</sup> By referring specifically to the "principal character," Raleigh is defining this mode according to the literature which existed before Walter Scott's Waverly, in such a way that peripheral characters whose function and personality are those of the observer do not have a role, even theoretically, in this kind of narration. Technically, this definition either prevents a character from later fiction such as Nick Carraway from being regarded as the first-person narrator of The Great Gatsby or it forces us to regard Nick as the "principal character" in the novel.

Obviously, what is left out is a range of possibilities in which



the modes are not clearly distinguishable from each other. The same omission is apparent when Raleigh regards as error some of Defoe's efficiencies:

. . . if the story extend over a number of years, a detailed account of its earlier parts can only be given by sacrificing the sense of vivid and present reality that attends the hearing of a personal story told by a living voice; the sense of perspective and contrast is lost, the near becomes far and the far near, the narrator is forgotten in the actor. . . . Defoe, in the intricate maze of his story is apt to forget the actual speaker.<sup>20</sup>

This same kind of judgment is made today, as if the problem were in the writer and not in the extrinsic formal categories. Raleigh's conception of point of view has relevance here, in spite of his subsequent obscurity, by demonstrating to what extent we are still dominated by what are essentially eighteenth-century definitions of modes of story-telling.

In his famous study of the historical development of point of view, Norman Friedman cites Seldon L. Whitcomb's 1905 The Study of a Novel as "the first to my knowledge which devotes a formal section to the rubric, 'The Narrator. His Point of View.'"<sup>21</sup> Unaccountably, however, he leaves out the work of a critic whose obscurity is much less deserved than that of her contemporaries, Violet Paget, who published her work under the name of Vernon Lee. Paget's friendship with Henry James and her close knowledge of his fiction had obvious influence on her perception of the role of narrative, but, as George Kenneth Graham has pointed out, Paget had "fully" developed the idea of "the angle of narration" "twelve years before Lubbock's The Craft of Fiction."<sup>22</sup> In 1895, in an article originally published in Contemporary Review, she presents Eliot's use of "Point of view" in Middlemarch as a matter of particular aesthetic choices Eliot makes in describing her characters:

There is yet another constructive question about the novel--the most important question of all--whose existence the lay

mind probably does not even suspect, but which, I am sure, exercises more than any other the mind of any one who has attempted to write a novel; even as the layman, contemplating a picture, is apt never to guess how much thought has been given to determining the place where the spectator is supposed to see from, whether from above, below, from the right or the left, and in what perspective, consequently, the various painted figures are to appear. This supreme constructive question in the novel is exactly analogous to that question in painting; and in describing the choice by the painter of the point of view, I have described also that most subtle choice of the literary craftsman: choice of the point of view whence the personages and action of a novel are to be seen. For you can see a person, or an act, in one of several ways, and connected with several other persons or acts. You can see the person from nobody's point of view, or from the point of view of one of the other persons, or from the point of view of the analytical, judicious author. Thus, Casaubon may be seen from Dorothea's point of view, from his own point of view, from Ladislav's point of view, or from the point of view of George Eliot; or he may be merely made to talk and act without any explanation of why he is so talking and acting, and that is what I call nobody's point of view.<sup>23</sup>

Vernon Lee's idea is much more precise as a description of what the reader is reminded of than what an author does, but the essential value of her categories cannot be denied. It is to be regretted that she did not apply this system to her analyses of the styles of Meredith, Kipling, Stevenson, Hardy, Henry James, and Maurice Hewlett in "The Handling of Words," which is instead an evaluation of these authors' styles based on word counts.<sup>24</sup>

A short digression for a discussion of "perspective" will be useful here. "Perspective" is a term whose wide usage reflects a need to distinguish what a located observer can see from what "point of view" (or "voice") is used to describe it. The reason, of course, that such a need exists is that, in the works of many novelists, instances of such a distinction are not only interesting but important as well. In Hardy, for example, passages narrated from a character's "perspective" (regardless, again, of the "point of view") are easy to identify. As a means of characterization, this device has interest for its rich presentation

of consciousness without the slow inefficiencies of narrating (in one or another of the forms which approach stream of consciousness) what that consciousness is doing. As a means of narrative, this device has importance for its obvious limitation of "omniscience" without the mysteries and obfuscations which such limitation often entails. In this passage from A Laodicean, Hardy's interest is in George Somerset's delicate sensibilities:

Down Somerset plunged through the long grass, bushes, late summer flowers, moths, and caterpillars, vexed with himself that he had come there, since Paula was so inscrutable, and humming the notes of some song he did not know. The tunnel that had seemed so small from the surface was a vast archway when he reached its mouth, which emitted, as a contrast to the sultry heat on the slopes of the cutting, a cool breeze, that had travelled a mile underground from the other end. Far away in the darkness of this silent subterranean corridor he could see that other end as a mere speck of light.

When he had conscientiously admired the construction of the massive archivault, and the majesty of its nude ungarnished walls, he looked up the slope at the carriage; it was so small to the eye that it might have been made for a performance by canaries; Paula's face being still smaller, as she leaned back in her seat, idly looking down at him. There seemed something roguish in her attitude of criticism, and to be no longer the subject of her contemplation he entered the tunnel out of her sight.

In the middle of the speck of light before him appeared a speck of black; and then a shrill whistle, dulled by millions of tons of earth, reached his ears from thence. It was what he had been on guard against all the time,--a passing train; and instead of taking the trouble to come out of the tunnel he stepped into a recess, till the train had rattled past, and vanished onward round a curve.

Somerset still remained where he had placed himself, mentally balancing science against art, the grandeur of this fine piece of construction against that of the castle, and thinking whether Paula's father had not, after all, the best of it, when all at once he saw Paula's form confronting him at the entrance of the tunnel. He instantly went forward into the light; to his surprise she was as pale as a lily. (Ch. XII, pp. 105-6)

Hardy is not required to explain Paula's feelings, and there is no hint that any such information is missing, when he limits his perspective so tightly to Somerset.

Dale Kramer points out one very subtle use of perspective in The Mayor of Casterbridge. He calls it "a near-Jamesian sensitiveness to scene in order to provide an oblique insight into Farfrae that acquires full clarity only after the reader reflects upon Farfrae's behavior toward the end of the novel."<sup>25</sup> The passage describes what Farfrae looks at in the conversation with Henchard in which the older man tells the younger about his difficulties with the newly reappeared Susan and the currently available Lucetta:

"But, damn it all, I am a lonely man, Farfrae: I have nobody else to speak to; and why shouldn't I tell it to 'ee?"

"I'll be glad to hear it, if I can be of any service," said Donald, allowing his eyes to travel over the intricate wood-carvings of the chimney-piece, representing garlanded lyres, shields, and quivers, on either side of a draped ox-skull, and flanked by heads of Apollo and Diana in low relief. (Ch. XII, p. 88)

There are several ways to interpret this passage, including, as Kramer mentions, the symbolic references to music, war (financial war between Henchard and Farfrae), the ox (or bull, as it appears in the novel), and perhaps the marriage between Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae, in the allusions to Apollo and Diana. Most important, however, is that Farfrae's attention wanders just as Henchard is about to tell him some secret which he feels to be a burden. In other words, we must look not only at what is seen here but also who is doing the looking: "in the context in which it appears, that is, the relationship between Henchard and Farfrae, the description shows how willing Farfrae is to be diverted from a direct and undivided consideration of others' human troubles."

One more passage, from The Well-Beloved, somewhat shorter than the one from A Laodicean and less ephemeral than the one from The Mayor of Casterbridge, will show how such a device as this can be used for aesthetic effect as well as for more pragmatic concerns of

characterization. Pierston arrives back at the peninsula where he was born just in time to see the funeral of the first Avic:

Ascending the steep incline to where the quarrymen were chipping just as they had formerly done, and within sound of the great stone saws, he looked southward towards the Beal.

The level line of the sea horizon rose above the surface of the isle, a ruffled patch in mid-distance as usual marking the Race, whence many a Lycidas had gone

"Visiting the bottom of the monstrous world";

but had not been blest with a poet as a friend. Against the stretch of water, where a school of mackerel twinkled in the afternoon light, was defined, in addition to the distant light-house, a church with its tower, standing about a quarter of a mile off, near the edge of the cliff. The churchyard grave-stones could be seen in profile against the same vast spread of watery babble and unrest.

Among the graves moved the form of a man clothed in a white sheet, which the wind blew and flapped coldly every now and then. Near him moved six men bearing a long box, and two or three persons in black followed. The coffin, with its twelve legs, crawled across the isle, while around and beneath it the flashing lights from the sea and the school of mackerel were reflected; a fishing-boat, far out in the Channel, being momentarily discernible under the coffin also. (Pt. II, Ch. iii, pp. 78-79)

There are passages like these throughout Hardy's novels. One significance which such passages have in a study of this kind is the evidence they provide that Hardy was a deliberate craftsman (should evidence for such an assertion still be required) in his narrative effects. It is also significant that "perspective," used in this rather narrow way, can be distinguished from the larger and more theoretical phenomenon usually called "point of view" or "voice." I will continue to use this term in this narrow way.

"Voice" is no more scientific or objective a term than "point of view." As a metaphor, it emphasizes the verbal reality and unity of a novel rather than its visual perspective or its conceptual and aesthetic similarity, as a work of art, to painting. "Voice" expresses a strong impression which modern readers have of Victorian fiction, which is that

the novel is dominated by the narrator. The meaning of "voice" is presently a mixture of minute specificity and subjective generality. Some critics use the word to refer to the characteristic verbal habits of particular authors. With little danger, for one instance, of confusing the reader, a critic can make efficient and passing reference to "the Austenite voice" and "the mediatorial voice" (which refers to the function of the narrator in the text) in a discussion of E. M. Forster's Howard's End.<sup>26</sup> There is also a use of the word to describe the effect which an instance of narration may have upon the reader, like "intrusive" voice. In essence, any theoretical discussion of the concept of voice is a discussion of point of view, even if "point of view" is regarded in its more rigid, most systematic sense, i.e., as the old triad of first-person, omniscient, and epistolary modes. "Voice" does not carry the connotations in critical parlance of "perspective," which implies the location of a perceiving human in a particular concept or to a particular spot in fictional space. It does not imply the act of seeing or perceiving. "Voice" implies the act of narrating, of telling, instead.

Gerard Genette's definitions and discussions of these terms are interesting for their value as syntheses of various thinkers' ideas about narrative.<sup>27</sup> To this end, he contrasts "voice" with "mode" (both borrowings from grammar, that is, from descriptions of language), a term whose use Genette summarizes:

Just as in grammar the term "mode" is used for those forms of the verb which affirm more or less the action in question and convey the various points of view from which the action is considered, so in fiction the term "narrative mode" covers the various possibilities of telling the events "more or less" and of telling them from different angles.

The two main modalities governing the regulation of narrative information are "distance" and "perspective."<sup>28</sup>

"Voice" has to do with time; a consideration of it leads Genette into

**d**istinctions among narrative levels, or, as he calls them, "degrees":

It would be necessary thus to distinguish, from the simple point of view of the temporal position, four types of narration: ulterior (classical position of the récit in the past, without a doubt by far the most frequent), anterior (predictive récit, generally in the future, but which nothing prevents from leading to the present, like Jocabel's dream in Moyse sauve), simultaneous (récit in the present contemporaneous with the action) and intercalated, between the moments of the action.<sup>29</sup>

Considering, then, that a narrator may be in any one of these four "positions" in relation to the story being told, Genette distinguishes "two types of récits: the first of a narrator absent from the story which it recounts (example: Homer in The Iliad, or Flaubert in l'Education sentimentale), the other of a narrator present as a character in the story which it recounts (example: Gil Blas, or Wuthering Heights). I call the first type, for obvious reasons, heterodiegetic, and the second homodiegetic."<sup>30</sup> Having come this far, Genette then carries his system to its final form, so that there may be four different narrative voices, depending upon whether or not the heterodiegetic and homodiegetic narrators tell their stories from within (intradiegetic) or without (extradiegetic) their "levels" of narration.<sup>31</sup>

Clearly, an application of Genette's way of categorizing narration does not depend on an uncritical acceptance of his contention that "it is perhaps legitimate to treat" the text of a novel "as the development, as monstrous as one wishes, given to a verbal form, in the grammatical sense of the term: the expression of a verb."<sup>32</sup> The metaphor in this case leads the critic to think of grammar rather than vision, or painting, in the cases of "point of view" and "perspective," or telling, as in the less formal use of "voice." In so far as it is metaphorical, Genette's description of narrative is no more true than any other. The value of the grammatical metaphor lies in the fact that a change in

narration (from, for example, a detached description to one originating from the consciousness of a character) will necessarily also be evident in the language the author uses to convey it, and not merely in the words but, more importantly, in the structure of the sentences and groups of sentences as well.

At this level of analysis, distinctions between the traditional modes of narrative break down. This is especially apparent in the distinction between first and third person (also a metaphor from grammar)--and especially in Victorian fiction. Speaking of the actual structuring of the sentences, there is no real or useful difference in Victorian realistic novels between what is called the "omniscient narrator" and what is regarded as the theoretically more limited first-person narrator.<sup>33</sup> Two rather striking examples from Hardy's fiction will illustrate this point. First, in The Trumpet-Major, Hardy emphasizes here his major theme, which is that people can have no significant awareness of their roles in history if they live, as they must, in their own times:

The present writer, to whom this party has been described times out of number by members of the Loveday family and other aged people now passed away, can never enter the old living-room of Overcombe Mill without beholding the genial scene through the mists of the seventy or eighty years that intervene between then and now. First and brightest to the eye are the dozen candles, scattered about regardless of expense, and kept well snuffed by the miller, who walks round the room at intervals of five minutes, snuffers in hand, and nips each wick with great precision, and with something of an executioner's grim look upon his face as he closes the snuffers upon the neck of the candle. Next to the candle-light show the red and blue coats and white breeches of the soldiers--nearly twenty of them in all besides the ponderous Derriman--the head of the latter, and, indeed, the heads of all who are standing up, being in dangerous proximity to the black beams of the ceiling. There is not one among them who would attach any meaning to "Vittoria," or gather from the syllables "Waterloo" the remotest idea of his own glory or death. (Ch. V, pp. 67-68)

The Woodlanders, for another example, begins with a description of what



the reader might find if he or she were to visit the places that the narrator has visited; the first sentence of the novel is: "The rambler who, for old association's sake, should trace the forsaken coach-road running almost in a meridional line from Bristol to the south shore of England, would find himself during the latter half of his journey in the vicinity of some extensive woodlands, interspersed with apple-orchards" (Ch . I, p. 1). This is as effective as it is because the narrator seems to be Hardy, just as the place seems to be local--that is, the "voice" telling the story seems to belong to our world, which includes "Bristol" and "England," rather than the fictional one.

The project of this dissertation, then, is to see what forms Hardy's conceptions of consciousness take in his novels: for Hardy, narration means perception, and a narrator in his novels has a kind of identity and individuality which weaken distinctions between first- and third-person narratives. There is, however, more than one way to perceive of any event, and, to Hardy, because his narrator appears to be more closely allied to reality and our time than to fictionality and the events of the story, the character engaged in the events offers a perspective without which our vision of the truth would be incomplete. Because Hardy does not center his novels around characters who are not conscious, we can say that individual consciousness presents a perspective, the personal perspective, which is necessary for understanding the truth of events and the world. The personal perspective, that of the engaged consciousness, is not by itself to Hardy enough for a complete understanding, but, in conjunction with the perspective of the narrator who is looking back in time on familiar deeds and places, it is one of the necessary perspectives. Most of the time, there is a sharp

difference between the perspectives of the narrator and the characters; it is possible, with some reservation, to regard them as irreconcilable, as opposites. If they do seem contradictory it is because Hardy saw a deep disjunction in the truths offered by scientific and artistic knowledge--particularly those of Darwinian progress and the exterior, aesthetic world of painting and observation of, for instance, "The Dorsetshire Labourer"--and the importance of the perceiving individual. Hardy avoids choosing between the two sets of conflicting assumptions by employing both kinds of narration. Later, after all his fiction was written, he came to a conception which could hold both these opposing sets of ideas, which could in fact resolve them; it is not until he was well into composition of The Dynasts that he considered directly consciousness as a potential force in history and evolution.

The next chapter will study Hardy's "omniscient" narrator and consider its function in the light of its use in Victorian fiction. Chapter Three will study Hardy's means of presenting the personal perspective of the characters as they compare to other authors' means of presenting characters' consciousnesses. Using these explorations of kinds of narration as tools for analysis, the rest of this dissertation will be devoted to Hardy's presentation of consciousness as it appears in the narration of his major novels and as it appears in characters, situations, and themes which repeat from novel to novel.

## Chapter Two: The Histor, Hardy's "Omniscient" Narrator

Arriving at terminology to describe Hardy's "omniscient" narration requires both a direct look at the terminology itself as well as a glance at the use of this kind of narrative in other authors of Hardy's century. This more theoretical and historical discussion will make up the first section of this chapter. Only after such a general context has been established will it be possible to organize the more specific and idiosyncratic Hardyian techniques. "Hardy's Histor," then, will make up the second section of this chapter. Finally, once Hardy's "omniscience" has been sorted out, it will then be possible to begin again with a discussion of Hardy's presentation of consciousness.

### A. The Histor: Its Use in Other Victorian Novelists and in Criticism

Of the several difficulties inherent in any discussion of omniscient narration, the first to arise has to do with terminology. "Omniscient," "intrusive," and "authorial" all are usually used to refer to the same kind of narration, even though they obviously mean different things outside of a discussion of "third-person" narrative. The reason, of course, that so many terms refer to the same phenomenon is that none refer to the phenomenon itself but all refer to one or another aspect of it. "Intrusive" seems different from the other two in that "omniscient" and "authorial" statements can be identified by their contents, but "intrusive" statements exist only in so far as the reader is fixed, as it

were, on the story being told rather than on the means of telling. That a narrator or a narrative statement is "intrusive" means that it is out of place in some system of aesthetics in which a pretense of the story as real and immediate takes priority over another pretense (which is really just as viable), that the intimate relationship between storyteller and reader is of higher aesthetic priority than, for example a presentation of characters' thought processes. "Intrusive," then, refers indirectly to a set of aesthetic assumptions about the nature of realism in fiction. We might at first think that this idea about the primacy of the story belongs to post-Jamesian schools of thought, but complaints about "intrusions" occur in the Victorian criticisms and reviews of novels just as instances of intrusions occur outside of "third-person" narratives.<sup>1</sup>

The problem with "intrusive," then, as a term to describe this kind of generalizing and detached narration, is that no indisputable examples of it exist. Every such example would serve to illustrate the reader's rather than the author's focus. "Omniscience" is, on the balance, easier to define. An omniscient statement by a narrator is one in which the narrator speaks of events or characters as real but is not limited in knowledge to what another such "real" observer would know at that time. Clearly, "omniscience" refers to the absence of a certain kind of limitation on knowledge, and not to the presence of absolutely accessible knowledge. "Omniscient" narration has been discussed, condemned, and defended in a variety of situations, particularly since James. Most of the less dogmatic of these discussions generally end up regarding "omniscience" as a "point of view" rather than as a quality which a statement may or may not express; the many objections to this kind of narration make the same metonymic generalization. A sober look at the term

"omniscience," however, makes immediately apparent that criteria for omniscient narration can be drawn up which distinguish it from the perspective which allows the author access to any character's consciousness. There is not much profit in detailed and extended analyses of terms like these, as numerous studies can illustrate, but enough delineation to make the complexity of the terminology problem clear will, it is to be hoped, cast doubt on all current typologies which confuse particular instances of "omniscience" with general narrative strategies.<sup>2</sup>

In a 1941 review of contemporary fiction, Howard Baker discusses omniscient narration in a different way. He too sees it as a form whose style and content are strictly limited. Baker calls this narration "authorial" here, but he is referring to the kind of generalizing commentary which makes up "omniscience." Because of the term "omniscient" and because of the habits of commentary which occur in omniscient narration, we might at first think that the content of such narration is limited only by the thematic interests of whatever author is using it. Baker finds, however, that the content is more likely to be based upon a small range of values which are "settled" and shared between the writer and reader:

The contemporary realist, as Professor Beach has remarked, is characteristically "disinclined to discuss things with the reader . . ., to point the moral for him, and explain the underlying philosophy. . . ." Such reticence, I believe, is more than a recent convention. For in the past centuries when authors were apparently more communicative, they were communicative on special grounds, and they observed their own kind of silence. The easiest thing to say is that a Fielding or a George Eliot drew upon settled and universally recognized standards; they could point the moral and put the price on the values because their readers shared in their attitudes towards morals and values; they could do so, because their readers would do so of their own accord anyway. Now we live in an age of unsettled values, without these special grounds for agreement between author and reader. But at the same time, when it came to matters that lay outside these special grounds, the older authors also held their silence.<sup>3</sup>

Baker's assumption that the content of narrative omniscience will be in agreement with the values of the readership seems to contradict conventional wisdom; it is not hard to find instances in which the argumentative tone of the narrator seems justified to later readers, like Hardy's insistent defense of Tess. A closer look, however, at even the more notorious conflicts between Victorian readers and authors bears Baker out. Tess is a good case in point because in it Hardy seems to hold his readers responsible for the failures of the society he presents. "But," as Hardy says in his 1892 Preface to the novel, "the responsive spirit in which Tess of the d'Urbervilles has been received by the readers of England and America would seem to prove that the plan of laying down a story on the lines of tacit opinion, instead of making it to square with the merely vocal formulae of society, is not altogether a wrong one . . ." (p. xvii).

It is also of significance that the kind of commentary which Baker has in mind is less authorial than it is omniscient, since, as we shall see, authorial statements refer in fact to the novel as a devised piece of fiction, rather than as a record of truth. What Baker has to say about the "style" of omniscient commentary, however, can be as true of authorial as omniscient commentary:

Readers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries got familiar truths, and not--not characteristically in the novel--the real perplexities and the deeper meditations of those centuries. They got Augustan urbanity from Fielding, pleasant irony from Jane Austen, comic homeliness from Dickens, embossed golden rules from George Eliot. They got much more too, but not in author's commentary. For successful commentary has always been conventional, mannered, polished, often gay, never serious. It falls under the control of the principle that led Dostoevsky to use an innocent and gentle little narrator to tell about terrible things.<sup>4</sup>

While Hardy is often "serious" and rarely "gay," it is true that the Principle has its effect upon him, for what is notable about Hardy's

omniscience is his irony.

When we come to Hardy, indeed, this term "omniscience" seems even less practicable than it does in the abstract, because time and time again he will limit what his narrator knows to less than omniscience. Others, also, have noticed that Hardy does not pretend to omniscience about his characters' motivations or about their secret actions. One is Michael Millgate, who thinks that these non-omniscient passages, and others in which Hardy adopts the perspective of a character to narrate a scene, reflect Hardy's unwillingness to engage himself in the world of complex moral and "intellectual commitments":

It is almost as though Hardy shrank from the responsibilities of omniscience, from the necessity of moral judgements and firm intellectual commitments, and found a certain security in adopting--usually quite inconsistently and on a scene-to-scene basis--the limited but essentially human perspectives available to particular characters.<sup>5</sup>

P. N. Furbank goes even further in relating general patterns of ideas in Hardy's work to his habits of limiting the source of narration to one who is not omniscient. Furbank finds that Hardy is generally unwilling to be what he calls the reader's "teacher": "Narration, for him, tends to be a matter of someone 'reading appearances'. . . . He likes to abnegate responsibility for the witnessing and interpreting of events and to shuffle it off on to the shoulders of his characters, converting them into eavesdroppers and voyeurs."<sup>6</sup>

The most important objection to "omniscient" and "intrusive" is that they describe the reader's impression of the extent and appropriateness of narrative commentary rather than emphasizing something more important about this function of narration, like how fundamental a role this kind of narrator has played in the history of the novel and of narrative itself; for this reason, I prefer "histor." From the term used by Homer

to mean "inquirer," histor is used by Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg to mean a person, "in short, of authority, who is entitled not only to present the facts as he has established them but to comment on them, to draw parallels, to moralize, to generalize, to tell the reader what to think and even to suggest what he should do."<sup>7</sup> The voice of authority, of thought, of articulated values and beliefs, the histor sets scenes and moods, describes characters, and comments on events. The histor's is the voice we get to know as Hardy's, although this voice is not so much Hardy's as it is that of what Wayne Booth calls "the implied author," a voice familiar with the characters and expressing implicit and explicit opinions about them or about some quality, possession, or action of theirs.<sup>8</sup> This voice knows what will happen at the end of the novel; it knows the countryside and its history, the towns and their histories. It seems to be an omnipresent character in Hardy's fiction. Distinguishable from the author, whose handiwork may be seen in irony, symbolism, names, juxtaposed or contrasting events and scenes, and the logic inherent in the plot, the voice of the histor spells out the moral universe of the novel.

The histor's is the voice with which we are to identify ourselves, the voice we must believe if we are to read the novel in its own terms, for the explicit terms of the novel are in the words of the histor. The words of the narrative line make up the substance of the histor; the voice of the histor is a structural element in the novel as a whole. In the voice of the histor, for instance, Hardy spells out Arabella's crudeness and unfitness for Jude; he sympathizes with Jude's, Sue's, and Philotson's unfitness for the society in which they live; and he details the effects of the unassuageable "ache of modernism."<sup>9</sup> The large perspective of events which leads the viewer to see humanity as a whole rather than



any human, the cosmic perspective is the perspective of the histor.

In the history of narrative, according to Scholes and Kellogg, the voice of the histor is as ancient as the voice of Thucydides, "basing his authority on the accuracy of conclusions he has drawn from evidence he has gathered," and as commonly associated with reliability as the voice of the eyewitness.<sup>10</sup> Everyone recognizes the fictional value of an eyewitness, especially when that eyewitness is a trustworthy character narrating anomolous events, but novelists since James have also recognized the powerful ambiguity possible in the narration of an unreliable eyewitness. This has led writers and critics to the conclusion that all perceivers are inherently biased and therefore untrustworthy. For Hardy, however, such unreliability is never a matter of concern; in some very important ways Hardy's histor is an eyewitness and, of course, the reliability of the histor is unimpeachable. The result for Hardy is that his narrator can offer a personal perspective with none of the unreliability associated with regular human perceptions.

As a term, "histor" has a critical value other than its reminder of the long and powerful tradition of the story-teller, for it also suggests that fiction may be a kind of history, especially if Thucydides is to be regarded as the model. This notion is an old one, and story-tellers and historians alike have long been aware of the difficulties in separating truth from fiction in any kind of narrative. In "Narrative and History," J. Hillis Miller lists the effects that this entanglement has had on the forms which fiction can take:

The traditional notions of form in fiction . . . are displaced versions of ideas about history. The entire fabric of assumptions about form and meaning in the novel . . . stands or falls with the metaphor defining a work of fiction as a species of history.

The assumptions about history which have been transferred to the traditional conception of the form of fiction may be

identified. They include the notions of origin and end ("archeology" and "teleology"); of unity and totality or "totalization"; of underlying "reason" or "ground"; of selfhood, consciousness, or "human nature"; of the homogeneity, linearity, and continuity of time; of necessary progress; of "fate," "destiny," or "Providence"; of causality; of gradually emerging "meaning"; of representation and truth . . . .<sup>11</sup>

Like Fielding and Thackeray, whose The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling and The History of Henry Esmond, Esq., A Colonel in the Service of Her Majesty Q. Anne, Written by Himself make explicit their debts to this idea about history, Hardy too makes use of the reliability inherent in a narrator who is a reporter of historical facts. The effect is intimately tied up with the "realism" which these novels adopt as aesthetic standards; by referring to historicism, or, as Miller says,

By calling a novel a history its author at one stroke covers over all the implications of gratuitousness, of baseless creativity and lie, involved in the word "fiction." At the same time he affirms for his novel that verisimilitude, that solid basis in pre-existing fact, which is associated with the idea of history.<sup>12</sup>

The histor dominates Victorian fiction at all levels. Even though the important Victorian novelists often used the histor as a means of presenting authorial concerns, it is a serious mistake to assume that this is its only--or even its most important--use. Disraeli, Thackeray, Dickens, Trollope, Meredith, and George Eliot all have complex narrative presentations, a part of which is due to each author's individual interpretation of this voice. Like all serious writers of fiction, these authors were deeply concerned with the question of fictionality itself, and they used the reliable and historicist voice, the one which denies the difference between fiction and history, to raise this very question. Disraeli, in particular, broached directly the point at which fiction and history merge, in his subject matter as well as in his style, and in Coningsby (1844), he even goes so far as to discuss how it is that the

absent author of a book can carry over into the reader's non-reading life:

There are some books, when we close them--one or two in the course of our life--difficult as it may be to analyze or ascertain the cause,--our minds seem to have made a great leap. A thousand obscure things receive light; a multitude of indefinite feelings are determined. Our intellect grasps and grapples with all subjects with a capacity, a flexibility and a vigour, before unknown to us. It masters questions hitherto perplexing, which are not even touched or referred to in the volume just closed. What is this magic? It is the spirit of the supreme author that by a magnetic influence blends with our sympathizing intelligence, directs and inspires it. By that mysterious sensibility we extend to questions, which he has not treated, the same intellectual force which he has exercised over those which he has expounded. His genius for a time remains in us.<sup>13</sup>

This communion between reader and the rare "supreme author" sets up, as an ideal, a direct and intimate relationship between them and ignores inter mediating forms like novel or narrator.

Thackeray's histor in Vanity Fair (1847-48) offers an interesting contrast to Disraeli's serious and unspectacular use of this voice. Disraeli's histor serves to support the mimetic aims of his fiction, while the reliability of Thackeray's histor often serves to subvert the mimesis in his novel. We are told at the beginning and end and reminded again and again that the characters in Vanity Fair are merely "puppets" and that the story has a didactic rather than a mimetic purpose. The last paragraph, for example, probably the most famous passage in this very popular novel, concludes the novel simply by ending it. Not only are the characters dolls, but we, presumably for our belief in the reality of the fiction and for our pleasure in being entertained by fiction, are children: "Ah! Vanitas Vanitatum! which of us is happy in this world? Which of us has his desire? or, having it, is satisfied?--come, children, let us shut up the box and the puppets, for our play is played out."<sup>14</sup> Thackeray's histor, however, is not always so antimimetic. In this

passage, for instance, he uses the histor to argue the realism of his method and the antiheroic style of his presentation:

I know that the tune I am piping is a very mild one (although there are some terrific chapters coming presently), and must beg the good-natured reader to remember that we are only discoursing at present about a stock-broker's family in Russell Square, who are taking walks, or luncheon, or dinner, or talking and making love as people do in common life, and without a single passionate and wonderful incident to mark the progress of their loves. The argument stands thus--Osborne, in love with Amelia, has asked an old friend to dinner and to Vauxhall--Jos Sedley is in love with Rebecca. Will he marry her? That is the great subject now in hand.

We might have treated this subject in the genteel, or in the romantic, or in the facetious manner. Suppose we had shown how Lord Joseph Sedley fell in love, and the Marquis of Osborne became attached to Lady Amelia, with the full consent of the Duke, her noble father: or instead of the supremely genteel, suppose we had resorted to the entirely low, and described what was going on in Mr. Sedley's kitchen--how black Sambo was in love with the cook (as indeed he was), and how he fought a battle with the coachman in her behalf; how the knife-boy was caught stealing a cold shoulder of mutton, and Miss Sedley's new femme de chambre refused to go to bed without a wax candle; such incidents might be made to provoke much delightful laughter, and be supposed to represent scenes of "life." Or if, on the contrary, we had taken a fancy for the terrible, and made the lover of the new femme de chambre a professional burglar, who bursts into the house with his band, slaughters black Sambo at the feet of his master, and carries off Amelia in her night-dress, not to be let loose again till the third volume, we should easily have constructed a tale of thrilling interest, through the fiery chapters of which the reader should hurry, panting. But my readers must hope for no such romance, only a homely story, and must be content with a chapter about Vauxhall, which is so short that it scarce deserves to be called a chapter at all. And yet it is a chapter, and a very important one too. Are not there little chapters in everybody's life, that seem to be nothing, and yet affect all the rest of the history?<sup>15</sup>

Much of the interest in Vanity Fair is interest in its histor, in Thackeray's cynical and sarcastic humor at the expense of his characters, who represent the grasping and the sentimental of humanity. As passages like these make clear, the histor is at the center of our attention; such passages are not intrusive--they are the substance of the novel.

One of the major attractions to Dickens' Bleak House (1853), of

course, is the narrative itself, and one of the most interesting aspects of the narrative of this novel is that Dickens uses his histor for the more descriptive and poetic passages and uses the first-person, rather flat narration of Esther Summerson to narrate the mundane and slow-moving part of the story. What is unusual about this is that the histor is individualized in a way that the character is not; in this same way, it is Esther who may be said to be detached in this novel, not the narrator (of the "third-person" sections). The histor of Bleak House is one of the most important in the history of omniscient narration; Dickens is clearly reaching for a particular aesthetic (and didactic) effect in this novel, for not only are there two narrators, the bland Esther and the dramatic histor, but Dickens moves the histor to the present tense--and therefore to the world of the reader. This present tense is different from the kind of summarizing present found, for example, at the end of the novel in "The Close of Esther's Narrative"--it is immediate, and particular, and non-fictional. The novel is crowded with many passages of beautiful and powerful narration, so it is hard to find one which may be regarded as typical. Jo's death is narrated in a relatively restrained fashion; then, after a long passage of conversation (Jo attempts to repeat the Lord's Prayer after Dr. Woodcourt) in which there is no narrator's voice, the histor says:

The light is come upon the dark benighted way. Dead!  
Dead, your Majesty. Dead, my lords and gentlemen. Dead,  
Right Reverends and Wrong Reverends of every order. Dead, men  
and women, born with Heavenly compassion in your hearts. And  
dying thus around us every day.<sup>16</sup>

It is impossible to remember the histor of Bleak House, however, without also remembering the Chancery and Dickens' vivid descriptions of life under its "draw," as Miss Flite describes its power.<sup>17</sup> The long paragraphs make full quotation impractical, but a part of the beginning can show

both the effect of the present tense and the directness of the didactic message:

Gas looming through the fog in divers places in the streets, much as the sun may, from the spongy fields, be seen to loom by husbandman and ploughboy. Most of the shops lighted two hours before their time--as the gas seems to know, for it has a haggard and unwilling look.

The raw afternoon is rawest, and the dense fog is densest, and the muddy streets are muddiest, near the leaden-headed old obstruction, appropriate ornament for the threshold of a leaden-headed old corporation: Temple Bar. And hard by Temple Bar, in Lincoln's Inn Hall, at the very heart of the fog, sits the Lord High Chancellor in his High Court of Chancery.

Never can there come fog too thick, never can there come mud and mire too deep, to assort with the groping and floundering condition which this High Court of Chancery, most pestilent of hoary sinners, holds, this day, in the sight of heaven and earth.<sup>18</sup>

Trollope's more normal histor in Barchester Towers (1857) shows, by contrast, how original Dickens' is. This is not to slight Trollope, however, whose aims are different. Like most "omniscient" narrators, the histor of Barchester Towers is used to discuss aesthetic problems. This discussion itself provides the "frame" in which the novel is set and serves, like Thackeray's, as a structural element at the beginning and end of the novel. It is worth quoting this passage in full for its clear concentration of Trollope's style:

We must now take leave of Mr. Slope, and of the bishop also, and of Mrs. Proudie. These leave-takings in novels are as disagreeable as they are in real life; not so sad, indeed, for they want the reality of sadness; but quite as perplexing, and generally less satisfactory. What novelist, what Fielding, what Scott, what George Sand, or Sue, or Dumas, can import an interest to the last chapter of his fictitious history? Promises of two children and superhuman happiness are of no avail, nor assurance of extreme respectability carried to an age far exceeding that usually allotted to mortals. The sorrows of our heroes and heroines, they are your delight, oh public! their sorrows, or their sins, or their absurdities; not their virtues, good sense, and consequent rewards. When we begin to tint our final pages with couleur de rose, as in accordance with fixed rule we must do, we altogether extinguish our own powers of pleasing. When we become dull we offend your intellect; and we must become dull or we should offend your taste. A late writer, wishing to sustain his interest to the last

page, hung his hero at the end of the third volume. The consequence was, that no one would read his novel. And who can apportion out and dovetail his incidents, dialogues, characters, and descriptive morsels, so as to fit them artificially at the end of his labour? Do I not myself know that I am at this moment sick with cudgelling my brains to find them? And then when everything is done, the kindest-hearted critic of them all invariably twits us with the incompetency and lameness of our conclusion. We have either become idle and neglected it, or tedious and over-laboured it. It is insipid or unnatural, overstrained or imbecile. It means nothing, or attempts too much. The last scene of all, as all last scenes we fear must be,

In second childishness, and mere oblivion,  
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

I can only say that if some critic, who thoroughly knows his work, and has laboured on it till experience has made him perfect, will write the last fifty pages of a novel in the way they should be written, I, for one, will in future do my best to copy the example. Guided by my own lights only, I confess that I despair of success.<sup>19</sup>

**T**rollope's histor, as it is shown here, in concentrated form, and as it **a**ppears elsewhere in his fiction, is as idiosyncratic as the histor of **e**very other author who uses the form. It is also what could be called **t**he "standard Victorian narrator" or, as Wayne Booth says of the histor **o**f The Mayor of Casterbridge, "the 'old-fashioned' narrator's voice."<sup>20</sup>

The histor of The Ordeal of Richard Feverel (1859) is the means by **w**hich the novel sounds like an ironic medieval allegory. Meredith's histor stays close to the story throughout most of the novel, as it does **h**ere:

A poor Dyspepsy may talk as he will, but he is the one who never gets sympathy, or experiences compassion: and it is he whose groaning petitions for charity do at last rout that Christian virtue. Lady Blandish, a charitable soul, could not listen to Hippas, though she had a heart for little mice and flies, and Sir Austin had also small patience with his brother's gleam of health, which was just enough to make his disease visible. He remembered his early follies and excesses, and bent his ear to him as one man does to another who complains of having to pay a debt legally incurred.<sup>21</sup>

**T**hat the histor does not depart on flights of independent narrative means **t**hat there are few passages in this novel like those of Disraeli and

Trollope, which focus the reader's attention upon authorial problems of realism and fictionality. Because of the ironic detachment of the histor, Meredith's entire novel seems filtered through an engaged and purposeful consciousness which, because it never really disappears into the story and because it seems so engaged, seems authorial. The Ordeal of Richard Feverel is like Vanity Fair and Bleak House in that the key to it is in the histor, not in the story; the reading of any of these novels is the reading of the histor's interactions with the materials of the novel.

Meredith's histor is usually much less central to the subject of his novels than it is in The Ordeal of Richard Feverel. Perhaps an apt characterization is that found in the Introduction to Sandra Belloni (1864), when Meredith identifies the histor's role as that of the "Philosopher."<sup>22</sup> This is not so far from the histor in, for instance, The Egoist (1879), in which the histor is used more sparingly and subtly than it is in The Ordeal of Richard Feverel. The only extended passage of this kind of narration occurs in the Prelude, "A Chapter of Which the Last Page Only is of Any Importance." In the Prelude, Meredith introduces what might be called the histor's aesthetic companions, the Comic Spirit, which, as Muse, serves as inspiration to the histor, and the "imps" who find the Egoist to be ridiculous:

You may as well know him out of hand, as a gentleman of our time and country, of wealth and station; a not flexible figure, do what we may with him; the humour of whom scarcely dimples the surface and is distinguishable but by very penetrative, very wicked imps, whose fits of roaring below at some generally imperceptible stroke of his quality, have first made the mild literary angels aware of something comic in him, when they were one and all about to describe the gentleman on the heading of the records baldly (where brevity is most complimentary) as a gentleman of family and property, an idol of a decorous island that admires the concrete. Imps have their freakish wickedness in them to kindle detective vision: Malignly do they love to uncover ridiculousness in imposing figures.



Wherever they catch sight of Egoism they pitch their camps, they circle and squat, and forthwith they trim their lanterns, confident of the ludicrous to come. So confident that their grip of an English gentleman, in whom they have spied their game, never relaxes until he begins insensibly to frolic and antic, unknown to himself, and comes out in the native steam which is their scent of the chase. Instantly off they scour, Egoist and imps. They will, it is known of them, dog a great House for centuries, and be at the birth of all the new heirs in succession, diligently taking confirmatory notes, to join hands and chime their chorus in one of their merry rings round the tottering pillar of the House, when his turn arrives; as if they had (possibly they had) smelt of old date a doomed colossus of Egoism in that unborn, unconceived inheritor of the stuff of the family. They dare not be chuckling while Egoism is valiant, while sober, while socially valuable, nationally serviceable. They wait.<sup>23</sup>

In many ways, George Eliot's histors are exemplary for their integration into and resonance throughout all levels of their novels. At her best, in Middlemarch, Eliot brings a philosophical understanding of the advantages and failures of objectivity and detachment to bear exactly on that treatment of her own characters. In fact, Middlemarch may be said to be about the effects and responsibilities of engagement, just as, as J. Hillis Miller has pointed out, it is also about the failure of traditional "notions" of history (including those held by her characters).<sup>24</sup> Part of the excellence of her narrative comes from its complete integration into her story; like Dickens' and Meredith's, that is, Eliot's nearly omnipresent histor is the necessary basis for our comprehension of the novel. It is difficult therefore to lift a single passage out and call it typical of Eliot's histor, for no single passage seems sufficient. One passage, unusual in its separability from the text, seems personal in its self-revelation and its reference to Fielding; it is quite ironic, however, in that what appears to be hurried summary to Eliot's histor is leisurely expansiveness to many of her readers:

A great historian, as he insisted on calling himself, who had

the happiness to be dead a hundred and twenty years ago, and so to take his place among the colossi whose huge legs our living pettiness is observed to walk under, glories in his copious remarks and digressions as the least imitable part of his work, . . . and especially in those initial chapters to the successive books of his history, where he seems to bring his arm-chair to the proscenium and chat with us in all the lusty ease of his fine English. But Fielding lived when the days were longer (for time, like money, is measured by our needs), when summer afternoons were spacious, and the clock ticked slowly in the winter evenings. We belated historians must not linger after his example; and if we did so, it is probable that our chat would be thin and eager, as if delivered from a camp-stool in a parrot-house. I at least have so much to do in unravelling certain human lots, and seeing how they were woven and interwoven, that all the light I can command must be concentrated on this particular web, and not dispersed over that tempting range of relevancies called the universe.<sup>25</sup>

This histor of Middlemarch, even though she stops to discuss problems of narrative, consistently speaks of the characters as real, as if the weaving of the characters' "lots" were not done by the author, and never presents them as anything but actual people. The Finale of Middlemarch maintains this position; it begins, as many Victorian conclusions do, with the histor discussing fictionality, but Eliot never uses her histor to distinguish between the contents of the novel and life. All the characters are reduced at the end from the heroic to the ordinary so that they can disappear in the mass of humanity and undistinguished lives. In her two marriages, the "determining acts of her life," Dorothea is no different from the rest, whatever we might have thought of her potential:

Certainly those determining acts of her life were not ideally beautiful. They were the mixed results of young and noble impulse . . . struggling amidst the conditions of an imperfect social state, in which great feelings will often take the aspect of error, and great faith the aspect of illusion. For there is no creature whose inward being is so strong that it is not greatly determined by what lies outside it. A new Theresa will hardly have the opportunity of reforming a conventual life, any more than a new Antigone will spend her heroic piety in daring all for the sake of a brother's burial: the medium in which their ardent deeds took shape is for ever

gone. But we insignificant people with our daily words and acts are preparing the lives of many Dorotheas, some of which may present a far sadder sacrifice than that of the Dorothea whose story we know.

Her finely-touched spirit had still its fine issues, though they were not widely visible. Her full nature, like that river of which Cyrus . . . broke the strength, spent itself in channels which had no great name on the earth. But the effect of her being on those around her was incalculably diffusive: for the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs.<sup>26</sup>

There is little that can be said in summary of all these authors' uses of the histor. The aesthetic choices which lead to the organization of a novel around a central intelligence do not, it seems to me, also lead these authors to a similarity in style. On the contrary, the differences among them are emphasized in a study such as this, when examples from each are set side by side. The irreducible habits of garrulity or restraint, expressiveness or analysis show up most clearly in long passages like the ones above, when an author's "authorial" voice or personality can be isolated from the story it narrates. The point is that the histor, though technically only a "voice," comes at last to seem to be a personality, whose interests and consistencies make up the index around which the novel is organized. Because this "personality" is as much an impression as are "omniscience" and "intrusiveness," similar objections can be raised to the use of "histor" as were raised to the other two terms. More important, there is "third-person" narration which is not dominated by commentary and central authority and which, therefore, is not the narration of a histor. We can conclude this section of this chapter, then, by putting the histor in the larger context of all narration, in a theoretical rather than historical context.

In his search for a comprehensive typology of narrative, Gerard Genette disregards those aspects of the histor which seem to coalesce into

a fictional personality and concentrates on the discours or text of the novel. He describes what is here called the histor in several ways. In considering the distance between the narrator and what would be reality if the fiction were life, he finds that the narrator can present dialogue as "limited or reported discourse," a technique by which the narrator appears to be absent and the characters appear to speak, and as "narrativized discourse," the more commonly recognized form of narration in which the narrator summarizes and abstracts what would have been the dialogue if there had been any.<sup>27</sup> Genette calls "non-focalized récit" the text of the histor because the narrator is not limited ("focalized" or "focussed") consistently to the perspective of any particular character.<sup>28</sup> "Non-focalized récit" describes, then, the text of all narration that is not limited to the perspective of a character, assuming, of course, that the narrator can in no way be regarded as a character. In a "nonfocalized" text--or in narration with "zero" focalization, the narrator is extradiegetic and heterodiegetic; this is, as Genette says, the "classical" focalization (or "focus of narration" as Brooks and Warren express it.) "Externally-focalized" narration describes the text in which "we are never allowed to know the thoughts or sentiments" of the characters. Dashiell Hammet and Ernest Hemingway (in "The Killers" and "Hills like White Elephants") produced "externally-focalized récits."<sup>29</sup> In Victorian fiction, I believe that the récit is in fact often "focalized" to the perspective of some kind of story-teller, "Philosopher," "historian," "chronicler," or "leader of the chorus" which the author chooses as a central intelligence for narrating the novel.<sup>30</sup>

Genette's system is intelligent and useful, especially for the organization and consideration of groups of novels. Once faced with a particular text, however, or with particular parts of a text, the reader

finds two objections to such a macrosystem of "third-person" narration. The first is that it too absolutely assumes the fictionality of the narrator; in fiction, and especially in Victorian realistic novels, the narrator is often "authorial," referring to the novel as a narration of fiction. This is the only function of the narrator which can properly be called "authorial."<sup>31</sup> Obviously, this authorial narrator is fictional in the same way that the novel is fictional, but it is fictional in a different way than a character, like Huck Finn or Tristram Shandy, is. Henry James regards this authorial commentary as a "crime," as a "pernicious trick," which robs the novelist of the only justification for fiction that there is. Trollope's is "a suicidal satisfaction in reminding the reader that the story he was telling was only, after all, a make-believe."<sup>32</sup>

It is impossible to imagine what a novelist takes himself to be unless he regards himself as an historian and his narrative as history. It is only as an historian that he has the smallest locus standi. As a narrator of fictitious events he is nowhere; to insert into his attempt a backbone of logic, he must relate events that are assumed to be real.

J. Hillis Miller rightly points out that to regard authorial commentary as a "crime" is to imply that the novelist is a kind of historian and that fiction cannot be justified for its own sake or for the sake of beauty. The truth is, as these examples of the histor in Disraeli, Thackeray, Dickens, Trollope, Meredith, and Eliot make clear, that this kind of narrative commentary was not only deliberate but essential to the aesthetic purpose of the authors. What is more, each author's use of it is different enough from the others that James limits the narrator unnecessarily by thinking of fiction only as history, and Genette makes it too much like what Booth calls "undramatized" narration by lumping together all narrators that are outside of the story (heterodiegetic)

and outside the time of the story (extradiegetic).<sup>33</sup>

The second objection is Genette's typology is more intangible as well as more theoretically problematical, in that "extradiegetic-heterodiegetic," which describes most of Hardy's narration (not to mention that of Disraeli, Thackeray, Dickens, Trollope, Meredith, and Eliot), does not take into account the impression that most readers have (and that many critics insist upon) that the narrator of a Victorian realistic novel has a personality, a unified, identifiable "sound" or "feel." This sense of a personality is merely an impression, hence the problem, but it is in part the reader's reaction to authorial statements about the fictionality of the work; it is also a reaction to other statements which are clearly fictional in that they pretend, as Hardy often does, that the setting is real, that the characters are people, or that the narrator actually witnessed the events. Most important, probably, this impression of a whole and human personality is based in the conscious and unconscious recollection of general philosophical statements and summarizing little aphorisms that seem to expand the subject of the novel from the particulars of the characters and their actions at this time and place to all people at all times and places. The histor in Jude, for instance, describes Jude and Arabella's wedding:

And so, standing before the aforesaid officiator, the two swore that at every other time of their lives till death took them, they would assuredly believe, feel, and desire precisely as they had believed, felt, and desired during the few preceding weeks. What was as remarkable as the undertaking itself was the fact that nobody seemed at all surprised at what they swore. (Pt. I, Ch. ix; p. 65)

It is possible, therefore, to reduce the histor to a collection of linguistic characteristics (extradiegetic-heterodiegetic), but to do so ignores the reader's clear impression that there is in this kind of narration a personal perspective, however comprehensive, with which to

identify. This impression must be recognized in critical parlance and be placed within the context of the fictionality of realistic, authorial narration and whatever relationship exists between reader and writer.

#### B. Hardy's Histor

Hardy's histor has attracted quite a bit of critical attention, most of it negative, especially when his more turgid style is emphasized; the histor is the locus for all those Latinate words, references to painting and architecture, and generally learned phrases.<sup>34</sup> In "Hardy's 'Pedantry,'" C. H. Salter finds consistency in as well as justification for Hardy's habits of using learned allusions and Latinate expressions in their reference to the world outside Wessex. That is, he finds Hardy's "pedantry" to belong to a way of describing his fictional world in terms which the outsider to Wessex would use. There is, he says, "an obvious but fundamental duality or contrast in Hardy between Wessex and the rest of the world. Hardy's 'pedantic' language is part of the language which Wessex meets in the rest of the world."<sup>35</sup> Salter goes on to distinguish among various uses of learned language, but essentially they all compared what is small in Wessex with what is similar or identical, however much larger, in the outside world.<sup>36</sup> Hardy's histor speaks in a voice from outside Wessex, using "language which Wessex meets in the rest of the world." Ian Gregor finds Hardy's allusions to be a form of characterization of the histor, which he thinks of as an authorial "consciousness":

Hardy's references to artists--and the same applies to all his "cultural" allusions--have a dramatic function rather than a descriptive one. They are employed as means of altering the reader's response, so that he is kept moving, in the way that the novel itself is constantly moving, from a dramatic to a

contemplative mood, and then back again. The allusions are one of the means through which Hardy keeps us alert to the mediating consciousness of the author, which is always integral to his meaning.<sup>37</sup>

Robert Schweik looks at Hardy's use of the histor in Far from the Madding Crowd as evidence of Hardy's strategies for handling narrative problems as they arose. The mixture of ironic and sober narration in the first five chapters, for instance, Schweik says,

was certainly not characteristic of Hardy, nor was it likely to have been entirely congenial to him. Probably it came about as a result of his initial effort to combine a number of not entirely compatible objectives--the more serious treatment of character he had been groping toward in A Pair of Blue Eyes, the comic tone and rustic humor of Under the Greenwood Tree . . . , and the "incident" necessary to satisfy Stephen's demand for "some distinct and well arranged plot". . . . In any case, Hardy seems to have found the manner he had adopted increasingly difficult to maintain, and by Chapter V it had become something like a see-saw between wry comicality and profound seriousness. Yet, although Hardy no doubt felt the strain of keeping a balance between such diverse objectives, the result was a remarkably controlled opening; and his handling of scene and action leaves the impression of a narrator of broad awareness and flexible sensibility.<sup>38</sup>

In Chapters IV-XVI, Hardy continues to apply different narrative "tones" to the different groups of characters, "but for the most part the various strands of their stories are developed separately, and the characters, so far as they act upon one another, do so mostly at a distance, separated physically and psychologically."<sup>39</sup> Chapters XIX-XXIII tell the story of Boldwood's courtship of Bathsheba; because Hardy had intended to spend six chapters on this, they are "fleshed out" by "carefully wrought and highly particularized accounts of the sheep-shearing process" which, "at best only peripherally relevant to the Bathsheba-Boldwood affair, had to be brought to the foreground and allowed to assume proportions which nearly obscure the main action without providing any centre of [their] own."<sup>40</sup>

After Chapter XXV, Schweik says, there is a "marked reduction in



Hardy's use of authorial generalization" which "was probably a result of the increased time pressure under which he worked; . . . in any case, it marks still another distinct shift in narrative method--and the beginning of a gradual decline into increasing dependence upon 'strong' effects, shock, surprise, and external melodrama."<sup>41</sup> Schweik, advises, then, that we proceed cautiously when generalizing about Hardy's methods of narration, since, in Far from the Madding Crowd at least, they seem much more the result of ad hoc solutions to current narrative problems than the result of a consistent aesthetic. It is possible, however, to find a number of narrative acts and qualities that seem characteristic of Hardy. A few of these characteristic narrative actions or patterns demand discussion; it is important, for example, to attempt to describe or identify Hardy's "omniscient" narrator, since just who he is, where he is standing, and where he got his knowledge can be something of a puzzle.

This question of the identity of the histor does not usually arise in Victorian fiction, mostly because authors like Thackeray, Meredith, and Eliot either announce the convention whereby the narrator came by his or her knowledge or they so completely dramatize the narrator that we read the novel in order to enjoy the histor's story-telling. Occasionally, Hardy makes use of the usual conventions explaining the origin of the narrator's knowledge, as he does in The Romantic Adventures of a Milkmaid by claiming that his knowledge comes from "the testimony of the land-surveyor, my authority for the particulars of this story, a gentleman with the faintest curve of humour on his lips" (Ch. I, p. 305) and directly from Jim Hayward himself ("In relating this incident to the present narrator Jim used to declare . . ." [Ch. XVII, p. 401]). In The Trumpet-Major, Hardy's histor refers to himself as "writer," names his sources, and ties it all to reality by suggesting that he still visits

Overcombe Mill: "The present writer, to whom this party has been described times out of number by members of the Loveday family and other aged people now passed away, can never enter the old living-room of Overcombe Mill without beholding the general scene through the mists of the seventy or eighty years that intervene between then and now" (Ch. V, pp. 67-68).

In general, Hardy's use of the histor is the same as that of any other major Victorian author, but his narrator is so often so obviously located in the novel that he seems paradoxical: he is both there, in the fictional time and space, though nonexistent as far as the characters know, and is not there, since he is in a later time, narrating the story as if it happened in the past. There are so many examples of this apparently physical locating of the narrative perceiver that no choice can be said to be truly representative. First, a relatively simple description of Dick Dewy from Under the Greenwood Tree:

Having come more into the open he could now he seen rising against the sky, his profile appearing on the light background like the portrait of a gentleman in black cardboard. It assumed the form of a low-crowned hat, an ordinary-shaped nose, an ordinary chin, an ordinary neck, and ordinary shoulders. What he consisted of further down was invisible from lack of sky low enough to picture him on.

Shuffling, halting, irregular footsteps of various kinds were now heard coming up the hill, and presently there emerged from the shade severally five men of different ages and gaits, all of them working villagers of the parish of Mellstock. They, too, had lost their rotundity with the daylight, and advanced against the sky in flat outlines, which suggested some processional design on Greek or Etruscan pottery. (Pt. I, Ch. i; pp. 4-5)

It is, of course, possible to analyze this passage at some length, connecting the reference to the "processional design on Greek or Etruscan pottery" with the formal structure of the novel, with its theme of vanishing beauty, and with the artist's attempt to preserve ancient rituals. For the present, however, what is most important is the situation of the

narrator as a perceiver with a local point of view, a perspective, even to the point of how the Mellstock choristers sound as they approach in the dark.

The next example of Hardy's habit of clearly locating the perceiver in the perspective, as it were, of the entire scene has the added virtue of introducing a related technique--that of a theoretical or hypothetical observer. From Desperate Remedies, this passage could have been from Cytherea Graye's perspective, except that Hardy does not identify her as the perceiver. Instead, the perceiver is some unidentifiable "spectator in the Town Hall," "a person on the ground":

The picture thus presented to a spectator in the Town Hall was curious and striking. It was an illuminated miniature, framed in by the dark margin of the window, the keen-edged shadiness of which emphasized by contrast the softness of the objects enclosed.

The height of the spire was about one hundred and twenty feet, and the five men engaged thereon seemed entirely removed from the sphere and experiences of ordinary human beings. They appeared little larger than pigeons, and made their tiny movements with a soft, spirit-like silentness. One idea above all others was conveyed to the mind of a person on the ground by their aspect, namely, concentration of purpose: that they were indifferent to--even unconscious of--the distracted world beneath them, and all that moved upon it. (Ch. I, No. iii; pp. 9-10)

Again, much could be made of the description here of the detached minds of concentrating humans and their observers, but what is most important right now is the fact that the narrator is given a kind of identity which is the result of our knowing where he is standing and where he is looking. There is no Town Hall, of course, and there is no spire, but the location of the narrator in this space seems to give it reality. We almost always know where Hardy's histor is standing, and knowing that gives us a sense not only that he is real but that what he describes is real as well. This, then, is Hardy's usual explanation for the source of his narrator's knowledge: he was there and saw what "a spectator" or

a "person on the ground" would have seen.

Very often, Hardy uses this technique of a clearly delineated perspective to suggest that the setting of the novel is an actual site in England which can be reached and seen by anyone who wishes to visit there. The second chapter of Tess, for instance, locates the setting and even comes with advice:

The village of Marlott lay amid the north-eastern undulations of the beautiful Vale of Blakemore or Blackmoor aforesaid, an engirdled and secluded region for the most part untrodden as yet by tourist or landscape-painter, though within a four hours' journey from London.

It is a vale whose acquaintance is best made by viewing it from the summits of the hills that surround it--except perhaps during the droughts of summer. An unguided ramble into its recesses in bad weather is apt to engender dissatisfaction with its narrow, tortuous, and miry ways.

This fertile and sheltered tract of country, in which the fields are never brown and the springs never dry, is bounded on the south by a bold chalk ridge that embraces the prominences of Hambledon Hill, Bulbarrow, Nettlecombe Tout, Dogbury, High-Stoy, and Bubb Down. The traveller from the coast, who, after plodding northward for a score of miles over calcareous downs and corn-lands, suddenly reaches the verge of one of these escarpments, is surprised and delighted to behold, extended like a map beneath him, a country differing absolutely from that which he has passed through. Behind him the hills are open, the sun blazes down upon fields so large as to give an unenclosed character to the landscape, the lanes are white, the hedges low and plashed, the atmosphere colourless. Here, in the valley, the world seems to be constructed upon a smaller and more delicate scale; the fields are mere paddocks, so reduced that from this height their hedgerows appear a network of dark green threads overspreading the paler green of the grass. (Ch. II, pp. 9-10)

By this same device of lending reality to the narrator by the clear description of the setting and to the setting by the clear identification of the narrator, Hardy also makes his characters seem as real as their surroundings by moving from a description of what could be a real place to a description of his characters in that place. This happens again and again and, obviously, is an essential part of the mimetic as well as ironic nature of Hardy's fiction. To see how such a technique operates,

it is best to work with a particular example, the opening of The Return of the Native, but any number of other passages, like the beginning of Under the Greenwood Tree, the chapter on the Great Barn in Far from the Madding Crowd, or the description of Shaston in Jude, would also serve.

Hardy begins The Return of the Native with the time and place so specified and so localized that the pretense is that the narrator is on the spot.<sup>42</sup> The first truly "hypothetical" observer is a furze-cutter, but the narrator describes the scene in such a way ("moment by moment," "heron," the horizon "seemed to be a division in time") that we have the impression that the histor is actually there at that time:

A saturday afternoon in November was approaching the time of twilight, and the vast tract of unenclosed wild known as Egdon Heath embrowned itself moment by moment. Overhead the hollow stretch of whitish cloud shutting out the sky was as a tent which had the whole heath for its floor.

The heaven being spread with this pallid screen and the earth with the darkest vegetation, their meeting-line at the horizon was clearly marked. In such contrast the heath wore the appearance of an instalment of night which had taken up its place before its astronomical hour was come: darkness had to a great extent arrived hereon, while day stood distinct in the sky. Looking upwards, a furze-cutter would have been inclined to continue work; looking down, he would have decided to finish his faggot and go home. The distant rims of the world and of the firmament seemed to be a division in time no less than a division in matter. The face of the heath by its mere complexion added half an hour to evening; it could in like manner retard the dawn, sadden noon, anticipate the frowning of storms scarcely generated, and intensify the opacity of a moonless midnight to a cause of shaking and dread. (Bk. I, Ch. i; p. 3)

Not only is the histor present at the scene, he also knows the heath better and with more sensitivity than anyone else in the novel:

In fact, precisely at this point of its nightly roll into darkness the great and particular glory of the Egdon waste began, and nobody could be said to understand the heath who had not been there at such a time. It could best be felt when it could not clearly be seen, its complete effect and explanation lying in this and the succeeding hours before the next dawn: then, and only then, did it tell its true tale. . . .

The place became full of a watchful intentness now; for when other things sank brooding to sleep the heath appeared

slowly to awake and listen. Every night its Titanic form seemed to await something; but it had waited thus, unmoved, during so many centuries, through the crises of so many things, that it could only be imagined to await one last crisis--the final overthrow. (Bk. I, Ch. i; pp. 3-4)

Part of the reason that Egdon Heath seems so well characterized to readers, of course, is that the histor, who knows and describes that heath, is also vividly characterized. Having described the heath "now," on a Saturday evening in November, and having described it at this point on every "nightly roll into darkness," Hardy reveals something about his narrator and, therefore, something pertinent to the unity of his novel:

It was a spot which returned upon the memory of those who loved it with an aspect of peculiar and kindly congruity. Smiling campaigns of flowers and fruit hardly do this, for they are permanently harmonious only with an existence of better reputation as to its issues than the present. . . . Fair prospects wed happily with fair times; but alas, if times be not fair! Men have oftener suffered from the mockery of a place too smiling for their reason than from the oppression of surroundings oversadly tinged. Haggard Egdon appealed to a subtler and scarcer instinct, to a more recently learnt emotion, than that which responds to the sort of beauty called charming and fair.

. . . The time seems near, if it has not actually arrived, when the chastening sublimity of a moor, a sea, or a mountain will be all of nature that is absolutely in keeping with the moods of the more thinking among mankind. (Bk. I, Ch. i; pp. 4-5)

Clearly, the histor is meant to be describing the world, but the suggestions of personal feelings ("a more recently learnt emotion") and of a personal life ("an existence of better reputation as to its issues than the present") hint at meaning in both directions--in the story, with the characters and their lives, and in the world, with the narrator and our lives. This impression of the personal nature of Egdon and its perceiver is intensified as the region is located historically and geologically, and then personally, in the unconscious of the individual human: in the winter, the histor says, "it became the home of strange phantoms; and it was found to be the hitherto unrecognized original of those wild regions

of obscurity which are vaguely felt to be encompassing us about in mid-night dreams of flight and disaster, and are never thought of after the dream till revived by scenes like this" (Bk. I, Ch. i; pp. 5-6).

Hardy's histor is often thought to be distant and cosmic, but in the opening of The Return of the Native it has a strangely personal and individualized feel. The presentation gets even more specific when Hardy introduces references to the novel. He mentions the barrow, "presently to be referred to," and "The above-mentioned highway," but not to remind us of the fictionality of his novel (Bk. I, Ch. i; p. 7). Indeed, just where we might expect this to happen, Hardy locates the histor in the scene itself:

We seem to want the oldest and simplest human clothing where the clothing of the earth is so primitive.

To recline on a stump of thorn in the central valley of Egdon, between afternoon and night, as now, where the eye could reach nothing of the world outside the summits and shoulders of heathland which filled the whole circumference of its glance, and to know that everything around and underneath had been from prehistoric times as unaltered as the stars overhead, gave ballast to the mind adrift on change, and harassed by the irrepressible New. (Bk. I, Ch. i; pp. 6-7)

This tantalizingly organized and unified perspective shatters in the next chapters into a series of vantage points from which to describe the scene. Hardy uses Captain Vye's perspective to introduce Diggory Venn, and Venn's perspective to describe the barrow and the figure of Eustacia on top, and the rustics' perspective to describe the bonfires, but he does not stop there. Once he has used up the available characters, including the histor reclining "on a stump of thorn in the central valley," Hardy shifts from one possible or hypothetical observer to another, unmindful of where each was before being discovered or where each goes after being used.

