THE IMFLUIENCE OF GRREK DRAMA OA THE WESSEX NOVBLS OF THOMAS HARDY

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 1931.Subanitted to the Department of Pnglish Oklahona Agricultural and Mechanical College

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the degree of
MASTIRR OF ARTS
1938

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GTAPRER I

## IMTRODUCTIOM

While the Bnglish novel has had a long history, beginning with Malory in the fifteenth century, the late nineteenth century found it still aesthetically immature. Thomes Hardy, who began his career as a novelist in 1871, felt that the art of prose narrative wes as yet comparatively undeveloped. In justification of this opinion he said:

Looking around on a well-selected shelf of fiotion or history, how few stories of any length does one recognize as being well-told fron beginning to endl The first half of this story, the last half of that, the middle of enother. The modern art of narrative is still in its infancy.

The scarcity of perfect novels in any language is because the art of writing them is as yet in its youth, if not in its infancy. Narrative art is neither mature in its artistic aspect, nor in its ethical or philosophical aspect, neither in form nor substance. To me, at least, the diffir oulties of perfeot presentation in both these kinds appear of such magnitude that the utanost each generation can be expected to do is to add one or two strokes toward the selection and shaping of a possible ultimate perfection. ${ }^{2}$ And further, in his article on Candor in Bnglish Fiction, Fardy pointed out:

The distinguishing feature of a well-rounded tale has beon dofinod in many ways. Briafly, a story should be an organism. Nothing should go before it, be inter-nixed with it, or follow it, that is not related to it. Tested by such considerations as these there are many volumes of fiction,

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I
    Plorence Mmily Hardy, Early Life of Thomas Hardy, p. 252.
2
From "Profitable Reading of Fiction," Forum, Marah, 1888.
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remaricable and even groat in their character drauring, their feeling, their philosophy, which are quite second rate in their struotural quality as narratives. The fewmess of those which fulelill the conditions is remaricable, and bears out the opinion expressed earlier, that the art of novel writing is as yot in its tentative stage onnyo

Fardy's interest in ultimate perfection and in procision in the matter of structure and form, many students have felt, was due to his early training in arohitecture. It is true that he spent six years of his life studying and working in that field, and his work in arohiteoture vas by no means unsuccessful. It is to this fact that his oonscious artistry is often attributod. Sammel C. Chew, in his monograph on Thonas Hardy, has writtens

The study and practioe of architecture gave to the author of the Wessex novels, it is not fanciful to say, his evident grasp of the essentials of proportion, design, finish, selection, and exactitude . . . Nore obvious traces of Hardy's early profession are the detailed and at times too technioal descriptions of the buildings in and around which his soones are laid. ${ }^{4}$

Other students and oritios of Thomas Hardy, including Willian Lyon Phelps and Joseph Warron Beach, have assumed that the prevailing Influonoe in Herdy's development of the prose narrative came from his work in architecture.

It can be deflnitely shown, however, that Hardy's study inoluded all of the arts, snd although his early work was done in arohiteoture, his interests were primarily in the fleld of literature. In this regard, Ernest Bremnecke, Jro, in his The Life of Thonas Hardy, has 3
From "Profitable Reading of Fiction," Nevt Reviewr, (Vol. II, 1890.) 4
Sanuel C. Chew, Thomas Hardy, Poet and Novelist, Bryn Mawr liotes and Monographs, III, p. 7 .

## whittom:

Hardy dia not devote all of his energies to his architectural. work, particularly in the early years of his indentures, attractive as he discovered his tochnical studios of $\mathrm{G}_{0}$ thic art to bea He was alroady inclining toward the attractions of iitorature, poetry in particulnr. The charms of his native Dorset seemed to be intensified by his intimate aequaintance with its lendmarics, and seened to cry for expression in meter and riynme. ${ }^{5}$

During his apprenticeship as an architeot, Hardy was tom betwoen the desire to devote hinself to the stady of classic literature, and the force that conmelled him to laam a profession. Early in his student days, he and several of his apprentice friends devoloped an intense Interest in Groek drana and classical Iitierature in genoral, and spont many hours in study and discussion. Mrs. Hardy, in regard to her husband's reverence for the Greak masters, has writtent
It seens he had also set to work on the Agranemnon and the
Oodipus; but on inquiring of lloule -m who vas a Tine Greok
soholar and was alvays roady to act the futor in ary olaasical
difficulty - if he ought to go on reeding sone Groek plays,
Moule's reluctant opinion ves that if Mardy reelly had (as
his father had insisted, and as indeed was reasonable, since
he nevor yet had earned a farthing in his life) to make an
ineose in some way by arohiteeture in 1868, it would hardily
be worth while for hin to read Aesohylus or Sophoeles in
$\begin{aligned} & \text { 1859-1361 . } \\ & \text { inas not smali. Mevertheless } \\ & \text { his substantial } \\ & \text { lonomledge of them }\end{aligned}$

While the training which Hardy had reeeived in art and architecture undoubtedly had some bearing on his work as a novolist, a lmowledge of Greek drama and of the Wesser novels revenls that the novels owe much to the author's thorough study of Greek drama. Gritios have admitted that traces of influenee froen the Greeks con be found in Hardy's writing. There is, however, little definite development of 5
Ermest Bromeake, Jre, The Life of Thonas Hardy, pp. 96m07. 6
Florence Bnily Mardy, ope cite, pp. $48=44$.
this theory. Seamel C. Chew states that the exact degree to whioh his study of Greek Iiterature influenced Hardy has not been dotemined, but maintains that from these studies oome the Sophoclean tone of the greater novels. He also attributes Hardy's power over irony, his grasp of the principle of total effect, and his ability to universalize 7 the applioation of a series of events to that source.