David Lodge notices this same feature in Hardy's style and relates

his use of these observers to his "cinematic" techniques:

The invocation of a hypothetical or unspecified observer in description is one of the signatures of Hardy's narrative style. His novels are full of phrases like, "An observer would have remarked", "a loiterer in this place might have speculated", or verbs of perception, often in the passive voice ("it was seen", "it was felt", etc.), that are not attached to any specified subject. Why should a novelist who did not shrink from exercising the authorial privilege of intrusive philosophical comment feel compelled to invent surrogates for himself when it came to description? The habit is linked with Hardy's heavy reliance on specified observers in his fiction: there are an extraordinary number of scenes in which one character observes, spies on or eavesdrops on others. . . . But we may also interpret Hardy's reliance on specified and unspecified observers as evidence of the importance he attached to visual perspective--it is as though he is trying to naturalise devices of presentation that would require no such explanation or justification in film.<sup>43</sup>

What does not require "explanation or justification in film," of course, is that all perceivers are located in space and time, an idea which seems more natural to Hardy than one which implies that an observer can be an inanimate machine like a camera. Not to dispute Lodge's generally insightful point that Hardy's world is a visually rich one, what is really striking about Hardy's descriptions is the consistency with which he located his perceivers, especially the theoretical ones.<sup>44</sup> This consistency finally comes down to consistency in the treatment of the character or setting being described. The detached description of Eustacia, for instance, continues through several chapters in the novel, until she speaks and until there is light enough to see her by. Even though Hardy has returned to the perspective of an observer who is not there ("Had the reddleman been watching he might have recognized her . . ."), he still does not allow his histor omniscience:

That she was tall and straight in build, that she was lady-like in her movements, was all that could be learnt of her just now, her form being wrapped in a shawl folded in the old cornerwise fashion, and her head in a large kerchief, a protection not superfluous at this hour and place. Her back was towards the wind, which blew from the north-west; but whether



she had avoided that aspect because of the chilly gusts which played about her exceptional position, or because her interest lay in the south-east, did not at first appear.

Her reason for standing so dead still as the pivot of this circle of heath-country was just as obscure. (Bk. I, Ch. vi; pp. 59-60)

We learn about Eustacia's profile when she lifts her head to use her telescope, and we "see" just a part of her face ("two matchless lips and a cheek only") when she blows on a glowing coal (Bk. I, Ch. vi; p. 63). It is not important, then, that there is a discernible single locus of narrative so long as the treatment itself is consistent; we forget, in the reading, the physical laws that would control the perspective of an individual perceiver as long as what is perceived seems to obey those laws.

Hardy's striking characterization of the histor at the beginning of The Return of the Native, however, has its effect. Even though it never organizes again into a unified and personal perspective, the histor continues to seem to be interested and individual. It shows more clearly here than anywhere else in Hardy's fiction that the perspective external to any character is still intensely sympathetic and that there is a sub-text of personal meaning to the visually rich world of nature. Numerous examples of this sympathy in external treatment and assumption of meaning in the world can be found in Hardy's novels. The external treatment by which Eustacia is introduced or Fanny Robin is described seems objective at first, but apparent detachment is in reality emotion restrained; what seems to be objectivity is merely the presentation of the context in which the characters seem most sympathetic. Eustacia is at her best when appreciated for her beauty.

Hardy's narrative treatment of Fanny Robin in Far from the Madding Crowd is an important example of this kind of external perspective

because of its consistency. All of the characters important to the plot--Bathsheba, Gabriel, Boldwood, and Troy--all get narration from inside their perspectives, all except Fanny. Hardy limits his narrator to a visual perspective such as might be offered by some human observing the scene, and that limitation is also applied to knowledge of the characters' circumstances and thoughts. Contrary perhaps to expectations, these limitations do not have the effect of highlighting Fanny's weaknesses and mistakes, as a truly objective perspective might do; they put them, mutely, in the context of a harsh, wintry world in which, friendless, Fanny singlehandedly tries to influence her fate.

Limited in knowledge of Fanny and Troy, the hypothetical "close observer" of Fanny and Troy's plan to get married is not limited to knowledge of the scene as it appears at this point--he knows how "The river would have been seen by day." It is as if Hardy wanted to let the appearances of the actions carry the full meaning to the reader, as if Hardy thought that the moral clarity in Fanny's situation would be confused by argument or a direct appeal to open-mindedness. It is worth quoting an extensive passage to show the consistency and effect of the treatment:

About this hour the snow abated: ten flakes fell where twenty had fallen, then one had the room of ten. Not long after a form moved by the brink of the river.

By its outline upon the colourless background a close observer might have seen that it was small. This was all that was positively discoverable, though it seemed human.

The shape went slowly along, but without much exertion, for the snow, though sudden, was not as yet more than two inches deep. At this time some words were spoken aloud:--

"One. Two. Three. Four. Five."

Between each utterance the little shape advanced about half-a-dozen yards. It was evident now that the windows high in the wall were being counted. The word "Five" represented the fifth window from the end of the wall.

Here the spot stopped, and dwindled smaller. The figure was stooping. Then a morsel of snow flew across the river towards the fifth window. It smacked against the wall at a

point several yards from its mark. The throw was the idea of a man conjoined with the execution of a woman. No man who had ever seen bird, rabbit, or squirrel in his childhood, could possibly have thrown with such utter imbecility as was shown here.

Another attempt, and another; till by degrees the wall must have become pimply with the adhering lumps of snow. At last one fragment struck the fifth window.

The river would have been seen by day to be of that deep smooth sort which races middle and sides with the same gliding precision, any irregularities of speed being immediately corrected by a small whirlpool. Nothing was heard in reply to the signal but the gurgle and cluck of one of these invisible wheels--together with a few small sounds which a sad man would have called moans, and a happy man laughter--caused by the flapping of the waters against trifling objects in other parts of the stream.

The window was struck again in the same manner.

Then a noise was heard, apparently produced by the opening of the window. This was followed by a voice from the same quarter:

"Who's there?"

The tones were masculine, and not those of surprise. The high wall being that of a barrack in the army, and marriage being looked upon with disfavour in the army, assignations and communications had probably been made across the river before to-night.

"Is it Sergeant Troy?" said the blurred spot in the snow, tremulously.

This person was so much like a mere shade upon the earth, and the other speaker so much a part of the building, that one would have said the wall was holding a conversation with the snow.

"Yes," came suspiciously from the shadow. "What girl are you?"

"O, Frank--don't you know me?" said the spot. "Your wife, Fanny Robin."

"Fanny!" said the wall, in utter astonishment.

"Yes," said the girl, with a half-suppressed gasp of emotion.

There was something in the woman's tone which is not that of the wife, and there was a manner in the man which is rarely a husband's. (Ch. XI, pp. 97-98)

This passage, long as it is, by no means constitutes the entire scene; as Fanny and Troy plan their wedding, Hardy effaces the narrator almost entirely and only returns the scene to it briefly, at the end, after Fanny has left and after Troy has closed the window. The point is that this external treatment of Fanny and her story, which is maintained throughout, is as typical of Hardy's histor as is his commentary on the

general applications of the thematic particulars. The hallmark of Hardy's histor, whether suppressed or explicit, is localization of his narrator in the fictional space.

In Thomas Hardy: The Forms of Tragedy, Dale Kramer points out that it is the absence of authorial commentary on Farfrae that gives his character complexity and ambiguity.<sup>45</sup> Kramer's idea is that Farfrae is just as flawed as Henchard is but that Hardy suppresses criticism of and judgment against him until after Henchard has been completely overthrown. Once "Farfrae's narrowness in personal relations" is made clear, by his ease in getting over Lucetta's death, we remember that his emotions seem shallow in his early relations with Henchard ("The young man appeared much moved by Henchard's warm convictions of his value") as well as in his sudden infatuation with Lucetta just after deciding to marry Elizabeth-Jane.<sup>46</sup> This narrative discretion serves the same function here that it does in Eustacia's introduction and in Fanny Robin's story, for the truth lies in the appearances. In the case of The Mayor of Casterbridge, Farfrae's personal strengths and weaknesses are irrelevant next to his role as Henchard's challenger and replacement--irrelevant, that is, until he is mayor himself and therefore vulnerable to destruction caused by general social change. At that point, the point at which Fanny dies in her story and the point at which Hardy turns to Eustacia's inner world, Farfrae is opened to inspection and analysis.

The narration of personal histories, then, requires that the histor "keep his own silence" as well as keep a particular kind of temporal distance.<sup>47</sup> That Hardy's characteristic kind of narrator is an expression of his desire to keep distance from emotional involvements as well as to live them vicariously is J. Hillis Miller's great insight into Hardy.<sup>48</sup> This distance, which except for the very end of The

Well-Beloved takes the form of temporal, historical distance, shows Hardy (and his histor) to be outsiders of the world he describes. This condition of being an outsider is at the heart of all of Hardy's histor's attributes. In general, that is, a histor is recognized by the authoritative commentary which he or she provides to the novel: Hardy's histor, however, is individual in that, whether or not he comments explicitly on a character, he tells the story from outside the milieu in which the character acts. This exteriority explains the "pedantic" language, which is the language of the outside world; it explains the strongly historical context for all the novels, including the just-off-stage presences of George III, Napoleon, Admiral Nelson, and the Royal Personage who visits Casterbridge when Farfrae is mayor.

P. N. Furbank believes that Hardy's "model, for himself as a novelist," comes first from his image of himself as a "countryman," a native to Wessex.<sup>49</sup> This "countryman" must, however, first of all be seen to be a countryman returning from the outside world to narrate the story; Hardy's histor is not a native who has stayed to tell stories from within the community. Hardy himself is most explicit about this in the opening of The Woodlanders which, like the opening of The Return of the Native, describes the condition of the narrator as clearly as it does the location of the setting. Even though Hardy will soon use Barber Percomb's perspective to present Little Hintock, he adopts the persona of "The rambler" or "the loiterer" who comes to this spot "for old association's sake":

The rambler who, for old association's sake, should trace the forsaken coach-road running almost in a meridional line from Bristol to the south shore of England, would find himself during the latter half of his journey in the vicinity of some extensive woodlands, interspersed with apple-orchards. . . . At one place, on the skirts of Blackmoor Vale, where the bold brow of High-Stoy Hill is seen two or three miles ahead, the

leaves lie so thick in autumn as to completely bury the track. The spot is lonely, and when the days are darkening the many gay charioteers now perished who have rolled along the way, the blistered soles that have trodden it, and the tears that have wetted it, return upon the mind of the loiterer. (Ch. I, p. 1)

Clearly, the "outside" from which the narrator returns is separated from Wessex by more than the kind of distance which can be crossed by train, since these woods carry with them "associations" of personal and general historical significance. The persona is that of a historian of both personal and collective histories.

To pick up all the threads again, then: the "pedantic" language of the histor is the language of the outside world applied to Wessex; Hardy's histor is a precisely located observer, whose perspective is as firmly attached to the fictional space as any character's, however movable it may be from moment to moment; Hardy's histor makes his points as much by letting appearances tell their tales as by direct authoritative commentary; this histor whose language is that of the outside world is a "countryman," one who knows well the regions he describes, but who is no longer a "native" and is in Wessex again only as a visitor; finally, the histor knows not only the area but its history, and not only its history but the personal histories of those who live there.

To call Hardy's persona "historian," then, is to tell only half the story, since a historian narrates the world's events, while Hardy's histor narrates personal ones. J. Hillis Miller has everything right in this description of Under the Greenwood Tree except the proximity of the histor to "living memory" of the events (Pt. I, Ch. i; p. 5). Hardy's histor is excluded from living under the greenwood tree, but he is not so far from it that he does not remember it. Miller says:

Outside these two levels of consciousness, the numb involvement in traditional life of the rustics and the relative

self-consciousness of Fancy and Dick, there is the consciousness of the narrator who tells the story. He is more knowing, objective, and cynical than any of the characters. In his objectivity, the objectivity of the "loving" historian of old country ways, he undercuts what he describes. He destroys it in the act of celebrating it, according to that paradox of the historical imagination whereby the deliberate representation of a traditional way of life testifies to the historian's exclusion from it. To see life under the greenwood tree so clearly and to describe it with such optic detachment, however sympathetically, is to be separated from it, to be unable to live it unthinkingly from the inside.<sup>50</sup>

Criticizing Miller, Daniel R. Schwartz puts emphasis on the fact that the novel ends with the nonverbal, natural, and expressive nightingale:

The narrator's reliance upon literary convention, in the form of the nightingale's call, to convey the novel's moral significance seems finally a refusal to take on an interpretive role that would bridge the distance between his position within the pastoral community and the world of the "madding crowd." His use of the pastoral calendar to measure time, the prose epithalamium of the closing chapter, and his refusal to intellectualize the greenwood tree into a literary symbol demonstrate that the narrator is a part of the world that he lyricizes.<sup>51</sup>

Supporting Schwartz's case are the many instances in which the histor seems to be describing a world he knows intimately; supporting Miller's are these same examples, which present the narrator as one returning, from the outside, to places he used to know intimately. Keeping in mind that, more often than not, Hardy's histor is somehow returning to the scene of his own past, as it were, it is exactly correct to characterize the histor as a historian or, as P. N. Furbank puts it better, as "the local antiquarian."<sup>52</sup> This persona is explicit in quite a large number of Hardy's novels and stories. A Group of Noble Dames and Life's Little Ironies are both groups of stories told within the frame of traditions of local narrative histories. The histor is "the judicious chronicler" in Two on a Tower and "a chronicler of moods and deeds" and "the chronicler of these lives" in Jude.<sup>53</sup>

The Trumpet-Major concerns itself directly with history, with the

historian, and with the impact of history on the personal lives of citizens peripheral to the large figures who normally go to make up our histories. As "the local antiquarian" of the lives of those touched by the world's events, the narrator dominates this novel. The first paragraph has a nostalgic quality that suggests the "Once upon a time" opening of traditional fairy tales, but even this early in the novel Hardy is concerned to dramatize the narrator as learned, as a reporter of researched and researchable events:

In the days of high-waisted and muslin-gowned women, when the vast amount of soldiering going on in the country was a cause of much trembling to the sex, there lived in a village near the Wessex coast two ladies of good report, though unfortunately of limited means. The elder was a Mrs. Martha Garland, a landscape-painter's widow, and the other was her only daughter Anne. (Ch. I, p. 37)

The reference to the two women being "of good report" is in keeping with the general attitude of the histor in this novel as one who, as it were, footnotes his observation. Benjamin Derriman's house is a case in point:

The hall was as interesting as mansions in a state of declension usually are, as the excellent county history showed. That popular work in folio contained an old plate dedicated to the last scion of the original owners, from which drawing it appeared that in 1774, the date of publication, the windows were covered with little scratches like black flashes of lightning; that a horn of hard smoke came out of each of the many chimneys, that a lady and a lap-dog stood on the lawn in a strenuously walking position; and a substantial cloud and nine flying birds of no known species hung over the trees to the north-east. (Ch. VI, p. 71)

These references to more or less scholarly substantiation are balanced consistently through the novel by clear references to the personal memory of the histor. We know that the histor has visited Overcombe Mill and has heard this story from the members of the Loveday family.<sup>54</sup> All these memories are filtered through the memory of the "local antiquarian," who at every turn also "remembers" the futures of the characters whose pasts he is describing:



While the troops loitered on their horses, and chatted to the miller across the stream, he gathered bunches of [cherries], and held them up over the garden hedge for the acceptance of anybody, who would have them; whereupon the soldiers rode into the water to where it had washed holes in the garden bank, and, reining their horses there, caught the cherries in their forage-caps, or received bunches of them on the ends of their switches, with the dignified laugh that became martial men when stooping to slightly boyish amusement. It was a cheerful, careless, unpremeditated half-hour, which returned like the scent of a flower to the memories of some of those who enjoyed it, even at a distance of many years after, when they lay wounded and weak in foreign lands. (Ch. III, p. 52)

This sense in which the futures of the characters are a part of what is already past is as essential to Hardy's presentation as the historical posture of his narrator. Barbara Hardy also points out this passage as an example of "Hardy's historical imagination," of how such an imagination emphasizes what the narrator knows as well as what the characters do not know:

Unlike the tensions we feel for dramatic characters' innocence of the future, what we feel in Hardy is a double vision of the soldiers' innocence and the author's and readers' wisdom after the events. The two points of view are not implicit as in Shakespeare, but explicitly set side by side. The admission that the simple story of the three lovers, so important and urgent to them, is all over is a truth native to Hardy's historical imagination. It has many effects. One of them is a poignant underlining of the casual moment.<sup>55</sup>

Another of the "effects" of "Hardy's historical imagination," and one of its most important, is his recurring use of cycles or repetitions in his novels. That Hardy uses the cycle of repeated actions and characters to structure his novels is a critical commonplace, and a cyclic form can be seen in virtually all his fiction. Any succession of lovers, as can be found in young Jethway, Stephen Smith, Henry Knight, and Lord Luxellian in A Pair of Blue Eyes, Gabriel Oak, Frank Troy, Farmer Boldwood, and Gabriel Oak again in Far from the Madding Crowd, Suke Damson, Grace Melbury, Felice Charmond, and Grace Melbury again in The Woodlanders, and Marcia Bencomb, the three Avices, and Marcia Leverre again in

The Well-Beloved, makes up a cycle when Hardy narrates it. Any replacement of one character by another, as can be found in the two Cythereas in Desperate Remedies, Henchard and Farfrae in The Mayor of Casterbridge, and Tess and 'Liza-Lu in Tess, makes up another. Most important for this study, however, is the fact that each of these cycles begins, as it were, outside the novel, with some other people at some other time.<sup>56</sup> To Hardy, it is the fact that there is, as in Eustacia's case, "the list of those who love too hotly to love long and well" that makes her story worth telling (Bk. III, Ch. v; p. 245). This is a conception of the individual in a community which requires an external and historicist voice to describe, because the characters are never completely aware of their places in the cycle. Even when Tess explicitly acknowledges that she is "one of a long row only," she says it to avoid knowing more:

". . . what's the use of learning that I am one of a long row only, finding out that there is set down in some old book somebody just like me, and to know that I shall only act her part; making me sad, that's all. The best is not to remember that your nature and your past doings have been just like thousands' and thousands', and that your coming life and doings 'll be like thousands' and thousands'." (Ch. XIX, p. 162)

The exception to this apparent requirement that this theme be expressed in direct commentary is The Well-Beloved, which is an experimental and only partially successful novel. It is concerned most explicitly with the idea of repeating lives and actions, but it is Hardy's novel least dominated by the histor. The point of The Well-Beloved is that Jocelyn Pierston's search for the Well-Beloved has logic and consistency from his point of view, however bizarre it may appear outside it. Hardy manages to illustrate both the consistency and the bizarreness in the same idea, that of the succeeding generations of Avices, a complexity of purpose which usually calls for the histor in his fiction. By using the three Avices to symbolize the persistence of the ideal, Hardy sacrifices

his usual more realistic and psychological orientation, a loss for which the concentration on Jocelyn's perception does not quite substitute. It may be no coincidence that The Well-Beloved is the only one of the cyclic novels that provides a way out of the repetitions: this is Hardy's novel least narrated by the histor and it is Hardy's only novel in which the repetitions come to an end; it may be possible to read into this that the only way to stop the cycle is to abandon the more objective and historical perspective and to immerse the novel into the perspective of a particular individual, even one who believes, as it were, in the Roman gods. It may be, in other words, the long view that the histor provides that encourages Hardy to see his characters as elements in a cycle.

It would be a mistake to end a discussion of Hardy's histor without once mentioning The Dynasts which, while not prose, can certainly be regarded as narrative and which, while not purely fictional, can certainly not be regarded as history. In fact, the most important difference between The Dynasts and Hardy's other narratives is that in The Dynasts he gives identities to the perspectives external to the characters and there is no internal presentation of characters' mental processes. As soon as we remember, however, Hardy's hypothetical observers and the specified, however shifting, locations of his narrative perceivers, we can see that the personifications of Pity, Irony, and History are not so very different from the multiple roles played by Hardy's histor in the novels. It is interesting that the effect of personifying these perspectives, these ways of observing and interpreting events, is to make them seem personal and local to a particular point of view, the "passionless" and consistent Spirit of the Years as well as the "impressionable and inconsistent" Spirit of the Pities.<sup>57</sup> There is another "voice" in The Dynasts which also replaces the narrator in the novels; there are

the descriptions of what happens and what characters do, including their entrances and exits, and descriptions of what things look like. The content of these descriptions makes this voice as important as, for example, George Bernard Shaw's stage directions and authorial commentary in his plays. Essential to the meaning of The Dynasts is the last stanza of the Chorus, at the end, which says:

But--a stirring thrills the air  
Like to sounds of joyance there  
That the rages  
Of the ages  
Shall be cancelled, and deliverance offered from the darts  
that were,  
Consciousness the Will informing, till It fashion all things  
fair! (After Scene, p. 256)

Just as essential, in the voice Hardy uses for stage directions, is the description in the After Scene of Europe as it appears from the Over-world:

Europe has now sunk netherward to its far-off position as in the Fore Scene, and it is beheld again as a prone and emaciated figure of which the Alps form the vertebrae, and the branching mountain-chains the ribs, the Spanish Peninsula shaping the head of the écorché. The lowlands look like a grey-green garment half-thrown off, and the sea around like a disturbed bed on which the figure lies. (After Scene, p. 251)

It cannot be said, then, that Hardy's histor disappears or even loses importance during the course of his career. To regard The Well-Beloved as Hardy's last novel is to give it its due place as his most "subjective" work, the one narrated most consistently from the perspective of a character, but to regard The Well-Beloved as Hardy's last narrative is to over-emphasize his decreasing reliance on the histor.<sup>58</sup>

The perspective of the histor is as native to Hardy's imagination as the historical nature of narrative is; as much as anything else can, this perspective can be regarded as Hardy's "idiosyncratic mode of

regard."<sup>59</sup> A "mode of regard," perception, is related to perspective in Hardy; no matter how fictive or "omniscient," every perceiver sees things from a particular point of view, from a single vantage point, which helps to make that perception local to the perceiver. The perceiver of a Hardy scene, whether narrator or character, whether histor or hypothetical observer, can almost always be located in the fictional space. It is to believe terminology over experience, then, to characterize Hardy's histor as "objective" and his characters as "subjective." There is more to perception in Hardy, moreover, than merely seeing. Occasionally, he credits a community or group of people with opinions or ideas, as he does here, in this passage from Far from the Madding Crowd:

It was eventually known that Gabriel, though paid a fixed wage by Bathsheba independent of the fluctuation of agricultural profits, had made an engagement with Boldwood by which Oak was to receive a share of the receipts--a small share certainly, yet it was money of a higher quality than mere wages, and capable of expansion in a way that wages were not. Some were beginning to consider Oak a "near" man, for though his condition had thus far improved, he lived in no better style than before, occupying the same cottage, paring his own potatoes, mending his stockings, and sometimes even making his bed with his own hands. But as Oak was not only provokingly indifferent to public opinion, but a man who clung persistently to old habits and usages, simply because they were old, there was room for doubt as to his motives. (Ch. XLIX, p. 381)

Most often, however, judgments and opinions are associated with a single observer who has a particular perspective. Even though Hardy maintained his use of the histor, he also increasingly depended on perspective as a determining factor in characters' ideas. This left Hardy in the paradoxical position of using a fictional device which allows for impersonal and omniscient narration of a world which, Hardy believed, could be known only personally and locally. This is faith in the value of a personal perspective, and such a faith led Hardy to characterize his narrator specifically, however incompletely in the novels. Hardy's use of

this voice affirms in a kind of backwards way the authority of the individual perceiver, whose qualifications for authority in Hardy's case exist merely in distance--temporal and cultural--from the events which are so engaging and encompassing to the participants. The perspective, however, of the participants, of the characters in Hardy's novels, is also a source of truth.

Hardy's histor is such an essential part of his novels that any summary seems too brief to be true. Almost any discussion of themes in Hardy's novels, for example, would also be a discussion of Hardy's histor, with critical focus being drawn to what might be called the narrator's "conceptual," rather than visual, perspective. Daniel R. Schwarz finds a pattern in the development of Hardy's histor through his major novels: in Far from the Madding Crowd the histor's "effort" is "to recover for himself the innocence of rustic life"<sup>60</sup>; in The Return of the Native the histor imposes order on the chaotic heath by describing it, even in the first chapter, as it pertains to Clym's eventual fate; beginning with The Mayor of Casterbridge, Schwarz says, Hardy's "narrators become increasingly the chroniclers of patterns of history that Hardy viewed with despair"--he does this as "the spokesman for Tess's emotional and moral consciousness" and by focussing on "the emotional and psychic responses of . . . Jude."<sup>61</sup> The apparently "disproportionate" "gloom and bitterness" at the beginning of Jude, like that at the beginning of The Return of the Native, is the result of "Jude's completed life" dominating the "consciousness" of the histor. The greatest advantage to a continuation of a study of Hardy's histor is that it might be able to correct those instances in which a phrase like "'Justice' was done, and the President of the Immortals, in AEschylean phrase, had ended his sport with Tess" is used to indicate Hardy's philosophical

ideas rather than the formulation for a particular novel of that novel's histor's more or less consistent perspective (Ch. LIX, p. 508).

This study, however, is concerned not only with Hardy's histor, but also with his other means of narration and how they relate to his ideas about consciousness. There is a noticeable change in Hardy's narration over the years in which he wrote novels, from a reliance on the histor, sometimes relatively impersonal in the early ones, to a reliance on the characters' perceptions, accompanied by a more personal and sometimes less obtrusive histor. To put it in mechanical terms, it is possible to count the number of instances in which Hardy narrates from a character's perspective in Desperate Remedies, while the histor seems ubiquitous; The Well-Beloved is narrated almost exclusively from Jocelyn's perspective, and instances of narration by the histor can be identified and counted. The difference is in the matrix of narration, the perspective which Hardy used as the norm. Just as the histor in Hardy is reliable and central for an understanding of the forces at work in the world, his characters are a source of truth, precisely because they are the participants in the events. It is necessary, then, to turn to Hardy's means of narrating the perspectives of his characters to understand the nature of his presentation of consciousness and his development as a writer of fiction.

### Chapter Three: Close Narration and the Personal Perspective

This chapter deals with "close" narration, which Hardy used to narrate the perspectives, thoughts, and feelings of the individual characters. Hardy's steadily increasing use of this kind of narration makes him seem modern in the same way that his steady dependence on the histor makes him seem Victorian. As will be seen, however, narration which presents the processing of a character's consciousness is no more modern than the novel itself, but a reliance on this kind of narration means that the author's focus is on the unique perspective of the individual and on the actions of the consciousness of that individual. There comes a point for some authors, moreover, at which the focus shifts from the consciousness of a perceiving character to the narration used to present that consciousness and that perception. There is no evidence that Hardy ever deliberately decided to use or not to use narration close to a character for any particular passage. There is plenty of evidence that he experimented with the identification and number of main characters and with structural units in a novel, and with descriptions of consciousness itself. There is also plenty of evidence that he was actively concerned with the condition of the "sensitive" individual in the world.<sup>1</sup> His concern with these abstract notions of the novel and of consciousness led him, perhaps unconsciously, to the use of close narration.

The first half of this chapter will show that the use of close narration is not a good means of identifying the early modern writers, for Charles Dickens and Henry James both well before 1890 seem to have an



acute awareness of its value and use. The second half of this chapter will explore instances of close narration in Charles Dickens' Dombey and Son, Henry James's The Portrait of a Lady, Hardy's Desperate Remedies, Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray, Hardy's The Well-Beloved, and Kate Chopin's The Awakening. The close narration in Hardy's major novels is the subject of Chapter Four.

#### A. The Terminology for the Presentation of Consciousness in the Novel

Ever since James Joyce published Ulysses, critics have been trying to define the stream-of-consciousness technique, to document its origins, and to describe its boundaries. The very abundance of this critical work suggests the revolutionary impact which this technique has had on fiction and on the description of narration. The development of the technique itself is the result of large forces at work in western society since the Renaissance, and most intensely since the beginning of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> It is well, therefore, not to claim too much for any single author or critic. This change in fictional style presupposes a change in the subject-matter of fiction--from the world outside people to the one inside them. For many reasons and in many ways, there has been a change in the popular understanding of perception and it is this which has caused the change in fiction. Historically, with the advance of stream of consciousness, the use of a characterized, independent, "objective" narrative voice recedes. One thing which sets Victorian fiction apart from preceding and subsequent fiction is that, in the great realistic novels of the nineteenth century, both narrative techniques appeared in some form in the same novels--there were both "subjective" and "objective" narration and neither was quite as it is

independently. Hardy's fiction is significant in this context in that his search for a way to express the actions of his characters' minds takes him increasingly closer to stream of consciousness even though he never gives up the reliability of the authorial, "omniscient" voice of the story-teller. It can also be said that, in spite of notions of "progress" in the novel, both forms still exist and often coexist today.

Some of the terminology created to name this "subjective" technique is limited by definition to what appears at the end of Ulysses and in Finnegans Wake--the two most important are "monologue intérieur" and "stream of consciousness." Edouard Dujardin, who is most famous for the use of the term "monologue intérieur," insists that it is not a general technique but the form Joyce takes, at the end of Ulysses, in Molly's monologue.<sup>3</sup> In fact, Dujardin finds only a few lines of it in Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.<sup>4</sup> In tracing the origins and development of this very precisely named and constituted technique, he finds examples of it in only a few novels, scattered through Danish, English, French, and Spanish early twentieth-century fiction, and he insists that the "formula" which these novels exemplify is new. He concludes that the environment which created the technique arose with the "movement of 1885" in France and is that of the symbolist poets.<sup>5</sup> The form of the monologue itself comes from the theatre, in which, he says, "true dramatic dialogue" is made up of the continual combination of "concealed dialogue" (which expresses the "soul" of the character) and "so-called dialogue" itself.<sup>6</sup>

To be monologue intérieur, a passage must meet four requirements. The character must be directly self-expressive so that "the intervention, at least the apparent intervention of the author" is eliminated.<sup>7</sup> Basically, the sentences in the passage must literally be in first person;

and that is why Dujardin finds so little of it in Portrait. Second, monologue intérieur must be of the genre of the "traditional monologue" of the theatre and be "a discourse without listener," if we disregard, as is usual, any phenomenon outside the world of the fiction like the reader, audience, or actors off-stage.<sup>8</sup> Having fulfilled the requirements of the monologue, the passage must also be "interior." The discours is not written as if it were "pronounced"--also like the "traditional monologue"--because "if the monologue in the theatre is spoken aloud, it is by virtue of a convention which is necessary; . . . theoretically, the object of the monologue is to express the thoughts and not to report the words."<sup>9</sup> The fourth requirement also has to do with interiority and is the "essential novelty which the monologue intérieur brings to bear." Its "object" is "to evoke the uninterrupted flux of thoughts which flash across the soul of the character, in proportion as they are born and in the order in which they are born, without explaining the logical sequence, and giving the impression of a 'tout venant.'"<sup>10</sup> In other words, the thoughts expressed by the characters must be represented in their prerational, preverbal--or, as Dujardin prefers--their "irrational" form.

"Stream of consciousness" is, in this context at least, a relatively old term, coined by William James to describe mental processes for psychologists. Speaking as precisely as possible about the term, Robert Humphrey defines it as

a type of fiction in which the basic emphasis is placed on exploration of the prespeech levels of consciousness for the purpose, primarily, of revealing the psychic being of the characters.

When some of the novels which fall into this classification are considered, it becomes immediately apparent that the technique by which the subjects are controlled and the characters are presented are palpably different from one novel to the next. Indeed, there is no stream-of-consciousness technique.

Instead, there are several quite different techniques which are used to present stream of consciousness.<sup>11</sup>

The point that stream of consciousness is best regarded as "a type of fiction" and as mental processing is a very useful one, and it helps classify much more exactly than usual who writes this kind of fiction and for what purposes. The greatest flaw with this kind of precision, of course, and it is not Humphrey's flaw, is that almost nobody uses the term this narrowly. It seems most wise to understand as symptomatic the need for terminology to describe, not what is narrated, but the technique used to narrate it rather than merely to dismiss as "loose" the current usage of "stream of consciousness."

Different conceptually from Dujardin's monologue intérieur and from Humphrey's "stream of consciousness," Charles Bally's "style indirect libre" and Günter Steinberg's "erlebte Rede" describe a larger and more wide-spread phenomenon. Although Bally defines the form in grammatical terms (i.e., by the presence and form of introductory verbs), he does not see the style indirect as "a form of grammar, it is an attitude of the spirit, and aspect, a particular angle from which one perceives things."<sup>12</sup> And, he goes on to say, "it is not purely a psychological observation which makes it possible to detect this form of thought, it is inferred from the very study of the language."<sup>13</sup> There are five "im-perceptible" steps from le style indirect pur to le style indirect libre, depending on how extensively and explicitly the indirect object in the sentence is subordinated. Essentially, however, the style indirect is the general form of the presentation of consciousness; the style indirect pur is an extreme and highly specialized form and it is probably identical to the monologue intérieur.

Richard Ohmann translates "le style indirect libre" into "free

indirect style" and uses it to describe only the linguistic characteristics of passages. Using the rules of Generative-Transformational grammar, he analyses the sentence, "She had made him lie" from Ernest Hemingway's "Soldier's Home."<sup>14</sup> Ohmann's kind of linguistic analysis is valuable for the understanding of narrative forms as well as of style, since it allows him to discern and describe distinctions among different kinds or intensities of these forms as well as distinctions and differences among authors. Ohmann's analysis of "free indirect style" in "Soldier's Home" demonstrates that this particular technique is a matter of the author omitting or deleting syntactic items which would be present in the "normal" third-person narrator's voice. There are three rules which transform the sentence "He thought, 'She has made me lie'" to the one which finally appears in Hemingway's story--"She had made him lie"--which, in context, is not a statement of "fact" but of the character's perception. From the "quotation, or reported thought" ("He thought, 'She has made me lie'"), changes of "pronouns and of verb tense" produce the sentence in the form of indirect discourse: "He thought that she had made him lie." A deletion rule transforms the sentence into its final form. Although the terms of Ohmann's analysis are modern, it is different from other grammatical descriptions of this technique only in that Ohmann makes no attempt to connect his analysis to implications concerning the narrator as an entity, fictional or not.

Barbara Hardy finds erlebte Rede to be a "useful concept," describing as it does the grammatical relationship between the discours of the narrator and that of the character.<sup>15</sup> Günter Steinberg says that a reader may know what a character says by the fact that the language takes the form of direct discourse (directer Rede), indirect discourse (indirecter Rede) or experienced discourse (erlebte Rede). Steinberg

sees this technique as an attempt to merge written and spoken language, making the written form syntactically simpler and, hence, more like the spoken language.<sup>16</sup> He also finds that certain adverbial phrases of time, like "now," and conditional verb forms, like "would," are very common in English erlebte Rede.<sup>17</sup> Less common, perhaps, but just as interesting, is the mixing of verb forms, as in this example from Ulysses which Steinberg cites:

And Father Connée smiled and saluted. How did she do.  
A fine carriage she had.<sup>18</sup>

Often there are interrogatives in erlebte Rede, usually occurring exactly as the character would ask them (without, however, quotation marks or the usual signals that the character is actually speaking); the explanation of the origin of this practice and its relation to other instances of erlebte Rede has been a point of discussion among critics from the beginning.<sup>19</sup>

Steinberg finds and reports the finding of instances of erlebte Rede in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Ariosto, Mateo Alemán, Cervantes, and Sebastián May.<sup>20</sup> He calls, with Bally, La Fontaine "the first virtuoso" of erlebte Rede in French literature. In the eighteenth century, Steinberg finds erlebte Rede "sporadically" in authors of French, English, and German literature; he names particularly Marivaux, Richardson, and Wieland. The change with the nineteenth century is a matter of the technique becoming integral to novelists' "art" and "style":

In the 19th century, then, Jane Austen, . . . above all Flaubert . . . and George Eliot . . . made [erlebte Rede] one characteristic component of their narrative art and, through their model, contributed to the fact that this presentation of discourse in their language turned into an important feature of the style of the more recent narrative literature. While [erlebte Rede] is embedded in the report in Flaubert's and also in George Eliot's novels, it begins to push back and to

overrun the report in particular works of Meredith . . . and Zola . . . .<sup>21</sup>

Steinberg identifies the second half of the nineteenth century as the time when this form proliferated; erlebte Rede is a description of the same phenomenon which the "indirect style," especially the "free indirect style," describes.

There are other terms for this kind of narration than these, which are in more or less common use. Philip Stevick identifies what he calls "naive narration," which occurs, for example, when "the anonymous author does not merely affect the voice suggestive of a hungry and clever boy but writes, ventriloquist style, as if the words issued from the boy himself."<sup>22</sup> "Naive narration" seems to refer to something corresponding to the style indirect, ranging in intensity from libre to pur:

In some sense, most of the novels of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries contain versions of naive narration. A substantial number of novelists, for example, play here and there at self-derogation: Fielding, Thackeray, Trollope, Dickens, Meredith. Other novelists contrast forms of rustic simplicity with urban corruption, as Mrs. Gaskell does, or Hardy, a juxtaposition that lends itself to passages in which the novelist's voice is apt to take on a certain sympathetic naiveté.<sup>23</sup>

Stevick's main emphasis is towards the pur end of the style indirect, since his interest is really in "sustained" narration of this type.

In his knowledgeable "Types of Subjective Narration in the Novels of Dickens," Robert W. Duncan adds these names to the list we already have: "subjective narration," "reported speech," "substitutionary speech," and "free indirect speech."<sup>24</sup> Arguing that Dickens deserves more credit than he gets for his narration, Duncan finds that the usual terminology is insufficient for making the necessary distinctions in Dickens' narrative:

While discussions of subjective narration generally make distinctions between dialogue and monologue, and between thought and speech, the play of ambiguity and the possibility of a

choral source in a number of passages in the novels [of Dickens] suggest the need for specifying four distinct groups: 1) speech of single characters; 2) dialogue; 3) thoughts of character; and 4) choral voice or presence of the narrator as an imagined participant. The first three involve communication--spoken, implied, or thought--while the last may introduce an invisible narrator as a participant in an action or as a choral commentator.<sup>25</sup>

Duncan's system is provocative in that he makes equally important all four "groups" of implied sources for narrative information, regardless of their general relative frequency or use in heightening the most important scenes. His most useful contribution is his defense of Dickens' subjective narration: Dickens, Duncan says, "was issuing his eleventh novel when Flaubert's first novel appeared," even though Flaubert has sometimes been credited with being "the decisive innovator in this field."<sup>26</sup>

Once begun, the list of terms for this kind of narration seems to go on infinitely. Sometimes the critic introduces new terminology to make distinctions, as Duncan does, which reflect the particularities of the author under study; at other times, critical interest seems focussed on larger concerns relating, for instance, the author to the fictionality of the work. J. Hillis Miller, for whom these minor distinctions are unimportant, reports yet another term:

A novel is in various ways a chain of displacements--displacement of its author into the invented role of the narrator, further displacement of the narrator into the lives of imaginary characters whose thoughts and feelings are presented in that odd kind of ventriloquism called "indirect discourse," . . . displacement of the "origin" of the story (in historical events or in the life experience of the author) into the fictitious events of the narrative.<sup>27</sup>

He calls "indirect discourse" "odd," he says, because

rather than speaking directly as the character, as Edgar Bergen speaks as Charlie McCarthy, or as Joyce speaks as Molly Bloom in the interior monologue of her soliloquy, the author in indirect discourse pretends to be a narrator who speaks for the character, lending him words in a form of language which



always involves some degree of ironical distance or difference. The displacement involved is present in the linguistic strategy employed.<sup>28</sup>

Before calling a halt to all this naming, it is necessary to introduce two more sets of terms. The first, "close narration," is the term which will be used in this dissertation for the general form of narration whereby the consciousness of a character, whether thoughts, feelings, or words, are presented, using the voice of the narrator but enough of the language and style of the character to make his or her voice "audible," or at least recognizable, as well. The second set of terms, from Gerard Genette, has to do with the larger context of the kind or genre of narrative to which the entire novel belongs.

All of these terms describe one or another part of the general technique of narration in which a character's consciousness is rendered for the reader while it remains mediated by the structural elements of the narrator's discourse. Stream of consciousness and monologue intérieur are different from the rest in that they are not mediated in this way except, as always, insofar as dialogue itself is mediated. The rest signify, essentially, the same phenomenon, and some make distinctions among kinds or forms of this same phenomenon. "Close" is a more convenient term for the kind of narration usually called erlebte Rede, style indirect libre, "free indirect style," in which the character's monologue or dialogue is mediated by the narrator but still knowable as the character's. "Close" is borrowed from sewing to suggest the rich effect for the reader it provides and the sometimes tedious care for the author it requires; such a borrowing provides for the density of texture and detail in the flow of the narrative which is the hallmark of twentieth-century fiction. For the writer, its emphasis on technical virtuosity connotes the precise planning and slow reworking of a piece or section

which we know that most serious modern writers take. The term also has the merit of suggesting for the reader that the character is not individualized from the narrator as usual, that there is no necessary distance between them: that they are intellectually and emotionally "close." The lack of distinction between the voices of the narrator and the character allows authors, without the aid of allegory, to use as plot and setting the events and interiors of characters' minds. "Close," then, refers neither to the perceiver nor to the producer, but to the form narration takes when the narrator renders the character's consciousness.

For Gerard Genette, what I call "close" narration is divided into several different kinds of narrative discourse. "Transposed discourse" refers to the technique of rendering dialogue in the free indirect style, and thus it describes the operation of the narrator summarizing dialogue that is never reported directly, summarizing it as if the fiction were reality. Charles Dickens used this form of narration quite frequently. One of the best examples of "transposed discourse" in all of English-language literature occurs in Bleak House (1852-53) at Nemo's inquest when Anastasia Piper and Jo give their evidence. Although the length of the passage makes full quotation impractical, it is important to remember that this bit of it, Jo's testimony, occurs in the context of narrative treatment which purports to present the characters in their most unvarnished and, for most of them, undignified state:

O! Here's the boy, gentlemen!

Here he is, very muddy, very hoarse, very ragged. How, boy!--But stop a minute. Caution. This boy must be put through a few preliminary paces.

Name, Jo. Nothing else that he knows on. Don't know that everybody has two names. Never heerd of sich a think. Don't know that Jo is short for a longer name. Thinks it long enough for him. He don't find no fault with it. Spell it! No. He can't spell it. No father, no mother, no friends. Never been to school. What's home? Knows a broom's a broom, and knows

it's wicked to tell a lie. Don't recollect who told him about the broom, or about the lie, but knows both. Can't exactly say what'll be done to him arter he's dead if he tells a lie to the gentlemen here, but believes it'll be something wery bad to punish him, and serve him right--and so he'll tell the truth.<sup>29</sup>

"Transposed discourse" is common in Dickens, even in novels with less spectacular narrative effects than Bleak House. Hardy uses it as well, but nowhere as extensively or as centrally as Dickens does.

The general phenomenon of close narration Genette calls "internally focalized," and its text he calls an "internally focalized récit."<sup>30</sup> It is distinguished from the "externally focalized" or "nonfocalized récit" which describes narration which is "focussed" outside the consciousness of the characters. Because Genette seems to refer to the general orientation of the narrative as a whole rather than to shifting orientations within the text, "internally focalized récit" is not identical to "close narration," which refers to passages of narration which dramatize a character's perception within a text which is usually what Genette would call "externally focalized" or "nonfocalized." To handle smaller units of text, Genette distinguishes between "fixed" and "variable" focalization, so what I am calling "close" narration would be in Genette's system an instance of internal focalization in a "variable internally focalized récit." (A "multiple internally focalized récit" is epistolary.) All of Hardy's novels, then, are variable internally focalized récits, and our interest is in the instances of internal focalization in them.

Close narration, as I have described it here, is not the same as stream of consciousness or the interior monologue, as they have been narrowly defined. It is an interesting question what exactly the relationship between close narration and these extreme forms is. If there is a qualitative difference between close narration and stream of

consciousness, then that difference must be describable and it must be possible to determine in every instance whether a passage is close to a character or whether that passage is a representation of that character's stream of consciousness. Moreover, if "interior monologue" is different from "stream of consciousness," then that difference too should be definable. The problem of the multiplying terminology is further confused by the fact that each author interprets the possibilities and formal characteristics of each kind of narration in different ways, so that close narration in Dickens can be distinguished from that of Hardy, as stream of consciousness in James Joyce can be distinguished from that of William Faulkner. Even Dorothy Dayers in The Nine Taylors (1932) makes her rendition of Lord Peter's stream of consciousness reflect the literary sources of her imagination rather than the conventions offered by Joyce, Woolf, or Faulkner: the passages presenting his stream of consciousness are set off from the rest of the text by quotation marks and the individual thoughts are separated from each other by ellipses.<sup>31</sup>

It will be recalled that for Edouard Dujardin the difference between the two kinds of narration is qualitative. Austin Warren, on the other hand, seems to regard them as the same "device":

A characteristic technical device of the objective novel is what the Germans call "erlebte Rede", and the French "le style indirect libre" (Thibaudet) and "le monologue intérieur" (Dujardin); and in English, the phrase "stream of consciousness", which goes back to William James, is the loose, inclusive correspondent.<sup>32</sup>

For Charles Bally, the difference between le style indirect libre and le style indirect pur is the result of "imperceptible" steps.<sup>33</sup> This means that, for Bally, if the difference is not quite quantitative, then it is certainly not a qualitative one. For Robert Humphrey, who advocates the

strict use of the term "stream of consciousness," there is a clear difference between stream of consciousness and other forms of narration, partly based on the content of the passage in question and partly based on class characteristics. Here, for example, Humphrey explains that he does not consider Henry James in his list of stream-of-consciousness writers

because it is obviously true that James is frequently concerned with description of mental content. The salient thing that differentiates him from the stream-of-consciousness writers is the fact that he describes the rational weighing of intelligence; hence, he is concerned with consciousness on a level which corresponds to the speech level. It lacks the free-flowing, elliptic, and symbolic quality of true stream of consciousness.<sup>34</sup>

Humphrey handles the main problem of defining stream of consciousness--as a narrative device--by insisting that there is more than one narrative technique for depicting stream of consciousness; in fact, he says, there are four: "direct interior monologue, indirect interior monologue, omniscient description, and soliloquy. There are, in addition, several special techniques with which a few writers have experimented."<sup>35</sup>

It is most interesting that "omniscient description" is one technique by which stream of consciousness can be rendered, since we usually think of Joyce's near first-person rendering of Molly's consciousness when we think of stream of consciousness as a technique. Humphrey's example of omniscient stream of consciousness is Dorothy Richardson, whom Humphrey calls "the twentieth-century pioneer in stream of consciousness."<sup>36</sup> Even more available for generous application (than "omniscient" stream of consciousness) is what Humphrey calls the "indirect interior monologue." When he gets right down to describing these techniques and providing examples of them, we can see that close narration is different from "indirect interior monologue" only in that close narration appears

in realistic novels and "indirect interior monologue" appears in novels of the genre stream of consciousness, a genre which, Humphrey admits, began to disappear into the mainstream by the time of Faulkner.<sup>37</sup> In Humphrey's system, then, allowing for his original limitation of "stream of consciousness" either to the form which mental processing takes or to a genre of novels which flowered briefly at the beginning of this century, close narration is a way of rendering characters' stream of consciousness. The relation between them is that of a subset to a set: what I call "close narration" is one of several forms possible.

One difference between close narration (erlebte Rede, le style indirect libre) and stream of consciousness and interior monologue is that one precedes the other two historically. As Steinberg suggests, close narration and early forms for rendering stream of consciousness seem to have appeared naturally and increasingly in the fiction of the nineteenth century. The greatest single strides in the development of the technique appear in French and German fiction, but British literature is notable for its steady and almost universal adoption of the technique. In the interests of space, I will not repeat any of the authors that Steinberg mentions; my interests lean towards extended passages of close narration whose placement in the novel has structural or thematic importance.<sup>38</sup> There are, to my knowledge, no such central passages in Jane Austen or George Eliot, though there are short passages which articulate the intelligent characters' perspectives, usually to show their partial comprehension. The examples presented here, from Charles Dickens, Henry James, Oscar Wilde, Kate Chopin, and Hardy have more than historical importance, especially those from Dickens and James. The examples from Wilde and Chopin turn again slightly to Steinberg's emphasis on the historical importance of the use of the technique: because of its impact on

the general--rather than the academic--readership, close narration suggests very clearly the general understanding of individualism and the popular conception of consciousness; that is, by virtue of the very presence of close narration in a novel, the reader knows that there is a kind of democracy in consciousness in the author's fictional world, that (in Victorian parlance) no matter how common or ill-bred, any character, and therefore any person, can have awareness and have a personal perspective.

#### B. The Use of Close Narration: Dickens, James, Wilde, Chopin, and Hardy

It is always entertaining to look for narrative effects in Dickens' works, mostly because, whatever the effect, the critic is nearly guaranteed of at least partial success. Close narration is no exception, and one can choose among a large number of examples from nearly every novel, each with varying degrees of closeness and intensities of style. Dickens seems to find the greatest stimulus for writing this kind of narration in the illness of his characters, and he often goes to some trouble to present the perspective of a character who borders on the delirious and who slips in and out of consciousness.

Richard Swiveller, for instance, in The Old Curiosity Shop (1840-41), suffers what might be regarded as typically Dickensian symptoms in his illness. He and "the Marchionness" are improved during the course of the novel by acts of kindness and by each other, so that, by the end, they are committed to goodness. This moment marks the turn-around for each of them:

He awoke. With a sensation of most blissful rest, better than sleep itself, he began gradually to remember something of these sufferings, and to think what a long night it had been,

and whether he had not been delirious twice or thrice. Happening, in the midst of these cogitations, to raise his hand, he was astonished to find how heavy it seemed, and yet how thin and light it really was. Still he felt indifferent and happy; and having no curiosity to pursue the subject, remained in the same waking slumber until his attention was attracted by a cough. This made him doubt whether he had locked his door last night, and feel a little surprised at having a companion in the room. Still he lacked energy to follow up this train of thought; and unconsciously fell, in a luxury of repose, to staring at some green stripes on the bed-furniture, and associating them strangely with patches of fresh turf, while the yellow ground between made gravel-walks, and so helped out a long perspective of trim gardens.

He was rambling in imagination on these terraces, and had quite lost himself among them, indeed, when he heard the cough once more. The walks shrunk into stripes again at the sound; and raising himself a little in the bed, and holding the curtain open with one hand, he looked out.

The same room certainly, and still by candle-light; but with what unbounded astonishment did he see all those bottles, and basins, and articles of linen airing by the fire, and such-like furniture of a sick chamber--all very clean and neat, but all quite different from anything he had left there, when he went to bed! The atmosphere, too, filled with a cool smell of herbs and vinegar; the floor newly sprinkled; the--the what? The Marchionness?

Yes; playing cribbage with herself at the table. There she sat, intent upon her game, coughing now and then in a subdued manner as if she feared to disturb him--shuffling the cards, cutting, dealing, playing, counting, pegging--going through all the mysteries of cribbage as if she had been in full practice from her cradle!<sup>39</sup>

That Dick Swiveller and the Marchionness are redeemed is important in this novel, and it explains why they are treated as closely as they are; it suggests that a nurturing environment and the doing of good can influence people, especially those rather passive or weak individuals who are controlled by the doers of evil.

In Nell's death, The Old Curiosity Shop offers a contrast to the narrative treatment of Jo's death in Bleak House and Paul Dombey's death in Dombey and Son. All three of these novels have complex narrative structures, but The Old Curiosity Shop seems in some ways, especially in the narration, to be a less deliberately crafted novel than the others. This distinction is relative, since, when The Old Curiosity Shop is



considered by itself, there is no lack of interesting narrative to discuss. First, the novel begins in the first person, with the narrator identifying himself as someone who knew Nell, Kit, and the old man. Second, Nell's death is not really narrated: we learn from the villagers (in Chapter LVII) that she is surely dying, but we are not told of her death until she has been dead for two days (in Chapter LXXI) after the scene in which Kit arrives to take her home with him, only to find her grandfather mistakenly believing that she is asleep in the next room and that she is on the mend. Her dying is described so quickly, and with such reserve and detachment, that our attention is inevitably turned to the real subject of the narration, Nell's grandfather. The end of the novel is really about him and his capsizing, not about her. Dickens' histor, called a "chronicler," keeps the focus on the old man and on the lessons to be learned from the death of one so young and good as Nell.<sup>40</sup>

In Dombey and Son (1847-48), Dickens' attention to narrative artistry is far more effective than it is in The Old Curiosity Shop. This is especially true of Paul's death: his dying takes two chapters, and Paul remains at the center of narrative attention, except for one digression to show the effect of the news of his illness on some of his old friends, from the time he gets sick at the private party with Mr. Feeder and Mr. Toots until his death in his own bed at home. Paul's last illness takes up Chapter XIV, and in it Paul comes to terms with his past and with his fears; even though he is unaware of the severity of his illness--sometimes he even seems unconscious that he is sick at all--and surprised by the solicitous behavior of the people around him, we know how serious it is for him by what he overhears and by his unconscious preparations to die. Dickens' project, in other words, is to convey to us a whole series of ideas which Paul, the consciousness through which

these ideas are filtered, does not know or understand. In order to carry this off, so that it is clear that Paul will die and that he knows nothing of it, Dickens narrates at length what Paul thinks and feels. The chapter is narrated remarkably consistently in close narration and is astounding for its modern narrative effects.

At the same time that he has strictly limited the perspective of the narration, Dickens also begins the organization of images referring to death which culminate when Paul dies. References to Paul's "old-fashioned" appearance, to the river rushing to the sea, and to the light reflected off it are made either close to Paul or in the words of one of the characters. Only after Paul is dead, and his consciousness stopped, does Dickens return to the voice of the histor to make clear that Paul is finally dead and to make explicit the metaphors for death. Although it is well worth reading, it is impossible to quote the entire passage, running on as it does for pages, but a few examples from Paul's more excited moments will show how extensive the close narration is and how central it is to Dickens' presentation of this child's death. First, Paul is quite ill but eagerly waiting for the day he can see his sister Florence:

There was a certain calm apothecary, who attended at the establishment when any of the young gentlemen were ill, and somehow he got into the room and appeared at the bedside with Mrs. Blimber. How they came there, or how long they had been there, Paul did n't know; but when he saw them, he sat up in bed, and answered all the apothecary's questions at full length, and whispered to him that Florence was not to know anything about it if he pleased, and that he had set his mind upon her coming to the party. He was very chatty with the apothecary, and they parted excellent friends. Lying down again with his eyes shut, he heard the apothecary say, out of the room and quite a long way off--or he dreamed it--that there was a want of vital power (what was that, Paul wondered!) and great constitutional weakness. That as the little fellow had set his heart on parting with his schoolmates on the seventeenth, it would be better to hear from Mrs. Pipchin, that the little fellow would go to his friends in London on the

eighteenth. That he would write to Mr. Dombey, when he should have gained a better knowledge of the case, and before that day. That there was no immediate cause for--what? Paul lost that word. And that the little fellow had a fine mind, but was an old-fashioned boy.

What old fashion could that be, Paul wondered with a palpitating heart, that was so visibly expressed in him; so plainly seen by so many people!<sup>41</sup>

Given freedom from his studies, Paul busily thinks and reflects on the minutia of the other characters' behavior and reactions to him, and Dickens goes to great lengths to narrate how busy Paul's thoughts are. In spite of all the evidence, however, Paul does not understand that he is sick, as Dickens, still in narration close to Paul, carefully shows:

Doctor Blimber was so particular about him, that he requested Johnson to retire from the dinner-table one day, for having thoughtlessly spoken to him as "poor little Dombey"; which Paul thought rather hard and severe, though he had flushed at the moment, and wondered why Johnson should pity him. It was the more questionable justice, Paul thought, in the doctor, from his having certainly overheard that great authority give his assent on the previous evening to the proposition (stated by Mrs. Blimber) that poor dear little Dombey was more old-fashioned than ever. And now it was that Paul began to think it must surely be old-fashioned to be very thin, and light, and easily tired, and soon disposed to lie down anywhere and rest; for he could n't help feeling that these were more and more his habits every day. (Ch. XIV, p. 204)

At a party given in his honor Paul begins to give up his mundane concerns and his ties to current problems for what are at first vague memories of his early childhood; that is, his busyness and Dickens' detail begin to be replaced by serenity and large, synthetic images. This peacefulness, which Dickens never really dramatizes for Nell, is described at great length--even so far as to show its development--for Paul. As Florence is singing, Paul's mind wanders to what is now more important:

For all that the child observed, and felt, and thought, that night--the present and the absent; what was then and what had been--were blended like the colours in the rainbow, or in the plumage of rich birds when the sun is shining on them, or in the softening sky when the same sun is setting. The many

things he had had to think of lately passed before him in the music; not as claiming his attention over again, or as likely ever more to occupy it, but as peacefully disposed of and gone. A solitary window, gazed through years ago, looked out upon an ocean, miles and miles away; upon its water, fancies, busy with him only yesterday, were hushed and lulled to rest like broken waves. The same mysterious murmur he had wondered at, when lying on his couch upon the beach, he thought he still heard sounding through the hum of voices, and the tread of feet, and having some part in the faces flitting by, and even in the heavy gentleness of Mr. Toots, who frequently came up to shake him by the hand. Through the universal kindness he still thought he heard it, speaking to him; and even his old-fashioned reputation seemed to be allied to it, he knew not how. Thus little Paul sat musing, listening, looking on, and dreaming; and was very happy. (Ch. XIV, pp. 211-12)

The memories of the ocean and the reference to the "broken waves" are, of course, prefigurations of death in the same way that "his old-fashioned reputation" and water are, especially the river moving into the sea outside Paul's bedroom window. This movement is the source of the murmur he hears at the party, and it, too, prefigures his death.

Like the little cart which represents Jo's breathing in Bleak House, the river expresses Dickens' sense of a kind of life force in Paul. Dickens takes care that Paul's worsening condition corresponds to his greater awareness of the river. After he is taken home his illness confines him to his bed, and he lies in it,

not caring much how the time went, but watching it and watching everything about him with observing eyes.

When the sunbeams struck into his room through the rustling blinds, and quivered on the opposite wall like golden water, he knew that evening was coming on, and that the sky was red and beautiful. . . . His fancy had a strange tendency to wander to the river, which he knew was flowing through the great city; and now he thought how black it was, and how deep it would look, reflecting the hosts of stars--and more than all, how steadily it rolled away to meet the sea.

. . . His only trouble was, the swift and rapid river. He felt forced, sometimes, to try to stop it--to stem it with his childish hands--or choke its way with sand--and when he saw it coming on, resistless, he cried out! . . .

When day began to dawn again, he watched for the sun; and when its cheerful light began to sparkle in the room, he pictured to himself--pictured! he saw--the high church towers rising up into the morning sky, the town reviving, waking,

starting into life once more, the river, glistening as it rolled (but rolling fast as ever), and the country bright with dew. . . .

By little and little, he got tired of the bustle of the day, the noise of carriages and carts, and people passing and repassing; and would fall asleep, or be troubled with a restless and uneasy sense again--the child could hardly tell whether this were in his sleeping or his waking moments--of that rushing river. "Why, will it never stop, Floy?" he would sometimes ask her. "It is bearing me away, I think!" (Ch. XVI, pp. 231-32)

This image of the flowing river keeps us aware of the progress of Paul's disease without Dickens ever having to make it the explicit subject of narration. This is important, because the nearer Dickens gets to Paul's death, the more centered on Paul his focus becomes. Once Paul fixes on the river's "resistless" movement, Dickens, with one small exception, strictly limits the narration close to him or to his perspective.

The account of Paul's death is worth recording here, because of the care with which Dickens narrates it, and because Dickens' control over his narrative and his sense of scene show up here as well as they do anywhere in his novels. Technically, the paragraph which describes Paul's hands is not from his perspective, since it describes what he cannot see, but since the narrator is never absent in close narration, what "they" see does not seem to interrupt the otherwise consistently limited narrative. Paul's mother died before he could know her, so this is his first glimpse of her:

Sister and brother wound their arms around each other, and the golden light came streaming in, and fell upon them, locked together.

"How fast the river runs, between its green banks and the rushes, Floy! But it's very near the sea. I hear the waves! They always said so!"

Presently he told her that the motion of the boat upon the stream was lulling him to rest. How green the banks were now, how bright the flowers growing on them, and how tall the rushes! Now the boat was out at sea, but gliding smoothly on. And now there was a shore before him. Who stood on the bank!--

He put his hands together, as he had been used to do at his prayers. He did not remove his arms to do it; but they saw

him fold them so, behind her neck.

"Mama is like you, Floy. I know her by the face! But tell them that the print upon the stairs at school is not divine enough. The light about the head is shining on me as I go!" (Ch. XVI, pp. 235-36)

After Paul's last speech, the narration returns to the histor, who completes the metaphors, who makes certain that we know that Paul is dead, and who prays that the "angels of young children" look after us when we die. In this novel, the histor does not have to argue that Paul is better off dead than alive, as he does for Nell, because, knowing Dickens, we know that for Paul to be met by his mother is for him to be well. In his usual, lyrical and emphatic histor, then, Dickens finishes the scene of Paul's death:

The golden ripple on the wall came back again, and nothing else stirred in the room. The old, old fashion! The fashion that came in with our first garments, and will last unchanged until our race has run its course, and the wide firmament is rolled up like a scroll. The old, old fashion--Death!

Oh, thank God, all who see it, for that older fashion yet, of Immortality! And look upon us, angels of young children, with regards not quite estranged, when the swift river bears us to the ocean! (Ch. XVI, p. 236)

The more we look at these chapters narrating Paul Dombey's death, the more "modern" they seem: in the context of the whole novel, these chapters constitute a digression of sorts, in which the novelist presents the consciousness of a character for its own sake, and not for the furtherance of the action. This kind of detailed and personal digression is much more typical of the histor, and it was many years before a novelist, Henry James, was to use close narration for these purposes again.

A discussion of the close narration in Hardy's Desperate Remedies (1871) will be useful here as a transition between Dickens and Henry James for a couple of reasons. The first reason is that this novel, Hardy's second, is notable for how derivative it is of popular fiction of the day. His inexperience as a writer and dependence on other

writers for many of the novel's formal characteristics make his use of close narration in it indicative of his less deliberate stylistic features. The second reason is that an analysis of the close narration in this novel is more productive, in general, in a discussion of the use of close narration in Victorian fiction than it is in a discussion of Hardy's novels, since it brings to light how a writer's use of this technique can determine our sense of the integrity of the novel, the identity of the protagonist, and the locus of the action.

Cytherea Graye should be the protagonist of Desperate Remedies--it is her virtue which is embattled and her goodness which is rewarded--and she dominates the narration of the first half of the novel; she disappears completely from it, however, in the second half. Hardy replaces her perspective with that of Anne Seaway, a character whose only real importance in the novel is in the narrative, for her impact on the events of the novel is minimal: she does not do anything except go where she can see what others are doing. Her most important moment in the action of the plot is the one in which Owen Graye discovers that her eyes are not the same color as those of Eunice Manston, the woman she is supposed to be. Anne's entire role in Desperate Remedies is that of a substitute: she is Aeneas Manston's substitute for the murdered and therefore missing Eunice, and she is Hardy's substitute for the sensitive and high-strung Cytherea. Anne's perspective in the second half of the novel is fully as dominant as Cytherea's is in the first half. The first half of the novel is a love story of which Cytherea is the complex and impressionable heroine, set in a rather unlikely study of class structure; the second half of Desperate Remedies is a murder mystery, and Hardy uses Anne's perspective to narrate the solution of the mystery.

Anne, of course, is not the only character to attempt to solve the

mystery of what happened to Manston's wife Eunice. Hardy treats a fairly large number of peripheral as well as central characters with short bits of narration close to them. Because no one suspects Manston of having murdered Eunice and hidden her body, Hardy can use the perspectives of these other characters to review the clues in the case without giving the solution away. The thinking and figuring that these characters do replaces, in a way, the chasing and fighting in which such characters would be involved in a novel of action. In this novel of thought and deduction, however, the pursuit is mental, and in order to detail the events of the "chase," the narration is close to the pursuers. That Anne is a better and more practical thinker than Edward Springrove, Owen Graye, or Rector Raunham--the pursuers--explains Hardy's use of her consciousness for the telling of the mystery. The question of what happened to Eunice cannot be answered until a series of smaller mysteries are solved first. Strictly speaking, it is Anne who solves the smaller mysteries that relate to Manston's behavior and that provide the important clues to the murder.

Even though he is married to Cytherea, Manston has asked Anne to pretend to be Eunice, whom he first claimed had died in the fire at the inn. Since everyone, including Anne, considers Cytherea superior, Anne is puzzled that Manston now says he prefers her to Cytherea and confused by his desire to convince others that Eunice is alive. While he is out, she takes the opportunity to do some dusting, against his wishes, in his office. She notices that the dust on a cabinet has been disturbed in an unexpected way, in a way which suggests that two panels are in fact doors. Like most actions in this novel, this one is mental rather than physical. Anne's "pondering" is presented close to her:

She balanced herself on one foot and stood pondering. She



considered that it was very vexing and unfair in him to refuse her all knowledge of his remaining secrets, in the peculiar circumstances of her connection with him. She went close to the cabinet. As there was no keyhole, the door must be capable of being opened by the unassisted hand. The circles in the dust told her at which edge to apply her force. Here she pulled with the tips of her fingers, but the panel would not come forward. She fetched a chair and looked over the top of the cabinet, but no bolt, knob, or spring was to be seen. (Ch. XIX, No. i; p. 388)

The passage continues from her perspective as she figures out how to open the cabinet and as she finds Manston's cache of letters and reads them. The cast letter Eunice wrote, to her cousin James in America, evokes close narration for Anne:

From creases in the paper it was plain that the writer, having got so far, had become dissatisfied with her production, and had crumpled it in her hand. Was it to write another, or not to write at all? (Ch. XIX, No. i; p. 393)

The fact that Manston is in possession of a letter written by Eunice the night she died is one of Hardy's most important clues that she was murdered by Manston. He expands its place in the narrative, without having to explain it by means of any knowledgeable perspective, by putting the clue before us close to Anne. Her erroneous deductions--that Manston and Eunice communicated around the time he asked Anne to live with him and that the worst result of honesty for Manston will be divorce court and damages--are red herrings, as it were, to draw our attention away from the possibility that Manston met and murdered Eunice the night of the fire. Close to Anne, then, Hardy emphasizes that the riddle of how Manston got Eunice's letter must be solved before the mystery itself can be:

If she had been burnt, this letter, written in her bedroom, and probably thrust into her pocket when she relinquished it, would have been burnt with her. Nothing was surer than that. Why, then, did he say she was burnt, and never show Anne herself this letter?

The question suddenly raised a new and much stranger one--kindling a burst of amazement in her. How did Manston become

possessed of this letter?

That fact of possession was certainly the most remarkable revelation of all in connection with this epistle, and perhaps had something to do with his reason for never showing it to her.

She knew by several proofs, that from the fire to his marriage with Cytherea, and up to the time of the porter's confession, Manston believed--honestly believed--that Cytherea would be his lawful wife, and hence, of course, that his wife Eunice was dead. So that no communication could possibly have passed between his wife and himself from the first moment that he believed her dead on the night of the fire, to the day of his wedding. And yet he had that letter. How soon afterwards could they have communicated with each other?

The existence of the letter--as much as, or more than its contents--implying that Mrs. Manston was not burnt, his belief in that calamity must have terminated at the moment he obtained possession of the letter, if no earlier. Was, then, the only solution to the riddle that Anne could discern, the true one?--that he had communicated with his wife somewhere about the commencement of Anne's residence with him, or at any time since?

It was the most unlikely thing on earth that a woman who had forsaken her husband should countenance his scheme to personify her--whether she were in America, in London, or in the neighbourhood of Knapwater.

Then came the old and harassing question, what was Manston's real motive in risking his name on the deception he was practising as regarded Anne. It could not be, as he had always pretended, mere passion. Her thoughts had reverted to Mr. Raunham's letter, asking for proofs of her identity with the original Mrs. Manston. She could see no loophole of escape for the man who supported her. True, in her own estimation, his worst alternative was not so very bad after all--the getting the name of libertine, a possible appearance in the divorce or some other court of law, and a question of damages. Such an exposure might hinder his worldly progress for some time. Yet to him this alternative was, apparently, terrible as death itself. (Ch. XIX, No. i; pp. 393-95)

Hardy's message to us about the importance of the clue transcends Anne's necessarily limited and self-involved questioning. When, close to Anne, Hardy poses the question, "Was, then, the only solution to the riddle that Anne could discern, the true one?" and when Anne realizes that the "alternative" of honesty for Manston is "terrible as death itself," we are presented with clues to which Anne, in a way, does not have access.

Knowing that Manston has taken money from his bank account and fully aware of his anxiety about Cytherea and Eunice, Anne continues to

search for explanations for his behavior. Her suspicions make her very observant and Hardy keeps his narrative largely limited to her perspective. This way, he does not have to narrate Manston's confession to Miss Aldclyffe. The night that Manston plans to run away is narrated scrupulously from Anne's perspective or close to her. Her perspective is maintained until Eunice's body is identified by the detective. Saving the solution of the mystery of how Manston actually murdered Eunice until his letter of confession, Hardy preserves Anne's perspective so we are not aware that there has been an important shift away from Anne as a source of knowledge:

"It is the body of his first wife," he said quietly. "He murdered her, as Mr. Springrove and the rector suspected--but how and when, God only knows."

"And I!" exclaimed Anne Seaway, a probable and natural sequence of events and motives explanatory of the whole crime--events and motives shadowed forth by the letter, Manston's possession of it, his renunciation of Cytherea, and instalment of herself--flashing upon her mind with the rapidity of lightning.

"Ah--I see," said the detective, standing unusually close to her: and a handcuff was on her wrist. (Ch. XIX, No. vi; p. 418)

Hardy's use of Anne as the consciousness through which he records the complex series of events (however mental) which make up the last half of the novel is responsible for much of the aesthetic failure of Desperate Remedies, because Cytherea's consciousness should be much more central than it is. It is necessary to understand the presentation of her character in order to see the loss which Anne's close narration constitutes. If we look only at the narration close to Cytherea, we see a shallow character whose responses are immediate and ephemeral. The character requires the sustained and objective effort of Anne's thinking in order to be intellectually active enough to be truly sympathetic. Many of the important characteristics of Hardy's sensitive and conscious

characters are present in Cytherea; the most important quality she lacks, intelligence, is attributed to her but never demonstrated as it is for the common, and irrelevant, Anne. By refusing to let her have a hand in solving the mystery so close to her own life and future, Hardy makes her unfit to be his heroine. We have it in her own voice that she understands and suffers from a conflict between her inner and outer worlds, but Hardy does not give her the strength--the mental strength, in this novel--to save herself.

Partly because of the weakness in the novel itself, discussion of close narration in Desperate Remedies is hollow and superficial unless it takes into account the larger issues with which Hardy was more directly concerned. Desperate Remedies, therefore, cannot be regarded as an attempt on Hardy's part to improve or expand the role played by close narration in his fiction. It was not until Henry James that close narration got an exponent, one who would argue its merits in the criticism and one who would explore its limits in the fiction. This is not to say that James worked alone, of course; clearly, the work of Flaubert and Dickens, not to mention the more conventional writers, puts James squarely in the mainstream of a long tradition in the use of this form. One difference between James and Hardy, especially early Hardy, is that we have indisputable evidence that James employed narration close to a character as a deliberately chosen means of telling his story.

Like Dombey and Son, what is most important about The Portrait of a Lady is not the numerous short passages of close narration, but James's devotion of an entire narrative unit--a chapter--to it, to dramatizing Isabel's thoughts about her relationship and future with Osmond. Like Dombey and Son, The Portrait of a Lady is notable for this single

chapter, which today seems to be its most significant contribution to the history of the novel. This chapter (Chapter XLII) is deserving of all its critical acclaim for its centrality to the novel and for its unified and extended arrangement as an entire chapter in close narration. The Portrait of a Lady is also important, in the history of the novel, because it was first published in 1881, long before Hardy was devoting such long passages of narration close to a character, and long before Joyce, Woolf, Lawrence, or Conrad began to have influence on the conception of narration.

James stops all the action to present Isabel doing nothing but thinking; that is, she is doing more than reacting to Osmond's suggestion that she prevail upon Lord Warburton to marry his daughter Pansy--she is building speculations and conclusions upon that suggestion which is merely the premise for the rest of the thinking that she does. The distance between the narrator and Isabel varies considerably in this chapter, from passages which are as she might have said them to passages outside her, summarizing her thoughts and the events of her past. One passage from the beginning of the chapter, just after Isabel has sat down to think, can show the obvious care James took to present not only Isabel thinking, but the logic and sequence of her thoughts:

The suggestion from another that she had a definite influence on Lord Warburton--this had given her the start that accompanies unexpected recognition. Was it true that there was something still between them that might be a handle to make him declare himself to Pansy--a susceptibility, on his part, to approval, a desire to do what would please her? Isabel had hitherto not asked herself the question, because she had not been forced; but now that it was directly presented to her she saw the answer, and the answer frightened her. Yes, there was something--something on Lord Warburton's part. When he had first come to Rome she believed the link that united them to be completely snapped; but little by little she had been reminded that it had yet a palpable existence. It was as thin as a hair, but there were moments when she seemed to hear it vibrate. For herself nothing was changed; what she once

thought of him she always thought; it was needless this feeling should change; it seemed to her in fact a better feeling than ever. But he? had he still the idea that she might be more to him than other women? Had he the wish to profit by the memory of the few moments of intimacy through which they had once passed? Isabel knew she had read some of the signs of such a disposition. But what were his hopes, his pretensions, and in what strange way were they mingled with his evidently very sincere appreciation of poor Pansy? Was he in love with Gilbert Osmond's wife, and if so what comfort did he expect to derive from it? If he was in love with Pansy he was not in love with her stepmother, and if he was in love with her stepmother he was not in love with Pansy. Was she to cultivate the advantage she possessed in order to make him commit himself to Pansy, knowing he would do so for her sake and not for the small creature's own--was this the service her husband had asked of her? This at any rate was the duty with which she found herself confronted--from the moment she admitted to herself that her old friend had still an uneradicated predilection for her society. She asked herself with dismay whether Lord Warburton were pretending to be in love with Pansy in order to cultivate another satisfaction and what might be called other chances. Of this refinement of duplicity she presently acquitted him; she preferred to believe him in perfect good faith. But if his admiration for Pansy were a delusion this was scarcely better than its being an affectation.<sup>42</sup>

As this passage shows, James has substituted mental for physical action in his narrative. Isabel's conclusion that Warburton is not pretending to love Pansy in order to court Isabel is an action, as surely as Huck's running away is, and it can be said that the real importance of close narration is its usefulness for narrating mental action.

There is an important difference between James's and Dickens' narratives; this difference, clearly, is not in their use of close narration but in their use of the histor. It is not that James has no histor, for even in this chapter of The Portrait of a Lady the narrator refers to himself as "I" and emphasizes and explains what Isabel would not emphasize or explain to herself. The difference is that Dickens uses the histor in the section from Dombey and Son as a structural part of the narration in the same way that he does for close narration: he uses the narrative to help him make units--in this case chapters and parts of

chapters--in which narrative and structural boundaries coincide (i.e., the beginning and ending of the chapter are the beginning and ending of the narrative treatment.) The two paragraphs by the histor, then, mark a structural change, the end of the chapter and the end of the episode.

The histor does not seem to have this kind of a structural significance to James. In fact, in his famous Preface (of 1909) to the New York edition of The Golden Bowl, James says that rereading his works has made him realize that

Anything, in short, I now reflect, must always have seemed to me better--better for the process and the effect of representation, my irrepressible ideal--than the mere muffled majesty of irresponsible "authorship". Beset constantly with the sense that the painter of the picture or the chanter of the ballad (whatever we may call him) can never be responsible enough, and for every inch of his surface and note of his song, I track my uncontrollable footsteps, right and left, after the fact, while they take their quick turn, even on stealthiest tiptoe, toward the point of view that, within the compass, will give me most instead of least to answer for.<sup>43</sup>

Although there is a theoretically problematical conflation of author and narrator here, we can with some confidence assume that the quotation marks around "authorship" and the reference to the "chanter" as well as the "painter" mean that James would accept a discussion of this passage as it relates to his narrator. There is then, for James, a sense in which the histor cannot "answer for" or represent enough in the text to make every word ("every inch . . . and note") resonant with multiple meanings. This is because, for James, the histor's perspective is ineradicably associated with that of the author and cannot, as Hardy's histor can, be fictionalized in a way that allows for both the meaning of his words and the meaning of his perspective, the location of which determines the kind of reliability to be found in the words. James recognizes that authorial absence is merely ostensible, but it is clearly his desire to avoid making authorial or omniscient commentary important

to his narration for mimetic reasons: "It's not that the muffled majesty of authorship doesn't here ostensibly reign; but I catch myself again shaking it off and disavowing the pretence of it while I get down into the arena and do my best to live and breathe and rub shoulders and converse with the persons engaged in the struggle that provides for the others in the circling tiers the entertainment of the great game."

James's own description of close narration in this Preface shows that, even if the forms of this kind of narrative had not changed very much since Dickens, the authorial aims had. His purpose, he says, has "constantly inclined to the idea" of presenting "the particular attaching case plus some near individual view of it; that nearness quite having thus to become an imagined observer's . . . close and sensitive contact with it."<sup>44</sup> His novels, then, are not his "own impersonal account of the affair in hand, but . . . [his] account of somebody's impression of it--the terms of this person's access to it and estimate of it contributing thus by some fine little law to intensification of interest."<sup>45</sup> His emphasis, then, is on the identity of that observer who provides "a certain indirect and oblique view of my presented action." It is important, as always with James, to make certain of what he means: in this case, by "indirect and oblique view" he is not referring to the narration, which is, "on the contrary, any superficial appearances notwithstanding, the very straightest and closest possible," but to the relations between the observer and the story he or she is narrating. What makes it oblique, of course, is that the perceiver is as much the subject of the narration as the perceived is--or, as James says of The Golden Bowl:

The thing abides rigidly by its law of showing Maggie Verver at first through her suitor's and her husband's exhibitory vision of her, and of then showing the Prince, with at least an



equal intensity, through his wife's; the advantage thus being that these attributions of experience display the sentient subjects themselves at the same time and by the same stroke with the nearest possible approach to a desired vividness. It is the Prince who opens the door to half our light upon Maggie, just as it is she who opens it to half our light upon himself; the rest of our impression, in either case, coming straight from the very motion with which that act is performed.<sup>46</sup>

By his own testimony, what makes James's close narration stand out is the larger, aesthetic context which it serves: he sought and used a number of techniques which provide that "oblique and indirect view" of the action. Close narration, then, fits into a rubric of possibilities of means for presenting not only the action but the particularities of the perceiver. The critical acclaim which James deserves is most just in consideration of his ideas about the role the observer takes in determining the nature of truth rather than in consideration of his narrative technique, especially for those novels written before The Golden Bowl (1904).

By the 1890's, close narration was commonplace. Jude the Obscure and The Well-Beloved are dominated by it and its concomitant assumption that the mind is the scene of significant action. Every important novel from the decade is largely narrated close to one or more of the characters, even novels like George Moore's Esther Waters, whose narrative texture is much less complex than that of Dombey and Son, The Portrait of a Lady, or Tess of the d'Urbervilles. Two more examples outside of Hardy, one from Oscar Wilde and the other from Kate Chopin, and one more from Hardy--The Well-Beloved--will show the extent to which close narration was naturalized, as it were, in British and American fiction and how essential the internal life of the characters was to the presentation of the novels' events.

The Picture of Dorian Gray (1891) has so much close narration in it that it is fair to say that the novel itself is narrated close to Dorian. This is not to suggest that the novel has no other narrative perspective, but, as close narration does not carry the requirements of exclusivity with it which may be imagined for other means of presenting stream of consciousness, all narrative points of view seem rather to merge into one which operates from inside the characters' heads--and especially from inside Dorian's. Every climax of recognition which shakes Dorian and every scene in which he suffers is narrated close to him; Wilde's concern, obviously, was with the effect which such a life has on Dorian, and that effect, just as obviously, is mental. When there is a conflict or discrepancy between inner and outer worlds, then that reality is an interior matter. This passage, which occurs while Dorian is still actually young and beautiful and while the picture is only beginning to show the effects of living, narrates not only Dorian's recognition that his actions affect him powerfully but also his breaking of the mirror (which objectively confirms his unchanging beauty) that Lord Henry had given him. One way that we know that this passage is close to Dorian is in the content; for us and for the narrator, Dorian is responsible for his own ruin:

Once, someone who had terribly loved him, had written to him a mad letter, ending with these idolatrous words: "The world is changed because you are made of ivory and gold. The curves of your lips rewrite history." The phrases came back to his memory, and he repeated them over and over to himself. Then he loathed his own beauty, and flinging the mirror on the floor crushed it into silver splinters beneath his heel. It was his beauty that had ruined him, his beauty and the youth that he had prayed for. But for those two things, his life might have been free from stain. His beauty had been to him but a mask, his youth but a mockery. What was youth at best? A green, an unripe time, a time of shallow moods, and sickly thoughts. Why had he worn its livery? Youth had spoiled him.

It was better not to think of the past. Nothing could alter that. It was of himself, and of his own future, that he

had to think. James Vane was hidden in a nameless grave in Selby churchyard. Alan Campbell had shot himself one night in his laboratory, but had not revealed the secret that he had been forced to know. The excitement, such as it was, over Basil Hallward's disappearance would soon pass away. It was already waning. He was perfectly safe there. Nor, indeed, was it the death of Basil Hallward that weighed most upon his mind. It was the living death of his own soul that troubled him. Basil had painted the portrait that had done everything. Basil had said things to him that were unbearable, and that he had yet borne with patience. The murder had been simply the madness of a moment. As for Alan Campbell, his suicide had been his own act. He had chosen to do it. It was nothing to him.

A new life! That was what he wanted. That was what he was waiting for. Surely he had begun it already. He had spared one innocent thing at any rate. He would never again tempt innocence. He would be good.<sup>47</sup>

The portrait is one way Wilde has of reflecting the truth about Dorian's self-serving denials and promises, for just after he blames his beauty, his youth, the picture, and Basil Hallward, and just after Dorian denies complicity in Alan Campbell's death, he finds "no change" in the portrait "save that in the eyes there was a look of cunning, and in the mouth the curved wrinkle of the hypocrite," and on the hand brighter blood.<sup>48</sup> The fact that Wilde uses an external means of characterization like the portrait in such an internal novel emphasizes his interest in the relations between inner and outer conditions of existence, between the internal and external ramifications of moral and immoral acts. In a way, the portrait replaces the histor as our guide to Dorian's evolution, or devolution, from innocent beauty to egregious immorality.

Like The Picture of Dorian Gray, The Well-Beloved can be said to be narrated close to its main character. The Well-Beloved: A Sketch of a Temperament (1897) is Hardy's last novel to be published in volume form. It is an odd book: once very popular, now it is mostly ignored; extremely personal and probably heavily autobiographical, it was called "short and slight" by Hardy himself.<sup>49</sup> The novel is, as it claims to be, a

sketch of the kind of temperament which spends its life in pursuit of the Well-Beloved, the ideal woman whose changeability is her constancy and whose fleshly tabernacle is essentially irrelevant to her worshipper. Specifically, it is the story of a sculptor, Jocelyn Pierston, who, upon returning to his native "isle," promises to marry Avice but jilts her for Marcia, who shortly returns to her parents; when Avice dies twenty years later, he falls in love with her daughter Ann Avice; twenty years later, she dies, and he falls in love with her daughter Avice, who elopes with Marcia's son to avoid marriage with him. When he recovers from the nearly fatal illness which follows, he no longer appreciates beauty; this means that the ideal no longer exists for him to love or create. His inconstancy is, he believes, loyalty to the ideal goddess who flits from the body of one woman to another; to the histor, his infatuations are the result of sexual attraction--"as the scientific might say, Nature was working her plans for the next generation under the cloak of a dialogue on linen"--no matter how chaste the eventual relationships may be (Pt. II, Ch. vi; p. 92). Hardy presents Pierston's sense of his own constancy close to him and Pierston's unconscious motivations in the voice of the histor.

Even though, as we have it from the histor, the Well-Beloved is a fantasy and Pierston's love for her based, in a way, on dishonesty, there is no evidence at the end that Pierston finds emotional health or a deeper reality; instead, Hardy seems to suggest that modernization on the peninsula and in the world of art introduces a shallowness and hollowness ("gourd-like") which were not there before:

His business was, among other kindred undertakings which followed the extinction of the Well-Beloved and other ideals, to advance a scheme for the closing of the old natural fountains in the Street of Wells, because of their possible contamination, and supplying the townlet with water from pipes, a

scheme that was carried out at his expense, as is well known. He was also engaged in acquiring some old moss-grown, mul-lioned Elizabethan cottages, for the purpose of pulling them down because they were damp; which he afterwards did, and built new ones with hollow walls, and full of ventilators.

At present he is sometimes mentioned as "the late Mr. Pierston" by gourd-like young art-critics and journalists; and his productions are alluded to as those of a man not without genius, whose powers were insufficiently recognized in his lifetime. (Pt. III, Ch. viii; pp. 217-18)

There is a kind of irony here, recognizable to readers of Hardy's other novels, which makes this passage seem regretful; this sadness, which is associated with the "pulling down" of the Elizabethan cottages and the presumption in the art world that Pierston died unappreciated, suggests that he has lost something genuine in the loss of his ideals. The key to the loss is in the image of the well, for this "closing of the old natural fountains in the Street of Wells, because of their possible contamination, and supplying the townlet with water from pipes, a scheme that was carried out at his expense," is an act so significant, so meaningful, that it is almost allegorical. It symbolizes most clearly the end of Pierston's creativity because,

During the many uneventful seasons that followed Marcia's stroke of independence [of returning to her parents] . . . , Jocelyn threw into plastic creations that ever-bubbling spring of emotion which, without some conduit into space, will surge upwards and ruin all but the greatest men. (Pt. I, Ch. ix; p. 49)

The wells, the "old natural fountains," are the "conduit into space" of Pierston's emotions.<sup>50</sup> To change over to city water, as it were, is to trade "that peculiar and personal taste in subjects" because there is a possibility of some unnamed "contamination" for ideas and emotions which are piped in from the outside (Pt. III, Ch. iv; p. 171). The "expense" for Pierston is his originality: he stops creating his art, he loses faith in the Well-Beloved; he stops originating his own ideas, emotions, and thoughts. That Pierston's rejoining of the community costs him his

creative wells of emotion and the imagination to transform his native stone into images of his dreams makes it seem that giving up the Well-Beloved is a tragic mistake, no matter how "subjective" a "phenomenon" she is (Pt. I, Ch. ii; p. 11).

From Pierston's perspective, however, the end of the novel is comic--the struggle is over and order is established: "Robinson Crusoe lost a day in his illness: I have lost a faculty, for which loss Heaven be praised!" (Pt. III, Ch. vii; p. 210). In spite of the placement of the histor's slightly regretful description of Pierston's change at the end of the novel, the very amount of narration close to Pierston or from his perspective makes us look at the events of the novel in the way he does. The narration from Pierston's perspective is so consistent and the histor in general so muted that almost nothing that happens in this novel takes place outside of Pierston's awareness or, if he is unaware of his own feelings, outside of his consciousness. Hardy narrates a handful of events of which Pierston is ignorant, like Anne Avice's attempts to convince her daughter to marry him and Avice and Leverre's elopement, but literally everything else that takes place in this novel is narrated as it enters Pierston's mind. This means that the important events are all mental, they are acts of Pierston's consciousness and functions of his personality; and even when Hardy uses the histor to narrate things which Pierston is not aware of, or does not think of, or forgets, the subject is still his consciousness.

Even the descriptions of setting are descriptions of Pierston's consciousness. Partly this is because most are narrated close to him, so what is narrated is his impression of the landscape, but the analogy between "the old natural fountains in the Street of Wells" and "that ever-bubbling spring of emotion" extends to Pierston's mind and the

"isle" itself. Pierston is returning to his home after over three years' absence:

What had seemed usual in the isle when he lived there always looked quaint and odd after his later impressions. More than ever the spot seemed what it was said once to have been, the ancient Vindilia Island, and the Home of the Slingers. The towering rock, the houses above houses, one man's doorstep rising behind his neighbor's chimney, the gardens hung up by one edge to the sky, the vegetables growing on apparently almost vertical planes, the unity of the whole island as a solid and single block of limestone four miles long, were no longer familiar and commonplace ideas. All now stood dazzlingly unique and white against the tinted sea, and the sun flashed on infinitely stratified walls of oolite.

"The melancholy ruins

Of Cancelled cycles," . . . [sic]

with a distinctiveness that called the eyes to it as strongly as any spectacle he had beheld afar. . . .

He stretched out his hand upon the rock beside him. It felt warm. That was the island's personal temperature when in its afternoon sleep as now. He listened, and heard sounds: whir-whir, saw-saw-saw. Those were the island's snores--the noises of the quarrymen and stone-sawyers.

Opposite to the spot on which he sat was a roomy cottage or homestead. Like the island it was all of stone, not only in walls but in window-frames, roof, chimneys, fence, stile, pigsty and stable, almost door. (Pt. I, Ch. i; pp. 3-4)

That this passage is narrated from Jocelyn's perspective and close to him allows Hardy to show Pierston's sensitivity to beauty and "ideas" in the external world and to imply a fundamental unity in all things, conscious and unconscious.

Pierston's characterization of the sounds of quarrying as the sounds of a sleeping island sets up an important equation between his sculptures, which are the images from his dreams, and the blocks of limestone cut from the island. Because Pierston carves statues from stones his father cuts, we can say, following the analogy, that the raw materials for his dreams are at least based in memory and tradition:

While the son had been modelling and chipping his ephemeral fancies into perennial shapes, the father had been persistently chiselling for half a century at the crude original matter of those shapes, the stern, isolated rock in the channel . . . . (Pt. II, Ch. i; p. 55)

The past is geological in this novel, layers "Of Cancelled cycles" superimposed on others; memory is a "substratum" of the mind (Pt. III, Ch. iii; p. 168). Memory is not petrified, however permanent it may be, because the island is asleep, not dead. Just as the blocks of limestone come from the sleeping island, so Pierston's images of the Well-Beloved are carved from dreams; the part of Pierston's mind that produces the "crude original matter" of his art is, in a way, asleep. For this reason, the external world has a kind of instability to him--a goddess migrates from one human body to another--and his dreams and impressions can blot out that world.

The most spectacular example of this perceptual distortion takes place at a party, when Pierston learns of the death of the original Avice. Hardy's narration of these consciousness-dominated and consciousness-created moments in Pierston's life give them great importance, considering how few moments are narrated at all. This passage, which describes Pierston's gradual integration of the meaning of Avice's death to him, illustrates how sympathetically Pierston is treated in this novel as well as how predominant mental reality is to this sensitive and creative dreamer. The letter Pierston reads secretly at the table stirs up vivid memories for him that overwhelm the trivial dinner party; this moment also marks the migration of the Well-Beloved from Nichola Pine-Avon to the dead Avice. The letter presents Avice's death simply and directly:

You will be sorry to hear, Sir, that dear little Avice Caro, as we used to call her in her maiden days, is dead. She married her cousin, if you do mind, and went away from here for a good-few years, but was left a widow and came back a twelve-month ago; since when she faltered and faltered, and now she is gone. (Pt. II, Ch. ii; p. 71)

Pierston's reaction is presented in a contrasting richness of narration



close to him:

By imperceptible and slow degrees the scene at the dinner-table receded into the background, behind the vivid presentment of Avice Caro, and the old, old scenes of Isle Vindilia which were inseparable from her personality. The dining-room was real no more, dissolving under the bold stony promontory and the incoming West Sea. The handsome marchioness in geranium-red and diamonds, who was visible to him on his host's right hand opposite, became one of the glowing vermilion sunsets that he had watched so many times over Deadman's Bay, with the form of Avice in the foreground. Between his eyes and the judge who sat next to Nichola, with a chin so raw that he must have shaved every quarter of an hour during the day, intruded the face of Avice, as she had glanced at him in their last parting. The crannied features of the evergreen society lady, who, if she had been a few years older, would have been as old-fashioned as her daughter, shaped themselves to the dusty quarries of his and Avice's parents, down which he had clambered with Avice hundreds of times. The ivy trailing about the table-cloth, the lights in the tall candlesticks, and the bunches of flowers, were transmuted into the ivies of the cliff-built Castle, the tufts of seaweed, and the light-houses on the isle. The salt airs of the ocean killed the smell of the viands, and instead of the clatter of voices came the monologue of the tide off the Beal.

More than all, Nichola Pine-Avon lost the blooming radiance which she had latterly acquired; she became a woman of his acquaintance with no distinctive traits; she seemed to grow material, a superficies of flesh and bone merely, a person of lines and surfaces; she was a language in living cipher no more. (Pt. II, Ch. iii; pp. 72-73)

Hardy's close narration seems most effective when his characters are most visionary--in this instance, in which figures representing social power and prestige fade under the influence of twenty-year-old memories, and in a passage from earlier in the novel, in which Pierston feels, unconsciously, that he should not marry Avice:

It was a presence--an imaginary shape or essence from the human multitude lying below: those who had gone down in vessels of war, East Indiamen, barges, brigs, and ships of the Armada--select people, common, and debased, whose interests and hopes had been as wide asunder as the poles, but who had rolled each other to oneness on that restless sea-bed. There could almost be felt the brush of their huge composite ghost as it ran a shapeless figure over the isle, shrieking for some good god who would disunite it again. (Pt. I, Ch. ii; pp. 12-13)

The "huge composite ghost" of shipwreck victims charges "The evening and

night winds . . . with a something that did not burden them elsewhere"-- a communality, a society, forced upon individuals, unnaturally, by their environment. At this moment Pierston is thinking of marriage, and it is the misery of communal identity that he fears.

From these passages, in which Pierston imagines the island "in its afternoon sleep," the dining room as "real no more, dissolving under the bold stony promontory and the incoming West Sea," and the wind as a "composite ghost, . . . a shapeless figure" running "over the isle, shrieking for some good god who would disunite it again," it is obvious that Pierston's perspective, however imaginative, is invested with the authority normally reserved for that of the histor. We allow Pierston, in his perceptions, the same kind of poetic licence we allow Hardy's histor in his descriptions, even though we know from the histor that Pierston's conviction that his Well-Beloved exists is preposterous. Because his fantasies are so extravagant we can easily recognize how they distort his perception; for this reason, and because of the sheer amount of narration close to Pierston, the reader, responding conventionally to conventional signals, trusts in the essential validity of his perceptions. There are, for instance, no descriptions in The Well-Beloved of any of the characters from a perspective so cosmic that they appear as flies on a billiard table, as they do in Tess (Ch. XVI, p. 136). Hardy's vision of the relative insignificance of the individual in the mass of humanity or in the universe of nature takes this characteristic form here, but the perspective is Pierston's, not the histor's, and Pierston's view of the pedestrians in Rome as ants is immediately followed by the identification of two, to Hardy, of humanity's most significant individuals, Shelley and Keats:

The streets below were immersed in shade, the front of the

church of the Trinità de' Monti at the top was flooded with orange light, the gloom of evening gradually intensifying upon the broad, long flight of steps, which foot-passengers incessantly ascended and descended with the insignificance of ants; the dusk wrapped up the house to the left, in which Shelley had lived, and that to the right, in which Keats had died. (Pt. III, Ch. i; p. 147)

This is the kind of statement which readers of Hardy are accustomed to associate with validity and authority. That the perspective is Pierston's does not change the association, so the effect of statements like these from Pierston's perspective, and the very predominance of this perspective, is to lend credence to Pierston's point of view.

Pierston's perspective, however, is not as reliable as that of the histor. Upon analysis, The Well-Beloved is much more complex than it is on first acquaintance; the most notable difference is that Pierston makes mistakes in his perceptions and his conclusions which are not apparent during a first or fast reading of the novel. There are important distinctions between Pierston's and the histor's evaluations. Hardy never uses the histor, for example, to validate Pierston's perception of the women he loves--to the histor, Pierston's love affairs are "professional beauty-chases" (Pt. I, Ch. ix; p. 50). Hardy never uses the histor to validate Pierston's faith in the Well-Beloved; his belief is a matter of psychological analysis--Pierston's Well-Beloved is, he says, "a subjective phenomenon" (Pt. I, Ch. ii; p. 11). Most important, however, are the small mistakes Pierston makes, which are never corrected by the histor; there are dozens of these, and their artistic value becomes obvious.

One very revealing sequence, for instance, shows how thoroughly Pierston has blinded himself to Ann Avic's own person in his conviction that she is "the exponent of the Long-Pursued" (Pt. II, Ch. vii; p. 97). In this specific example, moreover, his selective and sometimes obtuse

grasp of the external world is also apparent. In the first, rather remarkable passage, Pierston abstracts the sound of Ann Avice's voice from its content so that he can invest it with his own meaning:

. . . she attracted him by the cadences of her voice; she would suddenly drop it to a rich whisper of roguishness, when the slight rural monotony of its narrative speech disappeared, and soul and heart--or what seemed soul and heart--resounded. The charm lay in the intervals, using that word in its musical sense. She would say a few syllables in one note, and end her sentence in a soft modulation upwards, then downwards, then into her own note again. The curve of sound was as artistic as any line of beauty ever struck by his pencil--as satisfying as the curves of her who was the World's Desire.

The subject of her discourse he cared nothing about--it was no more his interest than his concern. He took special pains that in catching her voice he might not comprehend her words. To the tones he had a right, none to the articulations. By degrees he could not exist long without this sound. (Bk. II, Ch. vii; p. 97)

Less than one page later, Pierston does not even hear that voice as it argues with another--Ike, Ann's husband. Because it does not occur to Pierston that Ann Avice is married, he does not wonder who this couple is or why they are exactly where he thought she would be:

Turning at length, he hastened homeward along the now deserted trackway, intending to overtake the revitalized Avice. But he could see nothing of her, and concluded that she had walked too fast for him. Arrived at his own gate he paused a moment, and perceived that Avice's little freehold was still in darkness. She had not come.

He retraced his steps, but could not find her, the only persons on the road being a man and his wife, as he knew them to be, though he could not see them, from the words of the man--

"If you had not a'ready married me, you'd cut my acquaintance! That's a pretty thing for a wife to say!"

The remark stung his ear unpleasantly, and by-and-by he went back again. Avice's cottage was now lighted: she must have come round by the other road. (Bk. II, Ch. vii; pp. 98-99)

To be absolutely fair to Pierston, we cannot be sure that Ann Avice says anything for him to overhear, and this is exactly the point: we have no way to tell whether Pierston hears her or not. What stimulates the husband's response, of course, is being told in effect that he is no

longer the dwelling-place of Ann Avice's Well-Beloved.

Pierston meets this couple again under similar circumstances, but this time he even suspects, momentarily, that the woman is Ann Avice:

Drawing near his own gate he smelt tobacco, and could discern two figures in the side lane leading past Avice's door. They did not, however, enter her house, but strolled onward to the narrow pass conducting to Red King Castle and the sea. He was in momentary heaviness at the thought that they might be Avice with a worthless lover, but a faintly argumentative tone from the man informed him that they were the same married couple going homeward whom he had encountered on a previous occasion. (Bk. II, Ch. viii; p. 106)

In this case, again, the point is Pierston's awareness and not the events he perceives, since we have no way of knowing what "really" happened or whether Ann Avice said anything. The last event in this series makes it clear that Pierston ignores the evidence of his senses to preserve the integrity of his fantasy. In this case, he knows she is meeting someone and he follows her:

A crunching of feet upon the gravel mixed in with the articulation of the sea--steps light as if they were winged. And he supposed, two minutes later, that the mouth of some hulking fellow was upon hers, which he himself hardly ventured to look at, so touching was its young beauty.

Hearing people about--among others the before-mentioned married couple quarrelling, the woman's tones having a kinship to Avice's own--he returned to the house. (Bk. II, Ch. ix; p. 111)

The little love-scene between Ann Avice and her "lover" is purely a product of Pierston's imagination; Ann and her husband quarrel when they meet.

This is, finally, the heart of the purpose of presenting an individual and particular perspective--so that we can see how meaning is generated by the perceiver. Hardy has been interested in what people read into what they experience and by what means people remember experiences since he showed Cytherea Graye associating her father's death with shafts of sunlight: "Emotions will attach themselves to scenes that are

simultaneous--however foreign in essence these scenes may be--as chemical waters will crystallize on twigs and wires" (Desperate Remedies Ch. I, No. iii; p. 11). What makes Desperate Remedies more Victorian than modern is its use of external, objective correlatives to suggest the internal lives of its characters. What makes The Well-Beloved more modern than Victorian is that the subject of the narrative is the processing consciousness, the "chemical waters," of Jocelyn Pierston. The two novels, like all of Hardy's fiction, are contiguous with each other, but they belong to different genres, and the failure of each has to do with how well it fits the exacting extremities of genre. Desperate Remedies is so thoroughly a shallow thriller that to analyze it is to enrich it. The Well-Beloved is not a novel to satisfy popular tastes: it is about an artist who has problems of artistry, but for that, as a kind of meta-novel about stopping creating, it well rewards post-Jamesian critical analysis and attention.

Kate Chopin's 1899 The Awakening shows how thoroughly ingrained close narration and its assumptions about the sphere of a novel's action were by the end of the century. Chopin was strongly influenced by European literatures, as James was, and the quality of her prose makes hers a more attractive novel from which to select passages than, for example, George Moore's Esther Waters, the close narration of which borders, sometimes alarmingly, on the trite. Chopin's sensitivity to the effects of memory and mood make this passage not only a rich one for analysis of close narration but also, of course, an evocative one for its orchestration of personal and universal symbols. Taken from the very end of the novel, as Edna prepares to commit suicide and then as she succeeds at it, this passage so closely presents Edna's consciousness that it sometimes lapses into present tense; Chopin has so closely identified her

narrator's voice with Edna's that she seems not to be describing Edna's consciousness at all but the world around her:

The water of the Gulf stretched out before her, gleaming with the million lights of the sun. The voice of the sea is seductive, never ceasing, whispering, clamoring, murmuring, inviting the soul to wander in abysses of solitude. All along the white beach, up and down, there was no living thing in sight. A bird with a broken wing was beating the air above, reeling, fluttering, circling disabled down, down to the water.

. . . when she was there beside the sea, absolutely alone, she cast the unpleasant, prickling garments from her, and for the first time in her life she stood naked in the open air, at the mercy of the sun, the breeze that beat upon her, and the waves that invited her.

How strange and awful it seemed to stand naked under the sky! how delicious! She felt like some new-born creature, opening its eyes in a familiar world that it had never known.

The foamy wavelets curled up to her white feet, and coiled like serpents about her ankles. She walked out. The water was deep, but she lifted her white body and reached out with a long, sweeping stroke. The touch of the sea is sensuous, enfolding the body in its soft, close embrace.

She went on and on. She remembered the night she swam far out, and recalled the terror that seized her at the fear of being unable to regain the shore. She did not look back now, but went on and on, thinking of the blue-grass meadow that she had traversed when a little child, believing that it had no beginning and no end.

Her arms and legs were growing tired.

She thought of Leonce and the children. They were a part of her life. But they need not have thought that they could possess her, body and soul. How Mademoiselle Reisz would have laughed, perhaps sneered, if she knew! "And you call yourself an artist! What pretensions, Madame! The artist must possess the courageous soul that dares and defies."

Exhaustion was pressing upon and overpowering her.

"Good-by--because, I love you." He did not know; he did not understand. He would never understand. Perhaps Doctor Mandelet would have understood if she had seen him--but it was too late; the shore was far behind her, and her strength was gone.

She looked into the distance, and the old terror flamed up for an instant, then sank again. Edna heard her father's voice and her sister Margaret's. She heard the barking of an old dog that was chained to the sycamore tree. The spurs of the cavalry officer clanged as he walked across the porch. There was the hum of bees, and the musky odor of pinks filled the air.<sup>51</sup>

By ending her novel in the perspective of Edna, who, presumably, dies as the novel ends, Chopin does not allow for a distancing, objective

perspective such as would be provided by the histor. This leaves the novel in Enda's hands, as it were, and insists on her perspective as the salient one for the proper understanding of her story. The summary of her life, then, is the series of memories and feelings, however temporary and local of Edna and to the moment. This rather anarchic abandonment of the relative stability of the voice of the histor marks the novels of experimentalists like Chopin and James (whose The Portrait of a Lady ends in the local but continuing perspective of Casper Goodwood). Dickens, certainly, and Hardy and Wilde return to a locus outside the limited and particular ones of their characters in order to end their novels.

One way to look at all of this is to see that Dickens was a genuine genius, whose narrative experimentation prefigures all the innovations in narration except those which violate standard novelistic punctuation and sentence structure, that is, everything up to the most extreme forms for presenting stream of consciousness. Another possible conclusion to draw is that Henry James's early contribution to the development of narrative was in the elegant simplicity of his idea to stop the action altogether while Isabel Archer sits and thinks; in a way, we can say that it is the directness of the relation between the action and the narration in that scene which makes it stand out as a landmark to later readers, just as Chopin's leaving her novel without returning to the continuing world of the reader and the narrator and the surviving characters makes her novel important. Another is to say that different writers interpret close narration in different ways, just as do different writers of stream of consciousness; for Dickens, the situations in which he wished to present the characters' thoughts and feelings as well as their perspectives led him to take up their voices, their vocabularies and



idiosyncrasies as well as their more general styles. For James, the novelist's situation included the possibility, at least theoretically, of completely submerging the sense of a narrator in the flowing words which represent the flowing impressions of a marginally relevant character. For Dickens, a narrator was essential and, if the narration got close enough to a character, it became, as it does for Esther Summerson in Bleak House, first-person. For James, it seemed possible to present by way of narration what would not be spoken, but what would be only felt or thought in passing. For Hardy, both narrative situations were possible--and, beginning with The Woodlanders, necessary.

## Chapter Four: Close Narration in Hardy's Major Novels

Any of Hardy's novels can be analyzed by reference to close narration, because the close narration of any of his novels can be seen to be related to the narration of all of them and to his ideas about the nature of consciousness, to the boundaries of structural units within the novel, to the roles played by the minor characters, and to the identity of the main characters. With the exception of Desperate Remedies and The Well-Beloved, the most valuable novels to discuss, for critical purposes, are Hardy's major ones, Far from the Madding Crowd, The Return of the Native, The Mayor of Casterbridge, The Woodlanders, Tess, and Jude. There is, of course, a great deal which can be said about the other novels: all of Hardy's novels open up under analysis of this kind, and a look at the close narration of each of them allows for an organized way to think of Hardy's presentation of his characters. Limiting the discussion to Hardy's major novels is the most practical way to proceed, because a discussion of the close narration of all of Hardy's novels would be enormously bulky, and most of the results would be too particular to the novel at hand to make them worth the effort or space.

### A. Far from the Madding Crowd

Far from the Madding Crowd is Hardy's first important use of close narration in his novels, if we wish to use the narration to understand the integrity rather than the failure of the novel. The characters

presented by means of close narration are Gabriel Oak, Bathsheba Everdene, Farmer Boldwood, and Sergeant Frank Troy; instances of narration close to them occur in groups, so that events are dramatized rather than presented by isolated patches of close narration scattered here and there. Bathsheba and Gabriel each get relatively thorough presentation, especially compared to the protagonists of earlier novels. They share the center of consciousness in the novel in a way which suggests that there is no single "main" character but a pair of perceiving minds in Hardy's conception of this story. Joseph Warren Beach handles this split in the focus of the novel between Bathsheba and Gabriel by dividing the plot from the setting, so that "As Bathsheba is undoubtedly the central actor in the drama, so Oak is the central feature of the pictorial composition, the poem, to which the drama was attached."<sup>1</sup>

A glance at Gabriel's passages of close narration, however, reveals that he is presented not from the outside, which "pictorial composition" suggests, but from the inside. Gabriel's close narration occurs at four points in the course of the novel, which become points of intense emotional excitement in his life. The first cluster of passages close to him takes place at the beginning of the novel, when Gabriel loses his sheep and must go to work for wages. Hardy is concerned that we accept as valid Gabriel's perspective, in spite of his comic face and dress, since it serves as a kind of index for the just estimation of the behavior of the rest of the characters; the most important passage from this group of instances of close narration is a description of what Gabriel can see, his perspective, and of what he is thinking. His younger sheep dog has just run his entire flock over a cliff:

His first feeling now was one of pity for the untimely fate of these gentle ewes and their unborn lambs.

It was a second to remember another phase of the matter. The sheep were not insured. All the savings of a frugal life had been dispersed at a blow; his hopes of being an independent farmer were laid low--possibly for ever. . . .

"Thank God I am not married: what would she have done in the poverty now coming upon me!"

Oak raised his head, and wondering what he could do, listlessly surveyed the scene. By the outer margin of the pit was an oval pond, and over it hung the attenuated skeleton of a chrome-yellow moon, which had only a few days to last--the morning star dogging her on the left hand. The pool glittered like a dead man's eye, and as the world awoke a breeze blew, shaking and elongating the reflection of the moon without breaking it, and turning the image of the star to a phosphoric streak upon the water. All this Oak saw and remembered. (Ch. V, p. 41)

Oak is "central" in the "composition" of this novel, but not as Beach imagined it--as phrases like "The pool glittered like a dead man's eye" make clear--since Gabriel's centrality is obviously that of the perceiver and not that of the perceived (or "pictorial").

Hardy does not get close to Gabriel again until the sheep-shearing episode in Bathsheba's barn (Ch. XXII). This event marks a moment of happiness for Oak, and Hardy narrates with some detail not only his temporary freedom from worry that makes up the center of this episode but also Gabriel's unhappiness which begins and ends the scene. The last of Oak's perspective that we get until after Bathsheba has married Troy is his watching Boldwood take her out of the barn and into the sunlight. The third group of passages close to Gabriel marks a new phase in his life, one that puts him in direct opposition to Troy (Ch. XXXV through Ch. XXXVII). The climax of this new phase in Oak's life, however, does not come until the night of the storm which threatens Bathsheba's crops and which ruins Boldwood's ( in Ch. XXXVII). The importance of this climax is emphasized by the presence and intensity of the storm. Once the emotional energy has peaked and dissipated, for Gabriel and for the storm, Hardy moves the novel away from Oak again and does not return to

him until the end, after Boldwood has shot Troy, when Gabriel moves again into the center of the action surrounding Bathsheba.

The principle underlying Hardy's use of narration close to Gabriel seems to be that, when Gabriel's consciousness is stirred by external events and people, it dominates the content of what he perceives. Part of our sense of Oak's unselfish devotion to Bathsheba is a result of the close narration, for except for his despair at the loss of his sheep and his surprise at the outcome of Troy's return, all of the passages of narration close to Gabriel describe him thinking about Bathsheba.

Like Gabriel's, Bathsheba's instances of close narration occur in groups. The first group illustrates Bathsheba's intense love for Troy before she marries him and her confusion about her duty to Boldwood (Ch. XXXI through Ch. XXXII). This is, in fact, fairly late in the novel; Hardy stays outside of Bathsheba's perspective until she begins to realize fully the consequences of her actions--in this case, her playful toying with another's, Boldwood's, emotions. The second constellation of passages of narration close to Bathsheba describes her when, faced with Fanny Robin and her baby, she begins to regret her marriage to Troy (Ch. XLI and Ch. XLIII); this section ends as Bathsheba goes to her knees, humbled and ready to begin the long process of healing which will prepare her to appreciate Gabriel's true nobility. The last group of narration close to Bathsheba, then, really only one isolated instance, dramatizes her finally-awakened interest in Oak (Ch. LI).

The most important single instance of this narration close to Bathsheba shows her trying to learn the truth about Troy and Fanny; as a look at the scene as a whole shows, this section also has the purpose of presenting Bathsheba realizing her need for Gabriel, first, and then

learning humility, a lesson that has been coming since she was first introduced, sitting on her wagon and admiring herself in her mirror. Bathsheba first identifies the standard against which we compare her--Gabriel Oak--and then she tries to emulate him:

She suddenly felt a longing desire to speak to some one stronger than herself, and so get strength to sustain her surmised position with dignity and her carking doubts with stoicism. Where could she find such a friend? nowhere in the house. She was by far the coolest of the women under her roof. Patience and suspension of judgment for a few hours were what she wanted to learn, and there was nobody to teach her. Might she but go to Gabriel Oak!--but that could not be. What a way Oak had, she thought, of enduring things. Boldwood, who seemed so much deeper and higher and stronger in feeling than Gabriel, had not yet learnt, any more than she herself, the simple lesson which Oak showed a mastery of by every turn and look he gave--that among the multitude of interests by which he was surrounded, those which affected his personal well-being were not the most absorbing and important in his eyes. Oak meditatively looked upon the horizon of circumstances without any special regard to his own standpoint in the midst. That was how she would wish to be. But then Oak was not racked by incertitude upon the inmost matter of his bosom, as she was at this moment. Oak knew all about Fanny that she wished to know--she felt convinced of that. If she were to go to him now at once and say no more than these few words, "What is the truth of the story?" he would feel bound in honour to tell her. It would be an inexpressible relief. No further speech would need to be uttered. He knew her so well that no eccentricity of behavior in her would alarm him. (Ch. XLIII, pp. 337-38)

Bathsheba's regrets are only beginning, for she imagines that her pain will disappear as soon as she talks to Gabriel; it is as if she imagines that he will save her. She decides to ask him for the truth, and she goes to his house; still full of pride, however, she feels that she cannot be humiliated in front of him:

Alas for her resolve! She felt she could not do it. Not for worlds now could she give a hint about her misery to him, much less ask him plainly for information on the cause of Fanny's death. She must suspect, and guess, and chafe, and bear it all alone. (Ch. XLIII, p. 339)

Having come to this decision, she still waits and watches Gabriel, who  
now

appeared in an upper room, placed his light in the window-bench, and then--knelt down to pray. The contrast of the picture with her rebellious and agitated existence at this same time was too much for her to bear to look upon longer. It was not for her to make a truce with trouble by any such means. She must tread her giddy distracting measure to its last note, as she had begun it. With a swollen heart she went again up the lane, and entered her own door. (Ch. XLIII, p. 339)

Finally, Bathsheba is so distraught that some kind of expression is necessary, some kind of crisis required to end it. She is at her lowest point. Humiliated and out of control, she emulates what is idealized in Oak in this scene, his dignity--something Bathsheba has been trying to do since she realized that he "meditatively looked upon the horizon of circumstances without any special regard to his own standpoint in the midst." It is a kind of irony that Gabriel has dignity on his knees, while Bathsheba seems merely to be attempting to escape her own chaotic consciousness:

Bathsheba became at this moment so terrified at her own state of mind that she looked around for some sort of refuge from herself. The vision of Oak kneeling down that night recurred to her, and . . . she seized upon the idea, resolved to kneel, and, if possible, pray. Gabriel had prayed; so would she. (Ch. XLIII, p. 342)

Just as the scene in the storm is Gabriel's most intense moment, this scene, with Fanny laid out in the parlor, is Bathsheba's. That Bathsheba is at her lowest and most humiliated is represented by her finally being forced to her knees by the crushing of her pride. Gabriel, of course, is elevated during his climactic moments of awareness, so elevated, in fact, that he seems god-like with his lightning rod and the "shouting" sky and his perception that "love, life, everything human, seemed small and trifling in such close juxtaposition with an infuriated universe" (Ch. XXXVII, p. 287). He does not seem god-like in this way in Bathsheba's perspective; the picture of him which appears as she

struggles with her pride is one of conventional piety. In the voice of the histor, this presentation of Oak would be nothing but a blatant appeal to the most stereotypic of Christian ideals; from Bathsheba's perspective, however, it presents not only the image of her salvation and how abject she has become, but how domestic and comfortable Oak is among the everyday activities of civilized, indoor life.

Hardy's use of close narration to present Farmer Boldwood's consciousness is important because it engages Hardy in what can only be called a sympathetic depiction of insanity, an engagement which echoes his treatment of Clym Yeobright and Sue Bridehead. Moreover, Hardy not only devotes passages of narration close to Boldwood, he also describes events from his perspective. This close treatment of and attention to Boldwood's emotions begin as he is stunned by receipt of the Valentine and serve to show how he is obsessed by thoughts of Bathsheba, to the exclusion of normal concern for his farm and even his appearance. The most interesting of these passages occurs relatively late in the story, after Troy has run away, when Boldwood rationalizes events and motivations to suit his own desires: in other words, Hardy narrates his misperceptions. Boldwood is far from Oak's sober kind of sanity when he imagines that Bathsheba, having been deeply disappointed in her marriage to Troy, will be able to force her affections and passions to obey the rules of commerce:

How long he might have to wait he had not yet closely considered. What he would try to recognize was that the severe schooling she had been subjected to had made Bathsheba much more considerate than she had formerly been of the feelings of others, and he trusted that, should she be willing at any time in the future to marry any man at all, that man would be himself. There was a substratum of good feeling in her: her self-reproach for the injury she had thoughtlessly done him might be depended upon now to a much greater extent than before her infatuation and disappointment. It would be possible to



approach her by the channel of her good nature, and to suggest a friendly business-like compact between them for fulfilment at some future day, keeping the passionate side of his desire entirely out of sight. (Ch. XLIX, p. 382)

Subtly but very clearly, Hardy shows Boldwood's unrealistic ideals in his belief that he can force his own acknowledged passion into these same commercial patterns.

To Hardy, obviously, such dispassionate and "business-like" handling of sexual passions is impossible, and Boldwood's denial of the strength of his passion is evidence of his worsening instability. More evidence can be found in his fantasy that he can "annihilate the six years of his life as if they were minutes--so little did he value his time on earth beside her love," especially when we set that beside his "little care . . . for anything but as it bore upon the consummation" of his courtship of her. Boldwood is no wild-eyed, raving maniac; he is not melodrama's madman. In this close and sympathetic portrayal of him and his perspective, he is shown reasoning sequentially, given the assumption that the outcome will be what he wants it to be:

Six years were a long time, but how much shorter than never, the idea he had for so long been obliged to endure! Jacob had served twice seven years for Rachel: what were six for such a woman as this? He tried to like the notion of waiting for her better than that of winning her at once. Boldwood felt his love to be so deep and strong and eternal, that it was possible she had never yet known its full volume, and this patience in delay would afford him an opportunity of giving sweet proof on the point. He would annihilate the six years of his life as if they were minutes--so little did he value his time on earth beside her love. He would let her see, all those six years of intangible ethereal courtship, how little care he had for anything but as it bore upon the consummation. (Ch. XLIX, pp. 384-85)

Boldwood's last instance of close narration occurs as he recognizes Troy at his Christmas party:

Even then Boldwood did not recognize that the impersonator of Heaven's persistent irony towards him, who had once before

broken in upon his bliss, scourged him, and snatched his delight away, had come to do these things a second time. Troy began to laugh a mechanical laugh: Boldwood recognized him now. (Ch. LIII, p. 433)

This passage of narration close to Boldwood, however, is brief and, arguably, more like the histor than Boldwood, and we are more concerned with him as Gabriel sees him, still sympathetically but outside his perspective. His identification of Troy is the last image we get from him, since all the rest of the events which matter to him, his trial, conviction, and stay of execution all take place only peripherally to us.

#### B. The Return of the Native

Going by close narration alone, The Return of the Native "belongs" to Eustacia; she is more frequently and extensively presented by means of her own perspective than any other character in the novel. This novel is different, then, from Far from the Madding Crowd in that the voice of one character is allowed to predominate. The close narration of The Return of the Native also differs from that of the earlier novel in that Hardy expands his use of close narration beyond the few central characters--Eustacia, Clym, Diggory Venn, Mrs. Yeobright, and Wildeve--to include Captain Vye, Eustacia's grandfather, Charley, the young man who works for Captain Vye and loves Eustacia, and even the man hired to drive the rented fly at Diggory and Thomasin's wedding. More striking, however, than this simultaneously tightened focus on Eustacia and broadened inclusion of voices outside the ring of principal players is the congruence between the division of the novel into Books and the grouping of instances of close narration.

Books First and Third are narrated almost completely outside the

characters' consciousnesses. The beginning of The Return of the Native, it will be remembered, is the site of a tour de force for the histor, and Hardy stays outside of the characters' perspectives as they are all introduced and appear in pairs based either on love or, more often, enmity. The single instance of narration close to Eustacia in Book First shows her disenchantment with Wildeve as soon as he is free of Thomasin's claims (Bk. I, Ch. xi; p. 116).

Book Third, "The Fascination," describes Clym's face, Clym and Eustacia's wedding, Clym and Mrs. Yeobright's estrangement, and the gambling for the guineas Mrs. Yeobright intended for Thomasin and Clym. The first instance of narration close to Clym occurs in Book Third and, if the novel ended with Book Fifth, it would be his only one. Clym is the only character the depiction of whose consciousness would be affected in this way, as all the other important characters who get close narration are dead by the end of Book Fifth except Diggory Venn, who is made unimportant by his rejoining society. If any single passage had to exemplify Clym's thinking, however, this passage would do. It shows that the real focus of his thoughts is his mother and that, like Jude's, his thinking can be characterized by its intermittency--that is, things occur to him, and then he forgets them. Like Jude, Clym has perceptions of great wisdom and insight at times, but the wisdom and insight do not stay with him:

In spite of Eustacia's apparent willingness to wait through the period of an unpromising engagement, till he should be established in his new pursuit, he could not but perceive at moments that she loved him rather as a visitant from a gay world to which she rightly belonged than as a man with a purpose opposed to that recent past of his which so interested her. Often at their meetings a word or a sigh escaped her. It meant that, though she made no conditions as to his return to the French capital, this was what she secretly longed for in the event of marriage; and it robbed him of many an otherwise

pleasant hour. Along with that came the widening breach between himself and his mother. Whenever any little occurrence had brought into more prominence than usual the disappointment that he was causing her it had sent him on lone and moody walks; or he was kept awake a great part of the night by the turmoil of spirit which such a recognition created. If Mrs. Yeobright could only have been led to see what a sound and worthy purpose this purpose of his was and how little it was being affected by his devotion to Eustacia, how differently would she regard him! (Bk. III, Ch. iv; pp. 236-37)

Only the last sentence in this passage is technically close, although the entire passage is narrated from Clym's perspective. The last sentence also has interest because it seems to be the only thing that Clym thinks with which the narrator might disagree.

The rest of The Return of the Native, Books Second, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth, "belong" to the characters in a way that Books First and Third do not. Book Second, for example, is Eustacia's: she has at least one instance of close narration in every chapter but the two located at Bloom's End which do not treat her. The instances of narration close to Eustacia in this Book suggest that her consciousness is stirred to life by the news and then the presence of Clym. The mumming excites her quite a bit, and Hardy details not only her feelings during the planning but also her inner reality as the play is in performance. The most important feature of the narration close to Eustacia is that the ideas expressed in it are strictly limited to what she can know. Such absolute localization does not permit references to important future events except as she can guess them. Thus, in the course of the novel much of the content of these passages turns out to be a realistic mixture of the trivial and the significant, the misunderstood and the clear-sighted. On Eustacia's way home from the mumming, for instance, Hardy avoids reference to the characters' futures and avoids summarizing by the histor by turning our attention to the conclusions, however trivial and

ultimately irrelevant, which Eustacia draws:

Yeobright, if he had the least curiosity, would infallibly discover her name. What then? . . . What was the use of her exploit? She was at present a total stranger to the Yeobright family. The unreasonable nimbus of romance with which she had encircled that man might be her misery. How could she allow herself to become so infatuated with a stranger? And to fill the cup of her sorrow there would be Thomasin, living day after day in inflammable proximity to him; for she had just learnt that, contrary to her first belief, he was going to stay at home some considerable time. (Bk. II, Ch. vi; p. 171)

By using narration close to her, Hardy gives the same weight to Eustacia's thoughts that her infatuation with Clym is an idealization of him and that Clym and Thomasin might fall in love. The profound and the trivial are presented with equal emphasis because they have equal significance to Eustacia, regardless of their individual significance to Hardy or to us.

"Book Fourth: The Closed Door" roughly parallels "Book Second: The Arrival" in its frequency and intensity of close narration. In it Eustacia and Mrs. Yeobright quarrel, Clym damages his eyes and takes up furze-cutting, Eustacia dances with Wildeve, and Mrs. Yeobright crosses the heath to visit Clym, is not admitted, and dies. Book Fourth differs from Book Second, however, in that Eustacia's consciousness does not dominate as it did in Book Second; there is no single dominating consciousness in this Book, since there are instances of narration close to Mrs. Yeobright and Diggory Venn as well as Eustacia. In fact, since Diggory's single instance of close narration is short and relatively inconsiderable (Bk. IV, Ch. iv; pp. 317-18), the Book describes the pressures on Clym as the two women struggle to get from him what they need. The sympathetic presentation of these opposing sets of desires begins in the first chapter of this Book and, really, the two women compete against each other--and against Thomasin, who is completely out-classed--for the

rest of the novel, past the ends of their lives. Compared to Mrs. Yeobright, when the two women are paired off against each other, Eustacia seems shallow and self-absorbed. When it is clear that it was a mistake to have married Clym, Eustacia imagines "how all those Budmouth ones who should learn what had become of her would say, 'Look at the girl for whom nobody was good enough!'" (Bk. IV, Ch. iii; p. 305). Eustacia's too great concern for the opinions of others is presented here in conjunction with two other equally characteristic qualities: her early, and sound, impulse to attempt to change unsatisfactory conditions ("She cast about for any possible course which offered the least improvement in the existing state of things, and could find none") and her over-willingness to give up if she cannot immediately effect the desired change ("Two wasted lives--his and mine. And am I come to this! Will it drive me out of my mind?' . . . To Eustacia the situation seemed such a mockery of her hopes that death appeared the only door of relief if the satire of heaven should go much further" [Bk. IV, Ch. iii; p. 305].)

Eustacia's intermittent will to die appears rather whimsical, especially in Book Fourth, against Mrs. Yeobright's unblinking view of things. Understanding as she does the general truths before taking in the particulars, Mrs. Yeobright's perspective, though seldom presented in strictly close narration, is an important one in the novel. As she is on her way to visit Clym and Eustacia, her view of him working as a furze-cutter becomes a vision of human insignificance on the heath; Mrs. Yeobright's perception can be regarded as objective here, since she does not yet know that the worker she sees is her son:

The silent being who thus occupied himself seemed to be of no more account in life than an insect. He appeared as a mere parasite of the heath, fretting its surface in his daily labour as a moth frets a garment, entirely ingrossed with its products,

having no knowledge of anything in the world but fern, furze, heath, lichens, and moss. (Bk. IV, Ch. v; p. 328)

Much of our sympathy for Mrs. Yeobright comes as a result of Hardy's presentation of her perspective; she is never shown to be misperceiving and her voice is so close to that of the histor that she borrows some of his reliability. In our last view from her perspective, for instance, we have no sense that her thoughts are trivial, her feelings selfish, or her vision different from that of Hardy:

In front of her a colony of ants had established a thoroughfare across the way, where they toiled a never-ending and heavy-laden throng. To look down upon them was like observing a city from the top of a tower. She remembered that this bustle of ants had been in progress for years at the same spot--doubtless those of the old times were the ancestors of these which walked there now. She leant back to obtain more thorough rest, and the soft eastern portion of the sky was as great a relief to her eyes as the thyme was to her head. While she looked a heron arose on that side of the sky and flew on with his face towards the sun. He had come dripping wet from some pool in the valleys, and as he flew the edges and lining of his wings, his thighs, and his breast were so caught by the bright sunbeams that he appeared as if formed of burnished silver. Up in the zenith where he was seemed a free and happy place, away from all contact with the earthly ball to which she was pinioned; and she wished that she could arise uncrushed from its surface and fly as he flew then. (Bk. IV, Ch. vi; p. 343)

The expansiveness of her perception and the reliability in her generalizations set her in sharp contrast to Eustacia, for whose feelings we are accustomed to have sympathy, but whose ideas are intermittently good and bad, profound and trivial, and for whom there can be a large discrepancy between the importance of an action and its consequences. Hardy's treatment of Mrs. Yeobright's knocking, for instance, makes an interesting contrast to that of the mumming. Both knocks are narrated outside Eustacia:

"God, how I envy him that sweet sleep!" said Wildeve. "I have not slept like that since I was a boy--years and years ago."

While they thus watched him a click at the gate was audible,

and a knock came to the door. Eustacia went to a window and looked out.

Her countenance changed. First she became crimson, and then the red subsided till it even partially left her lips.

"No," she said, "we won't have any of this. If she comes in she must see you--and think if she likes there's something wrong! But how can I open the door to her, when she dislikes me--wishes to see not me, but her son? I won't open the door!" Mrs. Yeobright knocked again more loudly.

"Her knocking will, in all likelihood, awaken him," continued Eustacia; "and then he will let her in himself. Ah--listen."

They could hear Clym moving in the other room, as if disturbed by the knocking, and he uttered the word "Mother."

"Yes--he is awake--he will go to the door," she said, with a breath of relief. (Bk. IV, Ch. vi; pp. 336-37)

After Wildeve has left, Hardy treats Eustacia with a short passage close to her:

When he had quite gone she slowly turned, and directed her attention to the interior of the house.

But it was possible that her presence might not be desired by Clym and his mother at this moment of their first meeting, or that it would be superfluous. At all events, she was in no hurry to meet Mrs. Yeobright. (Bk. IV, Ch. vi; p. 338)

Considering the results, Eustacia's decision in these chapters to stay in the garden and not to answer the door is quite quick, unemotional, and undramatic. Her feelings do not seem to be tumultuous or intense: she thinks of what is "possible" and she is "in no hurry to meet Mrs. Yeobright." Her decision is made without agony and, after Clym seems to awaken, with very little self-questioning; it is a simple matter of preference and a mistake concerning the condition of Clym's consciousness.

"Book Fifth: The Discovery," full of wildly strong emotional crises, has few important passages of close narration. This Book sees Clym's despair at his mother's death, his realization that Mrs. Yeobright had come to visit him, his split with Eustacia, her return to her grandfather's house, Wildeve's visit to her there, Eustacia and Wildeve's plan



to escape, their drowning, and Clym's blaming himself for the deaths of both his mother and his wife. Instead of extended passages of narration close to the characters, Hardy uses the objective correlatives of Clym's blindness and the storm at the end of the Book to suggest emotional conditions. Hardy stays with Eustacia until her curious loss of self-awareness during the storm. He describes her depression at the beginning of the Book, and the voice gets close to Eustacia when she considers suicide using her grandfather's pistols (Bk. V, Ch. iv; p. 398), when Wildeve answers Charley's inadvertent signal (Bk. V, Ch. v; pp. 403-4), and, briefly, after she has run away, when she realizes that she does not have the means of escape (Bk. V, Ch. vii; pp. 421-22). The passage narrating Eustacia's reaction to the signal to Wildeve is the most interesting, because, in introducing it by describing Eustacia's state of mind, Hardy is explicit that she has reached some kind of level, some awareness, that allows her to see herself objectively. Because of her adversities, she has achieved the kind of self-consciousness signified in Hardy by a fissure in the personality of the character:

Had she not by her situation been inclined to hold in indifference all things honoured of the gods and of men she would probably have come away. But her state was so hopeless that she could play with it. To have lost is less disturbing than to wonder if we may possibly have won: and Eustacia could now, like other people at such a stage, take a standing-point outside herself, observe herself as a disinterested spectator, and think what a sport for Heaven this woman Eustacia was. (Bk. V, Ch. v; p. 405)

The narrator's position suggests validation and support for Eustacia's experience here: she is, "like other people at such a stage" of having lost without the necessity of losing, "a disinterested spectator," not a depressed or suicidal individual with a hopelessly local and biased perspective. This, then, suggests that all of Eustacia's suffering has brought her to this level, and that what she thinks, "what a sport for

Heaven this woman Eustacia was," is in fact an enlightened perspective.

While "Book Sixth: Aftercourses" does in fact give this novel an ostensible happy ending, with a wedding, Diggory and Thomasin are not characterized by means of narration close to them--Clym is. He has one instance of close narration in three of the four chapters in the Book: in the first, in which he is worried that Thomasin is attempting to make herself attractive to him; in the third, in which Clym believes that he should marry her; and in the fourth, in which Thomasin and Diggory marry and Clym commences his open-air preaching. In this Book Hardy is at pains to show the effects of Clym's experience on him, for, regardless of whether or not Diggory and Thomasin marry, Book Sixth "belongs" to Clym in the same way the Book Second does to Eustacia. There are two important changes in Clym which make him different from the young man who had just returned from Paris. The first is that "His sorrows had made some change in his outward appearance; and yet the alteration was chiefly within. It might have been said that he had a wrinkled mind" (Bk. VI, Ch. i; p. 455). The other effect on Clym of his "sorrows" is that he is still, essentially, blind; although Hardy tells us that Clym reads "books of exceptionally large type" (Bk. VI, Ch. i; p. 456), we see in this last Book that Clym's "Understanding" is still, as it were, "Darkened."<sup>2</sup> He "sees nothing" of Thomasin's interest in Diggory and does "not specially observe" the particulars of her behavior (Bk. VI, Ch. i; p. 457 and p. 460).

Accounting for what exactly Hardy meant by "a wrinkled mind" is a little more difficult than showing instances of Clym's blindness. Obviously, Hardy is suggesting that Clym has been prematurely aged by his experience. What Hardy chooses to emphasize by close narration, however, is that "His passion" for Eustacia "had occurred too far on in his

manhood to leave fuel enough on hand for another fire of that sort, as may happen with more boyish loves" (Bk. VI, Ch. i; p. 460).<sup>3</sup> Another "wrinkle" marks his continuing obsession with his mother; this time there is no doubt that it is a problem which will never be resolved. The passage begins close to Clym and ends, in the voice of the histor, with a clear reminder of the irrationality of Clym's thoughts:

Throughout this period Yeobright had more or less pondered on his duty to his cousin Thomasin. He could not help feeling that it would be a pitiful waste of sweet material if the tender-natured thing should be doomed from this early stage of her life onwards to dribble away her winsome qualities on lonely gorse and fern. But he felt this as an economist merely, and not as a lover. His passion for Eustacia had been a sort of conserve of his whole life, and he had nothing more of that supreme quality left to bestow. So far the obvious thing was not to entertain any idea of marriage with Thomasin, even to oblige her.

But this was not all. Years ago there had been in his mother's mind a great fancy about Thomasin and himself. It had not positively amounted to a desire, but it had always been a favourite dream. That they should be man and wife in good time, if the happiness of neither were endangered thereby, was the fancy in question. So that what course save one was there now left for any son who revered his mother's memory as Yeobright did? It is an unfortunate fact that any particular whim of parents, which might have been dispersed by half an hour's conversation during their lives, becomes sublimated by their deaths into a fiat the most absolute, with such results to conscientious children as those parents, had they lived, would have been the first to decry. (Bk. VI, Ch. iii; pp. 468-69)

The next two paragraphs are close to Clym; what is presented in them are not strong feelings but thoughts and resolves. This is the kind of death Clym suffers--death of his feelings. The Hand of Ethelberta is strikingly different from Far from the Madding Crowd and The Return of the Native, even though it comes in between them, because Ethelberta is not passionate, and the narration close to her, which constitutes all the close narration there is in the novel, presents her thoughts, schemes, and resolves just as it does for Clym at the end of The Return

of the Native. Such treatment has the odd effect of presenting the consciousness of these two characters without enlivening them; Ethelberta, in fact, is not even very likable in her novel, and neither, at the end of his, is Clym.

Clym's last instance of narration reinforces our sense that the "wrinkle" of his loyalty to his mother and her perspective is the most important one. Not only does he feel responsible for her and Eustacia's deaths, and not only does he desire to carry out to the letter what he imagines her wishes to have been, but he also idealizes her: he now believes that she was right all along. This is fully as sympathetic a picture of insanity as Boldwood's, and it is more completely presented:

Yeobright sat down in one of the vacant chairs, and remained in thought a long time. His mother's old chair was opposite; it had been sat in that evening by those who had scarcely remembered that it ever was hers. But to Clym she was almost a presence there, now as always. Whatever she was in other people's memories, in his she was the sublime saint whose radiance even his tenderness for Eustacia could not obscure. But his heart was heavy; that mother had not crowned him in the day of his espousals and in the day of the gladness of his heart. And events had borne out the accuracy of her judgment, and proved the devotedness of her care. He should have heeded her for Eustacia's sake even more than for his own. "It was all my fault," he whispered. "O, my mother, my mother! would to God that I could live my life again, and endure for you what you endured for me!" (Bk. VI, Ch. iv; p. 483)

Except for a short coda, which describes Clym preaching, from outside his perspective, this is the end of the novel. This is the first time that Hardy has allowed an expression of individual consciousness so near the end of a novel. Even though the chapter is entitled "Cheerfulness Again Asserts Itself at Blooms-End, and Clym Finds His Vocation," putting so much narration close to Clym so near the end causes Clym's sadly "wrinkled mind" to overshadow in significance both "Cheerfulness" asserting itself and his long-awaited reentry into the world. Hardy preserves the tone of this passage close to Clym by resisting his usual impulse to

comment on the state of Clym's mind in the voice of his histor. His losses, then, are what we remember of Clym.

### C. The Mayor of Casterbridge

The Mayor of Casterbridge is about how knowledge and communication determine the interactions of people. The world described in this novel is social rather than natural; and when Henchard leaves Casterbridge at the end he is leaving society and humankind as well as Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae. Essential to Henchard's personality at the beginning of The Mayor are his directness of approach when he wants something (whether information, action, or object) and his clumsiness with urban and sophisticated forms of communication. His abandonment of humankind is a long process, represented by his loss of the power to make himself believed and the loss of his usual direct and straightforward style. Such losses leave him without defense in Casterbridge's highly verbal society, where an absence of defense is a condemnation, and where the passing on of information makes a good defense (Henchard does not plead his case to Elizabeth-Jane and she rejects him; the furmity-woman is guilty of her misdemeanors but saves herself by charging Henchard.) Hardy illustrates Henchard's decline in every available way, from his changing jobs, to his lodgings, to the imagery surrounding him; equally consistent and of supreme importance is Henchard's decline in his resources for direct communication with others. When he tries to tell Farfrae about Lucetta's lack of chastity he is reduced to reading him her letters; when he and Elizabeth-Jane run the little seed shop, he is not able to confront her directly on matters which concern him greatly--the expense of the muff she says she bought, the number of books she suddenly owns, the real

status of her relationship with Farfrae. Henchard hates the idea that Donald might be courting Elizabeth-Jane:

Time had been when such instinctive opposition would have taken shape in action. But he was not now the Henchard of former days. He schooled himself to accept her will, in this as in other matters, as absolute and unquestionable. He dreaded lest an antagonistic word should lose for him such regard as he had regained from her by his devotion, feeling that to retain this under separation was better than to incur her dislike by keeping her near. . . .

Henchard was, by original make, the last man to act stealthily, for good or for evil. But the solicitus timor of his love--the dependence upon Elizabeth's regard into which he had declined (or, in another sense, to which he had advanced)--denaturalized him. He would often weigh and consider for hours together the meaning of such and such a deed or phrase of hers, when a blunt settling question would formerly have been his first instinct. (Ch. XLII, pp. 350-51)

What changes in Henchard is his attitude--now he is afraid of "an antagonistic word" and stymied by "the meaning of such and such a deed or phrase."

As Henchard gets less and less able to communicate directly with humanity, Hardy spends more and more of each chapter describing the events of the story from Henchard's consciousness. This begins slowly, as does Henchard's isolation, when he takes a job in Farfrae's yard and when he begins to drink again (in Ch. XXXII). The intensity of the close narration increases until Henchard's perspective dominates the chapters at the end of the novel. For Elizabeth-Jane, however, for whom the issue is secrecy, communication which is withheld from her, the narrative attention begins with her and loses intensity as the novel progresses and as she learns what was withheld. Once she enters Casterbridge and begins to act, the narrative perspective is basically hers (Ch. IV through Ch. IX), so that what she can hear and see, and therefore conclude, determine what is narrated. Elizabeth-Jane's consciousness is less and less central to the novel after Lucetta moves to Casterbridge;

this exclusion is so thorough that even when she learns of Henchard's lie to Newson, the perspective stays with Henchard and not with Elizabeth-Jane. Even though her perspective is the central one at the beginning of the novel, it is not until after she has forgiven Henchard his deceit, after her wedding and reinstallation into Casterbridge society, that Hardy returns to it.

There is a great deal of close narration in this novel compared to any of Hardy's that precede it, some instances of which are quite extensive and many more instances in which the narrative perspective and the knowledge allowed to the reader are limited to that of one or another character. Henchard's perspective dominates the novel; after him, in descending order of importance, speaking of the narration, are Elizabeth-Jane, Lucetta, Farfrae, Susan Henchard, and Jopp (Lucetta's nemesis). There is too much close narration in The Mayor to discuss it all completely, so it is best to look to the larger context and focus on what is most important. Structurally, Hardy's use of close narration divides this novel into four major sections. First, however, the novel is introduced: the origins of the situation are established from Henchard's and then from Susan's perspective (Ch. I through Ch. IV). The first section is Elizabeth-Jane's and narrates her arrival in Casterbridge (Ch. V through Ch. X). The second section is told from the perspectives of all four major characters and presents the competition between Henchard and Farfrae (Ch. XIV through Ch. XXV). The third section, which is the story of Henchard's fall from power, is narrated again from the perspectives of the four major characters, but Henchard's perspective begins to replace that of the others (Ch. XXVII through Ch. XXXVI). The last section is Henchard's and describes the process of his resignation from society (Ch. XXXVII through Ch. XLIV). The last chapter, much of

which is told from Elizabeth-Jane's perspective, is a conclusion: even though the perspective is Elizabeth-Jane's, it is less specific to the situation of finding Henchard's body and will than general about her recovery and prosperity.

The first section of the novel, told generally from Elizabeth-Jane's perspective, begins with her first view of Henchard and ends in Henchard's office; the narrative remains with Henchard after Elizabeth-Jane leaves at the end of their meeting. Casterbridge is described close to Elizabeth-Jane or from her perspective, as are Henchard, Farfrae, and the regulars at the Three Mariners. Early in the interview between Elizabeth-Jane and Henchard, at the end of the section, Hardy leaves Elizabeth-Jane's perspective: there is one passage of narration close to Henchard in which he assumes that Elizabeth-Jane is his own daughter. What he deduces from her last name is not Elizabeth-Jane's true paternity but

that the transaction of his early married life at Weydon Fair was unrecorded in the family history. It was more than he could have expected. His wife had behaved kindly to him in return for his unkindness, and had never proclaimed her wrong to her child or to the world. (Ch. X, p. 76)

The success of keeping the reader uninformed, with Henchard, of this bit of information depends mostly, of course, on Susan's (and Hardy's) using the same name for both children. The introduction of a passage of narration close to Henchard, however, draws attention to his feelings about it and his conflicts, since the passage occurs in a section dominated by Elizabeth-Jane's perspective, and she, of course, assumes correctly that she is Newson's child.

The second section of close narration goes from Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae's meeting at the granary (in Ch. XIV) through Lucetta's decision "to break away from Henchard" (in Ch. XXV, p. 204). During these pages,



Henchard alienates Farfrae and, after Susan's death, alienates himself from Elizabeth-Jane. Elizabeth-Jane, Henchard, Lucetta, and Farfrae all have close narration in this section, which divides into two units at Lucetta's arrival in Casterbridge. From Henchard's point of view, the most significant event in the first half of this section is the competing celebrations put on by himself and Farfrae; to Elizabeth-Jane, it is the death of her mother. Hardy treats each event with narration close to that character, but as Henchard is beginning to take over the center of Hardy's attention, the first subsection is really most concerned with Henchard's and Farfrae's growing competition. Just as Henchard makes the celebration and, later, the harvest, an arena of competition, so does he also regard Susan, and, most important, Lucetta and Elizabeth-Jane as objects in his war against Farfrae. In this light, the entire second section of the novel can be seen to begin with the threat of Henchard's loss of Elizabeth-Jane to Farfrae, as his anger shows when he finds her dancing with Farfrae at the younger man's celebration. Lucetta's entrance divides this section into two because, as object in this war, she represents Farfrae's first major victory.

Also underlying this entire section is the devastation of Elizabeth-Jane's emotional and social life. The narration close to her in this section reveals that Elizabeth-Jane has acute self-consciousness only in emotional crises. Sitting up with her dying mother, Elizabeth-Jane notices her own consciousness; demoralized by what seems to be Farfrae's inconsistent and disloyal behavior, she looks to the attractiveness of her own person to explain it. The passage illustrating this latter event is interesting for its independence from any scene in which it might be enclosed. In other words, this entire scene of Elizabeth-Jane looking in the mirror (which is an act of self-consciousness in Hardy)

and thinking about her appearance and his motives has no other purpose or action and is completely presented close to her. This is unusual, short as it is, for close narration in any author writing before Hardy's time and it is unusual in Hardy. The stimulus for the thoughts which are presented in close narration is that "the news" that Farfrae plans to stay in Casterbridge reaches her "At length." Her reaction to the news passes quickly, in two sentences, and Hardy moves her thoughts beyond her response, which is not really located in time, to this scene, which is:

A man following the same trade as Henchard, but on a very small scale, had sold his business to Farfrae, who was forthwith about to start as corn and hay merchant on his own account.

Her heart fluttered when she heard of this step of Donald's, proving that he meant to remain; and yet, would a man who cared one little bit for her have endangered his suit by setting up a business in opposition to Mr. Henchard's? Surely not; and it must have been a passing impulse only which had led him to address her so softly.

To solve the problem whether her appearance on the evening of the dance were such as to inspire a fleeting love at first sight, she dressed herself up exactly as she had dressed then--the muslin, the spencer, the sandals, the parasol--and looked in the mirror. The picture glassed back was, in her opinion, precisely of such a kind as to inspire that fleeting regard, and no more--"just enough to make him silly, and not enough to keep him so," she said luminously; and Elizabeth thought, in a much lower key, that by this time he had discovered how plain and homely was the informing spirit of that pretty outside. (Ch. XVII, p. 128)

Hardy turns everyone's attention to Lucetta once she moves to Casterbridge. She dominates the rest of this section of the book, not so much because the narration close to her is so extensive, but because the narration close to Elizabeth-Jane, Henchard, and Farfrae presents them thinking about her or it presents what they think about each other either in or as a result of her presence. Her arrival into Casterbridge is also an arrival into the lives of Elizabeth-Jane and Henchard; their awareness of her is presented in narration close to them. Once Farfrae joins their triangle, the relationships among these characters become

quite complex. Hardy's narrative reflects this rapidly escalating complexity because, essentially, everything that happens in the rest of this section occurs in the mind of one or another of this group of four. Hardy distinguishes among the characters, by means of close narration, in the amount and kind of knowledge each one has; the discrepancies between what the different characters know are very large at times and make this complicated situation quite intricate and unstable for them.<sup>4</sup> There is a slight shift in Henchard's presentation, for the others have secrets to keep from him; this section is the beginning of the end of his role as secret-keeper. He maintains control over Lucetta, however, as Susan did over him, and it is not until the end, when Elizabeth-Jane knows the secrets about Newson, that all his power is gone. He still has almost all of his secrets at this point, but the other characters are beginning to collect their own. Because what these characters do not know limits their ability to observe the complex situations in the novel and act appropriately, secrecy and power seem identical in Casterbridge. Whether it be one of ignorance or drunkenness, any limitation to a character's consciousness in this novel results in error and unhappiness. As these four characters appear in interaction with each other, their situation becomes more and more knotted; and the environment to which they react--which is, essentially, their mental environment--changes constantly as information is withheld or exchanged.

Summary of this second section of The Mayor of Casterbridge is difficult; its major unifying factors are the frequent shifting of narrative focus from one character to another and the only partial awareness from which each character suffers. Elizabeth-Jane, Henchard, Lucetta, and Farfrae are presented as they disturb the consciousnesses of each of the other characters. As each new action makes the knots more difficult

to untie, the lack of knowledge increases, as does the importance of knowing. The perspective of each character, then, is at least partially determined by the other characters, and none is independent of the others, though in many ways they are all isolated--perhaps dangerously isolated--from each other. Each individual perspective, then, limited by knowledge, can offer only a partial perception to the perceiving character; and knowledge withheld by another character is the limiting factor.

In the third section of close narration in the novel Henchard moves from magistrate, in which function he hears the testimony of the old furmity-woman, to bankrupt, sitting as unwelcome guest in his old house reading to Farfrae Lucetta's letters to himself (Ch. XXVII through Ch. XXXVI). This section marks the shift of narrative focus from Elizabeth-Jane to Henchard. It also marks Henchard's increasing loss of control over the effective social means of communication and the consequent increasing intensity of his inner life. Language becomes less and less useful, to Henchard and to the other characters, as more indirect means of communication surface. Even Henchard never abandons language completely, but he controls it imperfectly, at best, as his will shows. Henchard's is not the only consciousness presented in this section, however, and in spite of the decline in his fortunes, he is still a part of the circle made up by Elizabeth-Jane, Lucetta, Donald, and himself. The tenuousness of the Farfraes' marriage concerns him, narratively speaking, as much as it does them.

The scene in which Henchard struggles indirectly with Farfrae, by attempting to use Lucetta's own forms of language against her and as a means of revenge on Farfrae, gets several different narrative treatments from Hardy. This scene, in which Henchard comes to get Lucetta's letters from the safe and stays to read them to Farfrae, takes two chapters

(Ch. XXXIV and Ch. XXXV), and is presented directly, in dialogue narrated by the histor, and indirectly, as Lucetta overhears it and as Farfrae summarizes it for her. None of the narration of the scene is complete by itself. The first form which this part of the story takes is mostly made up of what Henchard and Farfrae say to each other between Henchard's reading of the first three letters. Then the histor, suggesting that Henchard's loss of verbal efficacy is evidence of good in him, says:

The truth was that, as may be divined, he had quite intended to effect a grand catastrophe at the end of this drama by reading out the name; he had come to the house with no other thought. But sitting here in cold blood he could not do it. Such a wrecking of hearts appalled even him. His quality was such that he could have annihilated them both in the heat of action; but to accomplish the deed by oral poison was beyond the nerve of his enmity. (Ch. XXXIV, p. 284)

Lucetta's perspective of the telling of the scene goes beyond Henchard's plan not to destroy the letters, even though the narration of the scene downstairs stops. Lucetta's concern is with Donald's knowledge and her part of this ends only when it is clear that her husband does not know who the author of Henchard's letters is. A little of the narration close to Lucetta is interesting here for its emphasis on the linguistic nature of Lucetta's secret and its telling:

The usual time for Donald's arrival upstairs came and passed, yet still the reading and conversation went on. This was very singular. She could think of nothing but that some extraordinary crime had been committed, and that the visitor, whoever he might be, was reading an account of it from a special edition of the Casterbridge Chronicle. At last she left the room, and descended the stairs. The dining-room door was ajar, and in the silence of the resting household the voice and the words were recognizable before she reached the lower flight. She stood transfixed. Her own words greeted her in Henchard's voice, like spirits from the grave.

Lucetta leant upon the banister with her cheek against the smooth hand-rail, as if she would make a friend of it in her misery. Rigid in this position, more and more words fell successively upon her ear. (Ch. XXXV, p. 285)

Words are "like spirits from the grave" in this novel, as Henchard finds

out from the furmity-woman and as Elizabeth-Jane finds out from Henchard's will.

Compared to sections two and four, this section, section three, has a simple narrative surface. As far as the plot is concerned, however, section two is quite simple compared with three and four: in section three, almost all of the events occur in the world in which the characters live, while in section two they occur in the minds of the characters. Section four is different from both of these in a variety of ways. For one, the perspective is almost exclusively Henchard's, just as it is Elizabeth-Jane's in section one. For another, Hardy uses this section to clear up the complexities in relationships that were set up in the second section, so, in this fourth section, Henchard and Farfrae wrestle, the skimmington takes place and Lucetta dies, Henchard lies to Newson about Elizabeth-Jane, then leaves Casterbridge, comes back for the wedding and leaves again to die.

This section documents the ultimate estrangement between the verbal world of Casterbridge--in which Henchard needs to tell Farfrae that his wife is dying and Newson that Elizabeth-Jane is alive in the next room--and Henchard's isolated world of "nameless apprehension" and "unspeakable" grief (Ch. XL, p. 327). Henchard's powerlessness is represented by his inability to convince Lucetta's household that Farfrae went to Weatherbury and Farfrae that Lucetta is dying. Henchard's own part in his isolation is represented by his lie to Newson that Elizabeth-Jane is dead. Hardy devotes a great deal of close narration to this lie and to Henchard's attempt to justify it to himself, showing him guessing about future events, wondering about consequences, and justifying himself to himself. The passage as it appears in the text is interspersed with comments from the histor summarizing Henchard's reasons for lying,

Newson's reasons for believing him, and Henchard's reasons for not correcting the wrong done; they are omitted here to isolate Henchard's perspective:

Henchard heard the retreating footsteps of Newson upon the sanded floor, the mechanical lifting of the latch, the slow opening and closing of the door that was natural to a baulked or dejected man; but he did not turn his head. Newson's shadow passed the window. He was gone.

Then Henchard, scarcely believing the evidence of his senses, rose from his seat amazed at what he had done. . . . He had expected questions to close in round him, and unmask his fabrication in five minutes; yet such questioning had not come. But surely they would come; Newson's departure could be but momentary; he would learn all by inquiries in the town; and return to curse him, and carry his last treasure away!

. . . Newson's back was soon visible up the road, crossing Bull-stake. Henchard followed . . . . The coach Newson had come by was now about to move again. Newson mounted; his luggage was put in, and in a few minutes the vehicle disappeared with him.

He had not so much as turned his head. It was an act of simple faith in Henchard's words--faith so simple as to be almost sublime. . . .

Was Elizabeth-Jane to remain his by virtue of this hardy invention of a moment? "Perhaps not for long," said he. Newson might converse with his fellow-travellers, some of whom might be Casterbridge people; and the trick would be discovered. . . .

He watched the distant highway expecting to see Newson return on foot, enlightened and indignant, to claim his child. But no figure appeared. Possibly he had spoken to nobody on the coach, but buried his grief in his own heart.

His grief!--What was it, after all, to that which he, Henchard, would feel at the loss of her? Newson's affection, cooled by years, could not equal his who had been constantly in her presence. . . .

He returned to the house half expecting that she would have vanished. No; there she was--just coming out from the inner room, the marks of sleep upon her eyelids, and exhibiting a generally refreshed air. (Ch. XLI, pp. 338-39)

Henchard's assumption that "surely" the questions to "unmask his fabrications" will follow the lie and that Newson will "return to curse him" continue to draw attention to the hostility of the linguistic world to Henchard. What is represented in this passage is a series of Henchard's thoughts: Henchard wonders whether the lie will work and imagines its discovery; as Newson does not return, Henchard guesses what must have

happened and, to justify his act, discounts the sincerity of Newson's affection for Elizabeth-Jane.

More than half of the narration close to Henchard occurs in the chapters between his perspective of the skimmington (it barely registers on his consciousness) at the beginning of Ch. XL and his return to Casterbridge for Elizabeth-Jane's wedding in Ch. XLIV. The less power Henchard has in Casterbridge, the more his consciousness dominates the narrative so that, at this point, in the last section of the novel, his acts lose virtually all their efficacy. His thought, however, gains efficacy, for good or ill; the highly abstract idea, for instance, that another form of himself exists (his double in Ten Hatches Pond) prevents him from committing suicide, because it seems to him like the future taking its form in the present while the present still exists. His lie to Newson is ineffective in his campaign to keep Elizabeth-Jane's loyalty, but his knowledge that Newson has returned has the effect of motivating him to leave Casterbridge. His failure to defend himself against Elizabeth-Jane's angry outburst at the wedding party is a failure of consciousness as well as one of action, since the same justifications that convinced him (and us) would also convince her.

Henchard's last chapter of close narration, Chapter XLIV, the next to the last one in the novel, is devoted almost exclusively to him and to his relationship with Elizabeth-Jane. His return to Weydon Priors, the site of the fair, is not handled close to him, but his thoughts are expressed as he talks aloud. After he leaves there, the narration moves him quickly through travelling and finding work and continues in summary until Henchard hears of Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae's wedding. His mind is aroused by this news, for which he has been listening and waiting, and close narration provides the means by which his excitement is



presented:

What if he had been mistaken in his views; if there had been no necessity that his own absolute separation from her he loved should be involved in these untoward incidents? To make one more attempt to be near her: to go back; to see her, to plead his cause before her, to ask forgiveness for his fraud, to endeavour strenuously to hold his own in her love; it was worth the risk of repulse, ay, of life itself. (Ch. XLIV, pp. 370-71)

The rest of the chapter, including his purchase of the goldfinch and his meeting with Elizabeth-Jane, is narrated close to Henchard or from his perspective. Henchard's last instance of narration--an act of his consciousness which replaces the external, social act of defending himself to Elizabeth-Jane--prepares us for his death, for in "not sufficiently valu[ing] himself to lessen his sufferings," Henchard annihilates himself. He knows on what terms life is lived in Casterbridge, and he shuts his lips "up like a vice, and uttered not a sound":

How should he, there and then, set before her with any effect the palliatives of his great faults--that he had himself been deceived in her identity at first, till informed by her mother's letter that his own child had died; that . . . his lie had been the last desperate throw of a gamester who loved her affection better than his own honour? (Ch. XLIV, p. 377)

The last chapter, XLV, is a return to Elizabeth-Jane's perspective, but it does not have the limitations of her personal biases; it seems detached, in fact, from the situation narrated--that of her discovery of and grief at Henchard's grim death. It seems rather to have a structural purpose, that of assuring the audience that the new order has asserted itself and the carnage is at an end, like the last scenes of Jacobean revenge dramas. This contributes a great deal to the sense that so many critics have that this novel is mythic in its cyclic presentation of kings--in this case, mayors--and their rivals.

D. The Woodlanders

In The Woodlanders, close narration can no longer be regarded as an isolated technique used occasionally to present the perspective of a character at the peak of emotional or intellectual excitement. There are very few chapters which have no close narration at all in them in this novel, and even these are so firmly associated with the perspective of one or more of the characters that they maintain the general narrative attention to the inner worlds of the characters even though the voice is external to them. If close narration presents the inner worlds of the characters, then Grace Melbury, Giles Winterborne, Edred Fitzpiers, George Melbury, Marty South, and Felice Charmond all have inner worlds, interior and private and rarely expressed to the others. Central as the characters' perspectives are, however, the histor is strong in this novel as well: as the voice for the environment in which these active consciousnesses operate, the histor is necessary for Hardy's vivid presentation of the outside world. A full reading of The Woodlanders requires that both kinds of perspectives and both worlds be taken into account.

In general, as The Woodlanders progresses, more and more of the novel's narration is close to the characters; the further we go in this novel the more interior it becomes--the bulk of the narration begins with Barber Percomb, looking in as Marty works, and it ends with Grace, locked in Giles's cottage and in the hotel at Sherton Abbas separated from the woodlanders who are outside. Rather loosely structured sections can be discerned in the novel as characters are grouped or isolated for close narration. The most loosely structured of the sections is the first; in it Melbury, Marty, Giles, Grace, and Fitzpiers all get

close narration. This section lasts until Fitzpiers decides to marry Grace (in Ch. XXII). This is nearly half-way through the novel; such a long exposition establishes all of the preconditions necessary to the outcome of the novel: from Marty's sacrifices; to Melbury's "exaltation" in his own "inferiority" to Grace (Ch. IV, p. 36); to Giles's loss of his leasehold; to Grace's fastidious and, to her, bewildering attraction to Fitzpiers; to Fitzpiers' habitual philandering. The image or thought of Grace unifies all these particular bits of close narration into a "section" of the novel; with rare exceptions, the narration in this first half of The Woodlanders presents the circle of characters around Grace as they think and wonder about her.

The second section of the novel defined by Hardy's use of close narration, focussed around Fitzpiers the way the first is focussed around Grace, begins with Grace believing Fitzpiers' story about Suke Damson's molar (Ch. XXIV) and ends when Fitzpiers hides in Felice Charmond's house, having abandoned Grace (Ch. XXXVI). It is, then, the narration of Grace and Fitzpiers' marriage. With the exception of one passage close to Giles as he bitterly reacts to Grace's asking if he has forgotten her (Ch. XXV, p. 212), this section begins concentrated on Grace and Fitzpiers as they marry, as he is attracted to Charmond, and as Grace realizes the mistake she has made in marrying him. This narrative focus broadens, after Fitzpiers spends the night away from home, to include Mr. Melbury and Mrs. Charmond, who find themselves caring more about the Fitzpierses' marriage than either Grace or Edred seems to. This is the only point in the novel that we get close to Felice and the last one that we get close to Melbury. Fitzpiers' has to do with his attraction to Felice. This sympathetic, close portrayal of Charmond and Fitzpiers' love affair gives it emphasis, for it is realized nearly as vividly as

that of Grace and Fitzpiers. There is truth in Grace's insight, narrated close to her, that she, Felice, and Suke are all equal in their relationship with Fitzpiers:

It was well enough, conventionally, to address either one of them in the wife's regulation terms of virtuous sarcasm, as woman, creature, or thing. But life, what was it, after all? She had, like the singer of the Psalm of Asaph, been plagued and chastened all the day long; but could she, by retributive words, in order to please herself, the individual, "offend against the generation," as that singer would not? . . .

In their gestures and faces there were anxieties, affection, agony of heart--all for a man who had wronged them--had never really behaved towards either of them anyhow but selfishly. Neither one but would have well-nigh sacrificed half her life to him, even now. The tears which his possibly critical situation could not bring to her eyes surged over at the contemplation of these fellow-women whose relations with him were as close as her own without its conventionality. She went out to the balustrade, bent herself upon it, and wept. (Ch. XXXV, pp. 313-14)

Suke and Felice are as much a part of Grace's marriage as her father is.

The Woodlanders, then, begins with narration presenting the perspectives of the whole community of consciousnesses concerned with Grace and Fitzpiers and their marriage. As the perspectives are established, as they define themselves as habitual for the characters, as the characters achieve emotional stasis, these perspectives lose centrality and, in the last two sections, only Grace and Giles get close narration. Their period of illusory happiness, after Fitzpiers has left and before they find out that a divorce for Grace is impossible, makes up the third section of the novel marked out by the close narration (Ch. XXXVIII and Ch. XXXIX). This section has none of the diffuseness of the first two sections and, though it is quite short considering the length of the first two sections, this section offers fully as rich a presentation of Grace and a much richer presentation of Giles than the novel has offered up to this point. Hardy leaves Giles behind after this section, and it is the only one in which Giles has an equal voice in the narration. Because

the narrowing of the narrative focus continues through section three, Grace is obviously the center of attention in this novel. The third and fourth sections of The Woodlanders, together comprising less than one quarter of the novel, make up for their brevity by the intensity and depth of the presentation of her.

The fourth section is Grace's alone; it begins the night of the storm after she has turned Giles out of his cottage (Ch. XLI) and ends as she wonders what to do about her past and potential relations with Fitzpiers, the day her dress is caught in the man trap (Ch. XLVII). Much of the close narration in this section has to do with Giles's dying, but Grace's consciousness, as she realizes his condition and finally decides to fetch Fitzpiers, is the significant one. If Dickens had been writing this section, he would have narrated, at the very least, Giles's delirium close to him, representing his gradual loss of awareness of the outside world and underscoring his virtuousness and selflessness. In a Dickensian The Woodlanders, Grace would be changed by Giles's death and never be fooled by the selfish and inconsistent Fitzpiers again--or Fitzpiers would be made worthy. As Hardy does it, however, Grace and Fitzpiers remain their usual selves and the "visionary world in which [Giles] was mentally living" is never represented further than: "he never for a moment recognized her, continuing his rapid conversation to himself and seeming to look upon her as some angel or other supernatural creature" (Ch. XLII, p. 379). His death, too, replete with Dickensian possibilities, is quite modest in its narrative effects: "Winterborne never recovered consciousness of what was passing; and that he was going became soon perceptible also to her. In less than an hour the delirium ceased; then there was an interval of somnolent painlessness and soft breathing, at the end of which Winterborne passed quietly away" (Ch. XLIII, p. 387).

Hardy's interest in Giles, as a perspective from which to describe his story, like his interest in the perspectives of all the other characters, has been replaced by his interest in what Grace perceives.

What can be discovered by looking at the way the close narration divides up this novel, then, is that Grace, "conjectural" as she is, is not really available for detailed consideration until relatively late in the novel (Ch. V, p. 42). The other characters, on the other hand, with the exception of Giles, are made transparent early on and then set aside, still part of the story but offering no new insights and leading to no new avenues. Their shift to the periphery of the narrative attention coincides with what seems to be a loss in their potential for change or growth; at the same time that they lose their relevance to Hardy's narration, their roles in their society and their patterns of behavior and thought become established and predictable. The last note in the novel is one of stasis, of changelessness, as Marty swears eternal loyalty to the irrevocably unresponsive Giles; Marty's last speech underscores the importance of stasis and immutability in this novel by making the last element in the treatment of the characters their incapacity for change. While Fitzpiers' emotional variability makes him seem on the surface to be too inconsistent to be predictable, and thus too changeable to be narratively abandoned when he is, his flightiness and the very lack of persistence in him are qualities that do not change--that is why his perspective loses importance as soon as he falls in love with Felice; it is not the object of his love that is so significant here, it is that he falls in love so soon after his wedding. Melbury is left behind long before the end, too, left with a deep mistrust of his own perception; the implication from the absence of narration close to him is that he loses faith in his judgment permanently and ends up feeling, as he does

against Mrs. Charmond, "as inferior as a savage with his bow and arrows to the precise weapons of modern warfare" (Ch. XXIX, p. 257).

Giles differs from the other characters who get close narration and who then get dropped because he is not really a part of the community structured around or the communal opinion concerning Grace, except, of course, to Melbury; as an outsider to the community, as peripatetic, with no leasehold, he is like Grace, someone on whom the community thinks and acts. Giles's close treatment, however, is like Fitzpiers': the other characters are shown arriving at stasis, but, like Fitzpiers, Giles is a character who does not change; the narration close to him illustrates his essential consistency and, once that is clear, his perspective is no longer central. More important for determining his close narration than his nearly mythic role as an image of reliable nature and as a disenfranchised member of the community, however, is his personality. He is "one of those silent, unobtrusive beings," who are silent and unobtrusive because they live so completely in their own worlds (Ch. XXXIX, p. 345). In his habitual reticence--"lost in his thoughts as usual"--Giles is a great deal like Michael Henchard is at the end of The Mayor of Casterbridge, so involved with his own busy mental life that external and social communication is awkward and insufficient (Ch. XXVI, p. 223). Giles's self-involvement causes him to make important mistakes in his dealings with others: it causes him unwittingly to bid against Melbury at an auction, to misconstrue as sincere an invitation to breakfast from the Melburys, and even to put off reading the terms of his leasehold until it is too late.

Close narration is necessary for Hardy to show Giles's thoughts and feelings since it is out of character for Giles to express them openly. The narration close to Giles shows him in intensities which he never

shares with the other characters; it is a measure of his isolation and loneliness, as well as a measure of the number and importance of events in his life in which he is out of communication with others. This is most noticeable in the third section of the novel marked out by close narration, when the concentration of the narrative treatment on him is greatest. In this section we see him: remembering slights and surprised at Melbury's permission to court Grace again (Ch. XXXVIII, pp. 333-34); vowing not to woo her out of respect for her breeding (Ch. XXXIX, p. 345); thinking about Mr. Melbury's letter saying that a divorce is impossible (Ch. XXXIX, p. 349); upset because he allowed himself to kiss Grace (Ch. XXXIX, p. 351); and saddened that she trusted in the divorce plans (Ch. XXXIX, p. 352). All of these feelings and decisions, like his early affection for Grace (Ch. VII, p. 59), his "self-derision" at being left outside by Grace's family (Ch. VI, p. 51), and his hope that Mrs. Charmond might honor his "moral right" to the lapsed lease (Ch. XV, p. 124), are never communicated. His death, nearly as silent and unobtrusive as his life, is uncharacteristically voluble only for a time. Because his delirium has a listener, Grace, there is no sense of unexpressed or pent-up feelings; because his volubility is delirious, the flow of his words has little impact on Grace's consciousness, since she is more concerned with whether he will die than the sense of his monologue; for these reasons it is peripheral to Hardy and is not narrated.

The Woodlanders is especially important for understanding Hardy's use of close narration for two reasons: the first is that the two most important characters in the novel are inarticulate: Giles is always inarticulate, it is a part of his personality, and it is explained by his self-absorption and the intensity of his inner life; Grace is inarticulate because she spends the novel motivated by passions which she does



not understand and of which she is often unconscious. In situation after situation she finds herself unable to express or define how she feels. Often, this is because what she feels is sexual: "'O Giles,' said she, 'I know--I know! But--I am a woman, and you are a man. I cannot speak more plainly. I yearn to let you in, but--you know what is in my mind, because you know me so well'" (Ch. XLI, p. 371). Her feelings for Fitzpiers have so much to do with sexual attraction that not only can she not explain herself to the Melburys but she feels guilty about the feelings themselves: "That Fitzpiers acted upon her like a dram, exciting her, throwing her into a novel atmosphere which biassed her doings until the influence was over, when she felt something of the nature of regret for the mood she had experienced--could not be told to this worthy couple in words" (Ch. XXII, p. 189). As Harvey Curtis Webster points out, Fitzpiers is Hardy's "focal point" for the "action" of the laws of sexual selection in The Woodlanders; Grace, however, is also controlled by these biological forces whose presence in her consciousness seems so inexplicable and undefinable to her.<sup>5</sup> Dale Kramer is another reader who finds a Darwinian kind of sexual attraction motivating Grace: "It is not Grace's conscious volition or any extension of acquired quality stemming from experience that brings about the reunion with her husband. It is the animal quality of sexual need, indicated by the excitement engendered in her during their nocturnal rendezvous and the incident with the man-trap. To help clarify the sexual nature of Grace's attraction to Fitzpiers, Hardy added Melbury's last speech to post-first edition texts of the novel: 'Let her take him back to her bed if she will!' . . . ."<sup>6</sup> Grace's feelings for Fitzpiers are nothing more than a biological impulse operating below the level of her consciousness; this is probably the most important form that nature takes in Grace's

mind or in the mind of any Hardy character. As "Nature . . . working her plans for the next generation under the cloak of a dialogue on linen," these biological forces control the consciousnesses of the characters and cause them to select partners because of sexual attraction in spite of the permanence of marriage, the transitory nature of such feelings, and all the other intellectual reasons for not selecting that particular partner (The Well-Beloved Pt. II, Ch. vi; p. 92). Sexual selection, the kind of brutal process that Darwin describes, is part of the internal world of the characters in The Woodlanders, as it is for many of Hardy's characters.

The second reason that The Woodlanders is especially important for understanding Hardy's use of close narration is that, in this novel, Hardy realizes with unaccustomed clarity and vividness both the outer world of the mind's environment and the inner world of the thinking, feeling, and at least partially engaged consciousness. The outer world here is more than the woods; it includes the biological and social laws that pattern the environment and require an external, "omniscient" voice to describe. Clearly, there is no deep-seated or intrinsic antipathy between nature and humanity in this novel; humans, whether isolated or "among the depraved crowds of a city slum," are just as influenced and modified by abstract, impersonal forces as the trees are:

On older trees still than these huge lobes of fungi grew like lungs. Here, as everywhere, the Unfulfilled Intention, which makes life what it is, was as obvious as it could be among the depraved crowds of a city slum. The leaf was deformed, the curve was crippled, the taper was interrupted; the lichen ate the vigour of the stalk, and the ivy slowly strangled to death the promising sapling. (Ch. VII, p. 59)

The most important similarity between the trees and the people, however, is their degree of unconsciousness of the patterns in the "web" of which they make up a part (Ch. III, p. 21). Grace and Fitzpiers are no more

aware of the biological basis for their affections than the trees are of who plants them, but these two characters, especially, are conscious and feel themselves separate from the outside world. The inner world of one of the conscious characters does not have the same general unconsciousness found in the world outside it; characters who are conscious, therefore, justify their perception by seeing their own kind of consciousness in the world outside them and explain the inexplicable to themselves by calling it "love" or "loyalty" or "nerves." Showing how consciousness operates on what is not known and what is vaguely felt is the most important use of close narration in The Woodlanders, an operation that is rarely described by the histor, and even then metaphorically, as if from that character's perspective.

Examples which show the effects of unconscious forces on the perception of the characters abound in this novel. Many have to do with sexual attraction and are presented close to the characters or from their perspectives. Felice Charmond, for instance, has a moment, after seeing the damage done to Melbury and Grace by her affair with Fitzpiers, in which she realizes the effect on her and the nature of her affection for him:

She had never so clearly perceived till now that her soul was being slowly invaded by a delirium which had brought about all this; that she was losing judgment and dignity under it, becoming an animated impulse only, a passion incarnate. A fascination had led her on; it was as if she had been seized by a hand of velvet; and this was where she found herself--overshadowed with sudden night, as if a tornado had passed. (Ch. XXXII, p. 281)

For Melbury, insight into his own folly is less sudden and thorough than Felice's into hers; the distortion his perception causes is presented more directly in the voice of the histor, as if Melbury does not completely realize the difference between what he sees and the "outer

landscape" itself:

The scene to him was not the material environment of his person, but a tragic vision that travelled with him like an envelope. Through this vision the incidents of the moment but gleamed confusedly here and there, as an outer landscape through the high-coloured scenes of a stained window. (Ch. XXXII, p. 277)

More examples of this kind would leave the impression that Hardy is more single-mindedly concerned with the general contrast between inner and outer worlds than is true: while the existence of an inner world, separate from but not independent of the outer one, is one of the central assumptions of this novel, the various inner worlds of particular characters and their different means of maintaining them are more central to it; right at the heart of The Woodlanders, however, is one consciousness, one inner world--Grace's. The effect of sexual selection on her perception is most carefully presented, but there is so much lost in the separation between her "modern nerves" and "primitive feelings" that she seems sometimes to be two creatures or two consciousnesses, one inside her and one (the "primitive" one) outside her (Ch. XL, p. 358).

As Ian Gregor says, "the most vivid drama of the novel takes place within the consciousness of Grace Melbury"; that drama is narrated from her perspective.<sup>7</sup> There is in fact so little authorial commentary on the events of Grace's internal arena of action that it is possible to misread key passages, which are close to her or from her perspective, as descriptions of the outer world originating from the histor. Here, for example, is what "modern nerves" feel like:

Not a sound came from any of the outhouses as yet. The tree-trunks, the road, the out-buildings, the garden, every object wore that aspect of mesmeric passivity which the quietude of daybreak lends to such scenes. Helpless immobility seemed to be combined with intense consciousness; a meditative inertness possessed all things, oppressively contrasting with her own active emotions.<sup>8</sup>

There is no way that the world in The Woodlanders can be said to have "intense consciousness"; Grace, however "active" her "emotions" are, does have this kind of awareness as well as, at this moment, "Helpless immobility." Her already bifurcated personality is further stressed by her barely acknowledged doubts about the wisdom of marrying Fitzpiers; these doubts, in fact, have kept her awake, they are the activity of her emotions, they are the reason that she is up at dawn in the first place. In a very important way, Grace is unaware of her own mind here, and unaware of the extent to which her perception distorts what she sees. It is she who is meditatively inert, for she cannot decide what to do about her promise to marry Fitzpiers. This moment of doubt, and her subsequent witnessing of Suke Damson's departure from Fitzpiers' house, lead her away from marriage, but once in his presence she becomes even more obviously mesmerized and passive; she believes his story about Suke's painful molar and marries him.

After Grace has run away from Fitzpiers and is hiding in Giles's cottage, Hardy shows what "primitive feelings" are like. This is another instance in which the voice might seem to be that of the histor; the perspective is Grace's, however, and that she seems "almost to be apart from herself" is an important clue to the identity of the "invisible colourless thing . . . shrieking and blaspheming at every corner of the walls":

The wind grew more violent, and as the storm went on it was difficult to believe that no opaque body, but only an invisible colourless thing, was trampling and climbing over the roof, making branches creak, springing out of the trees upon the chimney, popping its head into the flue, and shrieking and blaspheming at every corner of the walls. As in the grisly story, the assailant was a spectre which could be felt but not seen. She had never before been so struck with the devilry of a gusty night in a wood, because she had never been so entirely alone in spirit as she was now. She seemed almost to be apart from herself--a vacuous duplicate only. The recent self

of physical animation and clear intentions was not there.  
(Ch. XLI, pp. 371-72)

"The recent self of physical animation and clear intentions" is outside in the storm, on the roof. The outer world of the histor does not have monsters like this one; for the histor, the worst "monster" of the woods is the man trap Timothy Tangs sets, describable in objective, historical, and mathematical terms:

The sight of one of these gins, when set, produced a vivid impression that it was endowed with life. It exhibited the combined aspects of a shark, a crocodile, and a scorpion. Each tooth was in the form of a tapering spine two and a quarter inches long, which, when the jaws were closed, stood in alternation from this side and from that. When they were open the two halves formed a complete circle between two and three feet in diameter, the plate or treading-place in the midst being about a foot square, while from beneath extended in opposite directions the soul of the apparatus, the pair of springs, each one having been in its prime of a stiffness to render necessary a lever or the whole weight of the body when forcing it down, though rust had weakened it somewhat now. (Ch. XLVII, p. 425)

This monster, endowed with a "soul" as it may be, has none of the vitality that Grace's monster has; it belongs in the world outside, in the world of the histor. The specters, ghosts, monsters, and abstract forms that live in the inner worlds of these characters are native to the characters and usually defined in their terms. When the world seems inexplicable or supernatural, the voice of the sober, analytical histor has been drowned out, as it were, by the intense, imaginative, self-absorbed one of the character, and it is the internal world which is described.

#### E. Tess of the d'Urbervilles

The close narration in Tess of the d'Urbervilles does not divide the novel into anything resembling sections or parts. More than any

Hardy novel before it, Tess's story is told within a relatively small range of narrative distances, whose extreme boundaries are represented by close narration and by the histor; that is, most of Tess is narrated in a voice less distinctive than those of the characters or histor, less local than the characters and less universal than the histor. Most of this narration is what Dorrit Cohn calls "psycho-narration," which describes the central processes and the consciousnesses of the characters from an omniscient perspective.<sup>9</sup> "Consciousness" is a word that appears again and again in this novel, alone and in opposition to "automatic," "mechanical," and words that describe the presence or absence of "will." By its very predominance, this "psycho-narration" makes up the matrix in Tess against which other narrative forms contrast; the most fruitful way to regard it is as the middle ground, the evidence or action of transition between narration close to the characters and narration from the detached, commenting histor. To regard the narration of Tess in this way is to facilitate explanation for the sharply uneven distribution of close narration and the histor throughout the novel.

The histor is extremely important in this novel and is sometimes as fully characterized a persona as the histor in Under the Greenwood Tree or The Trumpet-Major. The descriptions of the interior of the house, for example, "whose interior features are so well known to all travelers through the Froom Valley," that Angel and Tess choose for their honeymoon, is the occasion for personification of the histor:

As all visitors to the mansion are aware, these paintings represent women of middle age, of a date some two hundred years ago, whose lineaments once seen can never be forgotten. The long pointed features, narrow eye, and smirk of the one, so suggestive of merciless treachery; the bill-hook nose, large teeth, and bold eye of the other, suggesting arrogance to the point of ferocity, haunt the beholder afterwards in his dreams. (Ch. XXXIV, p. 277)

Most important, the histor seems to dominate the impression left by the novel on most readers, who quote and analyze and argue about the importance and seriousness of such passages as the last paragraph:

"Justice" was done, and the President of the Immortals, in AEschylean phrase, had ended his sport with Tess. And the d'Urberville knights and dames slept on in their tombs unknowing. The two speechless gazers bent themselves down to the earth, as if in prayer, and remained thus a long time, absolutely motionless: the flag continued to wave silently. As soon as they had strength they arose, joined hands again, and went on. (Ch. LIX, p. 508)

Ian Gregor argues in the right direction when he insists on the larger context of the whole paragraph rather than accepting as final the first sentence alone:

How often the opening sentence of that paragraph has been quoted in isolation, and made to serve as "the conclusion" to the novel, whereas Hardy, true to his practice, makes his conclusion multiple in emphasis. . . . For him, it is the four sentences taken together which constitute a human truth, by catching in varying lights our condition, flux followed by reflux, the fall by the rally; it is this sense of continuous movement which suggests that the fiction which records it should be described as "a series of seemings".<sup>10</sup>

As unilateral and univocal as the histor might seem, the content of his commentary cannot be regarded as simple or single-minded.

A number of interesting things can be said about Hardy's use of close narration in Tess of the c'Urbervilles. For one, the only characters treated by this means are Tess, Angel Clare, Mr. Clare (Angel's father), Joan Durbeyfield (Tess's mother), and Mrs. Brooks (the housekeeper in Sandbourne who discovers Alec's murder.) The perspectives of Mrs. Durbeyfield and Mr. Clare are unimportant over the long run, but that of Mrs. Brooks is not. Another reason that the narration in this novel is interesting is that looking only at the narration close to Tess and Angel makes them seem isolated, from each other and from everybody else. Tess is different from The Mayor and The Woodlanders in that the



only inarticulate character in this novel is Tess, who is made so by the secret of her past with Alec; she is not naturally reticent like Giles or stymied like Henchard. The secret and her frustrated attempts to tell it to Angel are the source of some of the narration close to Tess, especially as she is deciding to marry him, but the secret is told in the middle of the novel and the bulk of the narration close to her occurs after that. Most of Angel's close narration appears in the last part of the novel, "Phase the Seventh--Fulfilment," but Hardy maintains his perspective or our sense of it throughout. The first passage of close narration in this novel is Angel's, for instance; he regrets not dancing with Tess (Ch. II, pp. 16-17), and much of our sense of Tess at Talbothays is Angel's view of her. Excluding that of the histor, the central consciousness in this novel, however, is Tess's; it is best, therefore, to begin with her.

The first three Phases of Tess--"The Maiden," "Maiden No More," and "The Rally"--"belong" to the histor; of the characters, the consciousness most represented is Tess's, but Hardy leaves the defense of her case in the hands of the histor rather than to Tess. This allows Hardy to explore Tess's feelings of guilt while he independently analyzes the nature and extent of the guilt itself; that is, Tess feels guilty, and even unnatural, for her liaison with Alec, but the histor has a list of separate and complex points to make about the actual degree of her participation in the liaison, the generalized, communal nature of her betrayal by her family and heredity, and the distinction between natural and social laws in sexual relationships. The novel really does not become Tess's until she decides to marry Angel in "Phase the Fourth--The Consequence" (beginning in Ch. XXXI, more than half-way through the Phase.) Tess stays at or near the center of narrative attention until

the narration close to her stops, after she and her family have moved to the churchyard at Kingsbere (Ch. LII, p. 464, the end of "Phase the Sixth--The Convert"), although the closeness of the narration gradually diminishes beginning about half-way through "The Convert," as Alec tries to convince Tess to take him back. The center of the novel, then, for Tess, takes up the last third of the Fourth Phase, all of the Fifth, and the first two chapters of the Sixth (Ch. XXI through Ch. XLVI).

The Fifth Phase, "The Woman Pays," begins with Angel's reaction to Tess's confession and ends with Tess, unable to summon the courage to approach Angel's parents, face to face with Alec, who is in the guise of a Christian. The fact that the intensity of the narration close to Tess does not diminish immediately after her trip to Emminster but continues for a couple of chapters, as Alec relinquishes his spiritual aspirations, lends support to the histor's assertion that, in spite of all that Tess has suffered and will suffer later, "the greatest misfortune of her life was this feminine loss of courage at the last and critical moment through her estimating her father-in-law by his sons" (Ch. XLIV, p. 384). Unlike her betrayal by Alec, her wedding, the murder, and her execution, none of which is narrated close to her, and all of which might seem to be great misfortunes, this failure to get help, this "loss of courage," is treated as one of the most important events of her consciousness as well as of her public life.

In analyzing this scene, it soon becomes clear that Tess is at her peak in Flintcomb-Ash, ironic as that may sound. Even though her life is at its most barren and conditions at their worst, her virtue, intelligence, and sensitivity are at their most worthy. Because Tess is sensitive, she has "felt," she knows that the importance of things lies in their meaning. Looking down on the Vale of Blackmoor, for example, on

her way to visit the Clares in Emminster, she thinks it beautiful: "Yet it was in that vale that her sorrow had taken shape, and she did not love it as formerly. Beauty to her, as to all who have felt, lay not in the thing, but in what the thing symbolized" (Ch. XLIV, p. 378). The predominance of the symbol over the "thing" makes her inner world the salient one, just as it makes the events of her consciousness the important ones: "as the mileage lessened between her and the spot of her pilgrimage, so did Tess's confidence decrease, and her enterprise loom out more formidably. She saw her purpose in such staring lines, and the landscape so faintly, that she was sometimes in danger of losing her way" (Ch. XLIV, p. 379). It is the "staring lines" of her "enterprise," then, that deserve our attention, and not the faint landscape or the petty small-heartedness of Felix and Cuthbert Clare or Mercy Chant. This is reinforced by what Hardy chooses to narrate close to Tess. First, Hardy uses close narration to show Tess's fear of "good" people and the "severe look in [their] eyes": "Such a good man" as Mr. Clare "might be prejudiced against a woman who had chosen Sunday" as the day to pay such an important visit (Ch. XLIV, p. 379). The effort Tess puts into ringing the Clares's doorbell is considerable, and the mental labor involved is described in great detail. The focus is on her "nerves":

She nerved herself by an effort, entered the swing-gate, and rang the door-bell. The thing was done; there could be no retreat. No; the thing was not done. Nobody answered to her ringing. The effort had to be risen to and made again. She rang a second time . . . . The wind was so nipping that the ivy-leaves had become wizened and grey, each tapping incessantly upon its neighbour with a disquieting stir of her nerves. A piece of blood-stained paper, caught up from some meat-buyer's dust-heap, beat up and down the road without the gate; too flimsy to rest, too heavy to fly away; and a few straws kept it company.

The second peal had been louder, and still nobody came. Then she walked out of the porch, opened the gate, and passed through. . . . A feeling haunted her that she might have been recognized (though how she could not tell), and orders been

given not to admit her.

Tess went as far as the corner. She had done all she could do . . . .

Ah--the explanation was that they were all at church, every one. . . . It was, therefore, only necessary to wait till the service was over. She would not make herself conspicuous by waiting on the spot, and she started to get past the church into the lane. (Ch. XLIV, pp. 380-81)

Tess recognizes her brothers-in-law by their voices and Mercy Chant by their conversation. Once they take her boots, assuming that they belong, as Chant says, to "Some imposter who wished to come into the town bare-foot, perhaps, and so excite our sympathies," she is completely demoralized and gives up (Ch. XLIV, p. 383). Without the aid of the Clares, Tess cannot withstand Alec's influence or her own desires to murder him.

This is, of course, not the only event in Tess's life which is treated with the use of close narration. When Tess is first introduced, after the May Day dance, she is shown sad that Angel did not choose her as a dancing partner, guilty at being extra work for her mother, and shocked at the news of her father's illness (Ch. III, pp. 18, 19, 20). Tess reacts strongly to her mother's wish that she had succeeded in getting Alec to marry her (Ch. XII, pp. 103-4); like Jude, she has a moment in church when she believes that the composer of a hymn understands the way she feels (Ch. XIII, pp. 106-7). Tess's wondering whether or not to tell Angel about her connection to the ancient d'Urberville family is narrated close to her (Ch. XIX, p. 163), as are her attempts to tell him about Alec and the baby (Ch. XXXI, pp. 245-46 through Ch. XXXIV, p. 284). Angel's sleepwalking scene is limited to Tess's perspective, and her decisions to act and not to act are narrated close to her (Ch. XXXVII). The economic pressures on Tess are often narrated as they impinge on her thoughts and plans: the thought of finding work if she does not marry Angel is some incentive for her finally to accept him (Ch. XXXII,

p. 258); much of the chapter that ends with her sleeping in the woods and breaking the necks of all the injured birds is narrated close to her and describes her attempts to find work before reaching Flintcomb-Ash (Ch. XLI).

The last we see of Tess's perspective is the description of the Kingsbere church, where the d'Urberville vaults are and where Joan, Tess, and the children camp: as Joan says, "Isn't your family vault your own freehold?" (Ch. LII, p. 462). To Tess, meaning is apparent in every "thing," even in the domestic paraphernalia:

Tess gazed desperately at the pile of furniture. The cold sunlight of this spring evening peered invidiously upon the crocks and kettles, upon the bunches of dried herbs shivering in the breeze, upon the brass handles of the dresser, upon the wicker cradle they had all been rocked in, and upon the well-rubbed clock-case, all of which gave out the reproachful gleam of indoor articles abandoned to the vicissitudes of a roofless exposure for which they were never made. Round about were deparked hills and slopes--now cut up into little paddocks--and the green foundations that showed where the d'Urberville mansion once had stood; also an outlying stretch of Egdon Heath that had always belonged to the estate. Hard by, the aisle of the church called the d'Urberville Aisle looked on imperturbably. (Ch. LII, p. 461)

Having gone inside the church to muse on the long-dead d'Urbervilles, Tess sees Alec, who is what he appears to be, the ghost of her own past and of her parents' dreams:

She musingly turned to withdraw, passing near an altar-tomb, the oldest of them all, on which was a recumbant figure. In the dusk she had not noticed it before, and would hardly have noticed it now but for an odd fancy that the effigy moved. As soon as she drew close to it she discovered all in a moment that the figure was a living person; and the shock to her sense of not having been alone was so violent that she was quite overcome, and sank down nigh to fainting, not however till she had recognized Alec d'Urberville in the form. (Ch. LII, p. 463)

This scene is a vivid foreshadowing of Tess's ritual sacrifice on the altar at Stonehenge, "an altar-tomb, the oldest of them all." Alec makes explicit, by stamping on the floor over the vault, by his "The old

order changeth," and by putting the conflict between them in social terms ("Mind this; you'll be civil yet!") that this is a key scene in Tess's consciousness (Ch. LII, p. 464). Alec's boast that "The little finger of the sham d'Urbervilles can do more for you than the whole dynasty of the real underneath" is his victory over her, and her "Why am I on the wrong side of this door!" is another articulation of her surrender at Stonehenge: "It is as it should be . . . . I am ready" (Ch. LVIII, p. 505).

After Tess dies, as it were, at Kingsbere, in her "own freehold," Angel comes into his own, narratively speaking. He has important passages of close narration before this, especially in "Phase the Fifth--The Woman Pays," the center of the narration closest to Tess, but his perspective is the means by which the story of Tess's escape from Sandbourne and eventual capture on Stonehenge are narrated. Angel's regret at his irrational assumptions about sexual virginity are narrated close to him, so that he seems to have gained in sympathetic qualities in his change of heart about Tess. The effect of this transfer of narrative attention from Tess to Angel is to emphasize what is lost when Tess "spiritually ceased to recognize the body before [Angel] as hers--allowing it to drift, like a corpse upon the current, in a direction dissociated from its living will" (Ch. LV, p. 484). It suggests a kind of numbness in her, an absence of consciousness, a will so passive that it loses its own perspective. Angel's consciousness, on the other hand, seems enlivened, and if words of emotion may signify what is new about Angel's consciousness, then "Tenderness was absolutely dominant in Clare at last" (Ch. LVII, p. 493) and, like the house in which he and Tess hide, "within was affection, union, error forgiven: outside was the inexorable" (Ch. LVIII, p. 498).

Angel's last instance of close narration shows him pitying Tess and waiting with the men who have come to get her for her to awaken. The symbolic significance of Tess as a primitive sacrifice and of the eerie "silvered" faces and hands of the men and the "green-grey" "glistening" of the stones is muted somewhat by its origination in Angel's perspective:

When they saw where she lay, which they had not done till then, they showed no objection [to waiting], and stood watching her, as still as the pillars around. He went to the stone and bent over her, holding one poor little hand; her breathing now was quick and small, like that of a lesser creature than a woman. All waited in the growing light, their faces and hands as if they were silvered, the remainder of their figures dark, the stones glistening green-grey, the Plain still a mass of shade. (Ch. LVIII, pp. 504-5)

Their waiting for Tess to awaken on her own is an act of kindness and dignity, but it is also a means of allowing her capture to seem natural, so that the "masculine" sun, which in this novel is "a golden-haired, beaming, mild-eyed, God-like creature, gazing down in the vigour and intentness of youth upon an earth that was brimming with interest for him" (Ch. XIV, p. 109), is the same sun that "made a spot [on Tess's skirt] like a paint-mark set upon her" (Ch. XXXIV, p. 277), and shines at the end "upon her unconscious form, peering under her eyelids and waking her" (Ch. LVIII, p. 505).<sup>11</sup> By having the sun wake Tess, Hardy makes her surrender seem natural and inevitable, because the imagery in this novel relates the sun to mastery of the female by the male and to the insignificance of the individual will.

Our acceptance of the natural inevitability of her surrender, however, is also dependent on our faith in the reliability of Angel's perspective. That Tess is made passive by her murder of Alec is obvious; it may be less clear that Hardy takes the same care to show that Angel is made active as a result of his coming to love the flesh-and-blood

Tess. Hardy's concentration on his consciousness in the last Phase shows Angel thinking, planning, scheming, forgiving, loving--more active intellectually and emotionally than he has been before. He finds the house in which they hide, he finds provisions; he works out the scheme for escape and times the resting and walking periods; he recognizes Stonehenge and waits, awake and conscious, while Tess sleeps. Her unconsciousness and his wakefulness as day dawns on Stonehenge symbolize the quality of each character's mental life: Tess is so tired that she cannot go on any further; Angel is living for the future. All this activity makes Angel's perspective trustworthy; he is so active and energetic, in fact, that he is sometimes indistinguishable from the histor. Angel's "reward," then, for surviving the events of this novel, is an enlarged perspective, one approaching the comprehensiveness of that of Hardy's narrator, but Phase the Seventh does not abandon the local perspective of the characters to the large perspective of the histor entirely. Even though Tess's perspective disappears at the end of Phase the Sixth, and even though Angel's perspective takes in too much to be truly local, the particular perspective is emphasized in this last Phase--by a peripheral and nearly extraneous character, Mrs. Brooks.

As soon as Tess leaves Angel, "concentrated on the moment," alone in the dining room of The Herons, Hardy turns his attention to the housekeeper, Mrs. Brooks (Ch. LV, p. 484). She is, first, "deeply materialized, poor woman, by her long and enforced bondage to that arithmetical demon Profit-and-Loss," so her perspective is a good example of Hardy's use of a perspective that is so biassed and local that it affords a kind of objectivity (Ch. LVI, p. 485). Mrs. Brooks has only monetary interest in "Mr. and Mrs. d'Urberville" except for a curiosity, "reinvigorated" by Angel's visit, to hear what the visit is all about. She follows



Tess upstairs, therefore, and what she hears and can see through the keyhole is what is narrated. She sees Tess leave the house and waits for Alec to ring; the spot on the ceiling is her discovery, as is the "fancy" that the stain is blood (Ch. LVI, p. 488). Mrs. Brooks does not discover Alec's body: fearful that there has been violence, she waits in the drawing-room, noting lucidly that "the breakfast--a substantial repast of coffee, eggs, and a cold ham--lay spread upon the table untouched, as when she had taken it up, excepting that the carving knife was missing," as a workman looks into the bedroom (Ch. LVI, p. 489). Obviously, this turn to Mrs. Brooks's perspective serves a number of practical purposes: it gets Tess and Angel out of Sandbourne without Hardy having to narrate it at length, it explains how and when Alec's body is discovered, information Tess and Angel could not have, and it allows Hardy to stay out of Tess's consciousness and to avoid discussion of her state of mind. It also has the effect of offering an individual characterization of what will, in a few chapters, become abstract social necessity; in other words, the social order Tess is executed to protect is more than her abstract enemy--it is the particular livelihood of men who walk "as if trained" (Ch. LVIII, p. 504) and the particular perspective of Mrs. Brooks, who is de-materialized into curiosity by her encounter with Tess, Angel, and Alec.

Hardy uses the perspective of a peripheral character to narrate key scenes in others of his novels: Desperate Remedies, The Return of the Native, Jude, and The Well-Beloved. Anne Seaway, for example, is a peripheral character whose role becomes quite important simply because of the importance of her perspective, but Hardy also uses Owen Graye, Cytherea's brother, and John Raunham, Miss Aldclyffe's vicar, to review the clues to the mystery and to describe Cytherea's legal difficulties. The most

interesting of the narrators in The Return of the Native who speak from outside the circle of the most involved characters is Charley, the young man who prevents Eustacia from shooting herself with her grandfather's pistols. In his way, Charley contrasts with Clym, Wildeve, and Eustacia in the selflessness of his love and in his preference not to "use it all up," whether his affection or the time allotted to holding her hand (Bk. II, Ch. iv; p. 150): while he wants to divide up the time he can hold Eustacia's hand to make it seem to last longer, Clym and Eustacia, as the histor says, might be said to endanger their "mutual affections" by burning them up "at a fearfully prodigal rate" (Bk. IV, Ch. i; p. 284). The driver of the rented fly after Thomasin and Diggory's wedding serves a function like that of Mrs. Brooks. As the heath-dwellers celebrate the wedding,

The driver of the fly turned a supercilious gaze upon them; he even treated the wedded pair themselves with something like condescension; for in what other state than heathen could people, rich or poor, exist who were doomed to abide in such a world's end as Egdon? (Bk. VI, Ch. iv; pp. 478-79)

He is a part of the world outside Egdon Heath and the interior and passionate lives of the main characters. He is part of the movement of the novel away from the heath and towards a larger perspective.

It is interesting that there would be such a peripheral narrator as one of these in The Well-Beloved, Hardy's most tightly-controlled and closely-narrated presentation of an individual consciousness. The variations from Pierston's perspective are so isolated and rare that they can be counted and listed, so the use of Ruth Stockwool's perspective to narrate the third Avice's elopement with Henri Leverre is quite striking (Pt. III, Ch. vi; pp. 192-93). Such a clear change in the narrative focus adds to the significance of the event itself because it emphasizes the existence of a world outside of Pierston's consciousness which is

independent of, or even inimical to, his desires. It also allows Hardy to narrate the event without divulging its significance, which is not presented until Pierston finds out the truth of Avise III's behavior for himself.

Most important for this discussion, however, is Hardy's use of the landlord in the Christminster lodgings in Jude the Obscure. It is important, like Hardy's use of the perspective of Mrs. Brooks, for its shift of attention outside the tight enclave of main characters towards the mundane world of commerce, convenience, and opinion. Much shorter than Mrs. Brooks's eavesdropping on Tess and her discovery of Alec, this landlord's reaction to the deaths of Little Time and the other children is put in the context of other elements of the outside world:

The jury duly came and viewed the bodies, the inquest was held; and next arrived the melancholy morning of the funeral. Accounts in the newspapers had brought to the spot curious idlers, who stood apparently counting the window-panes and the stones of the walls. Doubt of the real relations of the couple added zest to their curiosity. Sue had declared that she would follow the two little ones to the grave, but at the last moment she gave way, and the coffins were quietly carried out of the house while she was lying down. Jude got into the vehicle, and it drove away, much to the relief of the landlord, who now had only Sue and her luggage remaining on his hands, which he hoped to be also clear of later on in the day, and so to have freed his house from the exasperating notoriety it had acquired during the week through his wife's unlucky admission of these strangers. In the afternoon he privately consulted with the owner of the house, and they agreed that if any objection to it arose from the tragedy which had occurred there they would try to get its number changed. (Pt. VI, Ch. ii; pp. 409-10)

The jury, whose interest in the case is based on legal requirements, and the "idlers," whose curiosity is stimulated by newspaper accounts and rumors that Jude and Sue are unmarried, offer perspectives on the couple which are already familiar in this novel: Jude and Sue always seem to be confronted and obstructed by the processes of law and rumor. The landlord, however, like Mrs. Brooks in her "long and enforced bondage to

that arithmetical demon Profit-and-Loss," becomes a participant in the drama because the "exasperating notoriety" attending Jude and Sue threatens to attach itself to him as well. His perspective, then, because he is so self-absorbed and self-protective, affords a kind of objectivity to his view of Jude and his family. His attention to their concerns is more profound than the legal and idle curiosity which motivate the other community members involved, and Hardy's use of close narration to describe it suggests an inner world for this character, a man Sue meets by chance in a large city; it suggests that he has a story, as Jude does, as Sue does, as Tess does.

These external, peripheral characters, then, serve two important functions so far as the narrative is concerned. They give a personal quality to the perspective of the rigorous social necessity that appears in these novels also as an abstraction and as sets of rules and laws that must be served. These characters imply, by their ultimate irrelevance in the lives of the main characters, that outside the intense circle of mutual feeling and destiny which encloses Hardy's main characters, especially the conscious, sensitive ones, are numbers of other potential characters, who have perspectives and inner worlds, and who are driven by the same desires and hurt by the same cruelties that the main characters are.

#### F. Jude the Obscure

Jude the Obscure is like The Well-Beloved in that it is nearly completely limited to the perspective of only one character, Jude; it is also like Tess in the absolutely essential role in the narration played by the histor. The way the novel is structured makes it appear that the

distinction between the perspectives of the histor and the individual character is as strong as ever. In general, the narration of Jude moves from inside his perspective to outside it: much of the narration of the beginning of the novel is frequently and extensively close to Jude; by the end, narration from Jude's perspective is rare--the instances are sometimes many chapters apart. Unlike Tess, there is no character like Angel to replace what is lost when Jude's consciousness stops being the locus of the narrative perspective. While Sue gets some close narration, more than any other character except Jude, she does not have the necessary reliability, especially at the end, to allow Hardy to offer her perspective as the true one; Sue's consciousness is too rarely presented, as well, so she seems only infrequently accessible, especially after the family leaves Aldbrickham (in Pt. V, Ch. vi). Because neither Jude nor Sue is inarticulate and because neither feels the pressure to conceal emotions from the other, their dialogue is not driven inwards; because they are both thoughtful and literate, this dialogue can contain many of the allusions and comparisons that appear to be natural to Hardy's descriptions. Dialogue in Jude the Obscure, therefore, does a great deal of the work that Hardy's close narration and histor have done in the past. Sue and Jude discuss matters at length and in detail; Hardy is not so dependent in this novel on close narration to depict their inner lives. Both characters express themselves very well, and so long as they are talking, regardless of whether or not there is close narration, their presentation does not seem external.

The perspectives of Jude, the histor, and, to a lesser extent, Sue are the source of almost all of the important narration in the novel. The short little paragraph close to the landlord in Christminster has none of the significance to the plot or large practical value offered by

the sections in Tess and The Well-Beloved narrated by Mrs. Brooks and Ruth Stockwool. Arabella and Phillotson each get a little bit of narration close to them--Arabella as she totes up Jude's potential as a husband "when he should begin to get frightened a bit, and stick to his trade, and throw aside those stupid books for practical undertakings" (Pt. I, Ch. ix; p. 66); Phillotson as he falls in love with Sue, noting how excellent her teaching is and how transparent each feels to the other (Pt. II, Ch. v; pp. 123-24)--but these passages are constituted of so few out of so many words that their effect over the long run is inconsiderable. The description of Jude, Sue, and Little Time at the Agricultural Fair, however, is mostly narrated from Arabella's perspective; as he does at other places, Hardy uses Arabella's pragmatic insights about love and sex to say that Sue loves Jude as much as she can, that Jude loves Sue a great deal more than this, that both take care to engage the child's attention, and to hint that the couple is right not to marry, since they are so obviously happy with each other, while Arabella and Cartlett see the fair "in the antipathetic, recriminatory mood of the average husband and wife of Christendom" (Pt. V, Ch. v; p. 357).

The effect of Sue's close narration is considerable, on the other hand, greater perhaps than the narration itself may warrant. In part, this is because of her importance as a character in the novel: because of the complexity and unpredictability of many of her feelings and motivations, she deserves closer attention than, for example, does the less conjectural Arabella. Another part of the importance of Sue's close narration rests in its placement in the novel: all of it is found in Parts Fourth and Fifth, and its presence draws attention away from the absence of Jude's perspective; there is so little of it, however, that it cannot be said to substitute for the personal perspective lost when

Jude's is withdrawn. Finally, narration close to Sue is important in this novel because it presents her at her least intellectual and reasoned; her irrational sensitivities would be masked by her verbal sophistication were it not for these passages, because she is not always as rational and objective as her speech would make her appear. This is not to say that Sue is habitually dishonest about what is on her mind, only that by the time they are expressed, her feelings have often become slightly better organized.

The first of these passages contrasts Sue, "the ethereal, fine-nerved, sensitive girl, quite unfitted by temperament and instinct to fulfil the conditions of the matrimonial relation with Phillotson, possibly with scarce any man," as she reacts to that passionate kiss on the road (Pt. IV, Ch. iii; p. 263). For Jude, the kiss is "a turning-point in [his] career" which convinces him to give up his relatively modest ambitions for being a curate because he feels his sexuality makes him unworthy to be "a propounder of accredited dogma" or "a law-abiding religious teacher" (Pt. IV, Ch. iii; p. 261). He even burns his books because of the kiss and his feelings for Sue. In contrast, she seems childish and self-delusive as she returns to Phillotson,

with tears in her eyes for having run back and let him kiss her. Jude ought not to have pretended that he was not a lover, and made her give way to an impulse to act unconventionally, if not wrongly. . . .

"I have been too weak, I think!" she jerked out as she pranced on, shaking down the tear-drops now and then, "It was burning, like a lover's--O it was! And I won't write to him any more, or at least for a long time, to impress him with my dignity! And I hope it will hurt him very much--expecting a letter to-morrow morning, and the next, and the next, and no letter coming. He'll suffer then with suspense--won't he, that's all!--and I am very glad of it!"-- . . . . (Pt. IV, Ch. iii; pp. 262-63)

Hardy's histor, nearly sarcastic in his "as she pranced on, shaking down the tear-drops now and then," emphasizes that in her self-pity Sue is

taking unfair advantage of Jude, whose self-scrutiny is admirable, however much his conclusions are exaggerated.

When Sue feels jealous of Arabella, however, there is no self-delusion or dishonesty on Sue's part, and the histor loses this critical, sarcastic tone. The chapter in which Arabella comes and fails to tell Jude about Little Time's imminent arrival--and in which Sue finally permits sexual relations between herself and Jude--also shows how important Sue's dialogue is to any understanding of her, for even though the single-minded depth of her jealousy of Arabella is dramatized in narration close to her, this flash of emotional intensity is insufficient alone for explaining why she allows their relationship to become a sexual one (given that she is "quite unfitted by temperament and instinct to fulfil the conditions of the matrimonial relation"), why she agrees to marry Jude this time, or why she goes to visit Arabella herself the next morning. All of this complexity in her actions is presented by means of dialogue or the histor, or sometimes as Jude understands her; the simple bases to the actions, and perhaps the most powerful, are presented close to her. Jude insists that he will go out to meet Arabella:

There was that in his manner which she knew it would be futile to oppose. She said no more, but, turning to her room as meekly as a martyr, heard him go downstairs, unbolt the door, and close it behind him. With a woman's disregard of her dignity when in the presence of nobody but herself, she also trotted down, sobbing articulately as she went. She listened. She knew exactly how far it was to the inn that Arabella had named as her lodging. It would occupy about seven minutes to get there at an ordinary walking pace; seven to come back again. If he did not return in fourteen minutes he would have lingered. She looked at the clock. It was twenty-five minutes to eleven. He might enter the inn with Arabella, as they would reach it before closing time; she might get him to drink with her; and Heaven only knew what disasters would befall him then.

In a still suspense she waited on. It seemed as if the whole time had nearly elapsed when the door was opened again, and Jude appeared. (Pt. V, Ch. ii; pp. 318-19)



Mistaken as she is in this fantasy about Jude's meeting with Arabella, it is not completely absurd for Sue to fear that Arabella will do what she can to "entrap" Jude (Pt. V, Ch. ii; p. 318) or that Jude is "deserting" her for a woman whom he regards as his wife: "If she was my wife while she was away in Australia with another husband she's my wife now" (Pt. V, Ch. ii; p. 319). The key to understanding Sue is in her dialogue, not in her close narration, which is too infrequent to do anything but to suggest the depth of emotions whose complexity is already apparent. The key to Jude, however, is in the narration close to him; the novel is so thoroughly his that, except for that of the histor, a discussion of any perspective other than Jude's soon threatens to be little more than a digression.

The narration close to Jude is partially responsible for making him so thoroughly the center of this novel, but it is not evenly distributed throughout the book. In fact, there is a sharp division half-way through Jude the Obscure: in the first three Parts, Hardy seems concerned to show Jude's consciousness as it identifies him in and as it is shaped by the world outside it. As in the case of Sue's close narration, Jude's articulate and learned conversation and his intelligent and sensitive partner dilute the primacy of close narration for presenting his inner life--they also make this division in the novel considerably less noticeable. The break represented by the shift in narrative location is not absolute in that Jude's consciousness does not disappear from the novel the way Tess's does. The change in narrative focus does have its effect, however. For one thing, Jude seems to stop evolving as a character when he gives up his ambitions for Christminster and the church. Another important difference between these two halves, which divide the novel more or less at the site of Sue's first instance of close

narration, the openly passionate embrace on the road from Marygreen, is the locus of the action: the first half of the novel takes place, by and large, in Jude's consciousness: the events are mental, as are the labor, the conflicts, the actions, and the reactions. The second half of Jude the Obscure takes place in the world in which Jude lives. He is still nearly as much the center of the action as before; it is the setting, as it were, that has changed. "At Marygreen," "At Christminster," and "At Melchester" are set, essentially, in Jude's consciousness; the rest of the novel, however, is set "At Shaston," "At Aldbrickham and Elsewhere," and "At Christminster Again."

Looking at Jude's most extensive passages of close narration one after the other gives an interesting profile, a shape almost, to his story. Many of these are among the most famous passages from this novel and will not require extensive quotation because of their familiarity. They mark the major events in the movement of Jude's mental life, and each one is "a turning-point in Jude's career" (Pt. IV, Ch. iii; p. 261). Particular narrative attention is paid: to Jude's despair that there is "no law of transmutation" for translating Greek or Latin into English (Pt. I, Ch. iv; p. 31); to his decision to study religious texts after the "polytheistic fancy" of his prayer to Diana (Pt. I, Ch. v; p. 36); to his dreams and ambitions of future brilliance in Christminster, just before he meets Arabella (Pt. I, Ch. vi; pp. 39-41); to his decision to meet Arabella one Sunday rather than translating his new Greek Bible (Pt. I, Ch. vii; pp. 47-48); to his first night in Christminster as he thinks of his past and imagines the ghosts of his intellectual and theological forebears (Pt. II, Ch. i; pp. 91-94); to his growing affection for Sue as he attends her church to be near her, though he does not know of her more subversive allegiances (Pt. II, Ch. iii; pp. 106-8); to his first

meeting with Sue, during which he also hears that Phillotson is still a schoolmaster (Pt. II, Ch. iv; pp. 116-18); to his application to the "academic dignitaries" for advice on getting into Christminster as a student and his realization that his intellectual aspirations are a "dream" (Pt. II, Ch. vi; pp. 133-37); to his giving up of his newly formed clerical ambitions for a modest future in the church and his invitation from Sue to join her in Melchester (Pt. III, Ch. i; pp. 153-55); to his feelings for Sue as she announces her plans to marry Phillotson and her desire that Jude give her away in the ceremony (Pt. III, Ch. vii; pp. 203-5); to his first meeting with Sue after the wedding, as they meet to visit the dying Drusilla, and his lingering feelings of degradation from his "midnight contiguity" with Arabella (Pt. III, Ch. ix; pp. 224-25); to his acceptance of his love for Sue as he gives up even his modest ambitions for a life in the church and as he burns his books (Pt. IV, Ch. iii; pp. 261-62); to his discovery of the bodies of his dead children (Pt. VI, Ch. iii; pp. 404-5); and, finally, to his last visit to Sue, as he waits for her in the church at Marygreen (Pt. VI, Ch. viii; pp. 468-69). A listing such as this is different from a listing of the major events of the novel because these events occur inside Jude's consciousness and are mental actions. There are only two such comprehensive and important actions after Jude gives up his last intellectual ambition and after he puts his books in the bonfire, his discovery of the children's bodies and his last visit to Sue; all the rest occur in the first half of the novel.

Of these fourteen major events in Jude's consciousness, eight have to do with the Christminster dream and his intellectual aspirations, including those that also have to do with Arabella; the rest describe Jude as he thinks about Sue and his children. In general, Sue comes to

replace the Christminster dream in Jude's consciousness as the focus of his thoughts. The two "dreams"--of an exalted life in Christminster and a happy life with Sue--together make up what is most important in Jude's inner world; as the first diminishes, the second grows. Our sense that Jude's consciousness does not just cease to exist the way Tess's does, even though the close narration seems to, is corroborated by the last instances of narration close to Jude, which are focussed on Sue. After he is finally convinced that Sue will not come back to him, Jude fills his inner world with curses instead of dreams which, because he speaks them aloud, do not seem any the less inside his awareness for not being narrated close to him. Part of Tess's surrender, her readiness for death, is explained by the absence of narration close to her--she becomes passive and seems to act without a will. Jude, on the other hand, remains a presence in spite of his desire to die, so he curses his existence rather than making himself absent from it.

Jude's story, as it is told by the narration close to him, is of one whose dreams are so essential that they are the substance of "the little cell called your life" (Pt. I, Ch. ii; p. 15). His dreams collapse--he learns that there is no "magic thread of fellow-feeling" between birds and people (Pt. I, Ch. ii; p. 11), that his intellectual ambitions are nothing but a dream (Pt. II, Ch. vi; p. 137), that it is "glaringly inconsistent for him to pursue the idea of becoming the soldier and servant of a religion in which sexual love was regarded as at its best a frailty, and at its worst damnation" (Pt. IV, Ch. iii; p. 261)--and he creates other dreams to take their places, he finds other ideals to love. Jude's efforts to maintain an inner world in which customs are not at odds with desires or hopes with what in The Woodlanders is called "the intractability of circumstances" are heroic (Ch. XII,

p. 105). His dreams are at odds with reality, however, in such a way that they cannot survive, no matter how much effort Jude puts into the fight: the decision is not in his hands. He does all he can do, he even reduces and curtails his dreams every time they are challenged. The fate of his inner world lies in the world outside, in the impermeability of the "sphere" of the Christminster scholars (Pt. II, Ch. vi; p. 138), in society's unwillingness to accept the sexual origins of love, and in "the outcome of new views of life . . . the coming universal wish not to live" (Pt. VI, Ch. ii; p. 406). In the economic world of Darwinian laws of survival and fitness and in the philosophical world of Schopenhauerian pessimism the voice of the individual fades into silence, it cannot express the enormity that reality is in this novel, the histor is required for that; all Jude can do is narrate his own inner world, and his voice is drowned out by humanity in its massive form, cheering its own progress and performing (in Arabella's case) the act that will guarantee the survival of the species; Jude's voice is also silenced by cowardice in its individual form, as Sue, in an agonizing attempt to take part in the same processes at which Arabella is so natural, forces herself back out of individuality and into social conformity. Jude's voice persists until the end, even though the narration close to him does not, so Hardy's final focus on the processes of sexual selection contrasts Jude's willful self-annihilation with the undifferentiated mass of people that make up the crowd in which Arabella produces her bogus and perfectly unnecessary love-potion. The instinct to procreate, in other words, is set against Jude's "wish not to live," his desire to erase his own existence; this same contrast appears in the person of Sue, for whom procreation is annihilation.

In Jude, then, each character can be said to be represented by his

Well-Beloved, in which the relative briefness of the novel allows for a more intense presentation. The effect of this concentration is to increase the size and importance of passages of close narration, though their number may be smaller than in a novel like The Woodlanders or The Return of the Native, in which many characters get close narration all through the novel.

Some passages, in Jude, for instance, seem quite modern for their strict limitation to a character's perspective, but to concentrate on such passages is to undervalue the importance of Hardy's other pole of narrative attention, the histor. The histor's and the character's perspectives are not antipathetic or opposite, however, in any real sense. The value of both, and of alternating back and forth between external and internal perspectives, can be seen in this scene, in which Jude, new in Christminster, attempts to assuage his loneliness by going to church and by thinking about Sue. The choir sings "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" and Hardy shows Jude's and then the histor's interpretation of the relevance of that hymn to Jude's life:

It was the very question that was engaging Jude's attention at this moment. What a wicked worthless fellow he had been to give vent as he had done to an animal passion for a woman, and allow it to lead to such disastrous consequences; then to think of putting an end to himself; then to go recklessly and get drunk. The great waves of pedal music tumbled round the choir, and, nursed on the supernatural as he had been, it is not wonderful that he could hardly believe that the psalm was not specially set by some regardful Providence for this moment of his first entry into the solemn building. And yet it was the ordinary psalm for the twenty-fourth evening of the month. (Pt. II, Ch. iii; p. 107)

Jude has chosen this church because Sue attends it; the next two paragraphs show how Jude and then the histor relate his love for Sue with his religious "ecstasy":

The girl for whom he was beginning to nourish an extraordinary tenderness, was at this time ensphered by the same

or her voice, which can be narrated in dialogue or monologue, or in close narration. Sue stops her voice: "A quick look of aversion passed over her face, but clenching her teeth she uttered no cry" (Pt. VI, Ch. ix; p. 480). Sue's last act in Jude is to prevent herself from crying out. Jude's last action in the novel is his quotation, in competition with the cheers outside, of the solitary despair he finds in Job. Identified unambiguously with the crowd--the species--Arabella also spends the last chapter of the novel engaged in talk. Her voice, however, is the same as it always has been, shrewd, unromantic, and self-serving. Allied as she is with the world outside the minds of Jude and Sue, Arabella replaces the histor's usual summary and commentary; the outside world is so well represented at the end of this novel, in the cheering crowd, in Arabella and the widow Edlin, that Hardy seems to have felt no need to add the voice of the histor.

### C. Conclusion

Because Hardy's use of close narration is a part of his presentation of consciousness, it does not form a pattern of its own, independent of his other means of representing consciousness. A few tentative conclusions, however, can be drawn about Hardy's narrative. There is more and more close narration, in general, as time goes by; the clearest progress can be seen beginning with The Mayor of Casterbridge, since Hardy's achievements in his art are more continuous--less erratic--and there are no radically inferior novels after that one. In Tess, Jude, and The Well-Beloved, Hardy concentrates his narrative attention on a few characters rather than spreading it over many characters and over the full course of the novel, except in the much shorter The

harmonies as those which floated into his ears; and the thought was a delight to him. She was probably a frequenter of this place, and, steeped body and soul in church sentiment as she must be by occupation and habit, had, no doubt, much in common with him. To an impressionable and lonely young man the consciousness of having at last found anchorage for his thoughts, which promised to supply both social and spiritual possibilities, was like the dew of Hermon, and he remained throughout the service in a sustaining atmosphere of ecstasy.

Though he was loth to suspect it, some people might have said to him that the atmosphere blew as distinctly from Cyprus as from Galilee. (Pt. II, Ch. iii; p. 107)

The last part of this passage shows Jude's more honest appraisal of his feelings once out of church and faced with the decision of whether or not to introduce himself to her:

Jude waited till she had left her seat and passed under the screen before he himself moved. She did not look towards him, and by the time he reached the door she was half way down the broad path. Being dressed up in his Sunday suit he was inclined to follow her and reveal himself. But he was not quite ready; and, alas, ought he to do so with the kind of feeling that was awakening in him?

For though it had seemed to have an ecclesiastical basis during the service, and he had persuaded himself that such was the case, he could not altogether be blind to the real nature of the magnetism. She was such a stranger that the kinship was affectation, and he said, "It can't be! I, a man with a wife, must not know her!" Still Sue was his own kin, and the fact of his having a wife, even though she was not in evidence in this hemisphere, might be a help in one sense. It would put all thought of a tender wish on his part out of Sue's mind, and make her intercourse with him free and fearless. It was with some heartache that he saw how little he cared for the freedom and fearlessness that would result in her from such knowledge. (Pt. II, Ch. iii; pp. 107-8)

Clearly, this scene, copied here nearly in its entirety, has as its purpose the presentation of Jude's feelings for Sue and their rather complex relation to his religious ideals. Hardy's use of both narrative voices seems to suggest that neither is independently sufficient for presenting the truth about Jude's inner world, which seems to form itself around objects or events in the outside world which are there only by chance or there for a reason other than the one Jude suspects.

Close narration in Hardy's novels has a variety of purposes. It



demonstrates and dramatizes the existence of a character's inner world. It articulates the subjective, engaged perspective which Hardy felt to be necessary for a truly sympathetic understanding of his people. It presents the mental activity of a character whose experience has been complicated and deeply-felt enough to require secrets or to cause sequential, independent reasoning. It makes actions out of thoughts and feelings, so that the making of a decision, the struggle against indecision, wondering, self-scrutiny, self-questioning, and talking to oneself are all acts in a world of causes and consequences. Finally, close narration determines, by the space allotted to it, what is significant in a character's inner world; the lack of close narration determines what is peripheral. The novels range in content from Desperate Remedies, in which the emphasis is on what happens to people, especially, here, to thinking people, and how events control their minds and actions; The Well-Beloved, at the other extreme, is about how Pierston's mind controls his actions and even his perception of reality. The real issue is not how much close narration Hardy uses in any particular novel, but what there is about that novel that generates close narration. In The Mayor of Casterbridge and The Well-Beloved it is what the characters do not know: the close narration shows their mistakes and misperceptions. In Far from the Madding Crowd the The Return of the Native, the close narration shows the characters at their peaks of emotional excitement and, for those who misperceive, it shows how they arrive at their misperceptions. In The Woodlanders, Tess, and Jude, the necessity of the individual perspective for an understanding of the effects of natural and social laws on sensitive, thoughtful people seems to be behind the use and organization of the close narration.

## Chapter Five: Hardy's Conception of Conscious

Hardy's conception of consciousness seems to dominate the narrative of his novels, both in the kinds of specialized narration which he uses to present the perspectives of his characters and in the fact that, again and again, what is described is what the characters think, how they feel, what their mental characteristics are, what is at the "centre" of their consciousnesses (The Woodlanders Ch. III, p. 19). Moreover, Hardy's sense of human consciousness determines which characters are sympathetically treated and which are not: the absence of consciousness appears with the villainous qualities of his antagonists; its presence, the heroic qualities of his protagonists; its degree or intensity suggests how heroic the protagonists are.

It is difficult to summarize Hardy's conception and presentation of consciousness precisely because it is so central to his fiction. Generalizing about it is mostly unprofitable because Hardy's real insights into the ways in which people think and perceive are in the details and particulars of his observations rather than in the generalities and theories. It will be most useful to explore a few particular forms which can demonstrate both the diversity which Hardy's presentation of consciousness could take and the concentration of observation and idea present in each of those forms. For the sake of order, I will limit my discussion to the consciousnesses of some of the characters and leave the discussions both of consciousness outside of individual minds and of the relevance of Hardy's two perspectives until later. For now, therefore, a

sense of the range of Hardy's thought on this subject can best be had by a look at the following major areas: the first coming to consciousness of a character and the qualities of characters' consciousnesses, that is, the different kinds of minds, and two types in particular--the witch-figure and the split self. The themes of consciousness--knowledge and secrets, "dimly seeing" and the reality behind corporeality, and the "half-somnolent condition of most of humanity--will be taken up in the next chapter.

#### A. "Taking Thought"--First Coming to Consciousness

The simplest thing that can be said about Hardy's fiction, encompassing all of it, is that all of his novels are the stories of people who are forced by circumstances to think for the first time about themselves and the consequences of their actions (and, since thoughts are acts in Hardy's view, these characters are thus made self-aware because they are forced to think for the first time of the consequences of their thoughts and emotions.) Hardy calls this "Taking Thought," and it is the most basic act of consciousness in his world.<sup>1</sup> Hardy defines the problem in Desperate Remedies and continues with it unvaryingly through Tess, Jude, and The Well-Beloved. It is explicit for Cytherea in Desperate Remedies:

Why the particulars of a young lady's presence at a very mediocre performance were prevented from dropping into the oblivion which their intrinsic insignificance would naturally have involved--why they were remembered and individualized by herself and others through after years--was simply that she unknowingly stood, as it were, upon the extreme posterior edge of a tract in her life, in which the real meaning of Taking Thought had never been known. It was the last hour of experience she ever enjoyed with a mind entirely free from a knowledge of that labyrinth into which she stepped immediately afterwards--to continue a perplexed course along its mazes for the greater

portion of twenty-nine subsequent months. (Ch. I, No. iii; pp. 8-9)<sup>2</sup>

This first moment of self-awareness is just as explicit for the first Avice in The Well-Beloved as it is here. Because Avice is not one of the central characters of the novel, the description of her is more diffuse. From Pierston's perspective, we learn that Avice's "accents were those of one who had for the first time become conscious of her womanhood, as an unwonted possession which shamed and frightened her" (Pt. I, Ch. i; p. 7). And that "Avice had been transformed into a very different kind of young woman by the self-consciousness engendered of her impulsive greeting" (Pt. I, Ch. ii; p. 8). Though unfocussed and unemphasized, Avice's coming to consciousness takes place when she spontaneously kisses Jocelyn and sees his fastidious reaction.

Although it can be both explicitly narrated and central to the plot, as in the case of Cytherea, and also indirectly present, however peripheral, in the case of Avice I, "Taking Thought" sometimes happens "off-stage," as it were, outside of the narrative. Angel, for one example, is a character whose first coming to consciousness is both an essential part of his characterization and is not narrated. It occurs between the time he sees Tess dancing at the beginning of the novel and the time he begins to notice her at Talbothays, at some point or period which is not narrated. In this passage, narrated close to Angel, his idealism concerning Tess's virginity is contrasted with the pessimism that is almost inevitable in characters who have "Taken Thought":

"What a fresh and virginal daughter of Nature that milkmaid is!" he said to himself.

And then he seemed to discern in her something that was familiar, something which carried him back into a joyous and unforeseeing past, before the necessity of taking thought had made the heavens gray. He concluded that he had beheld her before; where, he could not tell. A casual encounter during

some country ramble it certainly had been, and he was not greatly curious about it. (Ch. XVIII, p. 155)

"Taking Thought" is merely the beginning of things for Angel, as it is for Cytherea and the others of Hardy's protagonists. Clearly, it does not make the character necessarily wise; nor, as in this case, does "Taking Thought" make a character less idealistic.

Marty South is another example of a character whose "Taking Thought" is narrated as fact rather than process; she has become conscious by the time we meet her at the very beginning of The Woodlanders. It is as Barber Percomb is looking in at Marty working that Hardy takes the opportunity to describe her. Note that it is the quality of her mind and the effect of the environment on her mind, and then on her face, which is really the object of description:

Her face had the usual fulness of expression which is developed by a life of solitude. Where the eyes of a multitude continuously beat like waves upon a countenance they seem to wear away its mobile power; but in the still water of privacy every feeling and sentiment unfolds in visible luxuriance, to be interpreted as readily as a printed word by an intruder. In years she was no more than nineteen or twenty, but the necessity of taking thought at a too early period of life had forced the provisional curves of her childhood's face to a premature finality. (Ch. II, p. 8)

Marty could not be the sympathetic and loyal center of morality for this novel if she had not already "Taken Thought," for "her sense of comradeship" and her "humanism" (Ch. XLVIII, p. 443) show how "the great web of human doings" that stretches "from the White Sea to Cape Horn" is an emotional and spiritual interconnectedness, not merely one of circumstance or the laws of nature or causality (Ch. III, p. 21).

The process or the result of awakening is the story which Hardy narrates, in one form or another, in all his novels. It may be argued that Avie's coming to consciousness is essentially irrelevant to The Well-Beloved, but a more careful consideration makes it clear that it is

finally irrelevant only to Pierston. By the end of his career as a novelist, Hardy was so completely concerned with people's consciousnesses--and with their coming to consciousness--that nearly all of the characters go through or have gone through this process, regardless of their proximity to the main characters and plot. The exceptions are notable, and most clearly presented in characters who do not change or whose changes are illusory. Arabella, for example, is not subhuman for being "a complete and substantial female animal," but she is essentially animalistic rather than spiritual, and her true vocation seems to be associated with red meat, particularly pigs (Pt. I, Ch. vi; p. 42).<sup>3</sup> That is, she is human, not a pig herself, but she is associated with pig-breeding, pig-slaughtering, and pig-marketing as long as Jude knows her. That she is also associated with eggs and ale merely demonstrates the heights to which she can rise; certainly they do not suggest progress on her part, as "Taking Thought" does, for she ends up selling pigs again with her father in Christminster in a "miserable little pork and sausage shop" (Pt. VI, Ch. vii; p. 459). As far as central characters go, however, the unconsidering ones like Arabella, Alec, and Lucetta are exceptional rather than normal for not having "Taken Thought." Even among the three Avices, for instance, each is described as having a different kind of coming to consciousness. Avicé I is made self-conscious by the contrast between her impulsive embrace and Jocelyn's and her mother's conventional repression; Ann Avicé begins to grasp the mysteries of art and what happens to the natural materials of life after they are transmuted by thought (Pt. II, Ch. xii; p. 131); and Avicé III is modernized into consciousness like Sue, Grace, and Fancy as a result of her education and deracination (Pt. III, Ch. i; pp. 153-54).

Hardy's typical symbolizing or generalizing mode of thinking made

the first moment of consciousness--or "moment of vision"--emblematic for him of consciousness itself, especially by the time of A Pair of Blue Eyes; but from the very beginning Hardy's vision of the importance of the operating mind goes beyond the merely emblematic into what is for him the more realistic day by day grappling with details and making of decisions. In other words, Hardy presents the action of the conscious mind at work in two ways: by detailed presentation, like close narration or attention to natural and architectural environment; and by symbolizing, like Henry Knight's look at history as he hangs on the face of the Cliff With No Name, or like Elfride waiting for the horse to decide the direction she will take. The way to find Hardy's treatment of consciousness in any of the novels, then, the way to organize the myriad instances and examples, is to look both for vivid, emblematic events (and their concomitant themes) and for the masses of details (which we usually think of as the "realistic" parts of the presentation). Such a search will turn up that novel's particulars of Hardy's constant consideration of the forms and effects of consciousness.

For example, Jude's epiphany as a result of his experience in Farmer Troutham's field is the touchstone for his entire novel, since it is the coming to consciousness of a hyperconscious (or, as Hardy puts it, "supersensitive") character.<sup>4</sup> There can be no denying the overarching importance of this event for Jude. He begins the experience surrounded by the past and completely unconscious of it, because it has been obliterated by the tilling, and because the field represents the kind of past which leaves no record except in the memories--the minds--of those who know it:

The fresh harrow-lines seemed to stretch like the channellings in a piece of new corduroy, lending a meanly utilitarian air to the expanse, taking away its gradations, and depriving it

of all history beyond that of the few recent months, though to every clod and stone there really attached associations enough and to spare--echoes of songs from ancient harvest-days, of spoken words, and of sturdy deeds. Every inch of ground had been the site, first or last, of energy, gaiety, horse-play, bickerings, weariness. Groups of gleaners had squatted in the sun on every square yard. Love-matches that had populated the adjoining hamlet had been made up there between reaping and carrying. Under the hedge which divided the field from a distant plantation girls had given themselves to lovers who would not turn their heads to look at them by the next harvest; and in that ancient cornfield many a man had made love-promises to a woman at whose voice he had trembled by the next seed-time after fulfilling them in the church adjoining. But this neither Jude nor the rooks around him considered. For them it was a lonely place, possessing, in the one view, only the quality of a work-ground, and in the other that of a granary good to feed in. (Pt. I, Ch. ii; p. 10)

The histor knows of this past, which means that for Hardy it exists, regardless of Jude's ignorance of it and regardless of its intangibility. Jude's emotional condition at the beginning of the scene is one of sympathetic oneness with the forms of nature in this world which, according to the histor, is haunted by human betrayal and mutability.

Troutham's interruption and his punishment of Jude's communion with the birds snap forever that "magic thread of fellow-feeling" which unites "his own life with theirs" (Pt. I, Ch. ii; p. 11). This change in Jude's mental existence is the beginnings of consciousness for him, it is a separation from nature, and, with his isolation reinforced by the permanence of his break from Phillotson, the moment is marked by a comprehensive and organized perception of the world, narrated close to Jude:

Jude went out, and, feeling more than ever his existence to be an undemanded one, he lay down upon his back on a heap of litter near the pig-sty. The fog had by this time become more translucent, and the position of the sun could be seen through it. He pulled his straw hat over his face, and peered through the interstices of the plaiting at the white brightness, vaguely reflecting. Growing up brought responsibilities, he found. Events did not rhyme quite as he had thought. Nature's logic was too horrid for him to care for. That mercy towards one set of creatures was cruelty towards another sickened his sense of harmony. As you got older, and felt yourself to be at the centre of your time, and not a point in its circumference,



as you had felt when you were little, you were seized with a sort of shuddering, he perceived. All around you there seemed to be something glaring, garish, rattling, and the noises and glares hit upon the little cell called your life, and shook it, and warped it.

If he could only prevent himself growing up! He did not want to be a man. (Pt. I, Ch. ii; pp. 14-15)<sup>5</sup>

Because he is young and "natural," awareness is new to him, consciousness is intermittent; as the histor immediately afterwards says: "Then, like the natural boy, he forgot his despondency, and sprang up. During the remainder of the morning he helped his aunt, and in the afternoon, when there was nothing more to be done, he went into the village."

In keeping with the complexity of the entire novel, this emblematic scene takes in Jude's relationships to his family and his personal past as well as those to nature and the history of Wessex. His consciousness is formed in conjunction with his deracination, both from society (his family and Phillotson, in this instance) and nature. Jude is Hardy's clearest presentation of the comprehensiveness of mind and the determinism of perception, for this novel is the biography of a consciousness, beginning as it does with the beginnings of awareness and the formation of his unconscious ideals and concluding as it does with their destruction. The Well-Beloved is the novel most dominated by the consciousness of a character (except Our Exploits at West Poley and, presumably, The Poor Man and the Lady, which were written in the voice of one of the characters), but it is not the most thorough presentation; it is, as Hardy said, "The Sketch of a Character." Jude is the only novel Hardy wrote in this biographical form, for most of his characters come to consciousness as adults instead of as children; only occasionally does a character "Take Thought" even in adolescence.

The very nature of the emblematic event in Hardy allows him to use a single event which affects a character--and the consciousness which

results from this event--as a representative for the more generalized phenomenon of "Taking Thought." Often this emblematic event can be interpreted as sexual experience, as in the case of Avice Caro, whose "womanhood" is awakened; but it is not her impulsive greeting which makes her self-conscious, it is Jocelyn's and her mother's reactions to it (Pt. I, Ch. i; p. 7). Tess's story, too, might be thought to originate with a sexual encounter, but this disappears as a central element in her maturation when compared to the real source of her change: thought. Hardy describes her change as taking place during the time following her return to her parents' house and the death of her baby, but he implies in the narration that it is the contemplation of her own death that takes the adolescent Tess "from simple girl to complex woman." In a passage shared by the histor and Tess, Hardy shows that, for Tess, part of consciousness is the perception that the past and the future exist in the present.

She philosophically noted dates as they came past in the revolution of the year; this disastrous night of her undoing at Trantridge with its dark background of The Chase; also the dates of the baby's birth and death; also her own birthday; and every other day individualized by incidents in which she had taken some share. She suddenly thought one afternoon, when looking in the glass at her fairness, that there was yet another date, of greater importance to her than those; that of her own death, when all these charms would have disappeared; a day which lay sly and unseen among all the other days of the year, giving no sign or sound when she annually passed over it; but not the less surely there. When was it? Why did she not feel the chill of each yearly encounter with such a cold relation? She had Jeremy Taylor's thought that some time in the future those who had known her would say: "It is the -th, the day that poor Tess Durbeyfield died"; and there would be nothing singular to their minds in the statement. Of that day, doomed to be her terminus in time through all the ages, she did not know the place in month, week, season, or year.

Almost at a leap Tess thus changed from simple girl to complex woman. Symbols of reflectiveness passed into her face, and a note of tragedy at times into her voice. Her eyes grew larger and more eloquent. She became what would have been called a fine creature; her aspect was fair and arresting; her soul that of a woman whom the turbulent experiences of the last year or two had quite failed to demoralize. But for the

world's opinion those experiences would have been simply a liberal education. (Ch. XV, pp. 124-25)

For the histor, Tess's experiences up to this point in the novel, before she goes to Talbothays, have merely educated her: her face becomes expressive, like Clym's and Marty's, and "her soul" is undemoralized: the truth of the matter, according to the histor, is that Tess's experiences would be "simply a liberal education" if it were not "for the world's opinion."

This passage is crucial in this novel and in Hardy's canon for its vision of the newly conscious Tess as undemoralized and liberally educated, for we are accustomed to think of consciousness in Hardy as essentially painful and debilitating. Tess is certainly not made light-hearted by her change: she thinks about the anniversary of her own death lying "sly and unseen among all the other days of the year," but she is deepened and enriched by these experiences and by these thoughts. That Tess's troubles do not begin with Alec's domination of her supports J. Hillis Miller's point that there is no original act, no beginning, which sets off the sequence of events which befall Hardy characters.<sup>4</sup> In this case, Tess's change is the result of her encounter with Alec, which is one result of the death of their horse Prince, which is one result of her father's having learned of the history of the Durbeyfield name, which is one result of her parents' lax behavior in what seems in this novel to be a difficult and demanding world. It is clear, however, that Tess is different as of this moment, in which she thinks beyond her beauty to her death. She has "Taken Thought," even though Hardy does say it in so many words. She begins the novel, at the May Day dance, as "a mere vessel of emotion untinctured by experience" (Ch. II, p. 13), and now, as a teenager, she is a "complex woman" who has "Symbols of

reflectiveness" in her face.

Cytherea Graye, of course, has a similar perception about the relative insignificance of the individual human life. She contrasts the perspective of the individual who lives that life against the perspective of the individual for whom that life is "but a thought," a function of that individual's consciousness--in her words, "my memory." Cytherea contemplates the effects which her own death will have on those who will blame her for her choice of Edward over Manston (after she has already married the latter):

"And perhaps, far in time to come, when I am dead and gone, some other's accent, or some other's song, or thought, like an old one of mine, will carry them back to what I used to say, and hurt their hearts a little that they blamed me so soon. And they will pause just for an instant, and give a sigh to me, and think, 'Poor girl!' believing they do great justice to my memory by this. But they will never, never realize that it was my single opportunity of existence, as well as of doing my duty, which they are regarding; they will not feel that what to them is but a thought, easily held in those two words of pity, 'Poor girl!' was a whole life to me; as full of hours, minutes and peculiar minutes, of hopes and dreads, smiles, whisperings, tears, as theirs: that it was my world, what is to them their world, and they in that life of mine, however much I cared for them, only as the thought I seem to them to be. Nobody can enter into another's nature truly, that's what is so grievous." (Ch. XIII, No. iv; pp. 278-79)

She offers the philosophical generalization that "Nobody can enter into another's nature truly" as an explanation for why it is that others are only thoughts to us; this seems to oppose directly the histor's generalization in Tess that "But for the world's opinion those experiences would have been simply a liberal education." That is, in the one case Hardy emphasizes the essential loneliness of people which is caused by the fact that each human consciousness is isolated and impenetrable; in the other, he shows the powerful effect which the thoughts of others can have. While these two positions might at first seem contradictory and lead to the conclusion that this is another of Hardy's philosophical

inconsistencies, the condition described in Desperate Remedies is one of nature and in Tess one of society. In fact, Owen Graye is the voice of "the world's opinion" in Desperate Remedies, and Cytherea's speech is made to him, so that, while the histor describes "the world's opinion" in Tess, Cytherea addresses it in her novel. These two passages, published in 1871 and 1891, are two different articulations of the same perception: that what is momentous to the individual is a passing thought to others.

This is probably the most important "Thought" which Hardy characters can "Take," and it means that they have a kind of consciousness and sensitivity which sets them apart from the rest of the world. One reason that Angel seems such a sympathetic character to us is that he, too, has this insight. His sensitivity to the solipsistic nature of perception and consciousness is on Tess's behalf, even though he does not know of her own struggle between personal desires and what she conceives as her duty. The passage is narrated close to Angel:

Tess was no insignificant creature to toy with and dismiss; but a woman living her precious life--a life which, to herself who endured or enjoyed it, possessed as great a dimension as the life of the mightiest to himself. Upon her sensations the whole world depended to Tess; through her existence all her fellow-creatures existed, to her. The universe itself only came into being for Tess on the particular day in the particular year in which she was born.

This consciousness upon which he had intruded was the single opportunity of existence ever vouchsafed to Tess by an unsympathetic First Cause--her all; her every and only chance. How then should he look upon her as of less consequence than himself; as a pretty trifle to caress and grow weary of; and not deal in the greatest seriousness with the affection which he knew that he had awakened in her--so fervid and so impressionable as she was under her reserve; in order that it might not agonize and wreck her? (Ch. XXV, pp. 198-99)

When Angel first meets Tess, at the May Day dance, she is "but a transient impression, half forgotten" (Ch. V, p. 48), and he is "not greatly curious" about having seen her before when he first notices her at

Talbothays (Ch. XVIII, p. 155); his "Taking Thought" and his sensitivity resulting from loving her make Angel able to imagine Tess's perspective. This, clearly, is the histor's position on Tess's personal integrity, and, indeed, Hardy's as well, but the perspective here is indubitably Angel's; this passage is part of a longer one in which he is shown deciding whether or not to stay on at Talbothays and let his love for Tess develop. "Taking Thought" means recognizing both what is the perspective of society and what is the perspective of the individual--whether that thinker be the individual in question or another--and also recognizing the difference between them. "Taking Thought" means a simultaneous awareness both of oneself and of one's "time" (Jude Pt. I, Ch. ii; p. 15). From this point of view, to take thought is to approach the perspective of the histor.

Because Owen takes society's side in the argument with Cytherea, her eventual choice of social good over individual pleasure is her own, for Owen's lameness is an apt representation of his power of thought and force of personality, and he cannot be imagined to be responsible for Cytherea's decisions. Although she argues for the fulfillment of personal desires, Cytherea adopts the social mores of marital fidelity, reluctantly but none the less completely, just as she later accepts social disapprobation for her failed marriage, even where there is no blame. Tess, in a similar way, surrenders herself to a justice which does not seem to have its basis in nature but in social morality. In both cases, Hardy describes one part of this action--this surrender to social mores--as an absence or death of individual morality. The characters themselves choose to surrender to social law, to the common good, and the result of that choice is a diminution of the self, of the individual, particularly of the "moral nature" or "moral sense"<sup>7</sup>: "It might almost

have been believed that a transmutation had taken place in Cytherea's idiosyncrasy, that her moral nature had fled" (Ch. XIII, No. iv; p. 277). For Tess, Hardy narrates close to Angel that "his horror at her impulse was mixed with amazement at the strength of her affection for himself, and at the strangeness of its quality, which had apparently extinguished her moral sense altogether" (Ch. LVII, p. 492). It is not Tess's murder of Alec which destroys her "moral sense"; nor is it her going to live with him as his wife. It is her surrender, her body's surrender of her "moral sense" and her consciousness's surrender of her body: "he had a vague consciousness of one thing, though it was not clear to him till later; that his original Tess had spiritually ceased to recognize the body before him as hers--allowing it to drift, like a corpse upon the current, in a direction dissociated from its living will" (Ch. LV, p. 484). Angel's "original Tess" is her "moral sense"; it is lost in her excessive and idolatrous love for Angel as well as in her obliteration by Alec.

This point, that Tess and Cytherea surrender parts of themselves in the conclusions to their novels, is easier to understand by looking at their moments of literal unconsciousness. For both of these characters, the beginnings and endings of their struggles with what is called in Desperate Remedies the "labyrinth" of thought are marked by moments or fits of unconsciousness (Ch. I, No. iii; p. 9): for Cytherea they are when she faints at her father's death (Ch. I, No. iii; p. 10) and at Manston's return (Ch. XX, No. ii; pp. 426-27); for Tess, they are in The Chase with Alec (Ch. XI, pp. 89-90) and on Stonehenge with Angel (Ch. LVIII, p. 504).<sup>8</sup> For both these characters, being conscious, to have "Taken Thought," is not a permanent condition. For Cytherea, it ends, as it does in thousands of novels, in marriage. Tess, by far the more

important character, is different. She surrenders, like Sue, Jude, and Jocelyn; she tries to give up her consciousness. For Tess, the way out of consciousness is a return to a more natural condition; for Cytherea, as for Sue, it is a return to the institutions of society. Both are movements away from individuality.

Tess's two moments of unconsciousness, in The Chase and at Stonehenge, make her party to her own sacrifice, for without them there would be very little ambiguity in her innocence. To be specific, there has been some discussion of whether Tess is raped or seduced by Alec.<sup>9</sup> If she had been awake there would be no question: she would have resisted or not. That she falls asleep shifts the attention away from the act itself to the way guilt is determined. It is safe to assume that the first sexual act between them takes place at least in some sense against Tess's will (which is separable from the body in this novel), but her unconsciousness is an emblem of her surrender, of her return to unthinking nature, in which sexual instincts meet no resistance. It is no condemnation of Tess to say that her liaison with Alec is natural, however unattractive he may be to us; Hardy is clear that the social disapproval levelled against Tess is based on superficial grounds. It is another matter, however, to dismiss her surrender at Stonehenge as natural, since she has "Taken Thought," and lived a conscious life. Her sleepiness at Stonehenge is as natural as her sleepiness in The Chase, and according to the histor as inevitable, but the loss of consciousness here has no positive form: it has no relation to sexual instincts, it serves only society and social order.



## B. The Qualities of Consciousness

An outline of Hardy's conception of consciousness, then, must include not only the first instance of "Taking Thought," usually imminent in the text for at least one of the central characters, and usually for the most central of the characters, but it must also take into account the inculcation of external social mores as well. It is rare in Hardy for society to be a mass or group of individuals separate from or hostile to his central characters, though we are accustomed to think of his heroes as isolated and embattled individualists. There are instances when a character may be so detached from the community that he or she can see it with some objectivity; Pierston, for one example has a perception of humans as busy and oblivious ants (The Well-Beloved Pt. II, Ch. i; p. 147), and Jude and Sue, for another, are interrupted in their restoration of the lettering of the Ten Commandments by the representatives of a superstitious group (Pt. V, Ch. vi; pp. 362-66), or, more important, they are pushed back into one room in their house at their household auction in Aldbrickham (Pt. V, Ch. vi; p. 368). Most of the important incursions of society into the lives of the characters, however, are incursions into their consciousnesses rather than into their practical environments; and compromises are made by the character rather than demanded by society. Jocelyn makes himself conventional at the expense of beautiful art and emotional depth; Sue and Tess both accept and adopt conservative social ideas after having evolved out of them. This is a surrender on their part and it is all the worse because the sexual component makes it seem personal and intimate. Even though Sue's surrender seems somehow much more violent and physical than Tess's, in spite of

the fact that it is Tess who dies, the underlying truth is that the acts of surrender for both characters take place, most importantly, in their minds. In this same way, Cytherea's resistance to Manston's sexual desires is seriously compromised by her fainting just as he finally restrains her. This is an important point, because although Hardy's individuals and societies seem opposed to each other, they are not in fact opposites or the two parts of a dichotomy. Society in its deadliest form arises in Hardy from inside the individual, and society itself is the mental environment, the values and ideas against which the sensitive and thoughtful characters struggle. The scope of consciousness in Hardy, then, extends into a conception of collective as well as individual identity.

Nature, too, is not opposite to humankind, although because of the "deadly war waged between flesh and spirit" from the Preface to Jude many readers have thought so. There is a kind of consciousness in Hardy that extends to much of vertebrate nature as well. Many readers have mistakenly concluded that a vision of conscious nature occurred to Hardy late in life, when he was writing The Dynasts, but evidence of it can be found in the assemblage of characters and animals in Under the Greenwood Tree. This novel also shows more clearly than Desperate Remedies both Hardy's preference for an interesting individual consciousness in a character and his respect for what might be called the collective consciousness of nature and communities of humans who share traditions and emotional attachments.

In some ways, this warm little novel takes Hardy as far as he will ever go in presenting the mental variousness of humanity. His early reviewers noted this variety but read it only as diversity among Hodges; the social and cultural similarities of the characters, however, seem to

me to emphasize rather than to qualify the mental differences among them. The characters in this novel serve as universal figures, made so by images and allusions in the text, but also as images of human consciousness which appear in essentially unchanged form throughout all of Hardy's Wessex and post-Wessex novels. That is, because of the extreme range of kinds of consciousness in this novel, and because of the archetypal quality of the characters, they exist in very similar and particular forms in the rest of Hardy's fiction. For these reasons, Under the Greenwood Tree has a mythic quality which places its action some time, in its mock-epic way, just after consciousness (rather than sin, in Hardy's mythos) has entered the world. That the novel is set in immediately post-lapsarian Wessex can be demonstrated easily by reference to the Biblical and Edenic images in it, but these details are less important than the novel's general tenor of innocence--or, more precisely, of remembered innocence. The fall is not completely tragic in Hardy's mythology, not completely painful, because part of consciousness is the memory of innocence in humanity and the sense of community with animals. The most notable aspect of Hardy's presentation of consciousness in this novel is the sheer number of very intelligent, stupid, sensitive, or insane people there are. Almost every character has a sharply distinct personality, and all of these odd characters are odd by virtue of their mental rather than physical forms.

Among the very intelligent are Fancy Day, her father Geoffrey, and Elizabeth Endorfield. Geoffrey Day has an intelligence, a mentality, that is described in a way that seems to call for explication. The Mellstock choir discusses it directly; to them he is "clever" and so "close" that his "dumbness is wonderful to listen to" (Pt. II, Ch. v; p. 93). His essential personality Hardy sums up with respect to style and habits

of thought: "There was in him a quiet grimness which would in his moments of displeasure have become surliness, had it not been tempered by honesty of soul, and which was often wrongheadedness because not allied with subtlety" (Pt. II, Ch. vi; pp. 98-99). Clearly, Hardy has such a precise conception of Day's consciousness that he requires the use of the histor to describe it, but the most striking aspect of Hardy's description of Geoffrey Day's intelligence is the description of his appearance, which, again, is phrased in terms of thought. First, Geoffrey looks as if he were thinking--"always looking down as if trying to recollect something he said yesterday" (Pt. II, Ch. vi; p. 98). And the appearance of his face suggests important and meaningful variation from the normal interiority of the "head" and exteriority of the face:

The surface of his face was fissured rather than wrinkled, and over and under his eyes were folds which seemed as a kind of exterior eyelids. His nose had been thrown backwards by a blow in a poaching fray, so that when the sun was low and shining in his face people could see far into his head. (Pt. II, Ch. vi; p. 98)

He has an extra set of eyelids, so that his eyes are more interior than usual, but the position of his nose allows "people" to see inside his "head" when sunlight strikes him directly in the face. This description of Day's symbolic face corresponds to Hardy's description of other characters whose mental condition blurs the normal distinctions made by age and gender, Clym Yeobright, little Father Time, Jocelyn Pierston, and William Dare.

There are other characters, too, who seem to be unusually bright or educated--quite a large number, really, considering the small size of the community made up by Mellstock and Yalbury. As a matter of fact, notable intelligence is so widespread in Mellstock that it extends beyond humanity into the animal world, and this is the key to this novel.

Reuben Dewy's horses and Geoffrey Day's dogs, and even his bees, all seem to have more complex thought processes than some of the characters are imagined to have. Geoffrey's dogs are presented not only as intelligent and expressive, but sensitive to his efforts of thought as well: "The keeper resumed his gun, tucked it under his arm, and went on without whistling to the dogs, who however followed with a bearing meant to imply that they did not expect any such attentions when their master was reflecting" (Pt. IV, Ch. iv; p. 170).

The real thinkers among the animals, however, are the Dewy's horses, Smiler and Smart, and two separate incidents show the depth of what can only be called their "consciousnesses." In the first, Reuben and Smiler meet Dick and Smart on the road, and the two men discuss Dick's chances with Fancy. Both horses mistake Dick's "clinch period at the end" of his thoughts for "the close of the conversation" and prepare "to move on" (Pt. II, Ch. viii; p. 112). But Smart can distinguish between Dick's "whipping at [his] flank in a fanciful way" and gestures "in connection with going on" (Pt. II, Ch. viii; p. 114). Later, however, on the way home, Smart is caught unawares when Dick surprises him by touching him

with the whip; and on Smart's neck, not far behind his ears. Smart, who had been lost in thought for some time, never dreaming that Dick could reach so far with a whip which, on this particular journey, had never been extended further than his flank, tossed his head and scampered along with exceeding briskness . . . . (Pt. III, Ch. ii; p. 127)

Even these animals are a part of the mythology of this novel, for they represent intelligent--or at least mental--animals all over Wessex. Even "though he understood English but imperfectly," Gabriel Oak's dog George joins him in threatening the Weatherbury rustics against gossip (Ch. XV, p. 123); and in A Pair of Blue Eyes there is a pig "who went out of his mind": "'As clean out of his mind as the cleverest Christian

could go. In early life 'a was very melancholy, and never seemed a hopeful pig by no means'" (Ch. XXIII, p. 261).

Superior thinking ability is not the only kind of notable intelligence in this small but complex community. Jane Day is Mellstock's and Yalbury's malcontent; her problem is not a philosophical disillusionment with innocence and ideals, however, as Shakespeare's Jacques' is, but "a queerness in her head" which suggests psychological maladjustment (Pt. V, Ch. i; p. 194). Thomas Leaf is another figure whose mind is so inadequate that he is nearly insubstantial, as his name and manner suggest. Using Leaf's voice, Hardy compares Geoffrey Day, into whose head one can see when the sun is low, with Thomas, who has "no head" at all, and who seems transparent to Day: "'A do look at me as if 'a could see my thoughts running round like the works of a clock'" (Pt. II, Ch. v; p. 93). Leaf's problem is not represented as psychological but intellectual; his failure is one of capacity, and when he is not at the peak of excitement his condition is one of "nothingness" (Pt. V, Ch. ii; p. 211). He is called "simple," affectionately, by the villagers, "not with any sense of humiliating Leaf by disparaging him . . . because it was an accepted thing that Leaf didn't in the least mind having no head, that deficiency of his being an unimpassioned matter of parish history" (Pt. II, Ch. iii; p. 76). Although his clean clothes and subservient manner make him likable to his fellow characters, the story that he tells the morning of Dick and Fancy's wedding about the man who makes a fortune from ten pounds certainly suggests that he is not among the generously endowed (Pt. V, Ch. ii; pp. 210-11). The point, however, is still the same: what is important about Leaf is the condition of his mind, the quality of his consciousness.

There are those who are less sympathetically treated, like Jane Day

and Thomas Leaf's mother--"'Every morning I see her eyes mooning out through the panes of glass like a pot-sick winder-flower'" (Pt. II, Ch. iii; p. 77)--but their purpose is more to suggest a range of intellectual and emotional capability rather than to symbolize or illustrate any particular idea Hardy has about the nature of their perception. In the way that Shakespeare was concerned to show the breadth of society by juxtaposing laborers and royalty, as well as others of less extreme rank, Hardy is concerned to present the broad range of human and sometimes natural intelligence. Like Smart and Smiler, Fancy, Elizabeth, and Geoffrey, Leaf is sympathetically treated because intelligence has a positive existence in Hardy--independent of the degree or quality of that intelligence--which refers to the larger and less finely graduated phenomenon of consciousness itself.

The intelligence of Elizabeth Endorfield, like that of Geoffrey Day, is one of the interesting ones. Her purpose in the plot is merely to advise Fancy to starve herself until Geoffrey withdraws his disapproval of Dick; that is, she is a part of the novel so that Hardy can advance the plot of Dick and Fancy's marrying. She has, however, qualities which make her very important to Hardy and to a discussion of this kind. She is "an exceedingly and exceptionally sharp woman in the use of her eyes and ears" and is regarded with some suspicion by the villagers who do not know her well (Pt. IV, Ch. iii; p. 166). Endorfield's role in the story occurs on two levels: the scene in which she gives Fancy the "charm," the advice, has most to do with an exploration of kinds of minds, of kinds of consciousnesses (this scene makes up most of "Autumn": "Fancy in the Rain," or Pt. IV, Ch. iii; pp. 165-68); and, second, what is of importance in this scene and in the sequence in which Fancy uses "The Spell" (the title of the next chapter) is that she chooses to

become a part of the village and its hierarchy by aligning herself with Dick--and with the "witch" Elizabeth.

"Mind" is the subject of Fancy's and Elizabeth's discussion: the most obvious example is the purported reason for Fancy's consultation of Elizabeth--how to make Geoffrey change his mind about Dick. Another example of the centrality of the concept of mind is that the scene is interior and, as Fancy goes outside and home, she turns "her attention to the external world once more," as if to make explicit that inside the Endorfield cottage is the interior world (Pt. IV, Ch. iii; p. 168). Three other factors intensify this effect. First, the idea of stopping eating is later made to seem as if it were Fancy's by the fact that Hardy does not narrate it in this scene; he has Elizabeth whisper it in Fancy's ear so that, because it is not narrated, we are kept in ignorance of it. Second, Fancy has the feeling that Elizabeth can read her mind, which has the effect both of making the consciousnesses of the two women seem less separate and of reminding us of the superstitious or supernatural overtones to the scene. Finally, Fancy's only passages of close narration occur in this scene; we learn, close to Fancy, that Elizabeth can read her mind and that she is "desperate about Dick" (Pt. IV, Ch. iii; p. 167).

Fancy knows that Elizabeth is not a witch; we know this because this description of Elizabeth's "distinctly Satanic" and less-than-Satanic qualities is from Fancy's perspective:

She was shrewd and penetrating; her house stood in a lonely place; she never went to church; she wore a red cloak; she always retained her bonnet indoors; and she had a pointed chin. Thus far her attributes were distinctly Satanic; and those who looked no further called her, in plain terms, a witch. But she was not gaunt, nor ugly in the upper part of her face, nor particularly strange in manner; so that, when her more intimate acquaintances spoke of her the term was softened, and she



became simply a Deep Body, who was as long-headed as she was high. (Pt. IV, Ch. iii; pp. 166-67)

It is, Hardy says, one of the things which "Fancy was revolving . . . in her mind" as she was deciding whether to ask Elizabeth for her opinion (Pt. IV, Ch. iii; p. 167). All of these little details in the novel refer to forms of consciousness, acts of the mind. They are connected to the development of the plot by Fancy's decision to ask Elizabeth Endorfield's advice and her shift in attitude from pragmatic scepticism at the beginning of the scene, when we see that she credits Elizabeth with nothing more than being "as long-headed as . . . high," to conventional superstition at the end, in which, from Fancy's perspective, Elizabeth is called "witch" (Pt. IV, Ch. iii; p. 168). This act on Fancy's part is, more than any other, Hardy's way of showing Fancy's identification with the Mellstock society. Fancy has "Taken Thought," as her indecisions and secrecy reveal, but this agreement with local and superstitious opinion suggests that she seeks to join the community and give up her individual and separating consciousness.

It is important that we see Fancy as fundamentally Mellstockian rather than urban (or modern) because, in this pastoral comedy, this heroine must give up considerable financial expectation and potential social mobility to satisfy the demands of the genre. If we believed that she had been educated and finished to the point that she belonged in a more advanced society or a more modern world than Mellstock, as do Grace Melbury and Sue Bridehead, then we would be forced to regard her marriage to Dick (or her education) as tragic, or at the very least as ironic. As a villager, however, she is part of Dick's own progress, and her native intelligence is merely one more factor in her favor, as Elizabeth's is to her. Fancy's exceptional intelligence neither sets her nor keeps her

apart from her community. Like Grace and Sue, Fancy is made different from the others by her education and environment; unlike them, she is still similar enough to return, to be changed back. Under the Greenwood Tree is the narration of the community's absorption of Fancy's complex mind and talents; the story of her coming to marry Dick is the story of her re-education, as well. Step by step, throughout the course of the novel, she relinquishes her pride, her expectations, her father's financial investment in her future, and her accomplishments and finished manners. Fancy's re-education is a process of intellectual conformity with the views and habits of the villagers, and one illustration of this re-education is this scene with Elizabeth Endorfield; another is her decision to use the marriage rituals which her mother used rather than the new ones she learned about at school. Fancy is not, however, completely obliterated, as Tess and Sue seem to be. In the matter of the church music, it is clear that her assimilation causes changes in the community, as Mellstock loses its traditional musicians and as the musicians lose their positions of leadership. Fancy's absorption into the community seems, ultimately, to be good for her and for the society, although Dick's naive assumption that they are completely honest with each other makes the ending of the novel rather ambiguous. Such absorption is not always so happy in Hardy's novels; there seems nothing good in Sue's.

Incidental as she may be to the logical and emotional centers of the novel, Elizabeth Endorfield has a critical effect on the lives of the characters. Endorfield is the archetype in Wessex for a kind of character which may be described in several ways, depending upon what features are considered most important. Hardy's own phrase "Mephistophelian visitants" has been picked up and used; in this pattern, Endorfield is the type for Sergeant Troy, Diggory Venn, William Dare, Baron Von Xanten

(of The Romantic Adventures of a Milkmaid), Richard Newson and Donald Farfrae (who combine to take this role), Dr. Fitzpiers (who is more like Faust than Mephistopheles), and, from The Dynasts, the Spirit Sinister, the Spirit Ironie, and the Spirit of Rumour.<sup>10</sup> In another scheme, Elizabeth is one of the "typical ballad" characters who have "a thoroughly rationalized 'mythology' to sustain them"; Under the Greenwood Tree, Far from the Madding Crowd, The Return of the Native, The Woodlanders, and Tess and, "with some reservations," Jude and The Trumpet-Major all take part in a narrative tradition much older, and less "literary," than the novel.<sup>11</sup> The presence of a witch and the power of magic in Hardy's fiction can also be explained by reference to consciousness in general and to the unreliable nature of perception in particular; for this reason it is somewhat misleading to call this character a "witch." This character is often regarded as a witch by the other characters, but there is seldom any doubt that Hardy sees him or her as merely unusually intelligent. The witch of Endor--one possible source for Endorfield's name--is an enduring symbol in Hardy of the superstitious interpretation of natural phenomena. Referring to World War I in 1922, for example, in the Apology to Late Lyrics and Earlier, fifty years after Under the Greenwood Tree, Hardy contrasts the "backwards" belief in this kind of witch-figure with modern, truth-seeking Darwinism. He says that "when belief in witches of Endor is displacing the Darwinian theory and 'the truth that shall make you free,' men's minds appear . . . to be moving backwards rather than on."<sup>12</sup>

The advantage to Hardy of allowing these characters their witch-like qualities is that the magic worked by these very intelligent people serves the artistic aims of his novels by implying that the strict causal

logic of literary realism cannot account for all events and actions. This is one reason that these characters are so common. Their very commonness introduces another terminological problem, because many of these characters are men, and many have importance in their novels beyond their association with superstitions. "Witch-figure," then, is a provisional term, limited only to this study; it is also understood that Gabriel Oak can be a witch-figure, as Elizabeth-Jane can, as can Susan Nunsuch. This is not to suggest that the term is inappropriate in any large way, only that "witch" must be read broadly. There are quite a number of witch-figures in Hardy, considering the fact that he is usually considered a realistic novelist, and their presence has been discussed by reference to "folkways," traditional art forms, and religious images.<sup>13</sup> Susan Nunsuch's incantation and spell make up a good example of Hardy's use of the traditional image of a witch; Hardy juxtaposes Susan's voodoo and Eustacia's unrelated agony to enhance the supernatural and mythic without sacrificing realistic probabilities (Bk. V, Ch. vii; pp. 420-25).

Allowing for all these sources for Hardy's unusually perceptive characters, the witch-figures, the most notable thing about them is that their special knowledge can always be explained by natural as well as supernatural means. This ambiguity is present even for those characters whose auras of the supernatural are instrumental in their stories. The Baron Von Xanten, for example, has power over Margery Tuck which "was curiously like enchantment, or mesmeric influence. It was so masterful that the sexual element was almost eliminated. It was that of Prospero over the gentle Ariel. And yet it was probably only that of the cosmopolite over the recluse, of the experienced man over the simple maid" (The Romantic Adventures of a Milkmaid, Ch. VIII, p. 355). The ambiguity is also obvious for those characters like Eustacia and

Elizabeth-Jane, whose special qualities make the references to the supernatural connotative and allusive. Elizabeth-Jane, for example, is not supernatural even when Hardy describes her directly as "This discerning silent witch" who divines truth by looking in the fire. The entire paragraph is worth quoting in full for its clear presentation of what Hardy thinks of when he describes a character in these terms. The power of Elizabeth-Jane's imagination, acting on what she already knows about Lucetta and Donald, is at the center of Hardy's interest:

A seer's spirit took possession of Elizabeth, impelling her to sit down by the fire and divine events so surely from data already her own that they could be held as witnessed. She followed Lucetta thus mentally--saw her encounter Donald somewhere as if by chance--saw him wear his special look when meeting women, with an added intensity because this one was Lucetta. She depicted his impassioned manner; beheld the indecision of both between their lothness to separate and their desire not to be observed; depicted their shaking of hands; how they probably parted with frigidity in their general contour and movements, only in the smaller features showing the spark of passion, thus invisible to all but themselves. This discerning silent witch had not done thinking of these things when Lucetta came noiselessly behind her and made her start. (Ch. XXIV, pp. 196-97)

The fact that Lucetta can surprise Elizabeth-Jane in the midst of her thoughts shows how very natural, rather than supernatural, her perspicacity is.

The passage of close narration which accompanies the agreement between Elizabeth-Jane and Lucetta to live together, technically at their third meeting, introduces the interesting pattern of imagery relating the two women to witchcraft and conjuring. They agree to meet, as they have always met accidentally before, at the cemetery, "old as civilization," where Susan Henchard is buried. Elizabeth-Jane sees Lucetta, and

Her presence so exceptionally substantiated the girl's utmost hopes that she almost feared her good fortune. Fancies find room in the strongest minds. Here, in a churchyard old as civilization, in the worst of weathers, was a strange woman of curious fascinations never seen elsewhere: there might be

some devilry about her presence. However, Elizabeth went on to the church tower, on whose summit the rope of a flag-staff rattled in the wind; and thus she came to the wall.

The lady had such a cheerful aspect in the drizzle that Elizabeth forgot her fancy. (Ch. XXI, p. 164)

The sentence in close narration is the one which describes Lucetta as a "woman of curious fascinations never seen elsewhere." Lucetta is not Satanic in any way to anyone but Elizabeth-Jane, and it is not to the histor that "there might be devilry about her presence." Later clarifying into a view of Elizabeth-Jane as a kind of witch whose consciousness is not bound by spacial limitations like most human consciousnesses, the imagery describes Elizabeth-Jane's qualities, not Lucetta's. This is made clear by the use of close narration which, in this case, presents a "fancy" of Elizabeth-Jane's mind.

The image of the witch emphasizes Elizabeth-Jane's intelligence and thoughtfulness without making her appear evil or extraordinary at all. In fact, this description of her as a witch is a great deal more sympathetic than one describing another quality of her mind:

Any suspicion of impropriety was to Elizabeth-Jane like a red rag to a bull. Her craving for correctness of procedure was, indeed, almost vicious. Owing to her early troubles with regard to her mother a semblance of irregularity had terrors for her which those whose names are safeguarded from suspicion know nothing of. (Ch. XXX, p. 248)

Probably the most interesting thing about this description of Elizabeth-Jane is that it occurs in the chapter immediately after the one in which Henchard saves her and Lucetta from the bull which threatens them. For such a repetition to occur so quickly suggests that the bull is a symbolic figure, controlled by "The premeditated human contrivance of the nose-ring" which is "too cunning for impulsive brute force," even when the bull has been stimulated by the "red rag" of "suspicion of impropriety" (Ch. XXIX, p. 238). The bull, of course, is an image for Hardy's

harrassed human being, in this case both Henchard, whom we are accustomed to think of as a "netted lion," as a somehow wrongly domesticated natural animal, and also Elizabeth-Jane, whom we are not (Ch. XLII, p. 349). There is no essential contradiction, however, in these metaphors which link Elizabeth-Jane both to witches and to animals. Even though Hardy's witches seem supernatural because of the strength of their mental powers, such powers do not signify a separation from or a denial of natural or physical ones.

The "real" witch-figure in The Mayor of Casterbridge is not Elizabeth-Jane but Fall, the weathercaster. The fact that his name is Fall and that at his cottage Henchard feels "like Saul at his reception by Samuel" uncovers the connection between Hardy's witch-figures and seers and his conception of consciousness (Ch. XXVI, p. 214). Fall, like Elizabeth Endorfield, is merely intelligent; and the two are connected to Hardy's personal vision of Eden and the human fall from grace in the way in which their knowledge is described: they belong to an earlier world and have a less restricted, more comprehensive kind of knowledge. Humans once shared general consciousness in Hardy's mythos, but, having evolved, are more and more isolated, both from nature and from each other. That Elizabeth Endorfield is a witch-figure means that she does not suffer from this isolation. This is why she tells Fancy that "little birds" told her about Fancy's problem with Dick and her father (Pt. IV, Ch. iii; p. 167); in the same way, Fall tells Henchard that he had a "Feeling" that he was coming to consult him (Ch. XXVI, p. 214). In Under the Greenwood Tree, which is just this side of Eden, Elizabeth's superior intelligence is less bound by the limitations of human consciousness than that of any other character in Mellstock and Yalbury. That the weathercaster Fall's name might portend Henchard's fall from power and fortune

does not preclude it from also referring to an earlier condition of human consciousness, the one before the fall. Elizabeth Endorfield and Fall also share a reference to Samuel and Saul, who meet after Samuel's death, through the industry of the witch of Endor, and after all of the witches are supposed to have been driven out (1 Samuel 28:7-19). Of whatever variety, Hardy's witches take their places in their stories as particular forms of consciousness, as kinds of minds. They can read natural signs; little birds tell them things; they can judge the weather. This communal consciousness seems unavailable to most of the characters who have "Taken Thought"; Tess's and Jude's life-long concern for the welfare of animals seems to be an indication of this communality, though it is at best only a vague memory or longing for it to them.

This ancient kind of intelligence which Elizabeth Endorfield and Mr. Fall have is what sets Gabriel Oak apart from the other characters in Far from the Madding Crowd. The most obvious examples of it are his abilities to tell time and predict the weather by natural signs; another is his immediate intuitive sympathy for Fanny Robin: "He fancied that he had felt himself in the penumbra of a very deep sadness when touching that slight and fragile creature. But wisdom lies in moderating mere impressions, and Gabriel endeavoured to think little of this" (Ch. VII, p. 58). As in his treatment of Elizabeth-Jane and Eustacia, Hardy does not really attempt to make Gabriel seem supernatural; most important are Oak's inherent nobility and intelligence and the fact that, like the old barn at Weatherbury, his virtues include endurance. His ancient way of knowing things endures as well, not only in his cleverness but in the intellectual processes of his dog George, in his associations with Samson, Moses, and other ancient figures, and in the "Arcadian sweetness" of his flute playing (Ch. VI, p. 45). During the trio performance of



Gabriel, Bathsheba, and Boldwood at the shearing-supper, "The shearers reclined against each other as at suppers in the early ages of the world . . ." (Ch. XXIII, p. 179). Even though Gabriel once gestures like "Elymas-the-Sorcerer" (Ch. VII, p. 59), his intelligence is clearly practical rather than supernatural. Oak's virtues have earthly, however precious, associations: they are "as metals in a mine" (Ch. XXIX, p. 215).

Giles Winterborne has this same instinctive--almost geological--knowledge when he plants and tends trees, but he lacks Gabriel's endurance in Hardy's presentation and would never have the strength to stand at dawn, as Boldwood sees Oak, "on the ridge, up against the blazing sky, . . . like the black snuff in the midst of a candle-flame" (Ch. XIV, p. 116). The actual possession of the "spreading" consciousness is more rare in Hardy than is a kind of instinctive memory of it or a longing for it ("I'll try to think," she observed rather more timorously; 'if I can think out of doors; my mind spreads away so'"--Far from the Madding Crowd Ch. IV, p. 32.) It is this desire for a feeling of unity in humanity, something he thinks existed in the past, that causes Jude to look to stone masonry, and especially medieval restoration, for his means of support. Phillotson, too, lonely and isolated, turns to archeology and to the study of the Romans in England for the same reason. Sue's isolation is so extreme that she can find no real connections, in the present or the past; this leaves her so weak that, even though she may be right about the necessity to reject institutions which endure in rigid defiance of reality, she has not the strength to stand personal loss.

It may be useful to summarize the general phenomenon of consciousness and to extend in this way the society found in Under the Greenwood Tree to the rest of Wessex. To look at all of Hardy's novels is to see an imaginary countryside peopled with characters of extremely diverse and deliberately specified degrees of intellectual capacity. Besides the very intelligent there are also quite a large number and variety of the mentally impaired; these characters range from the permanently impaired like Thomas Leaf and Grandfer Cattle to the temporarily diminished, as Jude is when he is drunk. A character may go mad, like Boldwood and Manston, and perhaps like Clym and Tess and Sue; a character may spend some mad moments, like Angel, Jocelyn, and Cytherea; or a character simply may be mad, like Jane Day. Interestingly, there are very few incorrigibly bad characters like Joseph Pennyways, the dishonest bailiff at Weatherbury in Far from the Madding Crowd. Most of the villains in Hardy's novels, when they are characters rather than abstractions like chance or circumstance or the human condition, have pasts--emotional histories--which account for their ignoble or opportunistic behavior; Manston, for example, and William Dare, the least mitigated of Hardy's antagonists, abandoned and unguided as children, have as their main flaw an arrogant lack of moral responsibility rather than any kind of inherently violent or criminal tendency. For those "villains" whose flaw is cowardice, like Henry Knight and Angel Clare, Hardy provides a change of heart at the end so that they are deepened and strengthened by their experience.

All of Hardy's characters can be discussed and classified according to the qualities of their consciousnesses, for this is as much a part of the information that Hardy always gives as their names. The rest of the descriptive material varies from novel to novel, and from situation to

situation, but if the characters are individualized, the kind of mind they have is described. Many of the best examples of this come from the locals in Wessex, whose collectivity makes any identification or individuation important, since to name one is to separate him or her from the community. In one interesting passage from Two on a Tower, Hardy can be seen emphasizing "personality" and "distinctive units of society" as criteria for naming, or "particularizing," some characters:

There now crunched heavier steps outside the door, and [Swithin's] grandmother could be heard greeting sundry local representatives of the bass and tenor voice, who lent a cheerful and well-known personality to the names Sammy Blore, Nat Chapman, Hezekiah Biles, and Haymoss Fry (the latter being one with whom the reader has already a distant acquaintance); besides these came small producers of treble, who had not yet developed into such distinctive units of society as to require particularizing. (Ch. II, p. 17)

In another example, Margery Tuck of The Romantic Adventures of a Milk-Maid, a novel which begins, quite literally, in the dark, is described in terms of intelligence and ideas: "She was one of those soft natures whose power of adhesiveness to an acquired idea seems to be one of the special attributes of that softness" (Ch. IV, p. 323).

It has often been noted before how Hardy's physical description of characters duplicates impressionism in painting: what Hardy narrates is less the description of the physical appearance than that of the mind or personality of the character or the impression of what the perceiver, influenced by the limitations of particularity, can see. The best example of this last one, of course, is Barber Percomb's look at Marty South:

In her present beholder's mind the scene formed by the girlish spar-maker composed itself into an impression-picture of extremest type, wherein the girl's hair alone, as the focus of observation, was depicted with intensity and distinctness, while her face, shoulders, hands, and figure in general were a blurred mass of unimportant detail lost in haze and obscurity. (Ch. II, p. 9)

Even though Hardy seems to be concerned here, as he so often is, with

visual effects and references to painting, this passage is less a description of Marty than it is a presentation of Percomb. The scene is described as forming "in her present beholder's mind," not even in his sight; and it is Marty's hair--its color and length--which interest the barber, not "her face, shoulders, hands, and figure in general." In short, Hardy's interest here is in Barber Percomb's consciousness.

General conceptions of intelligence and sanity apply most clearly for Hardy characters who are not central to the novels, and therefore who merit narrative description rather than dramatization of their personalities. For most of the characters who occupy the greatest part of Hardy's attention, the psychological and intellectual quality of self-alienation is the salient factor in their consciousness; it is important in Desperate Remedies and Under the Greenwood Tree and quickly becomes absolutely essential in the later novels. Self-consciousness and self-awareness are two of the principal and least destructive forms of self-alienation in Hardy, and when he concerns himself with the problem of consciousness, as he imagines a character, Hardy concerns himself with self-alienation and self-consciousness. A listing of Hardy's major characters will show a listing of characters who first come to consciousness and then who find themselves split, so that they can see themselves as objects or entities independent of their consciousnesses. This is always what images in mirrors mean in Hardy--not merely guilt or vanity, as is usually assumed of Bathsheba, for example, because of Gabriel's piqued condemnation of her, but self-alienation, consciousness. The paradigmatic example comes from that novel of barely- and recently-awakened consciousness, Under the Greenwood Tree:

Some circumstance had apparently caused much grief to Charley just previous to the entry of the choir, and he had absently taken down a small looking-glass, holding it before his face

to learn how the human countenance appeared when engaged in crying, which survey led him to pause at the various points in each wail that were more than ordinarily striking, for a thorough appreciation of the general effect. (Pt. I, Ch. ii; p. 8)

Sometimes this image of the reflected self is quite direct, as when Tess is moved to consider the day of her death while looking in the mirror "at her fairness"; when Jocelyn sees his ghostly reflection and comes to an awareness of his age; or when Boldwood faces his insubstantiality and "nervous excitability" after he gets Bathsheba's valentine (Ch. XIV, p. 114).<sup>14</sup> Sometimes the image is quite vivid and goes beyond the mere reflection of the viewer, as when Henchard--that "self-alienated man" (Ch. XLV, p. 380)--looks down in Ten Hatches Hole and finds his own double:

While his eyes were bent on the water beneath there slowly became visible a something floating in the circular pool formed by the wash of centuries; the pool he was intending to make his death-bed. At first it was indistinct by reason of the shadow from the bank; but it emerged thence and took shape, which was that of a human body, lying stiff and stark upon the surface of the stream.

In the circular current imparted by the central flow the form was brought forward, till it passed under his eyes; and then he perceived with a sense of horror that it was himself. Not a man somewhat resembling him, but one in all respects his counterpart, his actual double, was floating as if dead in Ten Hatches Hole. (Ch. XLI, p. 342)

This vision is horrifying to Henchard because he can reasonably expect to see either his own reflection in the pool or the body of another person; that it is not his reflection but his embodiment explains his confusion and superstitious acceptance of it as real. But these reflected images, and these gazings into mirrors, are more than signs of self-alienation; they are the act of alienation itself. A Hardy character looking in a mirror is a consciousness contemplating its detached presence, its double, in the outside world, like Charley watching himself cry. These acts of consciousness signify a kind of perception which, like

"Taking Thought," means self-consciousness to Hardy.

This same doubling of the self is the basis for the belief in a Well-Beloved, and a desire to reunite with the self is the motivation for the search for it. This is why Pierston, for whom the moon is a symbol of the Well-Beloved, thinks of her as "his wraith in a changed sex" (Pt. III, Ch. ii; p. 158).<sup>15</sup> This is why Edward Springrove's search for his Well-Beloved is his search for "Echoes of himself," for "the indefinable helpmate to the remoter sides of himself" (Ch. X, No. iv; pp. 200-201). Hardy's insight that the search for the Well-Beloved is in reality a search for another part of one's own self is a constant in his fiction, appearing as it does in character after character whose self-alienation appears as an image in a mirror or a search for the double. Angel rejects Tess because her apparent duplicity makes her unfit, he believes, to be his ideal, his "wraith in a changed sex":

"I repeat, the woman I have been loving is not you."

"But who?"

"Another woman in your shape." (Ch. XXXV, p. 293)

He is wrong, however, to reject her, since she is his double here: they have even committed the same crime. Angel's rejection of Tess is his rejection of himself; his self-consciousness is self-alienation here.

Ian Gregor points out the form which this split takes for Clym:

". . . Clym, in going against his mother and marrying Eustacia, is almost willing his own self-destruction, driving a splinter between 'the right and the left hands of the same body.'" <sup>16</sup> It is not, however, that Clym and his mother are merely two halves of a whole; he is so much a part of her that leaving her for Eustacia makes, as Gregor puts it, a "rent . . . in Clym's nature."<sup>17</sup> The damage done to Clym by his estrangement from and rebellion against his mother is vividly presented by Hardy in such a way that we can see the inner world of Clym's pain by what he sees and

hears in the outer world of the heath:

The wet young beeches were undergoing amputations, bruises, crippling, and harsh lacerations, from which the wasting sap would bleed for many a day to come, and which would leave scars visible till the day of their burning. Each stem was wrenched at the root, where it moved like a bone in its socket, and at every onset of the gale convulsive sounds came from the branches, as if pain were felt.<sup>18</sup>

It is inevitable, then, that Clym and his mother will not meet again as fully conscious beings. Because Mrs. Yeobright is a part of Clym from which he severs himself, she exists to him after this only as potential happiness and peace, and she appears to him only as a knock in his dreams. His self-alienation is symbolized by his estrangement from his mother, and her death makes this alienation permanent.

Rivalry, too, is often presented as a splitting or doubling of the self, and this is why Hardy's characters often seem to appear in pairs. Edward Springrove and Manston even join together at one point, in the struggle over Cytherea:

They flew together like the jaws of a gin. In a minute they were both on the floor, rolling over and over, locked in each other's grasp as tightly as if they had been one organic being at war with itself . . . .

Two characteristic noises pervaded the apartment through this momentous space of time. One was the sharp panting of the two combatants, so similar in each as to be undistinguishable; the other was the stroke of their heels and toes, as they smote the floor at every contortion of body or limbs. (Ch. XX, No. ii; p. 427)

This suggests that Manston, and not Cytherea, is Edward's missing other. Cytherea is the center of a different set of doubling, since Cytherea, of course, is really both Miss Graye and Miss Aldclyffe. Farfrae and Henchard compete, as Edward and Manston do, for survival. Pierston, too, sometimes seems split into several characters; he has complex familial relationships to both his rivals, Isaac Pierston, who shares his name, and Henri Leverre, who is the son of the woman he intended to marry at

the beginning and finally succeeds in marrying at the end.

Desperate Remedies is notable for its nearly chaotic schemes of split-up characters, and The Well-Beloved notable for its rigidly architectural plan of repetitions. These blatant forms of doubling do not occur consistently throughout Hardy's fiction, although the characters often appear in groups which draw attention to particular aspects of their identities. Dick Dewy's role, for example, as Fancy's suitor is shared among Dick, Farmer Shiner, and Parson Maybold in the same way that the function of a character in the plot determines grouping in others of Hardy's novels. Similar in form are: Stephen Smith-Henry Knight-Lord Luxellian; Gabriel Oak-Farmer Boldwood-Frank Troy; Clym Yeobright-Damon Wildeve-Diggory Venn; Eustacia-Mrs. Yeobright-Thomasin; and Grace Melbury-Felice Charmond-Suke Damson. One way to look at these characters is to see them as the lovers or suitors to the Beloved. Sometimes Hardy seems to multiply the suitors in order to validate their excesses and to emphasize the Beloved's extreme attractiveness and the power of sexual instincts. When the Beloved appears as a multiple character, however, the effect is less one of architectural symmetry than it is a hint of the persistence of the ideal in the world. For Ethelberte-Picotee and Tess-'Liza-Lu, the first appearance of the ideal is muddier, as it were, than the second, which is a clarification and a purification of the first. Hardy also occasionally pairs up characters so that their opposition to one another emphasizes their salient qualities; Edward Springrove-Aeneas Manston, Giles Winterborne-Edred Fitzpiers, Angel-Alec, and Sue-Arabella all demonstrate a contrast between spiritual and earthly natures.

This is not to suggest that all of the characters in all of these splittings, doubling, or triplings are self-alienated. Sometimes one



member of the group seems to exist as a part of it simply because of a lack of self-awareness; Arabella, for one, and Suke Damson, for another, and all of the characters associated generally with artificiality and exclusively with animals and instincts contrast with the self-aware and sensitive members of their groups. Picotee and 'Liza-Lu seem refined beyond the self-alienation which is emphasized in Ethelberta and Tess. Usually, too, in a group of three characters, all are not equally individualized and narrated; often, in fact, one of these characters is so minor a personality as to be incidental. This is particularly true in Under the Greenwood Tree. Though Arthur Maybold's shyness and ambitions make him potentially an interesting character, the only character whom we know to be self-alienated is Fancy, because she and Dick are the only characters narrated very precisely at all. Dick seems fairly simple and straightforward, but Fancy shows the signs of what Hardy thought of as modern nervousness, and these signs are so essential a part of her character that we are led to suspect that they will not disappear in her marriage to Dick. This is why she has a secret at the end--so that there is a part of her which is not subsumed in her marriage to Dick, no matter how optimistic the reader.

When Hardy wrote directly about the split in the consciousness of his characters, especially his "modern" ones, he usually conceived of it as a split between some kind of reasoning or judging faculty and some kind of imaginative or fanciful or spiritual one. In this sense, Hardy's conception of the internal conflicts--the "self-combating proclivity of the supersensitive"--which his major characters face changed very little over the years (Tess Ch. XXXVI, p. 311). Usually, however, Hardy is concerned with presenting how various states of feeling and thought are experienced and with making distinctions between them. In this, his

general development is a movement from simple to complex. In Desperate Remedies, except for Edward Springrove's search for a Well-Beloved, the most that can be said for the complexity of consciousness in the characters is that there is a split between "Reason" and "Fancy," between judgment and the emotions or the imagination. This is so conventional an idea that Hardy need not have been deliberate in so presenting it. By the end of the novels, however, by Tess, Jude, and The Well-Beloved, "reason" has become something like "awareness," and "fancy" and the emotions have become unconscious forces which differ in their nature as the situation and emotional condition of the characters change. Unconscious forces can be heredity, memory, and ideals, as well as sexual attraction, "an emotional void in Henchard that he unconsciously craved to fill," and "The irresistible, universal, automatic tendency to find sweet pleasure somewhere, which pervades all life, from the meanest to the highest" (The Mayor Ch. XXII, p. 169; Tess Ch. XVI, p. 134).

Speaking generally, then, of all of Hardy's novels, it can be said that his fiction is about the consciousness, the mental life, of an individual and the environment in which that consciousness operates. Each novel focusses at some time upon the acts of this consciousness as it is distinct from the physical world: it may be by way of demonstrating the first act of consciousness, the "Taking Thought," of a character; it may be by describing the self-alienation, the "self-combating proclivity" of the most sensitive of the characters, the protagonists. Each novel places that consciousness, however isolated, in the context of society and nature, which are both important functions of that consciousness as well as sources for it because their force arises from within the character, as a result of thought or feeling. In the very simplest terms Hardy ever provided, the sense--the meaning--of the individual in the

conscious world is carried by two conceptions: society, which is a thought (Dick's horse "Smart"), and nature, which in Hardy is a feeling (Reuben's horse "Smiler").

## Chapter Six: The Themes of Consciousness

In February 1887, a month before The Woodlanders came out, Hardy believed that "because we are in a somnambulistic hallucination . . . we think the real to be what we see as real" (Life, p. 186)--a thought that articulates the nexus between two of Hardy's three most important themes of consciousness. The first is that there is a radical difference between what is real and what is corporeal--"the material is not the real--only the visible, the real being invisible optically" (Life, p. 186). The second is that, conscious as we are, our awareness is shallow and incomplete; we are aware only of ourselves and only of the present; we are, to use a different image, sleepwalking, our minds in a dream of our own making which has only tangential connections to reality:

Each individual is conscious of himself, but nobody is conscious of themselves collectively, except perhaps some poor gaper who stares round with a half-idiotic aspect.

There is no consciousness here [in London] of where anything comes from or goes to--only that it is present. (Life, pp. 206-7)

The relation these two ideas share in Hardy's mind is one of cause and effect: the result of our incomplete consciousness, the result of our only partial wakefulness, is that we believe the superficial to be true. The third of these themes of consciousness is related in a slightly different way, for Hardy's characters show that whatever degree of consciousness is possible for them, even the most wakeful are not conscious enough to guarantee themselves survival: the aspirations of all Hardy's conscious characters are limited by lack of knowledge. Like the

railroad, knowledge (in the form of education) in Hardy is an image for change: the railroad represents social evolution and education represents human evolution, which, to Hardy's mind, was the development of consciousness.<sup>1</sup> Hardy uses knowledge, particularly in the forms of knowledge of secrets and of classical education, to demonstrate how some people are more highly conscious--more sensitive--than others. This unequal distribution of a high degree or sensitivity of consciousness appears in very practical as well as very abstract terms in Hardy's fiction. It means, for example, that characters are controlled by what they do not know; it means that knowledge, ignorance, and secrets have power over individual lives. These three themes make up a constant discussion in Hardy's novels of the limitations of particular consciousnesses. The theme of knowledge and secrets is the first of the three to dominate a novel and is most thoroughly presented in The Mayor of Casterbridge. Even a cursory look at any of the other novels, however, shows that it is always present and always central. In the same way, the themes of the corporeal and the real and the "sommambulistic hallucination" of perception appear in all of the novels, even though they are not always emphasized and thoroughly developed. The problem of reality and corporeality is most vividly presented in The Woodlanders and that of imperfect or partial perception in Jude.

This chapter will necessarily be elliptical. A full study of the themes of consciousness in Hardy's fiction would require so much space that its inclusion in any other study is impossible.<sup>2</sup> Hardy's interest in the meaning and effects of consciousness was so great and so thoroughly integrated into his very conceptions of humanity, nature, and society that it is ubiquitous. Such an intensive study would have to take into account not only the changes in Hardy's thinking which occurred over the

years but also how much and what part of this conception was deliberately presented by Hardy and how much was, as it were, unconscious. This current chapter is limited to the three most important of these themes--the power of knowledge and secrets, the "somnambulistic hallucination" of perception, and the two worlds of the real and the corporeal--and, regrettably, to only a very few of the most basic and clear-cut instances of their operation. The complex dichotomy between the real and the corporeal is so important a part of Hardy's discussion of perception that it will be treated separately, in the second half of this chapter. The other two themes are really two forms of the same idea: that there are reasons for such imperfect perception as exists even in the most sensitive, thoughtful, and intelligent. Hardy's use of metaphorical and symbolic patterns in the construction of these two themes hints at his visualization of this idea. The terms which this idea takes--secrecy and knowledge, drunkenness and sobriety, blindness and vision, and dreaming and waking--will be handled in the first part of this chapter. The concerns of the previous chapter--intellectual and emotional capacity, "Taking Thought," and the fissure in the modern personality--are obviously a part of Hardy's presentation of the characteristics and importance of human consciousness. In the next chapter, this discussion will be concluded, and Hardy's two perspectives (of the individual and of some observer with a cosmic detachment) and his two conceptions of the interrelations between the individual consciousness and the world will illustrate the last of these themes.

## A. 1. "Half-Somnolence": Knowledge and Secrets

In the context of this general discussion of Hardy's conception of consciousness, a theme which has to do with knowledge and secrets presents particular problems, partly because the interest in the effects of secret knowledge has a very long and rich history in Judeo-Christian culture. The use of this theme necessarily entails myriad complex associations, and, in a way, Hardy seems more interested in the complexity which is associated with this idea than he does with the associations themselves; specifically, Hardy relates a high degree or level of consciousness to the presence of secret knowledge in a character. This is particularly true in his early novels, when Hardy seems more interested in narrating the effects of consciousness--or, in this rubric, the effects of knowledge. In his later novels, Hardy was concerned with the experience and meaning of consciousness as well as its effects, so his presentation gradually becomes more and more intrinsic to his depiction of character. For example, there is a complicated mish-mash of secrets, subplots, and parasitic characters in The Hand of Ethelberta and The Mayor of Casterbridge; in Tess, however, there is an organized exploration of the guilt which comes of knowledge and a sympathetic presentation of the difficulty of knowing the true origin and fair distribution of that guilt.

The Hand of Ethelberta concerns itself exactly with the obligations of knowledge and the precariousness of secrecy, since, in this novel as in the others, what is secret is the truth. Characters, in other words, do not merely have knowledge; they must have knowledge of something--the truth. Like The Well-Beloved, The Hand of Ethelberta is interesting to Hardy scholars because of its artistic protagonist, and, just as Hardy makes clear his associations between emotional depth and artistic

productivity in his last novel, he presents in The Hand of Ethelberta his analysis of the sources and forms of fiction. There is a talent for story-telling, according to the basic premise of this novel, but success at telling stories depends on the reputation of the teller as well as on the teller's ability to sound truthful.<sup>3</sup> Hardy's explicit position seems to emphasize the appearance of truth in narration: in support of a point Ethelberta has already made, the histor says, "A modern critic has well observed of De Foe that he had the most amazing talent on record for telling lies; and Ethelberta, in wishing her fiction to appear like a real narrative of personal adventure, did wisely to make De Foe her model" (Ch. XVI, p. 127). But the point of the climax of this novel, when Ethelberta makes a story of her own life, is that the impetus to tell stories is more than a desire to sound truthful--it is the desire, ultimately, to be truthful, to tell the truth. Telling stories is the exposing of secrets; it is the imparting of knowledge. Keeping secrets is the hiding of knowledge, is lying, and, in Hardy, it always entails serious social danger. The Hand of Ethelberta is one of Hardy's more interesting analyses of the effects of knowledge and secrecy, then, because it illustrates what is for him the connection between art and truth; his more thorough and characteristic presentation of the problems of knowledge and secrecy, however, occurs in The Mayor of Casterbridge. Both novels show clearly the conflict which arises in the character who has both a public and a private life, but The Mayor shows more clearly than Ethelberta that, in Hardy's world, knowledge is strength and ignorance is weakness. Secrets, however, are another matter: if the knowledge and ignorance are of secrets, then over the long term knowledge is Faustian in that it dooms the knower; ignorance offers protection. The effects of knowing depend on whether or not what is known is secret.



It is Farfrae's knowledge, for instance, of grain, commerce, and technology which is the basis for his success in Casterbridge; his knowledge gives him power, eventually even political power. Farfrae's knowledge is not based on others' weaknesses; it is as practical and mundane as his world of commerce is. Like Elizabeth Endorfield's, Farfrae's judgment is so good that it seems supernatural, but to the histor there is no mystery:

Whether it were that his Northern energy was an over-mastering force among the easy-going Wessex worthies, or whether it was sheer luck, the fact remained that whatever he touched he prospered in. Like Jacob in Padan-Aram, he would no sooner humbly limit himself to the ringstraked-and-spotted exceptions of trade than the ringstraked-and-spotted would multiply and prevail.

But most probably luck had little to do with it. Character is Fate, said Novalis, and Farfrae's character was just the reverse of Henchard's, who might not inaptly be described as Faust has been described--as a vehement gloomy being who had quitted the ways of vulgar men without light to guide him on a better way. (Ch. XVII, p. 131)

Farfrae's knowledge is not of a Faustian kind, but Henchard's is; Farfrae's dealings in the world are based on pragmatic knowledge, Henchard's on secret knowledge.

Just as the key to Farfrae's role in The Mayor is knowledge--the knowledge of technology in agriculture and knowledge of the world outside Casterbridge--so Henchard's secrets provide the key to his role. His secrets are not of essential importance in and of themselves, in spite of their potentially criminal or immoral content: it is not really the fact that Henchard keeps secrets which interests us; it is in the exchange of knowledge for secrets that our attention is drawn to their significance. In this very mercantile novel, a novel of the marketplace, the warehouse, and of public ritual, knowledge is one more form of currency, of what people trade for power and prestige, for what they want; their secrets, on the other hand, are their debts. Henchard is privy to

a few secrets which are really the "burden" of others, but, characteristically, he has something that he must hide from others.<sup>4</sup> This secrecy contaminates all of his emotional investments and dominates all of his relationships. There are the secrets of his sale of his wife and child; the secrets of his remarriage to Susan, his pretence in courting her, and his affair with and abandonment of Lucetta. There is the secret of Elizabeth-Jane's illegitimacy, the secret of Henchard's visit to the weathercaster, the secret of Newson's visit and Henchard's lie to him, and the secret of the goldfinch.

Taken all together, Henchard's secrets have a powerful presence in the novel; they add up to a quality of his personality. All of this secrecy, for example, is the primary source of our sense of Henchard's profound isolation (a sense which is reinforced by the fact that the preponderance of close narration presents Henchard's perspective.) The reason that secrets isolate Henchard is that they form too unpredictable a basis for his relationships with other characters. This is especially true of the women, Susan, Lucetta, and Elizabeth-Jane; and the temporary or erratic quality of the love between Henchard and each of these women mirrors the instability of the secrets themselves. Jopp and Newson, too, are related to Henchard in the secrets that they share with him, that they keep from him, and that he keeps from them. Farfrae, interestingly, is different from all other characters in this matter because Henchard shares a little from most of his secrets with him. Farfrae knows about Susan and, though he does not know her identity, he also knows about Henchard's affair with and feelings for Lucetta. Clearly, then, if knowledge is a kind of currency in this novel, the arena of human relationships is the marketplace.

In Hardy's world, knowledge and secrets can put people in one of

three positions in regard to others. First, ignorance, having secrets kept from a character, can make that character helpless. Wise, self-educated, and intelligent, (all powerful virtues to Hardy), with "the serene Minerva-eyes of one 'whose gestures [beam] with mind,'" Elizabeth-Jane is essentially defenseless against the whims and moods of Henchard, Lucetta, and Farfrae until she has the knowledge of the entirety of her story (Ch. XLV, p. 380). Second, having a secret to keep can be a positive source of debilitation in Hardy. Attempting to keep her past a secret makes it impossible for Lucetta to have the strength to survive public knowledge; and a secret in his past makes it impossible for Henchard to keep his office, first, and then his family. Both are weakened by having a secret which becomes the basis of others' knowledge; it is as if secrets make characters vulnerable to fatal collapse while ignorance exposes them merely to pain. Finally, one character may know of another character's secret. The relationship between those who have knowledge and those who have secrets is a symbiotic one: for every character who has a secret to keep, there is at least one more, like the furmity-woman, who knows that secret; for every character who is debilitated by secrecy, there is another whose good fortune is due to knowledge of that secret. Jopp's power over Lucetta is based on his knowledge of her secret relationship with Henchard, just as the furmity-woman's power over Henchard is her knowledge of his secret crime. The skimmington has the fatal power that it does because it has Jopp's knowledge and Lucetta's debilitation as its origin, not because the characters are particularly superstitious, and only partly because Newson anonymously and unwittingly donates money. This power and good fortune which comes of knowing another's secrets, however, is not ennobling. Jopp is no hero for his treatment of Lucetta, and Henchard's collection of letters from

her does not give him the strength to expose her to Farfrae.

The unattractive power of knowing another's secrets, the helplessness of having secrets held against one, and the weakening caused by keeping secrets are all a part of what are to Hardy the destructive possibilities of knowing. He just barely avoids this potentially tragic aspect of knowledge in Under the Greenwood Tree, a novel as dominated by secrets as any of the others, but the threat of exposure is otherwise a constant and serious undercurrent of motivation in his fiction. Its effects can be seen throughout his novels. This threat, of course, makes Desperate Remedies the murder mystery that it is, and the labyrinth, which Hardy uses as a metaphor for thought, is in fact the process, however gradual, of exposing the guilty by the innocent. In A Pair of Blue Eyes, Elfride Swancourt's secret and its discovery contribute to her demise. The secret itself--that she has loved before--hardly seems significant to us, and it is difficult to be sympathetic to Henry Knight's demand for such emotional virginity. The act of secret-keeping, however, is a mistake that weakness makes, and Knight's disappointment that Elfride is not candid with him is much more understandable. This particular plot of secrets and their exposure is repeated in Tess, after having been made considerably more complex. In the later novel, the emphasis shifts from whether or not the heroine has committed a crime to whether or not the heroine is responsible for the crime (which has indubitably been committed.) In the change from A Pair of Blue Eyes to Tess, this plot also changes the emphasis from the effects of keeping the secret (interpreted as a lack of candor) to the secret itself; that is, although Angel believes that Tess "had practiced gross deceit upon him," the real source of his disillusionment is that Tess is not the ideal that he thought she was (Ch. XXXVII, p. 323). One reason that Tess is

so much more compelling than A Pair of Blue Eyes is that the secret is sexual rather than merely romantic in nature. It is also the reason that Alec's influence over Tess is so much greater than Stephen Smith's is over Elfride: the fact that the knowledge is sexual makes it of the most intimate kind.

Lucetta's secret, kept from Donald and from Casterbridge, is sexual in origin in this same way, but, for a number of reasons, it lacks the power to engage our sympathy in the way Tess's secret does. Not the least among them are that Lucetta is shallow and unconsidering (never having "Taken Thought"), that she cannot be said to be Henchard's sexual victim as Tess is of Alec, and that she is really only afraid of exposure and not concerned, as Tess is, with the meaning and extent of her guilt. The most important reason, however, that Lucetta's secret finally matters only to her and not to us or to any of the other characters is not psychological, it is structural: Lucetta, her secret, and her death are essentially peripheral to Henchard and the rise and fall of his fortunes.

There is another aspect of knowledge in Hardy than that of the tragic; there is a kind of knowledge which is not parasitic, which does not depend on the secrets and weaknesses of others for its source. This secret is of the truth about the world, and, though it can be as painful as the knowledge that the world is not fit for the most sensitive of us to live in (as Jude learns), it can also be the source of some kind of harmonious understanding of nature; this is the knowledge of the workings of natural forces. Father Time, Marty South, and Giles Winterborne, for instance, seem to have a kind of instinctual or inherent knowledge that makes chaotic nature legible.<sup>5</sup> The characters who derive actual strength from their knowledge, however, the ones who survive, learn some

"secret" of living which makes their perception truer. Gabriel Oak, for instance, is one who learns and benefits from living; and Elizabeth-Jane is in possession of

the secret (as she had once learnt it) of making limited opportunities endurable; which she deemed to consist in the cunning enlargement, by a species of microscopic treatment, of those minute forms of satisfaction that offer themselves to everybody not in positive pain; which, thus handled, have much of the same inspiring effect upon life as wider interests cursorily embraced. (Ch. XLV, p. 385)

The fact that Arabella is one of these characters mitigates her culpability as a survivor somewhat, although it does not of course make her any the less crass. She seems to have access to and control over a whole world of ideas and events to which Jude is almost perfectly oblivious. In a very basic way, Arabella knows and understands the secrets associated not only with slaughter but also with birth. She is not debilitated by her secrets, but then exposure holds no serious threat for her: that her dimple-making is only moderately successful seems irrelevant to her; that Jude is shocked at her other artificialities is less important to her than adulterations in the beer. Most important, she seems able to turn the threat of exposure to her own advantage; her greasy fingerprints on Jude's books lead to a public humiliation of Jude rather than Arabella, since she pretends that he has "ill-used" her to the churchgoers of Alfredston (Pt. I, Ch. xi; pp. 80-81).

Because Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae are more sensitive than Arabella, Hardy shows a more typical attitude about secrets in the scene in which they both recognize the damage they have suffered at the hands of those who had knowledge which was denied to them. Although Elizabeth-Jane's general circumstances are beginning to change for the better, she is still ignorant of the fact that Newson is her father; she has much of her story still to learn. For Farfrae, however, the worst is already

over. The context for this scene is that Henchard, fearful and suspicious of the purpose of Elizabeth-Jane's long walks, is spying on her:

Could he have heard such conversation as passed he would have been enlightened thus much:-- . . .

She ". . . I wish to get a glimpse of the sea every day."

he.--"Is it a secret why?"

She (reluctantly).--"Yes."

He (with the pathos of one of his native ballads).--"Ah, I doubt there will be any good in secrets! A secret cast a deep shadow over my life. And well you know what it was."

Elizabeth admitted that she did, but she refrained from confessing why the sea attracted her. She could not herself account for it fully, not knowing the secret possibly to be that, in addition to early marine associations, her blood was a sailor's. (Ch. XLII, p. 352)

Not only is it clear that Farfrae's objection to secrets is valid, however melodramatic; we can also see that, regardless of her ignorance, Elizabeth-Jane acts in accordance with and is, in fact, controlled by a secret of which she is not conscious.

Reminiscent of the script and stage directions of the theatre, in which there is no real "narrator" at all, Hardy's odd narrative form here reinforces the artificial intensity suggested by the phrase, "with the pathos of one of his native ballads," and the universalization of character suggested by the use of "He" and "She" instead of "Elizabeth-Jane" and "Donald" and by the ostensible, hypothetical nature of what is narrated ("Could he have heard such conversation as passed he would have been enlightened thus much"). Like Lucetta's secret, the story of Elizabeth-Jane's illegitimacy and her true paternity is not really at the heart of The Mayor of Casterbridge. It is treated lightly here, in a very detached way, and both Donald and Elizabeth-Jane recover completely from the effects of their ignorance. Furthermore, these two characters seem absolved of blame for their part in Henchard's fall, even Farfrae, partially because they are characters against whom secrets are kept. Their positions of ignorance lend them a kind of innocence or naiveté

which is not granted to Henchard, who must be regarded as one who uses secrets against others as well as having secrets to defend.

None of these characters has complete (or completely reliable) consciousness: the secrets kept against Farfrae, Elizabeth-Jane, Lucetta and Henchard and the secrets these characters keep are signs that none of them can perceive well enough, as Matthew Arnold phrased it, "[to see] life steadily, and [to see] it whole."<sup>6</sup> Their own secrets prevent them from seeing steadily and others' secrets cause them to see only fragments of what is there. Because of the instability of secrets, the quality of the characters' perception varies considerably in this novel, from complete ignorance and blindness to clear-sighted and sober thoughtfulness. There is a general pattern in which the characters move from ignorance or misperception to knowledge and clear-sightedness, though Henchard's change is less distinct than those from whom secrets are kept because, in general, as a secret-keeper, he moves from concealment to exposure. (His perception is unsteady and his actions, as a consequence, oscillate: he cannot, for example, seem to make up his mind after he has gone to see Fall the weathercaster.) Henchard's is the story of the painful effects of consciousness; Elizabeth-Jane's is the story of the effects of ignorance and the gaining of more complete consciousness. Elizabeth-Jane's education in life makes hers a story of coming to terms with pain; Henchard's debilitation makes his a story of gradual withdrawal into the private world of his own consciousness.

The first two chapters of the novel narrate the act which brings Henchard to consciousness. The fact that he is drunk when he sells Susan and the first Elizabeth-Jane to Newson signifies that he suffers from a partial, unreliable form of consciousness. It does not mean that Henchard is operating without consciousness: his "temper," we learn



later, is "artificially intensified" by alcohol (Ch. V, p. 41); certainly, Henchard's personality does not seem dulled by it. Intoxication is fairly unusual in Hardy but important in a discussion of this kind because it shows the impairment of an otherwise operant mind. Jan Coggan, for instance, seems by the repeated private "twirl" of his eye and Gabriel's preference for him to be the most conscious or advanced of the rustics, but his drinking classifies him as one of the rustics rather than one of the financially independent landowners (a group to which Gabriel comes to belong.)<sup>7</sup>

Accenting this difference between Gabriel Oak and Jan Coggan is the scene in which Joseph Poorgrass brings the dead Fanny Robin and her child back to Weatherbury for burial. Hardy makes use of the inebriation of Jan, Joseph, and Mark Clark to show the general quality of their thought. Metonymically, he focusses attention on their eyes to emphasize that it is their perception which is at issue and which is diminished--flawed, in fact--as a result of the dulling of their minds. To pay attention to the ways their eyes look to Oak also has the merit of illustrating their perception from outside it. Jan Coggan looks "indefinitely" at Oak when he enters the Buck's Head, "one or other of his eyes occasionally opening and closing of its own accord, as if it were not a member, but a dozy individual with a distinct personality" (Ch. XLII, p. 329). One of the best jokes in the novel, "the affliction called a multiplying eye," is Joseph's formulation of the effects of drinking alcohol (Ch. XLII, p. 330). Hardy narrates at length the increasing inebriation of the three men, especially as it affects their conversational and reasoning powers; he is interested most particularly, however, in how the alcohol affects their perception, so his habitual point of reference is their eyes. By the time they are thoroughly drunk,

they sit in darkness--"and the eyes of the three men were but sparkling points on the surface of darkness" (Ch. XLII, p. 329).

While Hardy is concerned with the immediate effects of their drinking on these three men's thought and perception, he uses their inebriation as a kind of symbol of their more everyday intellectual primitiveness. Jan Coggan is most nearly Gabriel's equal, so his general incapacity is less obvious than that of the other men, Joseph Poorgrass especially, but Hardy groups Jan, Mark, and Joseph together in this scene in opposition to Gabriel, who is, above all things, sober. Joseph Poorgrass's moralizings and generalizations are the object of comedy and, together with his inebriation, serve as an illustration of his general dimness. This very scene, for instance, in which Joseph fails to get Fanny to her own funeral, begins in a fog so dense that "The air was as an eye suddenly struck blind" (Ch. XLII, p. 323). Joseph's blindness parallels his fear ("The hollow echo" of the fall of a drop of water "reminded the waggoner painfully of the grim Leveller." "His spirits were oozing out of him quite" [Ch. XLII, pp. 324-25]), and that he is frightened by what he imagines encourages him to stay and get drunk with Mark and Jan. Gabriel's sobriety, which in this scene consists both in his abstinence and his calmness, is contrasted with Jan's drunkenness and Joseph's fear. The same sobriety of character contrasts with the willful or obedient somnolence of the other men, at the harvest supper/wedding feast (at which Troy convinces Bathsheba's workers to drink brandy) and after it (when Oak saves Bathsheba's grain from the storm.)

There is a similar contrast between sobriety and drunkenness in The Mayor of Casterbridge, where the distinction in social classes is even more clearly marked. Henchard's drunkenness at the beginning and after his bankruptcy mark him in the social hierarchy as a journeyman or day

laborer and as a denizen of Mixen Lane, respectively. Drinking is much more serious in the potentially anarchic urban setting of The Mayor of Casterbridge than it is in the relative stability of agricultural Weatherbury, but in Casterbridge inebriation does not rob characters of the will or the means to action. Henchard is able to act decisively and effectively while he is in this state of diminished consciousness, however antisocial these actions may be. What is lost is credibility and, in this novel, a respect for social conventions and order. For Jude, the matter is different again: each time that Jude gets drunk he repeats destructive actions which he or a member of his family has performed before. The repetition of the actions gives them symbolic significance. Whether suicide, formalized church prayer, or conjugal relations with Arabella, each of these actions becomes a kind of ritual or reflects an actual social ritual which is preserved in society but fatal to individuals like Jude or Sue. In this novel, complete, unmediated consciousness leads a character to a rejection of absolute social rules, particularly those concerned with marriage and education; intoxication leads to submission to them. Jude is right to call Sue "creed-drunk" when he sees her for the last time at Marygreen, and he is right about the effect of drunkenness on individual idealism: "'We've both remarried out of our senses. I was made drunk to do it. You were the same. I was gin-drunk; you were creed-drunk. Either form of intoxication takes away the nobler vision'" (Pt. VI, Ch. viii; p. 471).

To analyze intoxication in this way, however, threatens to give it undue prominence as a signifier of diminished consciousness. It is important and, in this general way, is used consistently, but just as Hardy presents varying capacities in The Mayor by reference to the keeping and telling of secrets, in Jude he makes the important metaphor the

dream, not the drink. There is a clear contrast in Jude between sobriety and intoxication, both in religion and in gin, but the real dedication of this novel is to those who dream. Hardy is concerned in his fiction to show the mental functioning of many characters, all of whom operate at different and sometimes varying degrees of consciousness. He uses inebriation to show how a generally conscious mind can be made less conscious without any suggestion of devolution. He uses secrecy to show how much under the control of others' consciousnesses we can be and how knowledge can mean intensification or advancement in consciousness.

#### A. 2. "Half-Somnolence": "Dimly Seeing" and Dreaming

Poor eyesight is another practical manifestation in Hardy's fiction of this general motif of the intermittent nature of awareness and comprehension; it is different from secrecy and drunkenness in that the limitation in perception has its source within the body or mind of the character. Blindness, of course, is an ancient symbol for the inability to understand what should be apparent. It appears most obviously in the metaphorical structures of Far from the Madding Crowd and in the symbolic structure of The Return of the Native, but it remains important long after these novels, in perhaps a more subtle form, in Hardy's use of darkness and dusk and in Pierston's "dimly seeing" (The Well-Beloved Pt. III, Ch. iv; p. 179).

Blindness is used as an image again and again in Far from the Madding Crowd, in a completely obvious and direct way. The histor, for example, contrasts Troy and Oak in showing the effects of Bathsheba's lack of attention to consequences and to her not having "Taken Thought":

Her love was entire as a child's, and though warm as summer it was fresh as spring. Her culpability lay in her making no attempt to control feeling by subtle and careful inquiry into consequences. . . .

And Troy's deformities lay deep down from a woman's vision, whilst his embellishments were upon the very surface; thus contrasting with homely Oak, whose defects were patent to the blindest, and whose virtues were as metals in a mine. (Ch. XXIX, p. 215)

"Vision," here, of course, means "insight." In a more general statement, Fanny Robin is described as she tricks herself into believing that the distance to Casterbridge is less than it is:

Self-beguilement with what she had known all the time to be false had given her strength to come over half a mile that she would have been powerless to face in the lump. The artifice showed that the woman, by some mysterious intuition, had grasped the paradoxical truth that blindness may operate more vigorously than prescience, and the short-sighted effect more than the far-seeing; that limitation, and not comprehensiveness, is needed for striking a blow. (Ch. XL, pp. 305-6)

Taken together, these statements show how "blindness" encourages action, for better, as in Fanny Robin's case, and for worse, as in Bathsheba's. Both women are capable of doing what they normally would not because they cannot see far (for Fanny) or deep (for Bathsheba.)

Clym Yeobright shares characteristics with two groups of Hardy's characters: he is an intense, intelligent idealist like Jude, Angel, and many others of the essentially noble characters; he is also one of those more ambiguous characters, like little Father Time, whose "modern perceptiveness" has destroyed his beauty (The Return of the Native Bk. III, Ch. i; p. 197). This destruction is, in its conception, quite specific: it is a matter of thought imprinting itself on the physical form of the thinker; Clym's blindness is one more instance of the destructive effect of his mind upon his body, but his blindness is as much symbolic as it is physical; it is in fact his mind, his "Understanding," which is "Darkened" ("A Lurid Light Breaks In upon a Darkened Understanding," Bk. V,

Ch. ii). Words pertaining to vision and blindness run through this novel, as they do through Far from the Madding Crowd, and they all refer to comprehension and perception. Clym's moments of vision and blindness are more ambiguous and frequent than his literal blindness would suggest, for he is never completely or permanently blinded, just as he is never completely or permanently wrong or insensitive. His blindness represents a limitation in thought rather than an absence of it.<sup>8</sup>

In this way, blindness is like drunkenness and somnolence, for it limits the ability to judge consequences. As he begins the process by which a "Lurid Light Breaks in upon a Darkened Understanding," Clym walks "the slow walk of one who has been awakened from a stupefying sleep" (Bk. V, Ch. ii; p. 377). He finds in his conversation with Digory Venn that he is unable to keep his purpose in mind: he says, "I began saying that I wanted to ask you something, but I stray from subjects like a drunken man" (Bk. V, Ch. ii; p. 379). These signs of Clym's erratic intelligence, as he seeks to discover the secret of his mother's death, suggest a kind of extremism in his consciousness, an instability. Clym is one of Hardy's most clearly presented idealists; idealism is related to these signs of limitation in consciousness in that it is possible in a Hardy character only when the inner vision can predominate over what Jude calls "the grind of stern reality" (Pt. VI, Ch. ix; p. 474). Mrs. Yeobright connects idealism to blindness when she accuses Clym of concocting his idealistic scheme to educate the heath dwellers in order to justify his blind love for Eustacia:

"You are blinded, Clym," she said warmly. "It was a bad day for you when you first set eyes on her. And your scheme is merely a castle in the air built on purpose to justify this folly which has seized you, and to salve your conscience on the irrational situation you are in." (Bk. III, Ch. iii; p. 227)

Hardy relates idealism to dreaming and imagination, which allow a character to misperceive reality, for good or ill, by enrichening it from that character's inner resources. Drunkenness and blindness diminish a character's perception without replacing, with images from the inner world, what has been lost from the outer one.

The extremities to which these accretions and limitations drive Clym can be brought out most directly by comparing the way he comes to interpret his mother's last words with the way Elizabeth-Jane comes to interpret those of Michael Henchard. Elizabeth-Jane respects Henchard's last words "from her independent knowledge that the man who wrote them meant what he said," not "from a sense of the sacredness of last words, as such" (Ch. XLV, p. 384). Clym, however, is prostrated by his feelings. He does not have "independent knowledge"; he is faced with a secret. Where Elizabeth-Jane feels "deep and sharp" regrets "for a good while," Clym says, "What's the moon to a man like me? Let it shine--let anything be, so that I never see another day! . . . I don't know where to look: my thoughts go through me like swords" (Bk. V, Ch. i; p. 366). Clym is "standing in the very focus of sorrow," and it is his consciousness which troubles him, not anything external to him; he is injured by the sharpness of thoughts rather than that of swords. Because the pain from his thoughts is so great, he does not "know where to look": when Eustacia comes in to see him, his eyes, again, are emphasized--he is "wide awake, . . . his eyes lit by a hot light, as if the fire in their pupils were burning up their substance." Clym is consumed by his consciousness of his mother's death as he is always consumed by his thoughts and feelings; The Return of the Native, after all, is the novel in which Hardy says that "thought is a disease of flesh," that thought is the "parasite" of beauty, and that "mental luminousness must be fed with the

oil of life" (Bk. II, Ch. vi; pp. 161-62).

Like secrecy and drunkenness, blindness (including the more specific phenomenon of poor eyesight) means for Hardy a limitation of a character's potential, especially a diminution of the potential effectiveness of that character's mind and perception. Another kind of limitation is suggested by his use of sleeping and fainting, for they imply an absence of consciousness rather than diminishment; like drunkenness and blindness, however, sleep never means that a Hardy character is completely unconscious, only that he or she is less able to perceive the outside world. This is because dreaming goes on under the sleep, and all of Hardy's sensitive characters are dreamers. Obviously, "dream" here refers to ideals and waking fantasies as well as to sleeping ones; they are the same in that the dream is the action of a character's consciousness which blots out, as it were, most of what is perceived except that which the consciousness itself produces. That these two kinds of dreaming are essentially the same to Hardy can be demonstrated by referring to any one of a number of sleeping dreams which Hardy characters have. Angel's sleepwalking scene, for instance, is told entirely from Tess's point of view; in this way, Hardy can present Angel's own lack of awareness of the distortions in his perception--to him, his sleep that night is "deep as annihilation"--as well as the content of his perception and the substance of the distortion itself--that is, Angel's grief for the "dead" Tess shows more clearly than almost anything else could how much a product of his own mind the Tess he loves is (Ch. XXXVII, p. 320). Like Dick Dewy's memory of the Christmas dance with Fancy (in which "The room became to Dick like a picture in a dream; all that he could remember of it afterwards being the look of the fiddlers going to sleep as humming-tops sleep, by increasing their motions and hum . . ." [Pt. I, Ch. viii;



p. 547), Angel's sleepwalking shows that the apparent truth of waking life--that the fiddlers are asleep and that nothing has changed for Angel and Tess--is contradicted by the truth suppressed beneath the surface--that the tops are made steady by their speed and that the Tess whom Angel loved is dead.

Angel and Dick, therefore, are dreamers; they are dreamers in exactly the same way, though not always to the same extent, that Edward Springrove, Christopher Julian, Gabriel Oak, Clym Yeobright, Edred Fitzpiers, Jude Fawley, and Jocelyn Pierston are dreamers. Even though their dreaming makes them idealistic and impractical, dreaming is essentially a sympathetic quality in these characters: it is a necessary part of whatever heroic stature they have, for they are in the "small minority who have sensitive souls," unlike the others, those who do not "Take Thought" or those who do not dream; these others are "mentally unquickened" (Life, pp. 185, 186). For the reader of Hardy, this dreaming, whether waking or sleeping, has two kinds of significance. The first is that it makes these characters more spiritual, less mechanical, and, as it were, mentally quickened. The second meaning to dreaming is that consciousness which has been "awakened" is independent of external reality in very important ways; those characters "who have sensitive souls" have, in essence, two worlds in which to live--their own and that of nature and society.

It is worth noting here again that these ways of differentiating among kinds or degrees of consciousness--secrecy, drunkenness, blindness, somnolence and dreaming--are not original with Hardy; he takes them over so wholeheartedly and uses them so frequently, however, that they are inevitably idiosyncratic, especially in his best work. Hardy's use of dreaming is more complex, less moral, and altogether probably more

original and insightful about human consciousness than his use of any of the other means of presenting the specifics of a character's degree of awareness, because he is clearer here than anywhere else that none of these "sensitive souls" can be said to be completely unconscious or completely aware at any time: in practice, consciousness in Hardy is intermittent. Blindness is Hardy's best metaphor for this intermittency because all of his perceivers have moments of vision and moments of blindness; that is, blindness is the best description of the flickering nature of perception; dreaming, however, is Hardy's best means of narration of this idea because it shows how a character may look, for example, at Christminster and see "The heavenly Jerusalem" (Pt. I, Ch. iii; p. 18) or may bury Tess in the midst of his own annihilation. All of Hardy's characters have moments of vision and moments of blindness, all of them have dreams, and though these moments are finally irrelevant for characters like Arabella, Thomasin, or Parson Maybold, they are critical for the ones whose dream world makes up the preponderance of what they perceive, for the characters whose inner worlds offer a refuge from the outside one.

The rest of Hardy's devices for describing, or narrating, degrees of consciousness are idiosyncratic (rather than original) because their importance really lies in the fact that they appear en masse. For example, instances of a character being "awakened" by an idea occur throughout Hardy's fiction. Few of these individual awakenings are of much significance to their characters or novels, but taken all together they show a remarkable sensitivity on Hardy's part to different intensities of attention and awareness. It is as if the degree of wakefulness is something Hardy notes with his other necessities of scene: place, time, locus of observation, character, and mood. Hardy is mostly concerned

with less than complete perception, and that is why all of these images suggest limitation. In Jude, however, Hardy describes complete wakefulness. As little Father Time travels to meet Jude and Sue for the first time, his difference from the rest of humanity (and even of animal life) is emphasized:

When the other travellers closed their eyes, which they did one by one--even the kitten curling itself up in the basket, weary of its too circumscribed play--the boy remained just as before. He then seemed to be doubly awake, like an enslaved and dwarfed Divinity, sitting passive and regarding his companions as if he saw their whole rounded lives rather than their immediate figures. (Pt. V, Ch. iii; p. 332)

The part of Father Time, of course, that is like a "Divinity" is his consciousness, the part of him that can perceive more than what is apparent, the part that can be more than merely physically awake.

Complete wakefulness, however, is rare in Hardy. Characters are most often shown waking up with an idea or, more common yet, in one of many different degrees of somnolence. One of Hardy's most illuminating presentations of consciousness uses both the image of the spinning top and the idea of the vagueness of the boundary between sleep and waking; it occurs in The Mayor of Casterbridge as Elizabeth-Jane waits with her dying mother. The histor begins this passage on consciousness with a general statement suggesting the impact of this experience on Elizabeth-Jane, and then, close to her, Hardy narrates what it feels like and what Elizabeth-Jane thinks of when she falls asleep:

To learn to take the universe seriously there is no quicker way than to watch--to be a "waker," as the country-people call it. Between the hours at which the last toss-pot went by and the first sparrow shook himself, the silence in Casterbridge--barring the rare sound of the watchman--was broken in Elizabeth's ear only by the time-piece in the bedroom ticking frantically against the clock on the stairs; ticking harder and harder till it seemed to clang like a gong; and all this while the subtle-souled girl asking herself why she was born, why sitting in a room, and blinking at the candle; why things around her had taken the shape they wore in preference to

every other possible shape. Why they stared at her so helplessly, as if waiting for the touch of some wand that should release them from terrestrial constraint; what that chaos called consciousness, which spun in her at this moment like a top, tended to, and began in. Her eyes fell together; she was awake, yet she was asleep.<sup>9</sup>

The spinning, of course, heightens the dramatization of her falling asleep as well as the presentation of her intellectual response to this crisis. The really interesting aspect of this passage appears in the questions Elizabeth-Jane asks herself. This intelligent and thoughtful character of Hardy's, faced with the death of her mother, asks herself not only the usual questions of why she was born and why things exist as they do, and not only the questions about the relationships between essence and form, but also the questions concerning the origins and ends of consciousness. One such end is suggested by the narrator's first sentence--"To learn to take the universe seriously"--but this character has already learned that. She begins this novel with the attitude that "life and its surroundings" are "a tragical rather than a comic thing," that "moments of gaiety [are] interludes, and no part of the actual drama" (Ch. VIII, p. 63).

As she falls asleep, Elizabeth-Jane is in a state of awareness which is both heightened and suppressed and which therefore distorts perception in its search for meaning. This searching is obvious here; it takes the form of the questions she asks. The distortion is only slightly less apparent: by seeing that "things around her" seem to have an existence independent of their corporeal ones ("they stared at her so helplessly, as if waiting for the touch of some wand that should release them from terrestrial constraint"), Elizabeth-Jane is seeing both the physical world in which she sits and her dream world, in which she spins. Between the clanging of the competing clocks and the helpless stares of

the "things around her" (not in her), Hardy shows her to be half-somnolent, her consciousness is both chaotic and subtle: "she was awake, yet she was asleep." Hardy almost always presents sleep paradoxically, both as a kind of absence of thought and as the presence of suppressed activity. This of course is why Angel remembers only the annihilation of his sleep and not his sepulture of Tess. It is also one of the most sophisticated of Hardy's narrative techniques, and one that it took him years to perfect. Desperate Remedies is dominated by superlatives and extremes rather than more ambiguous conditions, in this matter as well as in the others, and characters lapse completely in and out of consciousness with disturbing frequency. Not only do they jerk back and forth between fainting and stark wakefulness, but Cytherea even has supernatural visions as she sleeps. Even in this novel, however, Hardy tries to describe what he calls in it at one point "a partially recovered, half-dozing state" (Ch. XX, No. ii; p. 369) and, more gracefully, at another, "a half-somnolent state" (Ch. XIII, No. viii; p. 273).

This half-somnolence is presented much less clumsily in Far from the Madding Crowd, in which Hardy uses drunkenness to help in this presentation of partial awareness and in which he dramatizes consciousness as a dual existence. In this passage, which occurs in Oak's first night in Weatherbury, Gabriel is not literally asleep; Hardy contrasts, however, the still and dark exterior of what would be the appearance of sleep with the busy movement, "beneath" it, of the interior:

That night at Coggan's Gabriel Oak, beneath the screen of closed eyelids, was busy with fancies, and full of movement, like a river flowing rapidly under its ice. Night had always been the time at which he saw Bathsheba most vividly, and through the slow hours of shadow he tenderly regarded her image now. It is rarely that the pleasures of the imagination will compensate for the pain of sleeplessness, but they possibly did with Oak to-night, for the delight of merely seeing

her effaced for the time his perception of the great difference between seeing and possessing. (Ch. VIII, p. 78)

Gabriel's imagination is the source of his dreaming images, and Hardy is clear throughout the novel that Oak is a dreamer.<sup>10</sup> Gabriel is different from Bathsheba in precisely this quality; for, though she has the disadvantage of not having "Taken Thought" until late in the novel, she also does not have the romantic imagination that makes so many of Hardy's heroes impractical. When she is married to Troy, Bathsheba "sometimes" thinks of Gabriel

in the light of an old lover, and had momentary imaginings of what life with him as a husband would have been like; also of life with Boldwood under the same conditions. But Bathsheba, though she could feel, was not much given to futile dreaming, and her musings under this head were short and entirely confined to the times when Troy's neglect was more than ordinarily evident. (Ch. XLI, p. 316)

In the long run, not much is made of this potentially complex presentation of dreaming in Far from the Madding Crowd. Where it has its greatest importance as a theme is in those novels which are most specifically about degrees of consciousness and the conflict between the imagined and the external worlds, The Return of the Native, The Woodlanders, Tess, Jude, and The Well-Beloved.

The mention of one passage from The Return of the Native will suggest the greater understanding Hardy shows in handling this now extremely complex, unpredictable and flexible idea. This novel shows in a number of ways how the state of a character's mind determines the world in which that character lives. Hardy names the first chapter of Book Third, "'My Mind to Me a Kingdom Is,'" after Clym, but it is as true of the other characters as it is of Clym.<sup>11</sup> Clym's blindness and idealism show the particular forms of distortion endemic to his consciousness, just as Eustacia's "burden" of a secret does hers (Bk. V, Ch. iii; p. 386). At

the center of it all, however, is Mrs. Yeobright's frustrated visit to Clym and Eustacia, and the terms Hardy uses to present and assess the scene are those of degrees of consciousness.

Most significant is that Clym is asleep when Mrs. Yeobright arrives; though he is clearly dreaming about her, he does not wake up to let her in. Clym's dreaming prevents him from acting in the world outside his own mind. It does not matter whether or not it is a coincidence that he says "mother" just as she knocks, because he is too unconscious to let her in. This deep sleeping and Clym's poor eyesight, which has caused him to give up his reading for "the regulation thoughts" of a furze-cutter, "to judge by his motions," suggest that Clym has devolved, as it were, from an intelligent, thoughtful man to an insect, "a mere parasite of the heath, . . . entirely engrossed with its products, having no knowledge of anything in the world but fern, furze, heath, lichens, and moss" (Bk. IV, Ch. v; pp. 328-29). Clym's near-blindness is as apt a representation of this "engrossed" attention to the "surface" of things as are his dreaming, the sleeping cat, and the stupefied and "rolling drunk" wasps. Blind and dreaming, Clym is a part of the unconscious world: "There lay the cat asleep on the bare gravel of the path, as if bed, rugs, and carpets were unendurable. . . . among the fallen apples on the ground beneath [the tree] were wasps rolling drunk with the juice, or creeping about the little caves in each fruit which they had eaten out before stupefied by its sweetness" (Bk. IV, Ch. v; pp. 330-31).

By reversing the situation, Clym's dream in this scene illustrates the essential isolated somnolence of Clym, Eustacia, and Mrs. Yeobright. In his dream, Clym takes Eustacia to Blooms-End "to make up differences," the same reason Mrs. Yeobright visits Alderworth (Bk. IV, Ch. vii; p. 344). In his dream, he and Eustacia cannot get inside the house "though

she kept on crying to us for help." Clym's dream is an important reflection of the reality of this scene, in spite of what he says--"However, dreams are dreams"--because it shows how thoroughly all these characters are imprisoned in their own interior worlds. Mrs. Yeobright gets outside of herself long enough to make the effort to reestablish contact with Clym, as Hardy shows by making her perspective so reliable, but after she leaves the house she is "as one in a mesmeric sleep" (Bk. IV, Ch. vi; p. 339), back inside her inner world, inaccessible to Clym and Eustacia and even to Johnny Nunsuch, who finds her face inscrutable, like "some strange old manuscript the key to whose characters is undiscoverable" (Bk. IV, Ch. vi; p. 342).

Eustacia is also imprisoned into isolation, and Mrs. Yeobright's "graven" sight of her face at the window is a fair image of Eustacia's relation to the outside world (Bk. IV, Ch. vi; p. 339). Like Clym, Eustacia is a dreamer: her "youthful dream," as she tells Wildeve, was "wanting what is called life--music, poetry, passion, war, and all the beating and pulsing that is going on in the great arteries of the world" (Bk. IV, Ch. vi; p. 335). She has exchanged that dream for another; at the dance in a neighboring village she finds a way to enliven her inner world:

A clear line of difference divided like a tangible fence her experience within this maze of motion from her experience without it. Her beginning to dance had been like a change of atmosphere; outside, she had been steeped in arctic frigidity by comparison with the tropical sensations here. She had entered the dance from the troubled hours of her late life as one might enter a brilliant chamber after a night walk in a wood. (Bk. IV, Ch. iii; p. 310)

As it is presented here, this dance is narrated as an interior event, from within the enclosure of Eustacia's consciousness. She is as somnolent as usual when Mrs. Yeobright visits, all her passion is deep within



her: "Nobody could have imagined from her bearing now that here stood the woman who had joined with [Wildeve] in the impassioned dance of the week before, unless indeed he could have penetrated below the surface and gauged the real depth of that still stream" (Bk. IV, Ch. vi; pp. 332-33).

Jude the Obscure makes essentially the same connections between secrecy, drunkenness, blindness, and somnolence that The Return of the Native does. Jude is more affected by external matters than Clym is, and one way that Hardy shows this is by turning Clym's blindness into Jude's drunkenness. Jude does not live in the "Kingdom" of his mind in the way that Clym does because the outside world intrudes so much more frequently and effectively into Jude's imagination. Jude lives in both worlds, almost simultaneously. Certainly, there are times when external reality is far away or even inaccessible to Jude, as, for example, when he and Sue hear of their divorces: "The proceedings in the Law-Courts had reached their consciousness but as a distant sound, and an occasional missive which they hardly understood" (Pt. V, Ch. i; p. 309). There are times when the mercantile, meddlesome world is right outside their door:

Footsteps began stamping up and down the bare stairs, the comers inspecting the goods, some of which were of so quaint and ancient a make as to acquire an adventitious value as art. Their door was tried once or twice, and to guard themselves against intrusion Jude wrote "Private" on a scrap of paper, and stuck it upon the panel.

They soon found that, instead of the furniture, their own personal histories and past conduct began to be discussed to an unexpected and intolerable extent by the intending bidders. It was not till now that they really discovered what a fools' paradise of supposed unrecognition they had been living in of late. (Pt. V, Ch. vi; p. 368)

There are also times when the external reality causes a collapse of the characters' internal, personal lives, as, for example, when Jude learns how hard it is to learn languages:

What brains they must have in Christminster and the great schools, he presently thought, to learn words one by one up to tens of thousands! There were no brains in his head equal to this business; and as the little sun-rays continued to stream in through his hat at him, he wished he had never seen a book, that he might never see another, that he had never been born.

Somebody might have come along that way who would have asked him his trouble, and might have cheered him by saying that his notions were further advanced than those of his grammarian. But nobody did come, because nobody does; and under the crushing recognition of his gigantic error Jude continued to wish himself out of the world. (Pt. I, Ch. iv; pp. 31-32)

Mostly, however, Jude lives in a kind of condition in which both worlds coexist, either in alternating flashes of truth and dream or, more often, in superimposed layers of dream over fact. A few examples will serve to hint at the rich patterns of flickering and fading realities that go to make up this novel. Hardy's presentation of Jude is particularly modern in this sense: not only does Jude have important insights about the events and people around him which he loses as soon as he has them, but Hardy also attempts to narrate the gaining and losing of these insights. Jude realizes for a moment, for instance, that

It had been no vestal who chose that missile for opening her attack on him. He saw this with his intellectual eye, just for a short fleeting while, as by the light of a falling lamp one might momentarily see an inscription on a wall before being enshrouded in darkness. And then this passing discriminative power was withdrawn, and Jude was lost to all conditions of things in the advent of a fresh and wild pleasure, that of having found a new channel for emotional interest hitherto unsuspected, though it had lain close beside him. (Pt. I, Ch. vi; p. 46)

He realizes, too, for a moment, that stonemasonry is just as "worthy" an occupation as the study that goes on in the very best of academic environments: "For a moment there fell on Jude a true illumination; that here in the stone yard was a centre of effort as worthy as that dignified by the name of scholarly study within the noblest of the colleges. But he lost it under stress of his old idea" (Pt. II, Ch. ii; p. 98). In both of these cases, the loss of the insight depends on the

predominance of the ideal, as it appear to Jude, over the real: the dream blots out the external world.

More interesting a phenomenon is that which allows Jude to see both the external and the ideal simultaneously. This is especially clearly presented when Jude sees the ghosts of Christminster's famous intellectuals, artists, and statesmen populating the empty streets of the "actual" Christminster. The first time this happens, Jude is young, new to the city, and so full of "the magnificent Christminster dream" (Pt. I, Ch. vi; p. 46) that "When he passed objects out of harmony with [the "general expression" of the city] he allowed his eyes to slip over them as if he did not see them" (Pt. II, Ch. i; p. 91). The limitation on his perception comes from within, but to him the ghosts are so real that he finds himself speaking to them aloud (Pt. II, Ch. i; p. 94). The second time this happens, he is with Arabella, having just returned from his suicidal trip to see Sue. He sees the ghosts just as he had the first time and, later, hears them laughing at him even though, as he tells Arabella, "I don't revere all of them as I did then. I don't believe in half of them. . . . All that has been spoilt for me by the grind of stern reality!" (Pt. VI, Ch. ix; p. 474). The limitation now seems to have come from the outside; now it is reality limiting his imagination. Interestingly, Hardy turns to intoxication to describe not only Arabella's assessment of Jude's seeing ghosts--"Upon my soul you are more sober when you've been drinking than when you have not!"--but also Jude's means of dispelling his confusion concerning the two worlds in which he lives. He describes the "fog" that comes "from the meadows of Cardinal" College as fatal to him, as "death-claws . . . grabbing me through and through"; and, even more pointedly, he quotes Antigone to express the predicament of the two worlds, a predicament which his

drinking also expresses: "I am neither a dweller among men nor ghosts" (Pt. VI, Ch. ix; p. 475).

Jude's "half-somnolent state" is depicted, like Clym's, with metaphors of sight and blindness, light and dark, sobriety and drunkenness, and dreaming, which help preserve a distinction between what the characters perceive and what is there to be perceived.<sup>12</sup> There are many other such metaphorical uses of natural phenomena, particularly, for Jude, nighttime and fog. Both of these are ways of representing what is to Hardy the obscurity of external reality in the face of a powerful and consistent inner vision. Hardy uses fog, for instance, as an obstruction to Jude's vision at the beginning of the novel, when Jude is especially susceptible to the power of his imagination. This particular event dramatizes his flash of despair after his connections to nature have been broken in Farmer Troutham's field and his connections to society broken by Phillotson's departure for Christminster: "Jude went out, and, feeling more than ever his existence to be an undemanded one, he lay down upon his back on a heap of litter near the pig-sty. The fog had by this time become more translucent, and the position of the sun could be seen through it" (Pt. I, Ch. ii; pp. 14-15). What he can make out, through the recently "more translucent" fog and "the interstices of the plaiting" of his straw hat, are the sun, a full look at which would blind him, and the formulation of a harsh natural law:

Events did not rhyme quite as he had thought. Nature's logic was too horrid for him to care for. That mercy towards one set of creatures was cruelty towards another sickened his sense of harmony. As you got older, and felt yourself to be at the centre of your time, and not at a point in its circumference, as you had felt when you were little, you were seized with a sort of shuddering, he perceived. All around you there seemed to be something glaring, garish, rattling, and the noises and glares hit upon the little cell called your life, and shook it, and warped it. (Pt. I, Ch. ii; p. 15)

There is, of course, little pointed significance to this single event; the fog has exactly as much connotative impact as the "heap of litter" on which Jude lies down. The point is that few of Jude's epiphanies take place in broad daylight; most take place at night, at dusk, or in a fog. Fogginess, darkness, and twilight all mean that the internal world has primacy; the character's perception of external reality is obstructed and the perception of internal forces enhanced. This device is used in the early fiction like Far from the Madding Crowd (when Joseph's imagination takes over as he drives Fanny's coffin to Weatherbury from Casterbridge) in the same way as it is used at the end, in Tess, Jude, and The Well-Beloved.

Jude's first look at Christminster takes place at dusk, and his first entrance into the city takes place after dusk. On the event of that first glimpse from Brown House, Hardy emphasizes the preeminence of Jude's internal world by referring repeatedly to the mist which obstructs his view and by making Jude afraid of imaginary ghosts and monsters; Hardy again emphasizes Jude's personal perspective--as opposed to the "actual" decrepitude and corruption of Christminster--when he first goes to that city by showing it to be a place peopled with the imaginary ghosts of intellectuals. The dusk and the darkness are externalizations of Jude's own state of partial awareness, just as Clym's blindness and Jocelyn's faith (in the Well-Beloved) are of theirs, and they allow Hardy to specify, as it were, how much of the world that these characters see is of their own making. The relative strength of Jude's personal perspective has two different effects on his life: it makes him vulnerable to those more at home in the world than he, such as Arabella and Vilbert, and it allows him to think and feel in a logic which is more consistent with his internal reality and less determined by external realities.

All of these different ways of presenting the distinction between a character's perception and what is there to be perceived have this structure of conflicting (internal and external) realities as their basis. Even though "a full look at the Worst" seems to be Hardy's preferred way to confront the truth, he has a great deal of sympathy for those who reject "the grind of stern reality," and its horrors, for whatever inner world they can construct.<sup>13</sup> Hardy hints, metaphorically, at the existence of a character's internal world when he puts that character in a fog, at dusk, or in a dream; these metaphors show the character to be in both worlds but only partially aware of the world outside because of the strength of the inner vision. Characters whose inner worlds exist in the absence of knowledge, because secret knowledge has been withheld, are limited from without; characters whose inner worlds exist at their expense are blind or drunk, and therefore vulnerable to forces pressuring them out of individuality and back into social conformity. All of these metaphors describe the character's perception of the realities. Sometimes Hardy describes the inner world itself; usually it is beautiful, intoxicating, colorful, brilliant, and warm, as Eustacia's is at the dance, compared to the drab, sober, cold world outside. Of the many, many examples describing this, perhaps the most evocative is Tess's "mental cloud of many-coloured idealities, which eclipsed all sinister contingencies by its brightness" (Ch. XXXIII, p. 270), and which is basically the result of her love for Angel:

Her affection for him was now the breath and life of Tess's being; it enveloped her as a photosphere, irradiated her into forgetfulness of her past sorrows, keeping back the gloomy spectres that would persist in their attempts to touch her--doubt, fear, moodiness, care, shame. She knew that they were waiting like wolves just outside the circumscribing light, but she had long spells of power to keep them in hungry subjection there.

A spiritual forgetfulness co-existed with an intellectual

remembrance. She walked in brightness, but she knew that in the background those shapes of darkness were always spread. they might be receding, or they might be approaching, one or the other, a little every day. (Ch. XXXI, p. 249)

For Tess, the outer world is the reality from which she finds some refuge, but a faith in the value of the reality of the characters' inner worlds lies behind all of Hardy's means of suggesting the existence and source for them. The essential question for Hardy, then, has to do with what kind of reality each of these two worlds has.

#### B. The Real and the Corporeal

Hardy's most important insights about the difference between an individual consciousness and the world at large are worked out in his repeated explorations of the idea of a distinction between the real and the corporeal. At the heart of it, this idea comes from an understanding which Hardy had of the changes in reality which are caused by changes in perspective. Two extrinsic sources for this idea would certainly have reinforced Hardy's fundamental insight, which is based in his deep sympathy for the isolated consciousness. The first extrinsic source for this idea, obviously, is Plato, whom Hardy read and revered. This influence is easy to identify. After reading Cratylus, for example, he records in 1889: "A very good way of looking at things would be to regard everything as having an actual or false name, and an intrinsic or true name, to ascertain which all endeavour should be made."<sup>14</sup> Not only does this add fuel to the fires of those who find meaning in the names of Hardy's characters, but it also repeats in yet another way Hardy's belief that there is meaning beyond the random and chaotic surface of things. Hardy found this searching for intrinsic truth (a truth which

is independent of extrinsic corporealities) also in Goethe's late music and in "The much decried, mad, late-Turner rendering" which

is now necessary to create my interest. The exact truth as to material fact ceases to be of importance in art--it is a student's style--the style of a period when the mind is serene and unawakened to the tragical mysteries of life; when it does not bring anything to the object that coalesces with and translates the qualities that are already there,--half hidden, it may be--and the two united are depicted as the All. (Life, p. 185; January 1887)

Hardy's desire "to see the deeper reality underlying the scenic, the expression of what are sometimes called abstract imaginings" appear, of course, in his own work as well as in his appreciation of others.

Before going on to discuss the conflict between the real and the corporeal in his fiction, it is best to get out of the way the major extrinsic source for this theme other than Plato. The "war between the flesh and the spirit," Pauline as it is, is the moral version of the philosophical and psychological problem which Hardy saw in the distinction between the real and the corporeal.<sup>15</sup> This "war" is the split of the self in Hardy between the body and the mind. Clym suffers this split, and it shows in his face. Paula Power, whose name refers explicitly to Paul, is Laodicean because she will not commit herself wholeheartedly to Christianity, and she is Laodicean because her sexuality has been diluted by a strong intellectualizing will; that is, two qualities of her personality--her spirituality and her sexuality--are both in conflict with each other and also modified by this conflict. She is important for two reasons. The first is that Hardy had affection for her in spite of the failure of her novel. In the 1912 addition to the Preface, he finds

a compensation . . . in the character of Paula, who, on renewed acquaintance, leads me to think her individualized with some clearness, and really lovable, though she is of that reserved disposition which is the most difficult of all



dispositions to depict, and tantalized the writer by eluding his grasp for some time.

The second is that her hesitating and faintly self-immolating nature shows clearly the connection between Sue's insanity and Pauline thought. The fissure between the body and the mind, which makes this Laodicean character epicene both in her beliefs and in her attachments, is the hallmark of a type of character in Hardy whose internal conflict takes the form of a struggle between spirituality and sexuality; this type shows up as Cytherea Graye, Fancy Day, Henry Knight, Bathsheba Everdene, Ethelberta Petherwin, Clym Yeobright, Ann Garland, Paula Power, Swithin St. Cleeve, Margery Tuck, Grace Melbury, Angel Clare, Jocelyn Pierston, Jude Fawley, and Sue Bridehead.

While many of Hardy's formulations of the problem of the real and the corporeal are dated in the Life from the late eighties, and while The Woodlanders shows how important it was to him at that time, it appears in essentially the same form in all his novels. In Desperate Remedies, for example, both Cytherea and Edward can see the real in the corporeal. Edward searches for a Well-Beloved who exists in more than physical form; that Cytherea's perceptiveness is the result of the strength of her own inner vision is more obvious yet. Early in the novel, she waits for answers to her advertisement for work:

At post-time in that following Monday morning, Cytherea watched so anxiously for the postman, that as the interval which must bring him narrowed less and less her vivid expectation had only a degree less tangibility than his presence itself. In another second his form came into view. (Ch. V, No. i; p. 63)

This same near-preeminence of her own thoughts over the realities of the external world appears in this comparison between Cytherea and Adelaide Hinton, her rival for Edward. Although we cannot be sure that Hardy is as unsympathetic to Adelaide as Cytherea is, the fact that her "thought"

has "life" implies that it is independent, in a way, from the thinker:

. . . Cytherea slipt out of church early, and went home, the tones of the organ still lingering in her ears as she tried bravely to kill a jealous thought that would nevertheless live: "My nature is one capable of more, far more, intense feeling than hers! She can't appreciate all the sides of him--she never will! He is more tangible to me even now, as a thought, than his presence itself is to her!" (Ch. XII, No. i; pp. 240-41)

Cytherea's ability to conceive of reality in such a way that it surpasses the power of corporeality over her perception is an aspect of her consciousness which makes her special to Hardy, just as it is the result of her complex consciousness and the fissure in her personality.

This is an idea about which Hardy was explicit with some frequency. Ideas and feelings take on allegorical embodiments for those characters who can see the reality instead of merely what is corporeal. Elizabeth-Jane sees the "things around her" staring "at her so helplessly as if waiting for the touch of some wand that should release them from terrestrial constraint" (Ch. XVIII, p. 135). Elizabeth-Jane is probably the one for whom "Expectancy sat visibly upon Lucetta the next morning," just as the perspective is probably hers while she and Lucetta are watching the market when the histor says: "In fact, what these gibbous human shapes specially represented was ready money--money insistently ready--not ready next year like a nobleman's--often not merely ready at the bank like a professional man's, but ready in their large plump hands" (Ch. XXII, pp. 174-75).

For George Melbury, reality is not so much seeing allegorical figures as it is living with them. As Hardy explains, Melbury's anxiety takes up space and exists as a figure in much the same way any of the characters do. The difference is that the anxiety is invisible; it is "real" instead of merely "corporeal":

In truth a constrained manner was natural enough in Melbury just now, for the greatest interest of his life was reaching its crisis. Could the real have been beheld instead of the corporeal merely, the corner of the room in which he sat would have been filled with a form typical of anxious suspense, large-eyed, tight-lipped, awaiting the issue. That paternal hopes and fears so intense should be bound up in the person of one child so peculiarly circumstanced, and not have dispersed themselves over the larger field of a whole family, involved dangerous risks to his own future happiness. (Ch. XXIII, p. 195)

Such hazard is more apparent, of course, when Melbury begins to realize that Fitzpiers is not going to be as good a husband as he had hoped: "That night carking care sat beside Melbury's pillow, and his stiff limbs tossed at its presence" (Ch. XXIX, p. 258). In these instances, the real has an existence independent of the corporeal; the corporeal neither confirms nor denies what is true (what is "real").

Hardy appears to have also believed that it is possible to know invisible reality by some kinds of external evidence. The personalities of many of his characters have a direct influence on how they look; their minds are imprinted upon their physical forms. In February 1887, for example, at the same time that he defined the optical invisibility of the real in terms of the "somnambulistic hallucination" of existence and at the same time that he distinguished between "a certain small minority" of those "who have sensitive souls" and "the mentally unquickened, mechanical, soulless," he says that the "small minority who have sensitive souls" and their "aspects" are "what is worth observing" (Life, pp. 185-86). Their "aspects," presumably, are their faces and the way they look. This idea appears as early as Desperate Remedies: "There is an attitude--approximately called pensive--in which the soul of a human being, and especially of a woman, dominates outwardly and expresses its presence so strongly, that the intangible essence seems more apparent

than the body itself," and that mood has to do with sexual interest. Even though Hardy focusses his attention on the gender of his characters, what is interesting in this passage is the replacement of the physical and particular by the abstract:

Concentrated essence of woman pervaded the room rather than air. . . .

The two rivals had now lost their personality quite. There was the same keen brightness of eye, the same movement of the mouth, the same mind in both, as they looked doubtingly and excitingly at each other. As is invariably the case with women when a man they care for is the subject of an excitement among them, the situation abstracted the differences which distinguished them as individuals, and left only the properties common to them as atoms of a sex. (Ch. VIII, No. ii; pp. 136-37)

This idea is familiar to readers of Tess: Izzy, Retty, Marion, and Tess are "one organism called sex" in their attraction to Angel (Ch. XXIII, p. 187).

It is in The Woodlanders, however, that Hardy's exploration of this idea is the most clear and thorough. Much of the narrative of The Woodlanders seems dedicated to expressing the idea that there is an abstract principle which is manifested in the appearances of the external world; to an educated eye or ear, that is, the real is discernible in the corporeal. This, of course, is why the forest in Little Hintock seems so very Darwinian: because the visible forms of nature express to Hardy a principle, and this principle is the real which the corporeal is the evidence of it. This passage is notable for its expression of the real in the corporeal as well as its assumption of unity in human, animal, and vegetable life:

They went noiselessly over mats of starry moss, rustled through interspersed tracts of leaves, skirted trunks with spreading roots whose mossed rinds made them like hands wearing green gloves; elbowed old elms and ashes with great forks, in which stood pools of water that overflowed on rainy days and ran down their stems in green cascades. On older trees still than these huge lobes of fungi grew like lungs. Here, as

everywhere, the Unfulfilled Intention, which makes life what it is, was as obvious as it could be among the depraved crowds of a city slum. The leaf was deformed, the curve was crippled, the taper was interrupted; the lichen ate the vigour of the stalk, and the ivy slowly strangled to death the promising sapling. (Ch. VII, pp. 58-59)

This kind of passage is also important for showing how the two worlds--personal and historical--exist for the histor as well as for Hardy's sensitive characters. Even though the histor can specify the presence of abstract principle in the mundane, external worlds of the characters, there is still a distinction between the abstract principle and the concrete world, the real and the corporeal. This explains in part why it is that neither world can be said to be false, regardless of the usual Platonic or Pauline positions: if the histor can see them both, then the best of the characters can be expected to see and exemplify them both, too.

Though they are certainly not among Hardy's most heroic characters, Grace Melbury and Edred Fitzpiers are important in the way they illustrate Hardy's idea that there is a juncture, as it were, at which the real and the corporeal meet. The unresolved ambiguities about their relationship and the qualities of their faces (their "aspects") which make description impossible are both loci for this juncture; the kind of relationship they have and their faces have both a general, symbolic significance and particular, local meaning. Neither kind of meaning is directly apparent: their corporeal features, for instance, reflect that there is a reality but are only inadequately informative of it. Both characters, too, have "quickened souls" (this is one explanation for Hardy's interest in their "aspects"), and the nature of the difficulties which they encounter is a result of that quickening. Like others of Hardy's couples whose members are, as it were, meant for each other, Grace

and Fitzpiers are too deeply attracted to each other to live apart happily and too sensitive to live together happily. The unresolved status of their marriage at the end of the novel, therefore, which points both to the antiromantic reasons for their reconciliation and to the continuation of the problems which separated them in the first place, is a necessary outcome of the fact that both have this special perceptiveness, the "quickened souls." At this point in Hardy's fiction, this conflicting attraction and sensitivity translates into an inability to maintain emotional fidelity at the same time that the characters are too similar not to marry.

Their "quickened souls" are apparent from their first introductions into the novel. Grace's description, which begins as Marty South "critically regarded Winterborne's companion," shows both how necessary Hardy's histor is to his presentation of this kind of character and with what clarity Hardy conceived dual realities--mental and corporeal--for his sensitive characters:

It would have been difficult to describe Grace Melbury with precision, either then or at any time. Nay, from the highest point of view, to precisely describe a human being, the focus of a universe, how impossible! But apart from transcendentalism, there never probably lived a person who was in herself more completely a reductio ad absurdum of attempts to appraise a woman, even externally, by items of face and figure.

Speaking generally, it may be said that she was sometimes beautiful, at other times not beautiful, according to the state of her health and spirits. (Ch. V, pp. 41-42)

Having described her beauty as dependent upon "her health and spirits," Hardy goes on to describe her "simple corporeal presentment." What is most important about her, however, is her "true quality," which is not apparent from her complexion, "look," mouth, eyebrows, or "drapery":

What people therefore saw of her in a cursory view was very little; in truth, mainly something that was not she. The woman herself was a conjectural creature who had little to do

with the outlines presented to Sherton eyes; a shape in the gloom, whose true quality could only be approximated by putting together a movement now and a glance then, in that patient attention which nothing but watchful loving-kindness ever troubles itself to give. (Ch. V, pp. 42-43)

Two things are clear here which are important. The first is that Grace, "The woman herself," is so complex and her "true quality" so recondite, so "conjectural," that an external, objective, even omniscient perspective is not the means by which to understand her; what is required is a local, personal, sympathetic perspective, one which can approximate the truth about "a shape in the gloom." The second point to be made is that Grace's "corporeal presentment" does not hint at the reality of her personality; in fact, it may be said to contradict it in some ways, for what she looks like to the "cursory view" is "something that was not she."

The introduction of Edred Fitzpiers, too, shows a similar complexity of narrative purpose. Like Christopher Julian (of The Hand of Ethelberta) and others of Hardy's dreamers, Fitzpiers is "not a practical man, except by fits, and much preferred the ideal world to the real, and the discovery of principles to their applications" (Ch. XVI, p. 135). The relationships between his external and internal forms are even more problematical than Grace's, because not only are his looks ambiguous, but the ambiguity itself may or may not exist. The role of the histor, again, is to reveal rather than resolve this ambiguity; and once again omniscience, as such, prevents the observer from the understanding which is possible, presumably, only upon close and patient inspection:

Edred Fitzpiers was, on the whole, a finely formed, handsome man. His eyes were dark and impressive, and beamed with the light either of energy or of susceptibility--it was difficult to say which; it might have been chiefly the latter. That quick, glittering, empirical eye, sharp for the surface of things if for nothing beneath, he had not. But whether his apparent depth of vision were real, or only an artistic accident of his

corporeal moulding, nothing but his deeds could reveal. (Ch. XIV, pp. 119-20)

It is interesting, really, that Hardy seems loathe to abandon the phrenological meditations stimulated by the description of a character's face and physique. Such a description is important in a novel like The Return of the Native, in which the physical is the means of finding the real; passages like this one of Fitzpiers, however, in The Woodlanders, in which Hardy establishes conflicting associations between the personality and face of a character, present problems to him. The convention of reading character in face contradicts Hardy's insight, expressed most directly in this novel, that the corporeal reflects the invisible real at best indirectly.<sup>16</sup>

The most interesting use of this distinction, and sometimes conflict, between the real and the corporeal occurs in those vivid, symbolic descriptions or passages in which Hardy seems to abandon realism for a "disproportioning . . . of realities to show more clearly the features that matter in those realities" (Life, p. 229; August 5, 1890). This is the best explanation there is for little Father Time, Jude and Arabella's child, whose presence in the novel can only be justified by reference to the meaning of his role. Father Time has both a thematic role which is spelled out quite explicitly in the novel and a symbolic role--the intuition of which depends upon the reader's sense of Hardy's fictional purpose. For the former, we have the character's name: "though he was formally turned into 'Jude,' the apt nickname" "Little Time" or "Little Father Time" never leaves him (Pt. V, Ch. vi; p. 359). He is "Age masquerading as Juvenility" (Pt. V, Ch. iii; p. 332), "his eyes resting on things they did not see in the substantial world" (Pt. V, Ch. iv; p. 337). Symbolically, he is history, both as a principle of the



impersonality of the largest perspective and as an example of the "persistence of the unforeseen" in the personal lives of the characters.<sup>17</sup> It is as history, as "Age," as "little Time," that this character perceives "the generals of life" instead of "the particulars" (Pt. V, Ch. iii; p. 334). These "generals," what Hardy also calls "the universal," constitute, in Jude the Obscure anyway, the reality; the "particulars" make up what is corporeal. Little Time's three most important acts of perception are of the abstract rather than the particular or personal. In spatial terms, "the house, the willows, the obscure fields beyond, were apparently regarded not as brick residences, pollards, meadows, but as human dwellings in the abstract, vegetation, and the wide dark world" (Pt. V, Ch. iii; p. 334). His perception of time is as generalizing as as his perception of space is: "I should like the flowers very very much, if I didn't keep on thinking they'd be all withered in a few days!" (Pt. V, Ch. v; p. 358). Finally, his murder of his siblings and his suicide are perfectly logical, considering his perception of the source of Sue's and Jude's problems: "I think that whenever children be born that are not wanted they should be killed directly, before their souls come to 'em, and not allowed to grow big and walk about!" (Pt. VI, Ch. ii; p. 402). It is as Jude's and Sue's adopted child that he is the embodiment of their personal pasts, including, of course, Jude's original liaison with Arabella, and Jude's and Sue's helplessness when face with her vitality and indirectness.

This use of characters' children to represent an idea which these characters have and which summarizes them can be regarded as Hardy's method of presenting, in a nonrealistic way, the abstract form of the characters' relations with each other and with society; it is one of his means of showing how abstract meaning can be found in the concrete world.

Hardy's nearly allegorical depiction of the real attempts to "bring" symbolic meaning to the "object" described, meaning "that coalesces with and translates the qualities that are already there,--half hidden, it may be," so that both the object which the artist presents and the "style" or means by which it is presented go beyond "The exact truth as to material fact," "and the two ['object' and 'style'] united are depicted as the All" (Life, p. 185); January 1887). A simpler example of this than Father Time is Tess's child Sorrow: because of Tess's victimization by Alec, her escape from him, and her resistance to the exclusivity of established church doctrine, the Sorrow is hers alone to bear and to bury. In both these cases, the child has a universal and a particular role to play in the novel, as character and as idea. Sorrow symbolizes the effect of abstract principle on Tess's life.<sup>18</sup>

Hardy uses creatures other than children in this same way; in Far from the Madding Crowd, for instance, the dog that helps Fanny Robin reach the Casterbridge Union is an almost purely allegorical figure. This dog would be completely allegorical if it were not for the fact that Hardy is clear that some of its symbolic meaning comes as a result of Fanny's "poetical power": "Darkness endows the small and ordinary ones among mankind with poetical power, and even the suffering woman threw her idea into figure" (Ch. XL, p. 307). The perspective which makes the dog symbolic is not only Fanny's, however; the first description is made while Fanny's eyes are closed:

"No further!" she whispered, and closed her eyes.  
From the stripe of shadow on the opposite side of the  
bridge a portion of shade seemed to detach itself and move  
into isolation upon the pale white of the road. (Ch. XL,  
p. 306)

This description seems carefully neutral; the neutrality changes after Fanny has opened her eyes. The perspective is hers though the voice is

the histor's:

He was a huge, heavy, and quiet creature, standing darkly against the low horizon, and at least two feet higher than the present position of her eyes. Whether Newfoundland, mastiff, bloodhound, or what not, it was impossible to say. He seemed to be of too strange and mysterious a nature to belong to any variety among those of popular nomenclature. Being thus assignable to no breed, he was the ideal embodiment of canine greatness--a generalization from what was common to all. Night, in its sad, solemn, and benevolent aspect, apart from its stealthy and cruel side, was personified in this form. (Ch. XL, p. 307)

Analysis of the "style" ("that coalesces with and translates the qualities" of the object, in this case, the dog, "that are already there") tells us that "the ideal embodiment of canine greatness" exists at least as an "idea" that can be thrown "into figure"; it also shows Hardy's belief that human tragedy can be mitigated by what seems to be sympathetic nature. Something in nature, in other words, helps Fanny when she needs it, and that something exists in nature, independent of perspective (when human eyes are closed); the meaning of that something depends on the mind of the perceiver. For Fanny, it is "softness" and "warmth"; it is "Night, in its sad, solemn, and benevolent aspect"; it is a "friend": "In her reclining position she looked up to him just as in earlier times she had, when standing, looked up to a man" (Ch. XL, pp. 306-7). This dog seems so symbolic that even the fact that the man at the Casterbridge Union stones it away takes on a kind of general significance.

Another such juncture of the real and the corporeal, which takes place in Two on a Tower, is instructive for its near absence of symbolic overtones. Its structure is essentially the same: a character finds personal meaning in external nature. This figure, a child again, is a rather amazing bit of psychological realism and demonstrates clearly Hardy's sense of how consciousness interprets the world even without the knowledge or deliberation of the character. Bound by conventions in which

the idea of pregnancy is distasteful to readers, Hardy lets us know of Lady Constantine's before even she is aware of it:

It was evening, and she was coming as usual down through the sighing plantation, choosing her way between the ramparts of the camp towards the outlet giving upon the field, when suddenly in a dusky vista among the fir-trunks she saw, or thought she saw, a golden-haired, toddling child. The child moved a step or two, and vanished behind a tree. Lady Constantine, fearing it had lost its way, went quickly to the spot, searched, and called aloud. But no child could she perceive or hear anywhere around. She returned to where she had stood when first beholding it, and looked in the same direction, but nothing reappeared. The only object at all resembling a little boy or girl was the upper tuft of a bunch of fern, which had prematurely yellowed to about the colour of a fair child's hair, and waved occasionally in the breeze. (Ch. XXXVII, pp. 271-72)

The child which Lady Constantine sees "in a dusky vista" does not exist, but there is a child which she does not see, which is invisible to her, and which is, in fact, real. It is because of the reality of her own, invisible, child that the other seems visible to her.

These four instances of the real manifesting itself in the corporeal can be arranged according to their relative degrees of realistic or allegorical presentation. The least realistic, in its presentation, is Fanny Robin's "friend," and the most, probably, is Viviette Constantine's "golden-haired, toddling child." The real and the corporeal find an easy balance, where neither is obscured and neither dominates, only in the instance of "Sorrow the Undesired--that intrusive creature, that bastard gift of shameless Nature who respects not the social law" (histor, Tess Ch. XIV, p. 120). Hardy finds his best means of presenting the simultaneity of the real and the corporeal, however, in The Woodlanders, not in the images of the forest and Melbury's anxiety and "carking care," which are instances of the predominance of the real, but in the character of Marty South. She has the same kind of thematic importance in the novel that Fanny's dog, Tess's baby, and little Father Time do,

but she is also realistic, like Grace and Fitzpiers. Having "Taken Thought," Marty has more in common with characters like Cytherea and Angel and like Grace and Fitzpiers, who combine "modern nerves with primitive feeling" (as Hardy says of Grace), than she does with Hardy's insensitives, like Suke Damson and Timothy Tangs (Ch. XL, p. 358). At the same time, Marty perceives the real in the corporeal: like little Time, who recognizes the impermanence of the roses, it is Marty who identifies "the end of what is called love":

the accident of two large birds, that had either been roosting above their heads or nesting there, tumbling one over the other into the hot ashes at their feet, apparently engrossed in a desperate quarrel that prevented the use of their wings. They speedily parted, however, and flew up with a singed smell, and were seen no more. (Ch. XIX, p. 168)

Hardy uses this perception of hers as a commentary on Grace's lack of loyalty to Giles and her attraction to Fitzpiers. It is also Marty who hears meaning in the wind sighing in the pines:

She erected one of the young pines into its hole, and held up her finger; the soft musical breathing instantly set in which was not to cease night or day till the grown tree should be felled--probably long after the two planters had been felled themselves.

"It seems to me," the girl continued, "as if they sigh because they are very sorry to begin life in earnest--just as we be." (Ch. VIII, p. 73)

As the enunciations of one of Hardy's prophetic figures, Marty's insights and perceptions speak to the universals of nature and human life. Like Father Time, moreover, she represents the relations among the other characters in the novel. Little Time stands for the consequences of actions begun by Jude, Sue, and Arabella, as well as more general forces within the human world itself:

On that little shape had converged all the inauspiciousness and shadow which had darkened the first union of Jude, and all the accidents, mistakes, fears, errors of the last. He was their nodal point, their focus, their expression in a single term. For the rashness of those parents he had groaned, for

their ill-assortment he had quaked, and for the misfortunes of these he had died. (Pt. VI, Ch. ii; p. 406)

In her role as the representative of ideas originating in the other characters, Marty is Hardy's witness to their acts. She witnesses George Melbury's sleeplessness caused by his concern for Grace and his vow to repay Giles's father through Giles, and Hardy narrates the particulars of Melbury's plan for Grace and Giles as Marty overhears it (Ch. III, pp. 16-19). Marty witnesses Grace's arrival from the outside world and her meeting with Giles, and Hardy uses her inspection of Grace to describe her (Ch. V, pp. 41-43). The novel begins, essentially, with Marty: Barber Percomb searches for her in the unfamiliar woods and tempts her for the sake of Felice Charmond's beauty. The novel ends with Marty as she demonstrates what is to Hardy an ideal kind of loyalty and love.

Hardy is explicit that Marty is an abstraction as well as a character. Her last speech, the last paragraph of The Woodlanders, is the articulation of what is surely Hardy's ideal of "loving-kindness." Her personal love for Giles provides the context for this last speech, but the particular quickly fades as Hardy's abstract and representative form of the character takes on greater significance:

As this solitary and silent girl stood there in the moonlight, a straight slim figure, clothed in a plaitless gown, the contours of womanhood so undeveloped as to be scarcely perceptible in her, the marks of poverty and toil effaced by the misty hour, she touched sublimity at points, and looked almost like a being who had rejected with indifference the attributes of sex for the loftier quality of abstract humanism. She stooped down and cleared away the withered flowers that Grace and herself had laid there the previous week, and put her fresh ones in their place.

"Now, my own, own love," she whispered, "you are mine, and only mine; for she has forgot 'ee at last, although for her you died! But I--whenever I get up I'll think of 'ee, and whenever I lie down I'll think of 'ee again. Whenever I plant the young larches I'll think that none can plant as you planted; and whenever I split a gad, and whenever I turn the cider wring, I'll say none could do it like you. If ever I forget your name let me forget home and heaven! . . . But no, no, my

love, I never can forget 'ee; for you was a good man, and did good things!" (Ch. XLVIII, pp. 443-44)

If we are not to think of Marty as a pitiful creature, expressing and pledging loyalty to Giles dead which she never did when he was alive, we must see her as "abstract humanism," which honors (thinks of) and remembers the individual because he "was a good man, and did good things."

Because she is unusually perceptive, Marty has important connections to Elizabeth Endorfield. Hardy deemphasizes the supernatural elements of the character and emphasizes Marty's closeness to nature. Marty can indeed predict the weather, but every one of her predictions is based on observation of natural phenomena. In dramatizing Marty's thought, Hardy provides the observations and the predictions, and the inferences which Marty draws from them. In one key passage, for instance, we see Marty as a kind of innocent, finding the truth in the mundane details of her work. It is worth noting, too, that it is psychologically realistic for Marty to express her own heavy-heartedness knowing that Giles wants to "bring things to a head" with Grace at a Christmas party (Ch. IX, p. 78). Having just spoken to Grace and having seen Fitzpiers as a rival for her, Giles decides to stop work for the day:

. . . "Here, Marty, I'll send up a man to plant the rest to-morrow. I've other things to think of just now."

She did not inquire what other things, for she had seen him walking with Grace Melbury. She looked towards the western sky, which was now aglow like some vast foundry wherein new worlds were being cast. Across it the bare bough of a tree stretched horizontally, revealing every twig against the evening fire, and showing in dark profile every beck and movement of three pheasants that were settling themselves down on it in a row to roost.

"It will be fine to-morrow," said Marty, observing them with the vermilion light of the sun in the pupils of her eyes, "for they are a-croupied down nearly at the end of the bough. If it were going to be stormy they'd squeeze close to the trunk. The weather is almost all they have to think of, isn't it, Mr. Winterborne? And so they must be lighter-hearted than we." (Ch. IX, pp. 78-79)

Marty's personal reasons for not feeling "lighter-hearted," while in evidence, are nearly buried by the significance of the "western sky, . . . aglow like some vast foundry wherein new worlds were being cast," and the suggestion of a reciprocal foundry in her as she observes the birds "with the vermilion light of the sun in the pupils of her eyes."

Even though Marty rather than Giles hears sadness in the sighing of the pines and sees light-heartedness in birds whose only thought is the weather, it is Giles who is the figure of nature in this novel. He, however, has a fundamental kind of weakness which dooms him to ineffectuality and an early death.<sup>19</sup> As "abstract humanism," Marty does not die young; she is merely "doomed to sacrifice desire to obligation" (Ch. XX, p. 174). She is, however, Giles's "true complement in the other sex":

Marty South alone, of all the women in Hintock and the world, had approximated to Winterborne's level of intelligent intercourse with Nature. In that respect she had formed his true complement in the other sex, had lived as his counterpart, had subjoined her thoughts to his as a corollary. (Ch. XLIV, p. 399)

In that she is unusually intelligent--on more than one occasion, her thought is "nothing less than one of extraordinary acuteness for a girl so young and inexperienced" (Ch. XXXIII, p. 285)--and in that she approximates Giles's "level of intelligent intercourse with Nature," Marty fulfills the role of the witch-figure in this novel. Even her deliberate gestures, like the letter she writes Fitzpiers telling him that Felice Charmond's beauty is at least partially dependent on Marty's own hair, even this attempt to manipulate social relationships points up her basis in the natural. Marty is, Hardy's histor says, only furthering something which has a kind of inevitability anyway; her letter, in other words, is one small part of a larger, more comprehensive force: her letter is "her long contemplated apple of discord" (Ch. XXXIV, p. 299). It



is "the tiny instrument of a cause deep in Nature" (Ch. XLV, p. 404).

Marty inhabits both the real world and the corporeal one as well; this is why her smallest gestures have significance far beyond themselves, and this is why her attributes are abstractions rather than idiosyncrasies or characteristics. Conceptually speaking, this real world is not the same as the personal, private world that each conscious character has; in practice, however, it is often difficult to tell the difference between them, mostly because the real world to Hardy is perceptible by the mind, so to speak, rather than by the senses. Mental rather than physical perception on the part of the characters is required because the meaning of the world resides in the real rather than the corporeal. Although it would be unfair to Hardy's imaginative powers to ascribe allegorical significance, especially in any really systematic way, to all such appearances of the abstract in the realistic settings of the novels, it is also true that the sense of the dual nature of perception and reality is an abiding one in Hardy. At the beginning of The Mayor of Casterbridge, for example, the vivid detail in the description of the signboard for the Three Mariners suggests something general about human endeavor:

Hereon the Mariners, who had been represented by the artist as persons of two dimensions only--in other words, flat as a shadow--were standing in a row in paralyzed attitudes. Being on the sunny side of the street the three comrades had suffered largely from warping, splitting, fading, and shrinkage, so that they were but a half-invisible film upon the reality of the grain, and knots, and nails, which composed the signboard. (Ch. VI, p. 46)

It is especially easy to see the persistence of this idea throughout Hardy's fiction if one remembers the conventional ways of expressing it, especially the Platonic and Pauline versions of the distinction between body and spirit or between the physical and the mental. What Hardy

seems to have done is to have conflated the Platonic assumption that the world falsely seems to be real and the Pauline doctrine that the body lacks the reality which is granted in Christian theology to eternal things. When he states either idea directly, Hardy distinguishes between them. The complexity arises when Hardy is dealing with neither idea in particular but with the distinction itself, between what is real and what seems to be real. In general, when he is not laboring under the influence of Plato or Paul, Hardy seems to have believed that reality differs from corporeality in that the former has meaning and the latter only evidence that meaning exists. It is by this means that Hardy saw order in the world, and these terms are the most profitable for understanding Hardy's aesthetic, especially as it relates to principles of realism and to the presentation of consciousness through narrative.

This is not to say that it is absolutely unprofitable to seek evidence of Platonic and Pauline formulations of this problem in Hardy's work. Examples of both abound in every novel, but so do their contradictions. As a matter of fact, a better way to look at Hardy's characters is to determine whether their problems come essentially from inside or from outside them. Hardy's attitude about the source of the limitations to a character's consciousness often seems more germane to his formulation of the real-corporeal split than any theoretical position he might take from time to time. Clym, for example, is destroyed from within his own defenses, and that is why his body shows the imprint of his mind, and that is why Hardy expresses his weakness as blindness, an alteration of perception which is inherent to the perceiver. Jude's sexuality, though clearly intrinsic to his basic nature, seems to him to be aroused outside his consciousness, and he experiences it as an external (material) force:

In short, as if materially, a compelling arm of extraordinary muscular power seized hold of him--something which had nothing in common with the spirits and influences that had moved him hitherto. This seemed to care little for his reason and his will, nothing for his so-called elevated intentions, and moved him along, as a violent schoolmaster a schoolboy he has seized by the collar, in a direction which tended towards the embrace of a woman for whom he had no respect, and whose life had nothing in common with his own except locality. (Pt. I, Ch. vii; p. 48)

Other descriptions of Jude's predicaments, too, his drunkenness among them, point to his environment as the source of his pain. These environmental forces are held in unsteady balance by the strength of his consciousness and by the vividness of his inner vision. Faced with Arabella, however, Jude finds that his inner world has been invaded by what seems to him to be alien and extrinsic. As Grace Melbury shows, however material sexual desire may be, it works from within the consciousness.

Hardy's last four novels--The Woodlanders, Tess, Jude, and The Well-Beloved--all show the effects of his thinking directly about how to portray the essential reality as he saw it and how to show where meaning resides. Very early in 1886, he recorded the statement that "My art is to intensify the expression of things . . . so that the heart and inner meaning is made vividly visible" (Life, p. 177). Whether Hardy's non-realistic, near-allegorical elements in the last four novels are intensifications of "the expression of things" or whether they are the mixing of genres, Hardy provides a very important clue here for understanding the most troublesome aspects of these last four novels. In The Well-Beloved, there is a kind of truth in Jocelyn's belief that the original Avice persists in her daughter and granddaughter: children are, to Hardy, the "expression in a single term" of their parents (Jude Pt. VI, Ch. ii; p. 406); paradoxically, this belief has the truth that it does because Jocelyn believes it to be true--it is true because he thinks it is true.

We can say that Jocelyn is right or wrong in his faith in the Well-Beloved only if we make one or the other of the worlds (of reality--what is only mentally and personally perceptible--and of corporeality--what is only physically and objectively perceptible) a false one. That is, when we assume that both worlds exist then we must also come to the conclusion that there is a Well-Beloved so long as Jocelyn believes that there is and that Jocelyn's Well-Beloved is an ideal, a fantasy, of his own making. In a way, she is his best creation, the one of which all his sculptures are only inferior copies.

It is just as important to read Jude the Obscure in this way as The Well-Beloved. The usual reading, which organizes the novel around an idea which opposes "reality" and "illusion," invalidates Jude's perspective, since the "reality" in this case is the corporeal world of natural and social laws and the "illusion" refers to Jude's dreaming.<sup>20</sup> Clearly, Jude's idealism in education, love, and personal freedom meets its destruction in the hostile world outside him, but Hardy marshalls all the best of his narrative repertoire to present, not the perspective of that hostile world, but Jude's perspective, and Hardy provides evidence to show that Jude should be right even if he is not. Jude deserves the education he dreams about, he deserves the personal freedom which he attempts to seize against social conformity; he deserves, too, not to have his family wiped out by the literalization of the ideas that children have no place in so grim a world and that legal marriage is eternal marriage. But there can be no doubt that Hardy presents the corporeal world of Christminster and Wessex as having existence, regardless of its lack of "reality" in Platonic or Pauline notions of the word; Hardy is clear, in other words, that Jude misconceives the world and does not see what is there. The fact that Hardy felt that this world has an objective

existence explains why he was never willing to give up his histor, no matter how important the personal perspective became to him. Both worlds exist simultaneously to Hardy, and the novels which attempt to present that simultaneity, Tess and Jude, are the novels most complexly narrated by both the histor and close narration.

All of the themes presented in this chapter can be regarded as more or less specific variations on Hardy's message that we live in two simultaneous worlds. People engage in secret-keeping and they drink as an expression of the always potentially predominant external world, the corporeal one. They dream and have moments of blindness as an expression of the always potentially predominant internal world, which is the real one. One final passage, from Tess, will show how the intensities of either of these worlds can be measured in the particulars of Hardy's presentation of characters' consciousnesses. The scene is the narration of the effects of Tess's confession to Angel of her earlier sexual relations with Alec. The distinction which Hardy makes between the corporeal, "the substance of things," and the real, "the essence of things," is also clearly identified here with the distinction between "external things" and Tess's and Angel's "brains":

Tess's voice throughout had hardly risen higher than its opening tone; there had been no exculpatory phrase of any kind, and she had not wept.

But the complexion even of external things seemed to suffer transmutation as her announcement progressed. The fire in the grate looked impish--demoniacally funny, as if it did not care in the least about her strait. The fender grinned idly, as if it too did not care. The light from the water-bottle was merely engaged in a chromatic problem. All material objects around announced their irresponsibility with terrible iteration. And yet nothing had changed since the moments when he had been kissing her; or rather, nothing in the substance of things. But the essence of things had changed.

When she ceased, the auricular impressions from their previous endearments seemed to hustle away into the corners of their brains, repeating themselves as echoes from a time of supremely purblind foolishness. (Ch. XXXV, p. 291)

This is one of Hardy's most important articulations of the theme of reality and corporeality, because of the clarity with which he shows that the perspective determines the distinction between them. This is one of those events in which the corporeal world is charged with meaning, in which the real meets the corporeal--in which "material objects around announced their irresponsibility with terrible iteration." Because there has been a change in the real--in "their brains" which previously were blind but now, presumably, can see--there is a change in the corporeal, in "external things."

Essentially, the perspective here is Angel's, but the passage is not clearly close to Angel, and the references to "their previous endearments" hustling "away into the corners of their brains" and, in the next paragraph, to what Angel's face looks like ("His face had withered") certainly mean that the perspective is not completely limited to him. The hallucinatory quality of the scene means exactly what Angel's sleepwalking does: he is and has been living in a "sommambulistic hallucination," from which he does not awaken until he recovers from his illness in South America. Because Angel is dreaming, as it were, we can say that his vision of reality is flawed: it is only for Angel that reality changes when Tess confesses; everyone else concerned--the reader, the histor, and Tess--already knew about Alec. We can see, then, in this passage, that the personal perspective which Hardy was quite willing to narrate is not identical to the real and that it can cause a character to misperceive what is real. Finally, however, it must not be forgotten that Angel's consciousness has been limited by external as well as internal factors, for he has had a secret kept from him. The scope of what is reality to him has been diminished by something outside of his control.

Even though Angel's personal perspective allows him to see things which are not true, of Tess, for instance, we cannot deny it its own reality. Like Jude and Jocelyn, Angel very much lives in a world of his own making which is as internally consistent as possible, considering the effects of chance and the external world. We can see that Angel is wrong to judge and treat Tess as he does, that he is hypocritical to accept her forgiveness while condemning her for the same crime, that he rejects orthodox Christian ideals and maintains orthodox sexual ones, but to deny the reality of the world he perceives is to ignore, for one thing, all of the close narration by which Hardy dramatizes it. Even the facts that Angel is wrong and that he comes to recognize his error do not make his perspective any the less valid. Hardy's portrayal of the inner worlds of his characters, however, involves more than close narration; it also involves his presentation of the external world, either as a force from which the individual consciousness is sharply distinct or in which this consciousness finds its own reflection. This subject is discussed in the next, and last, chapter of this study.

## Chapter Seven: Conclusion

The general movement of this dissertation has been from the surface of the texts of the novels--their places in their historical period, their fictional conventions, and their stylistic devices--to more and more speculative ideas about what kinds of conditions might generate in Hardy the particularities of these surfaces. The further we get from the narration close to the characters and the histor, the harder it is to speak unequivocally of Hardy's methods and ideas. To understand Hardy, however, it is necessary to find the unity in his work. For Hardy, as for most authors, this unity is far more abstract than anything in the text of the work, as it must be if it is to encompass all the conflicting and even contradictory elements of typical and atypical Hardyan fiction: allegorical characters and realistic aims in mimetic fiction; "close" and "cosmic" narration; the attempt to portray what the articulate and even what the inarticulate cannot say in a medium composed entirely of words; transient moments of insight in a world where thoughts, as acts, have profound and far-reaching effects; the effects of ignorance and blindness on people's lives.

From the vantage point of many years and layers of criticism, we can see that there is a kind of mythos in Hardy's conception of consciousness. There was once a period, or a phase, in Hardy's mythology, in which all nature shared the same consciousness. Then there was a Promethean change: humans developed separate consciousnesses; they became self-conscious; they began to need knowledge. Evidence of this



original period still exists, at the end only barely, in the natural witch-figures whose intelligence and ways of knowing seem ancient and comprehensive rather than classical and linguistic, in the processes of the mind that mirror natural and biological processes in the world outside, and in the "mental liberty" that Hardy's characters find out of doors at dusk (Tess Ch. XIII, p. 107). In The Dynasts Hardy seems to have believed that a consciousness in the universe is a possibility that exists in the future, a result of a species of universal evolution, but hints of this idea can be found all through the fiction and clearly in The Woodlanders. At their most essential level, there seems to be no important difference between Hardy's conceptions of consciousness in the world and the "spreading" consciousness of the most enlightened and sensitive characters (Far from the Madding Crowd Ch. IV, p. 32); they seem indistinguishable:

The role of man in the universe is, for Hardy, comparable to the role of will and intelligence themselves: it is a role of emergent exoneration and supremacy. The word emergent is important. Man's exoneration is not to be taken for granted. It is not to be rashly assumed by means of defiance, ambition, or egotism. It materializes slowly, out of blight and despair. It materializes so slowly and painfully, indeed, that one is inclined to think that Hardy saw an analogy for this painful vindication in the equally painful and agonized degrees by which modern man had suffered the loss of his traditional dignity in the teachings of Bacon, Montaigne, Galileo, Newton, Locke, Lyell, and Darwin, and yet survived to declare a new faith and worth for himself through a sublimation of his egoistic individuality into the instinctive wisdom and slowly maturing intelligence of the natural universe itself. Some such allegory is conveyed by the stories of Clym Yeobright, Michael Henchard, and Jude Fawley; it is implicit in Hardy's children of nature--Gabriel Oak, Giles Winterborne, Marty South, Diggory Venn, and John Loveday.<sup>1</sup>

Ian Gregor's tracing of Hardy's image of "The human race . . . as one great network or tissue which quivers in every part when one point is shaken, like a spider's web if touched" in all its various forms is fundamental to an understanding of this similarity in the two kinds of

consciousness.<sup>2</sup> The "web" illustrates both the existence of unity in the world outside the consciousnesses of the characters as well as the unity that works through those consciousnesses. The web is an image for the desire some of Hardy's characters have for unity with humanity (as in the case of Jude) and it is in fact the unity itself (as in the case of Tess). That is, the image of the web is a part of a conception of consciousness as something larger than the individual mind, something in which the individual mind takes part. It is a conception of mind which denies that each human is isolated in reality, whatever that person may seem to be to him- or herself or to an observer who is limited by space and time.

In the myth, then, the world was once conscious, in the way of early people, dogs, horses, pigs, and bees. The world may become conscious again, it is potentially so now. But, in the present-day of each of the novels, in the Wessex Hardy describes, only the people are truly conscious, and only some of them; they feel isolated from each other and alienated from themselves and nature. Consciousness almost always causes pain; though the pain is not unmixed, it seems to be so great that all of Hardy's sensitive characters attempt to escape from it, into society, into nature, or, failing these, into perfect unconsciousness--death. Society offers no refuge to those who are conscious and wish to escape isolation, because individuation is a separation from community as well as from nature. Society and nature share many characteristics from the point of view of the individual; in fact, the essential difference is between individuation and communality rather than between society and nature. This difference is often expressed in the novels as a distinction between inner and outer worlds, the inner world representing the individual and the outer one society or nature or both, depending on the

novel.

Just as we can posit a myth of the history of humanity in Hardy's novels, there also seems to be a universality of experience for the individuals who have consciousness. At first they are not conscious; they feel connected to nature, they have a place in the social structure. Then, because of experience, they "Take Thought": social support and order disappear, nature seems hostile, and this change necessitates "Taking Thought"; it is "the necessity of taking thought" that makes "the heavens gray" and forces "childhood's face to a premature finality" (Tess Ch. XVIII, p. 155; The Woodlanders Ch. II, p. 8). Once they have "Taken Thought," they begin to feel themselves incomplete: they may feel a "void" in themselves, as Gabriel and Henchard do; they may seek an idealized other, some part of themselves, a "true complement in the other sex," as Edward Springrove, Giles, Angel, Jude, and Jocelyn do (The Woodlanders Ch. XLIV, p. 399); they may find themselves contemplating their own body, their place in the outside world, as Cytherea and Edward, Charley Dewy, Eustacia and Clym, Henchard, Elizabeth-Jane, and Lucetta, Grace and Fitzpiers, Tess, Jude, and Jocelyn do. These characters live in two worlds: one is the world of their thoughts--their ideals, emotions, and the meaning that experience adds to place, time, people, and actions; the other is the outside world, whose reality is problematical--it is not real in the sense that it does not have intrinsic meaning and may only indirectly represent the truth. At this point, these characters either find or fail to find happiness, which, as D. H. Lawrence saw, exists in Hardy only in the community, in the security within the walls of the city.<sup>3</sup> Those who rejoin the community marry and usually can be expected to live, in spite of Hardy's reputed pessimism, happily ever after: Edward and Cytherea, Bathsheba and Gabriel,

Ann Garland and Bob Loveday, Thomasin and Diggory Venn, Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae, Angel and 'Liza-Lu; there are a few who can be expected to find marriage painful, but these characters seek its communality anyway: Dick Dewy and Fancy Day, Grace and Fitzpiers, Sue and Phillotson. Many more lose their consciousnesses as best they can and die; only a few survive alone, and their consciousnesses, like Clym's, have been irrevocably damaged. None maintains individuation and also remains intact.

In this context, society and nature become part of the same communality from which the character is separated for a time. Because a consciousness can exhibit the actions of nature (feelings) and society (thoughts), there is no completely trustworthy distinction between inner and outer worlds, even at this abstract, mythological level. The social and natural processes are identical, whether within or without a consciousness; furthermore, the inner and outer worlds can be indistinguishable when a consciousness perceives and when it is communal. Since both social and natural communality exist, and since all Hardy characters belong, intrinsically, to both, characters are opposed to either nature or society only so long as they resist either deliberately. That is, for example, nature operates through the individual with the same processes that it does through the outside world; as long as natural forces operate, there is no radical discontinuity between the individual and the natural world outside the character's consciousness. Society links the individual to the mass of humanity by means of family, learning, tradition, order, and, at its best, mutual protection and survival. Perception connects the inner and outer worlds because it is the act that consciousness takes in that world; by way of perception the inner world can invest the outer one with meaning, overlay it with ideals, blur it, or even blot it out.

There is a level, however, at which there is a clear distinction between the inner and outer worlds, and that is at the level of the narration, in the distinction between the perspectives of the histor and the characters. The continued presence throughout all of Hardy's novels of both perspectives means that both worlds continue to exist; the attention to the perspective results in attention to inner as distinct from outer worlds. There are novels in which Hardy's concern seems to be with the world outside the characters' consciousnesses; these novels are dominated by the histor, and they do not draw special attention to the difference between what the characters perceive and what is presented as real. Even in the most detached of these novels, The Trumpet-Major, however, Hardy finds a difference and finds its source or cause to be a matter of perspective:

The spectators, who, unlike our party, had no personal interest in the soldiery, saw only troops and battalions in the concrete, straight lines of red, straight lines of blue, white lines formed of innumerable knee-breeches, black lines formed of many gaiters, coming and going in kaleidoscopic change. Who thought of every point in the line as an isolated man, each dwelling all to himself in the hermitage of his own mind? (Ch. XII, pp. 119-20)

There is one novel--The Well-Beloved--that can be said to be dominated by the voice of a character, but parts of The Mayor of Casterbridge, The Woodlanders, Tess, and Jude are dominated by the perspectives of characters, and the location of the perspective determines the appearance of the world. These parts of these novels narrate the inner worlds of these characters. To these characters, then, and sometimes to the histor, the mind is a "hermitage" and the world merely abstract patterns of color and change.

Outside of either of these perspectives, there are fundamental correspondences between the world inside and outside of the characters. Of

the myriad ways Hardy expresses this idea, the most important are: similes comparing mental to natural phenomena, like thought and vegetative growth, memory and geological formations, mood (or state of mind) and topographical features, intensity of consciousness and landscape; reference to natural and social qualities in characters' names, showing the kind of communality in their origins; the effect of the mind upon the body of a character; and the ways in which the action of the consciousness is determined by the world, the action of the world by the consciousness of the character.

Hardy uses the geology, topography, and landscape of his setting to describe his characters' consciousnesses so frequently that whole books have been written about it.<sup>4</sup> Hardy uses travel to suggest thought, whether purposeful or aimless, whether directed or wandering, whether on roads, railroads, or on barely- or nonexistent pathways. Two novels present this technique most clearly, Tess and The Well-Beloved, but it is obvious in all the novels. Sometimes Hardy makes these comparisons between the physical world and mind directly, in the voice of the histor: "At times [Tess's] whimsical fancy would intensify natural processes around her till they seemed a part of her own story. Rather they became a part of it; for the world is only a psychological phenomenon, and what they seemed they were" (Ch. XIII, p. 108); "as if the words were the mere torso of a many-membered thought that had existed complete in his head" (Desperate Remedies Ch. XIII, No. ii; p. 270); "Fancy was . . . singing the tips and ends of tunes that sprang up in her mind like mushrooms" (Pt. II, Ch. vi; p. 98). As Samuel Chew points out, the use of these similes, and there are thousands of them, is as indicative of Hardy's ideas as their content:

If Meredith is an artist in metaphor, then is Hardy equally an artist in simile. . . . The point to be made here is that just as metaphor in the hands of Carlyle becomes itself a metaphor of his transcendentalism, so is simile appropriate to Hardy, for by his use of this figure of speech he suggests in every page of his writings the intimate interrelation of human beings and human affairs with the natural world around them. . . . It is easy to pass over single instances of these kinds without stopping to analyze them; but as they occur again and again there comes to be a growing impression of how each individual life contains in little the characteristics of the Whole, of how in any small series of events there are implications as wide as the universe.<sup>5</sup>

The majority of these figures are similes, but Chew's essential point is valid even for those that are not. Some of these figures are more important than others, clearly, often mostly because they occur again and again in Hardy's fiction and become so symbolic by repeated use that they require analysis. Absolutely central and obvious are those comparing geology, topography, and vegetative growth to mental conditions. Just as typical is Hardy's use of water--a sea or stream, usually, to refer to mental environment.

The "island" on which much of The Well-Beloved takes place, for instance, is only called an island: it is in fact the top of a peninsula and, to the histor, it "stretches out like the head of a bird into the English Channel" and "is connected with the mainland by a long thin neck of pebbles" (Pt. I, Ch. i; p. 3). To Avice and Henri Leverre, helpless in the currents of the "Race," the rocks give the island a "grim wrinkled forehead" (Pt. III, Ch. vi; p. 199). At the political party in which Pierston meets Nichola Pine-Avon for the first time, feeling strongly that he is about to meet the Well-Beloved, Pierston is "like a stone in a purling brook, waiting for some peculiar floating object to be brought towards him and to stick upon his mental surface" (Pt. II, Ch. i; p. 58). All of the characters in The Well-Beloved are in a kind of sea, in a fluid environment which influences their thinking. In

describing the predicament of Nichola Pine-Avon as the moral guardian of "her long perspective of girls," Hardy hints at the nature of that sea:

She was another illustration of the rule that succeeding generations of women are seldom marked by cumulative progress, their advance as girls being lost in their recession as matrons; so that they move up and down the stream of intellectual development like flotsam in a tidal estuary. And this perhaps not by reason of their faults as individuals, but of their misfortune as child-rearers. (Pt. III, Ch. iv; p. 170)

Nichola Pine-Avon's descent into banality is a result of her social responsibilities to her children, and the process of limitation, Hardy is clear, is that of censorship. Alfred Somers, too, Pine-Avon's husband, loses something in his marriage and maturity: he loses "that peculiar and personal taste in subjects which had marked him in times past" (Pt. III, Ch. iv; p. 171). In other words, he loses his uniqueness, his individuality. Pierston does not lose his creative individuality and he does not mature as his contemporaries and Pine-Avon and Somers do, because he remains "unanchored" in this sea of social responsibilities and interactions (Pt. III, Ch. iii; p. 167):

By the accident of being a bachelor, he was floating in society without any soul-anchorage or shrine that he could call his own; and, for want of a domestic centre round which honours might crystallize, they dispersed impalpably without accumulating and adding weight to his material well-being. (Pt. I, Ch. ix; p. 49)

The sea, then, is society in its most basic form, an abstract mental environment whose influence is to add "weight" to the "material well-being" of those who live in it. This is how society wreaks its damage in Hardy, to continue this metaphor, by surrounding those who are particularly receptive to its effects with "weight" and banality. It rolls individuals into a "composite ghost" desperate "for some good god" to "disunite it again" (Pt. I, Ch. ii; p. 13).

Dozens of examples of this kind can be found in any of Hardy's



novels, hundreds, perhaps, in all of them. By suggesting that there is no clear distinction between the consciousness of a character and the world around him or her, especially the world of nature, that the two worlds have the same features and processes, this metaphorical language contradicts directly the characters' own sense that there is no continuity between the content of their inner worlds and that of the intractable, unresponsive world outside. Though there are fewer passages asserting the discontinuity of consciousness and the world, they are important because they are key passages narrated close to the characters or from their perspectives, or these passages appear in scenes in the novel that are important for other reasons as well. Jude, for example begins the novel feeling a continuity between himself and nature. The purpose of the scene in Farmer Troutham's field is to dramatize the breaking of the "magic thread of fellow-feeling" that unites "his own life" with that of the birds (Pt. I, Ch. ii; p. 11). When Jude thinks, then, that his life is a "cell," he is feeling that he is disconnected from the world around him, the one to which he once felt he belonged ("All around you there seemed to be something glaring, garish, rattling, and the noises and glares hit upon the little cell called your life, and shook it, and warped it" [Pt. I, Ch. ii; p. 15].) At the dance with Wildeve, Eustacia finds happiness to be a warm, brightly lit room; this is a perception of the same order, as is Grace's sense, as the day of her wedding approaches, that "The interim closed up its perspective surely and silently. Whenever Grace had any doubts of her position the sense of contracting time was like a shortening chamber . . ." (Ch. XXIV, p. 205). Bathsheba, too, has this experience when she asks Troy, "in a small enclosed echo, as from the interior of a cell," if he knows Fanny (Ch. XLIII, p. 343).

In the sense that these characters find themselves enclosed and imprisoned by hostile circumstance, there is a radical discontinuity between the processes of the world and their own desires. Other moments in these same characters' lives, however, show that the inherent inseparability of body and mind is the basis upon which nature and consciousness intersect. All of these characters find sexual instincts operating upon their consciousnesses directly, so that their thoughts are changed in accordance with their attractions; all of these characters have moments, as Eustacia does, when the inner and outer worlds seem the same:

Never was harmony more perfect than that between the chaos of her mind and the chaos of the world without. . . .

. . . Extreme unhappiness weighed visibly upon her. Between the drippings of the rain from her umbrella to her mantle, from her mantle to the heather, from the heather to the earth, very similar sounds could be heard coming from her lips; and the tearfulness of the outer scene was repeated upon her face. (Bk. V, Ch. vii; p. 421)

There is in Hardy a general association between tragic events and this despairing sense of separation from the world; there is a concomitant, general association between comic events and a sense of oneness with the external world. There are many instances, however, in which nature reflects the tragic, as it does here with Eustacia, on in which the characters transcend the boundaries imposed by consciousness, as Mrs. Yeobright does or as Tess does when she contemplates the stars ("I don't know about ghosts, . . . but I do know that our souls can be made to go outside our bodies when we are alive" [Ch. XVIII, p. 154]) or when she listens to Angel playing his harp (Ch. XIX, p. 158).

The extent to which the consciousness can act upon nature is exemplified by the number of Hardy characters who die from thoughts or feelings. Of the characters whose deaths are a direct result of excessive feelings or obsessive thoughts are Miss Aldclyffe (Desperate Remedies),

Viviette Constantine (Two on a Tower), Geraldine Allenville ("An Indiscretion in the Life of an Heiress"), Lucetta (The Mayor of Casterbridge), Marty South's father (The Woodlanders), and Barbara ("Barbara of the House of Grebe," A Group of Noble Dames). The angina pectoris that kills Ann Avise in The Well-Beloved is a heartache that finally is too strong for a weak-hearted character. The most important of these deaths by mind, however, are those of Henchard, Tess, and Jude; all of these characters seem to will their own deaths by the absence of will to live. Henchard, the most strong-willed of the three, seems to die like Jude of defeat and the uselessness of living; Henchard's will survives him, in a way, with instructions for treating his body: "that no man remember me" (Ch. XLV, p. 384). Jude's will, too, his quoting from Job, is instruction for disposing of his effects, but, since all that Jude owns is the day he was born, his "will" is the refusal to bequeath it and the command that it "perish" (Pt. VI, Ch. xi; p. 488). Tess's absence of will is not enough by itself to kill her; she has moments in which she is "without volition" all through the novel, moments when she stops resisting the flow of events (Ch. XLIII, p. 513). Because it is useless for her to resist her capture, she is right not to try; in her case, there is a correspondence between her consciousness, with its absent will, and the course of events in the world outside her.

As a matter of fact, the only times in which Tess is at odds with the world, especially the natural world, is when her consciousness is most active. In this passage, which is critical for an understanding both of the nature of consciousness in Hardy's novels and of the importance of the voice of the histor, Tess is shown to be simultaneously at one and at odds with the world; she feels herself to be alien to nature but she is in fact alien only insofar as her feelings make her different

from what she is. The most important evidence that Tess's consciousness is not disconnected from "the actual world" is the "absolute mental liberty" she seeks and finds when she goes out alone:

The only exercise that Tess took at this time was after dark; and it was then, when out in the woods, that she seemed least solitary. She knew how to hit to a hair's-breadth that moment of evening when the light and the darkness are so evenly balanced that the constraint of day and the suspense of night neutralize each other, leaving absolute mental liberty. It is then that the plight of being alive becomes attenuated to its least possible dimensions. She had no fear of the shadows; her sole idea seemed to be to shun mankind--or rather that cold accretion called the world, which, so terrible in the mass, is so unformidable, even pitiable, in its units.

On these lonely hills and dales her quiescent glide was of a piece with the element she moved in. Her flexuous and stealthy figure became an integral part of the scene. At times her whimsical fancy would intensify natural processes around her till they seemed a part of her own story. Rather they became a part of it; for the world is only a psychological phenomenon, and what they seemed they were. The midnight airs and gusts, moaning amongst the tightly-wrapped buds and bark of the winter twigs, were formulae of bitter reproach. A wet day was the expression of irremediable grief at her weakness in the mind of some vague ethical being whom she could not class definitely as the God of her childhood, and could not comprehend as any other.

But this encompassment of her own characterization, based on shreds of convention, peopled by phantoms and voices antipathetic to her, was a sorry and mistaken creation of Tess's fancy--a cloud of moral hobgoblins by which she was terrified without reason. It was they that were out of harmony with the actual world, not she. Walking among the sleeping birds in the hedges, watching the skipping rabbits on a moonlit warren, or standing under a pheasant-laden bough, she looked upon herself as a figure of Guilt intruding into the haunts of Innocence. But all the while she was making a distinction where there was no difference. Feeling herself in antagonism she was quite in accord. She had been made to break an accepted social law, but no law known to the environment in which she fancied herself such an anomaly. (Ch. XIII, pp. 107-8)

Because Tess is mistaken about her true relationship with the world outside herself, the histor is necessary to describe what is true, not only of the world but also of her consciousness; that is, even though close narration is theoretically the device for the presentation of consciousness, because she is unconscious of forces that determine her perception

of herself and the world, Hardy uses the histor to narrate the content of what she thinks and feels. Obviously, it takes the histor to describe what Tess looks like as her "flexuous and stealthy figure became an integral part of the scene," but behind this obvious fact is an important point: that what Tess looks like is what she is, that her body is a part of nature, it is her "fancy"--"phantoms and voices antipathetic to her," "a cloud of moral hobgoblins"--that is alien. Tess's unwavering and essential alliance to the natural, here as elsewhere in the novel, means that her consciousness is not isolated the way she thinks it is: this isolation is "based" on nothing more than "shreds of convention."

It is necessary to emphasize the continuity between nature and consciousness in Hardy's novels as the conclusion to this study, because isolating the histor and close narration and isolating the themes of consciousness, especially that of the real and the corporeal, artificially spotlight "a distinction," as Hardy says of Tess, "where there was no difference." The relation between nature as it is described in The Woodlanders and the perceiving consciousness of the characters is as important as it is in Tess or any of the other novels: consciousness and nature are never completely independent of each other in Hardy. The landscape is so much a part of what the characters perceive that it becomes a correlative for their minds. This is especially true when the characters misperceive nature, for then they show more clearly than ever the content of their consciousnesses. Tess, in mistakenly believing that she is alien to nature, shows how ghostly, how insubstantial and unreal, social dicta are; by putting Tess at "mental liberty" at dusk, when her inner world and outer world are balanced, Hardy affirms a unity in nature and a place for Tess in that unity.

Similarly, Grace feels that nature, as she perceives it, is in

conflict with her educated and refined consciousness, which shows its "cultivation" (Ch. VI, p. 49). The morning, for example, that she sees Suke Damson coming out of Fitzpiers' cottage, Grace is awake because she doubts the wisdom of marrying him. Her perception is indistinguishable from what she perceives:

Not a sound came from any of the outhouses as yet. The tree-trunks, the road, the out-buildings, the garden, every object wore that aspect of mesmeric passivity which the quietude of daybreak lends to such scenes. Helpless immobility seemed to be combined with intense consciousness; a meditative inertness possessed all things, oppressively contrasting with her own active emotions.<sup>6</sup>

The key to understanding this passage and to identifying it with Grace's perspective is in the meaning of "mesmeric passivity" and "Helpless immobility . . . combined with intense consciousness." If Grace were described from the outside, we would see that she is hesitating--thinking both about marrying Fitzpiers and cancelling the wedding; she is so busy thinking that she cannot sleep. This hesitation and the concentrated thought beneath it are common features of Hardy's most conscious characters. In this state of intense mental activity they seem "rather duller than usual" to the other characters (Desperate Remedies Ch. XII, No. iv; p. 285); they are also so busy with their internal worlds that they find the external one (usually the source of the difficulty which causes so much activity) to be oppressive, as Grace does here. What is more, they find in their perception of the outside world the description of themselves, of their internal world. For Grace it is "mesmeric passivity" and "Helpless immobility . . . combined with intense consciousness."

Under the same conditions--indecision about marrying Manston--Cytherea Graye finds the outer world crushing and paralyzing to her ambition:

The stillness oppressed and reduced her to mere passivity. The only wish the humidity of the place left in her was to stand motionless. The helpless flatness of the landscape gave

her, as it gives all such temperaments, a sense of bare equality with, and no superiority to, a single entity under the sky. (Ch. XII, No. vi; p. 254)

Cytherea is not paralyzed by the oppressive "landscape," of course; she is thinking hard, perhaps even frantically. What she finally decides, to marry Manston, is a decision in favor of passivity, of letting things go on as they have begun. In this decision not to attempt to change the course of events, Cytherea's consciousness is horizontal, as it were: she has "bare equality with, and no superiority to, a single entity under the sky." Clym Yeobright's decision to allow the plans for his wedding to Eustacia proceed, against his intuition that it would be better to postpone it, results in the same mistake for him that it does for Grace and Cytherea, just as it is the result of the same conditions. Clym's intense thought is masked by hesitation and indecision and a sense on his part that external circumstances are too much for his higher ambitions: "There was something in its oppressive horizontality which too much reminded him of the arena of life: it gave him a sense of bare equality with, and no superiority to, a single living thing under the sun" (Bk. III, Ch. v; p. 245).

There are three issues at stake here in these passages describing Grace's, Cytherea's, and Clym's moments of marked indecision: the first is that each has the kind of "temperament" which is oppressed by "landscape" in this way; the second is that they allow a decision to be made in circumstances which militate against concluding the indecision, however painful they find it to be; and the third is that the decision in each case has to do with marrying an intellectually unsuitable and physically irresistible other. To be quite blunt about it, Grace, Cytherea, and Clym all base their final decisions on sexual attraction, on natural, biological processes, on the laws of the outside world, just as Jude

does when he marries Arabella. All of Hardy's characters are "flattened" by this aspect of the outside world, "the arena of life," Nature's "plans for the next generation" (The Well-Beloved Pt. II, Ch. vi; p. 92). Even though they have an inkling that their personal desires would be better served by not marrying, all three of these characters find their individual wills irrelevant in the face of the "oppressive horizontality," the "helpless flatness," the "mesmeric passivity" of nature. This flattening of the characters and the passivity in which it results are not the source of the problems these characters face. Their desires are demonstrably natural and understandable; problems arise for them when such fleeting desires are made the basis for permanent relationships, such as the ones society requires. The source of the problem in this case is clearly social regulations, especially those concerning marriage. Even this aspect of society is not strictly external to the characters' consciousnesses, however, as Sue's capitulation shows.

The conclusion, then, to all of this is that Hardy's true subject of narration is consciousness, as it is defined from within and without by character and narrator, by nature and society, by reality and corporeality. In this world in which consciousness is the arena, thoughts and feelings are actions and events are matters of the mind. Even so horrible an event as the death of Jude's children is more important for its origins in little Time's mind and its results in Sue's than it is as an event in a city, house, or family. From the perspective of the individual, the essential human condition is one of isolation and loneliness. No matter how moving this loneliness may be, however, it describes only the condition of the individual, and not that of the world or of humanity in general, as a mass. Hardy's pessimism, such as it is, is related, then, more to his conception of consciousness than it is to his vision



of the world. Those characters who do not attempt individuality do not suffer by being driven back into society and nature, into communality. The best formulation can be found by returning to the myth of the human getting and losing of consciousness. In the myth, the characters find, as Fancy does, that living alone, away from society and nature, gives them dreams, ideals, multiple possibilities, but the drive towards communality--the drive for sex in nature and the drive for power in society--is too strong and too intrinsic to be resisted, whether for the good of the individual or for that character's destruction.

## NOTES

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER ONE

<sup>1</sup> Florence Emily Hardy, The Life of Thomas Hardy, 1840-1928, Compiled Largely from Contemporary Notes, Letters, Diaries, and Biographical Memoranda, as well as from Oral Information in Conversations Extending Over Many Years (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1962), pp. 148-49. This single-volume work includes the two original volumes published in 1928 and 1930, respectively: The Early Life of Thomas Hardy, 1840-1891 and The Later Years of Thomas Hardy, 1892-1928. Following standard critical usage, I will refer to this volume as "the Life." As everyone knows by now, Thomas Hardy was probably the actual author of these works.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hardy, "The Dorsetshire Labourer," Longman's Magazine (July 1883), pp. 252-69; rpt. in Thomas Hardy's Personal Writings, ed. Harold Orel (Lawrence: Univ. of Kansas Press, 1966), p. 180.

<sup>3</sup> Hardy, "The Dorsetshire Labourer," p. 180.

<sup>4</sup> Hardy, "The Dorsetshire Labourer," p. 181.

<sup>5</sup> Walter Allen, The English Novel: A Short Critical History (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1954), p. 287.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Merryn Williams, Thomas Hardy and Rural England (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1972). Hardy's concern with "The Dorsetshire Labourer" is one bit of evidence among many that he saw society largely in economic terms and most often not, as do the authors Allen lists, in terms of manners or etiquette. That Hardy does not usually present social life the ways Austen, Thackeray, Trollope, Eliot, and James do is obvious, but it is also true that he shares many of their concerns and ideas about it. George Eliot explored more thoroughly than any of the writers Allen mentions the complex relationships among people in groups, yet parallels to her techniques can be found everywhere in Hardy. One very telling example is her use of the inns in Middlemarch to delineate the status of the characters as they comment on the events of the story (see Gordon S. Haight's Introduction to the novel [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1956], p. vi.) Hardy uses precisely this same technique in The Mayor of Casterbridge with, in descending order of respectability, the King's Arms, the Three Mariners, and Peter's Finger.

<sup>7</sup> Lord David Cecil, Hardy the Novelist: An Essay in Criticism (London: Constable, 1943), p. 19.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Hardy, Jude the Obscure, Vol. III of The Collected Works of Thomas Hardy, The Anniversary Edition (New York: Harper Brothers, 1920), Pt. I, Ch. ii; pp. 12-13. All references to Hardy's novels and The Dynasts are references to this edition unless otherwise noted. Future citations are incorporated into the text and cite chapter and page

number, as well as Part, Book, or Number where appropriate.

<sup>9</sup> D. H. Lawrence, "Study of Thomas Hardy," in Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence, 1936, ed. Edward D. McDonald (New York: Viking Press, 1972), pp. 410-11.

<sup>10</sup> It is a sign of the social stability, as well as the fundamental necessity of the business of farming, that the barn in Far from the Madding Crowd still stands and still serves its original function. And it is a sign of the depth of the social disturbance in Jude the Obscure that Marygreen's church has been torn down and that the handiwork which Jude loves so much is as dead as fossilized fern leaves (Pt. II, Ch. ii; p. 99).

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Hardy, The Dynasts, 1912 Introduction.

<sup>12</sup> D. H. Lawrence, "Study of Thomas Hardy," p. 415: "What is the great, tragic power in the book? It is Egdon Heath. And who are the real spirits of the Heath? First, Eustacia, then Clym's mother, then Wildeve. . . . What is the real stuff of tragedy in the book? It is the Heath."

<sup>13</sup> A Pair of Blue Eyes Ch. XXX, pp. 348-49. The least important manifestations of this idea about inner worlds are Hardy's explicit references to it. Fanny Robin, for example, largely treated as an anonymous figure and therefore not individualized, even Fanny Robin has an inner world. On her excruciating way to the poor house, "Her attitude was that of a person who listens, either to the external world of sound, or to the imagined discourse of thought. A close criticism might have detected signs proving that she was intent on the latter alternative" (Ch. XL, p. 303). Anne Garland, in The Trumpet-Major, has an inner world, and for her, much of life has to do with concealing it from those around her. By determined whistling and singing, she prevents the other characters from knowing what is really on her mind. Elizabeth-Jane in The Mayor of Casterbridge is "occupied with an inner chamber of ideas" (Ch. XV, p. 109). In The Woodlanders, Grace Melbury refuses to tell Giles Winterborne about "her own inner existence," and Edred Fitzpiers, too, has "inner visions" (Ch. VI, p. 48; Ch. XVII, p. 148).

<sup>14</sup> See n. 11 for Ch. VI.

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, Robert C. Schweik's discussion of Hardy's interest in the Victorian struggle with "the problem of how to reconcile the conflicting claims of 'altruism' and 'egoism'--that is, how to adjudicate the conflict between a requisite conscientious concern for others with personal desires for individual happiness" in "The Ethical Structure of Hardy's 'The Woodlanders,'" Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen, 211 (1974), p. 33.

<sup>16</sup> Robert C. Schweik discusses the histor of Far from the Madding Crowd in the context of Hardy's stages of composition of the novel in "The Narrative Structure of Far from the Madding Crowd," in Budmouth Essays on Thomas Hardy, ed. F. B. Pinion (Dorchester, Dorset: The Thomas Hardy Society, 1976), pp. 21-38. Of some interest also are: Rama Ghose, "Hardy's Asides and Commentaries in Tess," Visvabharati Quarterly, 38

(1972-73), pp. 112-18; John Sutherland, "A Note on the Teasing Narrator in 'Jude the Obscure,'" English Literature in Transition, 17 (1974), pp. 159-62; Sharon Pearson Lazenby, "Hardy's Omniscient Narrator: Advocate for Misjudged Individuals," DAI, 34 (1973), 780A (Univ. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign).

17 The general studies are: Joseph Warren Beach, "Bowdlerized Versions of Hardy," PMLA, 36 (1921), pp. 632-45; Mary Ellen Chase, Thomas Hardy from Serial to Novel (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1927; rpt. New York: Russel and Russel, 1964); Dale Kramer, "A Query Concerning the Handwriting in Hardy's Manuscripts," The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, 57 (1963), pp. 357-60; F. B. A. Pinion, A Hardy Companion: A Guide to the Works of Thomas Hardy and their Backgrounds (London: St. Martin's Press, 1968); Richard Little Purdy, Thomas Hardy: A Bibliographical Study (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1954); Robert C. Schweik, "Thomas Hardy: Fifty Years of Textual Scholarship," in Thomas Hardy, After Fifty Years, ed. Lance St. John Butler (Totowa, N. J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1977), pp. 135-48; Carl Weber, "Thomas Hardy and his New England Editors," New England Quarterly, 15 (1942), pp. 686-87).

18 Walter Alexander Raleigh, The English Novel: Being a Short Sketch of its History from the Earliest Times to the Appearance of Waverly, 2nd ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1895), p. 147.

19 Raleigh, The English Novel, pp. 147-48.

20 Raleigh, The English Novel, pp. 148-49.

21 Norman Friedman, "Point of View in Fiction: The Development of a Critical Concept," PMLA, 70 (1955), pp. 1160-84; rpt. in Approaches to the Novel: Materials for a Poetics, ed. Robert Scholes (San Francisco: Chandler, 1961), p. 119.

22 [George] Kenneth Graham, English Criticism of the Novel, 1865-1900 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 137.

23 Vernon Lee (Violet Paget), "On Literary Construction," Contemporary Review (1895); rpt. in her The Handling of Words (London: John Lane-The Bodley Head, 1923), pp. 1-33.

24 Vernon Lee, "The Handling of Words," in The Handling of Words, pp. 187-227. See section "D" for her ultimately disapproving evaluation of Tess.

25 Dale Kramer, Thomas Hardy: The Forms of Tragedy (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1975), p. 78.

26 J. L. VanDevvyvere, "The Mediatorial Voice of the Narrator in E. M. Forster's Howard's End," The Journal of Narrative Technique, 6 (1976), p. 207.

27 Gerard Genette, Figures III (Paris: Seuil, 1972). See, for example, his direct assertion that a novel can be treated as the extension of a sentence--of a verb, in fact (p. 75).

28 Shlomith Rimmon, "A Comprehensive Theory of Narrative: Genette's Figures III and the Structuralist Study of Fiction," PTL: A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature, 1 (1976), p. 48.

29 Genette, Figures III, p. 229. I have translated all quotations from this work which are used in this paper.

30 Genette, Figures III, p. 252. "Diegetic" refers to the histoire, or, as I translate it here, "story."

31 See Genette's summary on pp. 255-56.

32 Genette, Figures III, p. 75.

33 Genette, Figures III, pp. 251-52.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER TWO

<sup>1</sup> Richard Stang, in his The Theory of the Novel in England, 1850-1870 (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1959), documents contemporary reviewers' objections to intrusions (pp. 95-97). An instance of an intrusion in a "first-person" novel is this one from Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre, Norton Critical Edition (New York: W. W. Norton, 1971), Ch. XXVI, p. 262:

Reader!--I forgave him at the moment, and on the spot. There was such deep remorse in his eye, such true pity in his tone, such manly energy in his manner; and, besides, there was such unchanged love in his whole look and mien--I forgave him all; yet not in words, not outwardly; only at my heart's core.

<sup>2</sup> Two exceptions to this are worth noting here. The first, Wayne C. Booth's The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1961), makes the case that the current simplistic schemes for organizing all narration do not reflect the variety and complexity to be found in the actual texts. For another, different discussion of this same issue, see Lionel Suisit's "authorized translation" of Roland Barthes's 1966 "Introduction à l'analyse structurale des récits" ("An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative") in New Literary History, 6 (1975), pp. 37-72.

In his important "Point of View in Fiction: The Development of a Critical Concept," Norman Friedman uses the old (originally Platonic) "basic distinction" between "telling" and "showing" to arrange possible narrative forms as: Editorial Omniscience, Neutral Omniscience, "I" as Witness, "I" as Protagonist, Multiple Selective Omniscience, Selective Omniscience, The Dramatic Mode, the Camera (pp. 117-36). Even more important is Austin Warren's "The Nature and Modes of Narrative Fiction," Chapter XVI in René Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature, 3rd ed. (New York: Harvest Books-Harcourt, Brace and World, 1956), pp. 212-225. Presenting itself as a summary of what is currently thought about narrative, this chapter can nevertheless be seen to embody a kind of typology of narration. There are "essayistic" and "lyrical" first-person narration (p. 216). There is the third-person narrator, "the 'omniscient author' . . . the traditional and 'natural' mode of narration" (p. 222). The "romantic-ironic" form of third-person narration ("epic narration") "deliberately magnifies the role of the narrator . . . literature reminding itself that it is but literature" (p. 223). The "objective" form of third-person narration calls for "the voluntary absence from the novel of the 'omniscient novelist' and, instead, the presence of a controlled 'point of view'" (p. 223).

<sup>3</sup> Howard Baker, "An Essay on Fiction wzth Examples," Southern Review, 7 (1941), p. 395. The ellipses are Baker's.

<sup>4</sup> Baker, "An Essay on Fiction with Examples," pp. 395-96. Baker refers, of course, to Dostoevsky's The Possessed.

<sup>5</sup> Michael Millgate, Thomas Hardy: His Career as a Novelist (New York: Random House, 1971). Cited by P. N. Furbank, Introd., Tess of the d'Urbervilles, the (hardbound) New Wessex Edition (London: Macmillan, 1975), p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> Furbank, Introd., Tess, pp. 16-17.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), p. 266.

<sup>8</sup> Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction, p. 86.

<sup>9</sup> Tess, Ch. XIX, p. 160.

<sup>10</sup> Scholes and Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative, p. 243.

<sup>11</sup> J. Hillis Miller, "Narrative and History," ELH, 41 (1974), pp. 459-60.

<sup>12</sup> Miller, "Narrative and History," p. 457.

<sup>13</sup> Benjamin Disraeli, Coningsby; or, the New Generation (New York: Capricorn, 1961), p. 148.

<sup>14</sup> William Makepeace Thackeray, Vanity Fair: A Novel Without a Hero (New York: New American Library, 1962), Ch. LXVII, p. 822. In the section entitled "Before the Curtain," immediately preceding Chapter I and dated "London, June 28, 1848," just like an introduction, Thackeray calls his histor "the Manager of the Performance" (p. x).

<sup>15</sup> Thackeray, Vanity Fair Ch. VI, pp. 64-65.

<sup>16</sup> Charles Dickens, Bleak House (Cambridge, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin-Riverside Press, 1956), Ch. XLVII, p. 492.

<sup>17</sup> Dickens, Bleak House Ch. XXXV, p. 378.

<sup>18</sup> Dickens, Bleak House Ch. I, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Anthony Trollope, Barchester Towers, in Barchester Towers and The Warden (New York: Random House-Modern Library, 1936), pp. 726-27.

<sup>20</sup> Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction, p. 188.

<sup>21</sup> George Meredith, The Ordeal of Richard Feverel (New York: Random House-Modern Library, 1927), Ch. XXIX, p. 269.

<sup>22</sup> George Meredith, Sandra Belloni (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1898), Ch. I, p. 5.

<sup>23</sup> George Meredith, The Egoist, Norton Critical Edition (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979), p. 6.



- 24 Miller, "Narrative and History," p. 467.
- 25 George Eliot, Middlemarch, Bk. II, Ch. xv, pp. 104-5. Miller quotes this passage also in his discussion of the historicism in the novel.
- 26 Eliot, Middlemarch, Bk. VIII, Finale, pp. 612-13.
- 27 Gerard Genette, Figures III, pp. 190-91.
- 28 Genette, Figures III, p. 206.
- 29 Genette, Figures III, p. 207.
- 30 Anthony Trollope, Framley Parsonage (1859-60), Ch. XLVIII ("How They Were All Married, Had Two Children, and Lived Happily Ever After" [London: Robert Hays, 1925], p. 482: "Dear, affectionate, sympathetic readers, we have four couple of sighing lovers with whom to deal in this our last chapter, and I, as leader of the chorus, disdain to press you further with doubts as to the happiness of any of that quadrille."
- 31 There is nothing to be gained from a detailed discussion of this point, since examples are merely particular uses and add nothing to interpretation. One instance, from Two on a Tower, may be allowed for clarity:
- But Swithin St. Cleeve did not decease, as fact of which, indeed, the habituated reader will have been well aware ever since the rain came down upon the young man in the ninth chapter, and led to his alarming illness. Though, for that matter, so many maimed histories are hourly enacting themselves in this dun-coloured world as to lend almost a priority of interest to narratives concerning those
- "Who lay great bases for eternity  
Which prove more short than waste or ruining". (Ch. X,  
p. 78)
- 32 Quoted by Miller, "Narrative and History," p. 548.
- 33 Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction, pp. 151-52.
- 34 These are collected and cited in C. H. Salter, "Hardy's 'Pedantry,'" Nineteenth-Century Fiction, 28 (1973), pp. 145-48.
- 35 Salter, "Hardy's 'Pedantry,'" p. 146.
- 36 Specifically, Hardy uses learned vocabulary or allusion: for precision, scientific or relational; for a contrast "between the precise expression and something else more real or natural or human" (p. 151); for "delight or humor or pathos in the fact of a simple or natural thing fitting or requiring a complex description" (p. 152); for mocking "learning, and particularly logic and philosophy, as useless or unreal" (p. 153); for "the preservation of the earliest form of a word, which is appropriate both to Hardy's wish to preserve the past and to his sense of the brevity of the human life span" (p. 157), in Salter, "Hardy's 'Pedantry.'"

- 37 Ian Gregor, The Form of Hardy's Major Fiction (Totowa, N. J.: Rowman and Littlefield; London: Faber and Faber, 1974), p. 89.
- 38 Schweik, "The Narrative Structure of Far from the Madding Crowd," p. 26.
- 39 Schweik, "The Narrative Structure of Far from the Madding Crowd," p. 27.
- 40 Schweik, "The Narrative Structure of Far from the Madding Crowd," p. 31.
- 41 Schweik, "The Narrative Structure of Far from the Madding Crowd," p. 33.
- 42 And, of course, there is the pretense that the place is real. Hardy's concern with accurate natural description has led many of his readers into "Hardy country" searching for places in his novels. Editions of his books have often been published with maps (Hardy himself drew the one which usually serves as frontispiece for The Return of the Native) and photographs (of views, roads, and buildings). There is a very interesting and useful book of photography, Herman Lea's Thomas Hardy's Wessex (London: Macmillan, 1913; rpt. Guernsey C. I.: Toucan Press, 1969), which describes every building, road, and area from Hardy's novels that could be identified; it was written and photographed with Hardy's knowledge and support. Hardy acknowledged the pretense in his 1912 Postscript to his 1895 Preface to The Return of the Native, which deals directly with this subject:
- To prevent disappointment to searchers for scenery it should be added that the action of the narrative is supposed to proceed in the central and most secluded part of the heaths united into one whole, . . . certain topographical features resembling those delineated really lie on the margin of the waste, several miles to the westward of the centre. In some other respects also there has been a bringing together of scattered characteristics. (pp. vii-viii)
- 43 David Lodge, "Thomas Hardy as a Cinematic Novelist," in Thomas Hardy, After Fifty Years, ed. Lance St. John Butler (Totowa, N. J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1977), pp. 78-89; rpt. in his Working with Structuralism: Essays and Reviews on Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Literature (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), p. 98.
- 44 Am "imaginative stranger," the histor says, "might" think about the history of the barrow (Bk. I, Ch. ii; p. 13). "The imagination of the observer," he says, instinctively prefers Eustacia's completion of the geometry of the landscape to that of the heath people (Bk. I, Ch. ii; p. 14). These observers are not treated as if they existed, but Hardy does not draw attention to their only potential status. When Hardy decides to explain the odd shapes of the heath-dwellers, he moves to a perspective which clearly shows how freely he creates perspectives for narration: "Had a looker-on been posted in the immediate vicinity of the barrow, he would have learned . . . (Bk. I, Ch. iii; p. 15). When Eustacia returns to the barrow, Hardy returns to what would have been Venn's

perspective, "Had the reddleman been watching" (Bk. I, Ch. vi; p. 59). By this means Hardy stays outside of Eustacia, his histor expressing ignorance of her face and motivations.

- 45 Kramer, Thomas Hardy: The Forms of Tragedy, p. 75.
- 46 Kramer, Thomas Hardy: The Forms of Tragedy, p. 79. The quotation, from The Mayor of Casterbridge, is also quoted by Kramer and comes from Ch. VII, p. 56.
- 47 Howard Baker, "An Essay on Fiction with Examples," p. 395.
- 48 J. Hillis Miller, Thomas Hardy: Distance and Desire (Cambridge, Mass.: Balknap Press-Harvard Univ. Press, 1970), p. 72.
- 49 Furbank, Introd., Tess, p. 18.
- 50 Miller, Thomas Hardy: Distance and Desire, pp. 151-52.
- 51 Daniel R. Schwarz, "The Narrator as Character in Hardy's Major Fiction," Modern Fiction Studies, 18 (1972), p. 160.
- 52 Furbank, Introd., Tess, p. 18.
- 53 Two on a Tower Ch. I, p. 5. Jude the Obscure Pt. V, Ch. v; p. 348 and Pt. VI, Ch. xi; p. 486.
- 54 This passage has been cited twice already in this study: see p. 35 (of Chapter One) and p. 61 (of Chapter Two).
- 55 Barbara Hardy, Introd., The Trumpet-Major, the (hardbound) New Wessex Edition (London: Macmillan, 1974), p. 16.
- 56 This is J. Hillis Miller's idea. See his Thomas Hardy: Distance and Desire, p. 2, and his Fiction and Repetition: Seven English Novels (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1982), pp. 126-27.
- 57 1903 Preface to The Dynasts, p. ix.
- 58 The relationship of the composition of The Well-Beloved to that of the rest of Hardy's fiction is somewhat complicated, especially when Hardy's last novel is to be determined. The question is not merely whether The Well-Beloved or whether Jude is last, but how Tess, Jude, and The Well-Beloved all post- and antedate each other. The Well-Beloved was first published, serially, in 1892 in The Illustrated London News as The Pursuit of the Well-Beloved; it was written in 1891 from ideas recorded in the Life beginning in about 1884. In September 1889, Hardy and Tillotson's agreed to cancel their contractual arrangement for the serial publication of Tess, which at that time was called Too Late Beloved, and in February 1890 Hardy agreed to write something else, less offensive, for them, which according to Richard L. Purdy was to be The Pursuit of the Well-Beloved (Thomas Hardy: A Bibliographical Study, p. 94). Also in 1890, Hardy "jotted down" the "scheme" of Jude; he began to make notes for this novel, he says, beginning in 1887 (Preface, Jude the Obscure). By the end of 1892, the serial and the whole versions of

Tess, the serial version of The Well-Beloved, and a volume of short stories, A Group of Noble Dames, had been written and published; and Hardy was in the process of working out, as he says in the Preface to Jude, the "outline" of the "narration" of that novel. Jude was out of Hardy's hands by March of 1895, a heavily revised The Well-Beloved by January 1897, "and 'on a belated day' in that year" Hardy "seems to have outlined and commenced the composition of The Dynasts as we know it" (Purdy, p. 122).

59 "Art consists in so depicting the common events of life as to bring out the features which illustrate the author's idiosyncratic mode of regard; making old incidents and things seem as new," (Life, p. 225; March-April, 1890).

60 Schwarz, "The Narrator as Character in Hardy's Major Fiction," pp. 158-62. Robert Schweik, however, in "The Narrative Structure of Far from the Madding Crowd," finds "no particular pattern" in the "authorial generalizations" (p. 32).

61 Schwarz, "The Narrator as Character in Hardy's Major Fiction," pp. 168-69.

### NOTES FOR CHAPTER THREE

<sup>1</sup> Hardy often uses "sensitive" to describe his thoughtful characters. Sue, for instance, is an "ethereal, fine-nerved, sensitive girl" (Jude Pt. IV, Ch. iii; p. 263), and "sensitive souls" are "mentally quickened" (Life, p. 185).

<sup>2</sup> See Owen Barfield, History in English Words (New York: George H. Doran, n. d.) and Leslie A. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel (New York: Stein and Day, 1966) for two relevant ways to look at this idea.

<sup>3</sup> Edouard Dujardin, Le monologue intérieur: son apparition, ses origines, sa place dans l'oeuvre de James Joyce et dans le roman contemporain (Paris: Albert Messein, 1931), p. 31. Dujardin attributes the term to Paul Bourget, who introduced it in his novel Cosmopolis (1893), pp. 32-3. I have translated all quotations from this work which are used in this paper.

<sup>4</sup> Dujardin, Le monologue intérieur, p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Dujardin, Le monologue intérieur, pp. 95ff.

<sup>6</sup> Dujardin, Le monologue intérieur, p. 36. "Concealed dialogue" is, in Dujardin's words, "dialogue dissimulés."

<sup>7</sup> Dujardin, Le monologue intérieur, p. 37.

<sup>8</sup> Dujardin, Le monologue intérieur, pp. 37-8.

<sup>9</sup> Dujardin, Le monologue intérieur, p. 38.

<sup>10</sup> Dujardin, Le monologue intérieur, p. 68.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Humphrey, Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1958), p. 4. The information about William James also comes from here, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Ch[arles] Bally, "Le style indirect libre en français moderne," Germanisch-Romanische Monatschrift, 4 (1912), pp. 605-6. I have translated all quotations from this work which are used in this paper.

<sup>13</sup> Bally, "Le style indirect libre," p. 606.

<sup>14</sup> Richard Ohmann, "Generative Grammars and the Concept of Literary Style," Word, 20 (1964), p. 435; rpt. in Readings in Applied Transformational Grammar, ed. Mark Lester (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), pp. 119-36.

- 15 Barbara Hardy, Tellers and Listeners: The Narrative Imagination (London: Athlone, 1975), p. 209, n. 1.
- 16 Günter Steinberg, Erlebte Rede. Ihre Eigenart und ihre Formen in neuer deutscher, französischer und englischer Erzählliteratur, Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik, Nos. 50 and 51, eds. Ulrich Müller, Franz Hundsnocher, and Cornelius Sommer (Göppingen: Alfred Kummerle, 1971), p. 61.
- 17 Steinberg, Erlebte Rede, pp. 165-66. See also pp. 83-84, in which Steinberg says that "in English there are 'would/should' + infinitive up to a certain degree and, in addition, the more scarce subjunctive." The forms that erlebte Rede takes differ in each language. I have translated all quotations from this work which are used in this paper except the passage from Ulysses, which Steinberg left in English.
- 18 Steinberg, Erlebte Rede, p. 166. James Joyce, Ulysses (New York: Random House-Modern Library, 1961), p. 220.
- 19 Marguerite Lips, Charles Bally's student, did her dissertation on this kind of narration, and she "confesses that she cannot explain the form of the genuine question in [erlebte Rede] with her developmental theory" (Steinberg, Erlebte Rede, p. 55).
- 20 Steinberg, Erlebte Rede, p. 55.
- 21 Ibid. It is to be regretted that Steinberg does not cite the places in the works of Austen, Flaubert, Eliot, Meredith, and Zola in which erlebte Rede has been found. Instead, what he cites is where the discussions of the erlebte Rede of these authors can be found.
- 22 Philip Stevick, "Naive Narration: Classic to Post-Modern," Modern Fiction Studies, 23 (1977-78), p. 531.
- 23 Stevick, "Naive Narration," p. 534.
- 24 Robert W. Duncan, "Types of Subjective Narration in the Novels of Dickens," English Language Notes, 18 (1980), p. 37.
- 25 Duncan, "Types of Subjective Narration in the Novels of Dickens," p. 38.
- 26 Duncan, "Types of Subjective Narration in the Novels of Dickens," p. 41. The quotation about Flaubert, cited in Duncan, p. 36, is from Stephen Ullmann's "Reported Speech and Internal Monologue in Flaubert," Ch. II of Style in the French Novel (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1957), pp. 94-102).
- 27 Miller, "Narrative and History," p. 456.
- 28 Miller, "Narrative and History," p. 456, n. 3.
- 29 Dickens, Bleak House, Ch. XI, p. 113. Duncan is right to regard this kind of narration central to Dickens--he calls the "subjective" narration of dialogue "dialogue in the represented style," p. 39.

- <sup>30</sup> Genette, Figures III, pp. 206-7.
- <sup>31</sup> Dorothy Sayers, The Nine Taylors: Changes Rung on an Old Theme in Two Short Touches and Two Full Peals (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1934).
- <sup>32</sup> Wellek and Warren, Theory of Literature, p. 224.
- <sup>33</sup> Dujardin, Le monologue intérieur, p. 9; Bally, "Le style indirect libre," p. 606.
- <sup>34</sup> Humphrey, Stream of Consciousness, p. 127, n. 7 (to pp. 33-34).
- <sup>35</sup> Humphrey, Stream of Consciousness, p. 23.
- <sup>36</sup> Humphrey, Stream of Consciousness, p. 9.
- <sup>37</sup> Humphrey's discussion of "indirect interior monologue" is on pp. 28-33 of his Stream of Consciousness. In a move that seems to lend support to Humphrey's insistence on strict terminology, Dorrit Cohn finds ambiguity in the term "interior monologue." In her Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978), p. 15, she says: "At this point it becomes clear that the term 'interior monologue' has been designating two very different phenomena, without anyone's ever stopping to note the ambiguity: 1) a narrative technique for presenting a character's consciousness by direct quotation of his thoughts in a surrounding narrative context; and 2) a narrative genre constituted in its entirety by the silent self-communion of a fictional mind." What Humphrey says can be presented by omniscient narration is what Cohn calls "psycho-narration."
- <sup>38</sup> For this reason I have also left out instances of close narration from the Old Curiosity Shop, Vol. II (Boston: Houghton Mifflin-Riverside Press, 1922), see especially Ch. XXXIX, pp. 300-2 and Ch. XLVI, pp. 355-56. Also from Disraeli's Coningsby (New York: Capricorn, 1961), see Bk. I, Ch. iii; p. 23; Bk. III, Ch. i; p. 136; Bk. IV, Ch. ii; p. 187; Bk. VII, Ch. iv; pp. 440-41; and Bk. VIII, Ch. vii; p. 572 for representations of Harry Coningsby's consciousness whenever he is overcome by strong feelings of attraction to Sidonia and Edith Millbank. And from Trollope's Barchester Towers, pp. 206, 207, 365, 434, 455, for the occasional presentation of the thoughts and reflections of Dr. Grantly, Dr. Stanhope, Mrs. Proudie, and Mr. Slope.
- <sup>39</sup> Dickens, The Old Curiosity Shop Ch. LXIV, pp. 489-90.
- <sup>40</sup> Dickens, The Old Curiosity Shop, Chapter the Last [Ch. LXXII], p. 565:

The magic reel, which, rolling on before, has led the chronicler thus far, now slackens in its pace, and stops. It lies before the goal, the pursuit is at an end.

It remains but to dismiss the leaders of the little crowd who have borne us company upon the road, and so to close the journey.

<sup>41</sup> Charles Dickens, Dombey and Son, Vol. VI (Boston: Houghton Mifflin: Riverside Press, 1922), Ch. XIV, pp. 199-200. Subsequent references to this novel will be made in the text.

<sup>42</sup> Henry James, The Portrait of a Lady (Boston: Houghton Mifflin-Riverside Press, 1963), Ch. XLII, pp. 347-48.

<sup>43</sup> Henry James, Preface to The Golden Bowl (New York: Popular Library, n. d. [1972]), p. vii.

<sup>44</sup> James, Preface to The Golden Bowl, pp. vi-vii.

<sup>45</sup> James, Preface to The Golden Bowl, p. vi.

<sup>46</sup> James, Preface to The Golden Bowl, p. vii.

<sup>47</sup> Oscar Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray in The Portable Oscar Wilde, ed. Richard Aldington (New York: The Viking Press, 1946), Ch. XX, pp. 387-88.

<sup>48</sup> Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray, Ch. XX, p. 389.

<sup>49</sup> Quoted by Purdy, Thomas Hardy: A Bibliographical Study, p. 95.

<sup>50</sup> That Pierston's "ever-bubbling spring of emotion" is symbolized by the "old natural fountains" is J. Hillis Miller's idea as well (Fiction and Repetition, pp. 163-64). Miller also cites Proust's insight that "it is not without significance that Jocelyn . . . makes his statues of blocks of stone cut out by his quarryman father from the rock of his native isle" (Fiction and Repetition, p. 164).

<sup>51</sup> Kate Chopin, The Awakening (New York: Capricorn, 1964), Ch. XXXIX, pp. 300-303.



#### NOTES FOR CHAPTER FOUR

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Warren Beach, The Technique of Thomas Hardy (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1922), p. 53. It is Beach's belief that Hardy began with the setting in composing this novel, see pp. 50-51.

<sup>2</sup> Bk. V, Ch. ii; p. 374, Chapter title: "A Lurid Light Breaks In upon a Darkened Understanding."

<sup>3</sup> It is interesting that Hardy repeats the image of Eustacia's bonfire: her grandfather also worries about her running him out of fuel.

<sup>4</sup> Lucetta has a past to hide; she does not know of Henchard's past friendship with Farfrae, nor of the basis of his present aversion to Elizabeth-Jane; she never even learns of Elizabeth-Jane's love for Farfrae. Farfrae knows of Henchard's past with Elizabeth-Jane and with Lucetta, but he does not know that Lucetta is the woman Henchard said he would marry or that Elizabeth-Jane is not Henchard's daughter and therefore illegitimate; he does not learn until Lucetta's death that she was Henchard's lover. Elizabeth-Jane does not know the reason that Henchard dislikes her, the fact that she and Susan were sold to Newson by Henchard, and the history of Lucetta's and Henchard's relations; she learns Lucetta's story, but until the skimmington not that her partner was Henchard. Finally, Henchard learns, first, who "Miss Templeman" is, that she hired Elizabeth-Jane as companion, and that Lucetta loves Farfrae.

<sup>5</sup> Harvey Curtis Webster, On a Darkling Plain: The Art and Thought of Thomas Hardy (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1947; rpt. London: Frank Case, 1964), p. 167.

<sup>6</sup> Kramer, Thomas Hardy: The Forms of Tragedy, p. 100. The quotation is from Ch. XLVIII, p. 439.

<sup>7</sup> Gregor, The Great Web, p. 168.

<sup>8</sup> Ch. XXIV, p. 199 of the Anniversary Edition, my text for this study, reads: "Helpless immobility seemed to be combined with intense unconsciousness . . . ." Dale Kramer's authoritative edition of this novel reads as I have quoted it here (Oxford: Clarendon Books, 1981), Ch. XXIV, p. 158.

<sup>9</sup> Cohn, Transparent Minds, pp. 4-12.

<sup>10</sup> Gregor, The Great Web, pp. 196-97.

<sup>11</sup> J. Hillis Miller organizes his very impressive essay, "Tess of the d'Urbervilles: Repetition as Immanent Design," around these concepts,

tracing Hardy's use of red, metaphors of inscription, and descriptions of the sun (Fiction and Repetition, pp. 116-46).

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER FIVE

<sup>1</sup> The expression "to take thought," in one or another form, is not uncommon in the King James Version of the Bible. For instance, it is used in 1 Samuel 9:5, not far from the story of the witch of Endor; Jesus is quoted using it several times in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6: 25, 27, 28, 34) and in interpreting the Parable of the Foolish Rich Man (Luke 12: 22, 25, 26). In the Bible, it does not seem to carry the connotations of wisdom, insight, and necessity that it does in Hardy.

<sup>2</sup> This metaphor of "the extreme posterior edge of a tract in her life" recalls D. H. Lawrence's similar conception of the wilderness of personal freedom which he describes in "Study of Thomas Hardy" as occurring "at the extreme tip of life" (p. 409). Lawrence suggests nowhere that his image comes from Desperate Remedies. Even more striking a consistency in imagery is Hardy's description of Cytherea as "an exceptional young maiden who glowed amid the dulness like a single bright-red poppy in a field of brown stubble" (Ch. I, No. iii; p. 7). Lawrence's symbol for maximum self-expression in the same essay, of course, is the poppy.

<sup>3</sup> In his "Hardy and Education," Philip Collins traces Arabella's self-satisfaction and other porcine associations to a statement John Stuart Mill makes in Utilitarianism (1863): "It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied" (in Thomas Hardy: The Writer and his Background, ed. Norman Page [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980], pp. 63-4). The quotation by Mill can be found in Ch. II of Utilitarianism in Essential Works of John Stuart Mill, ed. Max Lerner (New York: Bantam, 1961), p. 197. Norman Holland finds Arabella to be associated with Hebrew images for uncleanness ("Jude the Obscure: Hardy's Symbolic Indictment of Christianity," Nineteenth-Century Fiction, 9 [1954], p. 51), cited by Leslie H. Palmer, who says that Holland "converts Arabella into the unclean animal of the Hebrews," in "The Ironic Word in Hardy's Novels," Tennessee Studies in Literature, 20 (1975), p. 123, n. 11.

<sup>4</sup> "Thus the supersensitive couple were more and more impelled to go away" (Jude Pt. V, Ch. vi; p. 367); "self-combatting proclivity of the supersensitive" (Tess Ch. XXXVI, p. 311).

<sup>5</sup> Ian Gregor discusses the detached and close narration of this passage, sentence by sentence, phrase by phrase. Gregor gets sidetracked into considering whether Hardy's use of close narration is "instinctual" or "calculating," when what is important about his analysis is that one cannot "make any extraction of ideas" (by "ideas," I think, Gregor means the articulations of philosophical or speculative ideas), "however insistently they seek to claim our attention, false to the manner of their existence, which is a manner created out of a tension which is sometimes

the tension between the narrative and the narrator" (The Great Web, p. 29). In other words, what is said close to Jude cannot be regarded as a philosophical statement made by the histor. This passage has proved difficult for other readers as well. The problem of whether Hardy's use of close narration is deliberate or not is compounded in this passage by its striking resemblance to a passage from the Life (pp. 15-16).

<sup>6</sup> Miller, Fiction and Repetition, p. 141 (for the discussion of Tess), p. 157 (for The Well-Beloved).

<sup>7</sup> Hardy repeats this trick very nicely, in a much less serious way, in The Romantic Adventures of a Milkmaid when he shows Margery Tuck feeling diminished by the grandeur of the Baron's bedroom. Although this bit of psychological realism is reason enough for its inclusion in the story, it also serves the function of preparing us for her capitulation to social convention in marrying Jim Hayward: "Everything here seemed of such a magnificent type to her eyes that she felt confused, diminished to half her height, half her strength, half her prettiness. The man who had conducted her retired at once, and some one came softly round the angle of the bed-curtains. He held out his hand kindly--rather patronizingly: it was the solicitor whom she knew by sight. This gentleman led her forward, as if she had been a lamb rather than a woman, till the occupant of the bed was revealed" (Ch. XI, p. 369).

<sup>8</sup> The Well-Beloved also begins and ends with unconsciousness: the metaphor for thought in this novel is divination rather than a labyrinth, but the pattern is still the same--the novel begins with his return to the sleeping island and ends both with his own rather catastrophic illness and with his closing of the island's natural wells.

<sup>9</sup> David Lodge, for instance, thinks that there is no ambiguity and that Tess is seduced. He offers as evidence: "She had dreaded him, winced before him, succumbed to adroit advantages he took of her helplessness; then, temporarily blinded by his ardent manners had been stirred to confused surrender awhile" (Ch. XII, p. 104), "Tess, Nature, and the Voices of Hardy," in Twentieth Century Interpretations of "Tess of the D'Urbervilles", ed. Albert J. LaValley (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 82, n. 11. To another reader, of course, this merely intensifies the ambiguity if it explains, as it could, how it is that Tess stayed with Alec after the event in The Chase and how it is that she lived in such proximity to him.

J. Hillis Miller makes the same point that I do: "To call it either a rape or seduction would beg the fundamental questions which the book raises, the questions of the meaning of Tess's experience and of its causes" (Fiction and Repetition, p. 116). Ian Gregor says that, since it is unclear whether Tess was raped or seduced, the ambiguity must be preserved and not be resolved (The Great Web, p. 183). In further support of the essential ambiguity of this event is the fact that, in the first edition, Dieter Riesner says, Tess is "made irresolute in the seduction scene with alcohol," (my translation) in his "Zur Textgeschichte von Hardys Romanen," Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen, 199 (1962), p. 399, n. 9.

<sup>10</sup> J. O. Bailey, "Hardy's 'Mephistophelian Visitants,'" PMLA, 61 (1946), p. 1180. Manston would also belong in this group.

<sup>11</sup> Donald Davidson, "The Traditional Basis of Thomas Hardy's Fiction," Southern Review, 6 (1940), pp. 162-78; rpt. in his Still Rebels, Still Yankees, and Other Essays (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Press, 1957); rpt. in Hardy: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Albert J. Guerard (Englewood cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963), p. 15.

<sup>12</sup> Allen Tate, "Hardy's Philosophic Metaphors," Southern Review, 6 (1940), p. 103.

<sup>13</sup> Ruth Firor, Folkways in Thomas Hardy (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1931).

<sup>14</sup> Other interpretations of the mirror images are available, of course, like Gabriel's condemnation of Bathsheba's posturing as vanity. But as she sits atop a pile of furniture and house plants like self-contained civilization accidentally and momentarily isolated in nature's "leafless season," Bathsheba's playing into her mirror, on which Gabriel secretly spies, is more than the evidence of "Woman's prescriptive infirmity" (Ch. I, p. 5). Her story is the story of her difficult and sometimes painful "Taking Thought," and, like her red jacket, her self-conscious admiration of her own beauty suggests not only the complex ambiguities of her character but the nature of her change as well--i. e., from unconsidering to fully conscious and from worship of virginal Diana (definitely antisocial in this context) to respect for natural Oak. David Lodge is convinced that Hardy uses "mirrors to dramatise encounters in which there is an element of guilt, suspense or deception," in "Thomas Hardy as a Cinematic Novelist," p. 97. Since he does not explain his terms, especially "suspense," it is difficult to argue with them. The other two, "guilt" and "deception," are not accurate enough to define the situations in which characters regard reflected images, because not all guilty or deceptive characters look in mirrors in Hardy, and not all mirror images are of guilty or deceptive people. Most such images do, however, reflect the faces of those who have "Taken Thought" or who are about to come to consciousness, just as many of these same characters seem indecisive and hesitant, and just as they are habitually presented with a fissure in their personality, by a split between their external and interior forms: looking in a mirror is the interior self contemplating the exterior self.

<sup>15</sup> J. Hillis Miller makes this point in Fiction and Repetition, pp. 147-48.

<sup>16</sup> Gregor, The Great Web, p. 91, quoting BK. III, Ch. iii; p. 223.

<sup>17</sup> Gregor, The Great Web, p. 92.

<sup>18</sup> Gregor, The Great Web, p. 92, quoting Bk. III, Ch. vi; p. 247.

## NOTES FOR CHAPTER SIX

- <sup>1</sup> Philip Collins, "Hardy and Education," p. 46.
- <sup>2</sup> Ian Gregor's The Great Web is an example of the scope such a study requires. He traces consciousness and evolution, and "personal and public, passion and work, man and nature" as they appear as separate and joined "strands" in Hardy's major novels (p. 37). By the time of Tess and Jude, these "strands" have become the "web": "the human body estranged from itself, and, inseparably bound to it, the social body, fractured by laws of its own devising."
- <sup>3</sup> Hardy's distinction between the realistic identity of the narrator and the realistic effect of the narration is quite sophisticated and, obviously, served him very well (since many readers have assumed that Hardy's histor belongs to the real rather than fictional world.)
- <sup>4</sup> "Instead of starting towards [Clym] in sorrowful surprise, as even Eustacia, undemonstrative wife as she was, would have done in days before she burdened herself with a secret, she remained motionless, looking at him in the glass" (The Return of the Native Bk. V, Ch. iii; p. 386).
- <sup>5</sup> "The casual glimpses which the ordinary population bestowed upon that wondrous world of sap and leaves called the Hintock woods had been with these two, Giles and Marty, a clear gaze. They had been possessed of its finer mysteries as of commonplace knowledge; had been able to read its hieroglyphs as ordinary writing . . . . They had planted together, and together they had felled; together they had, with the run of the years, mentally collected those remoter signs and symbols which seen in few were of runic obscurity, but all together made an alphabet" (Ch. XLIV, p. 399).
- <sup>6</sup> "To a Friend," in Selected Poetry and Prose (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1953), p. 6, l. 12.
- <sup>7</sup> Jan Coggan's "twirling," evidence of internal world: Ch. VIII, p. 69; Ch. XXXIII, p. 253; Ch. XVII, p. 463. He is also described as "a crimson man with a spacious countenance and private glimmer in his eye" (Ch. VIII, p. 63).
- <sup>8</sup> Hardy's comparison of Clym to the newly blinded Oedipus suggests both Clym's excessive love for his mother and the wilderness into which he is about to step. But his blindness refers to more than his emotional attachments, since his intellectual limitations are more general than that. Harvey Curtis Webster points out that Hardy learned from John Stuart Mill's On Liberty that freedom is the ability and willingness to

follow thoughts through to their logical conclusions (On a Darkling Plain, p. 45). Moments of blindness, then, are moments in which characters are unable and unwilling to see the consequences of their thoughts and actions. By the same token, Moments of Vision represent freedom in thought and a perception of truth.

<sup>9</sup> Ch. XVIII, p. 135-36. In some ways this passage may be regarded as a transition between the general situation described in the sentence which begins this paragraph, "The latter sat up with her mother to the utmost of her strength night after night," and the quite specific situation begun with the next paragraph, "A word from her mother roused her"; in effect, this makes it a transition between two specific events, Susan Henchard's writing of the letter to Michael Henchard which contains the truth about Elizabeth-Jane's paternity and her explanation to Elizabeth-Jane of the anonymous notes which forced a meeting between the young woman and Donald Farfrae.

<sup>10</sup> Bathsheba stimulates Gabriel's imagination. After she has hired him at Weatherbury:

. . . Oak walked on to the village, still astonished at the rencounter with Bathsheba, glad of his nearness to her, and perplexed at the rapidity with which the unpractised girl of Norcombe had developed into the supervising and cool woman here. But some women only required an emergency to make them fit for one.

Obliged to some extent to forego dreaming in order to find the way, he reached the churchyard . . . . (Ch. VII, p. 56)

<sup>11</sup> Eustacia's attitudes about rural Egdon Heath are well documented in the novel. Ian Gregor points out Thomasin's attitudes which, by contrasting so sharply with Eustacia's, demonstrate how imaginative Eustacia's Egdon is (The Great Web, p. 105).

<sup>12</sup> The partial or diminished consciousness which is signified in this passage by the effects of heavy drinking and "his half-somnolent state" is caused by "physical" and "mental pain": "Jude was in such physical pain from his unfortunate breakdown of the previous night, and in such mental pain from the loss of Sue and from having yielded in his half-somnolent state to Arabella, that when he saw his few chattels unpacked and standing before his eyes in this strange bedroom, intermixed with woman's apparel, he scarcely considered how they had come there, or what their coming signalized" (Pt. VI, Ch. vii; p. 458).

<sup>13</sup> "In Tenebris II," in The Complete Poems of Thomas Hardy, ed. James Gibson (New York: Macmillan, 1976), p. 168, l. 14. Jude Pt. VI, Ch. ix; p. 474.

<sup>14</sup> Webster, On a Darkling Plain, p. 191, citing the Life, p. 217. According to Webster, it is also possible that Hardy found in reading Hegel philosophical formulations which "caused him to think more intensively about the reality of the apparent, upon the elusiveness of the thing-in-itself" (p. 192).

<sup>15</sup> Preface to the First Edition of Jude the Obscure (1895).

<sup>16</sup> Part of the reason that these phrenological meditations persist in Hardy's fiction in spite of the difficulties they cause is that they are as much a part of the history of the novel as any other narrative lyricism like description of setting or what Ruskin called the "Pathetic Fallacy."

<sup>17</sup> The Mayor of Casterbridge Ch. XLV, p. 386. That Time is history is Ian Gregor's point: "In a phrase, [Hardy] is introducing with Father Time the process of history into the lives of Jude and Sue . . ." (The Great Web, p. 221).

<sup>18</sup> This is one explanation for Hardy's strange idea of having three generations of women loved by the same man. To Jocelyn, of course, they are essentially the same woman each time. There is a change, however, an evolution, of the character through the generations, even from his point of view. Avie I acquiesces in the attempts to make herself ordinary (Pt. I, Ch. ii; pp. 13-14); the second Avie is common. Avie II begins to grasp the mysteries of art (Pt. II, Ch. xii; pp. 131-32); the third Avie is refined and educated, she is "a still more modernized, up-to-date edition of the two Avies . . . . A ladylike creature was she --almost elegant. She was altogether finer in figure than her mother or grandmother had ever been . . ." (Pt. III, Ch. i; p. 153). She is the last of "The three Avies, the second something like the first, the third a glorification of the first, at all events externally . . ." (Pt. III, Ch. ii; p. 161).

<sup>19</sup> It is Giles's name, Winterborne, which suggests his weakness. It is the same weakness that Clym has after the tragedy which kills Eustacia and Wildeve: "Even supposing him capable of loving again, that love would be a plant of slow and laboured growth, and in the end only small and sickly, like an autumn-hatched bird" (Bk. VI, Ch. i; p. 460). It is also the weakness in Henry Knight, "whose imagination had been fed up to preternatural size by lonely study and silent observation of his kind--whose emotions had been drawn out long and delicate by his seclusion, like plants in a cellar" (Ch. XXX, p. 348).

As for Giles, it is sometimes difficult to separate the histor's view of Giles from Grace's. To her, he is a personification of nature and it is in her life that he is ineffective. Otherwise he is mostly quite effective, especially disregarding the paperwork not done on his property; he is without a doubt excellent at his job.

<sup>20</sup> For example: Kathleen R. Hoopes, "Illusion and Reality in Jude the Obscure," Nineteenth-Century Fiction, 12 (1957), pp. 154-57.



NOTES FOR CHAPTER SEVEN

<sup>1</sup> Morton D. Zabel, "Hardy in Defense of his Art: The Aesthetic of Incongruity," Southern Review, 6 (1940); rpt. in his Craft and Character: Texts, Method, and Vocation in Modern Fiction (London: Gollancz; New York: Viking Press, 1957); rpt. in Hardy: A Collection of Critical Essays ed. Albert J. Guerard (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963), pp. 37-8.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Gregor, The Great Web, p. 33, from the Life, p. 177.

<sup>3</sup> Lawrence, "Study of Thomas Hardy," p. 409.

<sup>4</sup> For example: Andrew Enstice, Thomas Hardy: Landscapes of the Mind (New York: St. Martin's, 1979).

<sup>5</sup> Samuel C. Chew, Thomas Hardy: Poet and Novelist (New York: Knopf, 1928; rpt. 1964), pp. 100-101.

<sup>6</sup> The Woodlanders, ed. Dale Kramer, Ch. XXIV, p. 158.

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