I do not want to underestimate the other influences on Hardy's art, but I believe it can be definitely shown that his interest in Croek drama was ono of the dominant sources of Hardy's artistic maturity. The purpose of this study is to trase the influences of Greek drame on the Wessex novels, particularly with regard to structure and form of plot, character development, and the uses of special devices to develop tragedy.

In the first place, Hardy did not acoidentally fall nor unoonsciously digress into the field of tragedy. He said, in the General Preface to the definitive edition of his worics:

Differing natures find their tongue in the presence of differing spectacles. Sane natures becone vocel at tragedy, some are made vooal by comedy, and it seems to me that whichever of these aspects of life a writer ${ }^{\prime} \mathrm{s}$ instinct for expression the more readily responds, to that he should be allowed to respond. That before a contrasting side of things he remains undemonstrative need not be assumed to mean that he remains unperceiving. 8

He chose tragedy beeause he saw in it the most fitting and appropriate and artistic medium through which to express the modern world, and he gives three reasons for his choice.

## 7

Samuel C. Chew, op. oit., pp. 8-9. 8
Thanas Hardy, Tess of the DYurbervilles, Genoral Preface to the Novels and Pooms, po xii.

Pirst, Hardy, as a result of his study and interest in the literature of classical Greece felt that the tone of his ovm age was similar to that age which produced the notable tragic dramas. During the age of Perieles, Greece reached its peak of intellectual splendor, but at the same time it was passing through the first stages of intelleotual and moral revolution. It was the exuberant eonsciousness of power, the freedan of expression and splendor of wealth that made an intelleotual revolution inevitable. With the growth of the entire nation and the inoreace in number of its oitizens, the life and government became more complex. After a period of forty years of pence, during which time Athens as a city reached what it felt was a world supremacy, there folloved a series of disastrous wars and groat social distress and confusion. With the growth of the nation there came the realization that the heretofore Utopian form of social and economic goverment wes not sufficient. The Athonians, truly the first of modern men, suddenly awoke to the endless miseries and disorders of life, and at the seme time saw that these disorders were due largely to the lawless aots of men.

It was at this time that the first ideas of science and reason began to appear. Developnents in these fields gave rise to doubt and confusion. The ryths and legends which had guided the lives of the Greoks were being supplanted by discoveries of the soientists and words of the philosophers. Individual oonsciousness arose, from which came 9 groed, jealousy, and undue ambition.

9
H. G. Wolls, The Outline of History, ppe 291-309.

England, during the age of Thomas Hardy, was having difficulty acquainting herself with changes, both economic and politionl, which had bean produced by the advance of industrislism. The change froa agricultural to industrial interests, which had taken plaee in the country in the early part of the century, had inereased the misery and suffering of the masses. The concentration of wealth had so intensified the poverty of the lower olasses that Hardy felt the tragio strain, which is so evident in both his prose and his poetry, perneating the entire country.

The advance of Darwin's theory had so completely shaicen the religious faith of the people that the Victorian conplacency, which they had previously onjoyed, was gone. Doubt and indecision naturally arose. Ind, too, the spread of general eduoation, Hardy felt, heightened the tragedy for the lower elasses by making them more conscious of the conflicts of human possions in the modern world.

Secondly, Hardy felt himself in harmony with the Greeks. In his novels, the idea of fate was prevalent, fate which was guided by the hands of the jealous gods, in whose power it lay to impose penalties, demand submission, and control destinies. In the Greek drama, it may be recalled, tragedy at the outset was inevitable.

Hardy, too, saw in the life of his time the sadness of the human lot and man's helplessmess in the hands of a blind power of fate. Just as the Greeks often questioned the actions of the gods, so did Hardy ask of the malignant Power governing mankind:

10
John W. Cunliffe, English Literature During the Last Half Century, pp. 42-62.

How arrives it joy lies slain And why unblooms the best hope ever sowm? ${ }^{11}$

Thirdly, Hardy's concentration on the Greelc tragedy had revealed to him a perfection of form suitable to the tragedy, which he folt was the method of expression best adapted to the modern world. He did not insist, however, that the whole world and human iffe came into his view only from the standpoint of tragie significance, and that he could not see the other phases. Ho felt only that his major bent was in that direction. $5^{x^{2}}$

There are many statements of Hardy's interest in Greek tragedy, most of which will be discussed later. The following, howover, is representative:

> toid it seemed a good foundation for a fable of a tragedy, told for own sake, as a presentation of particulars containing a good deal that vas universal, and not without a hope that cortain iound thereinartic, Aristotelian qualitios $\frac{\text { might }}{}$ be

These statements of Hardy's show the strength of his interest in Greek droma. The fallowing chapters, whith will inalude an snalysis of the Greek ideals of art, will show the influence of Hardy's study of Greek drama on his novels.

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II
    Thanas Hlardy, Wessex Poens, "Hap," p. 7.
1 2
    Thomas Hardy, Jude the Obscure, Preface, po x.
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## CHAPIGR II

THE GRRTE IDEALS OF LITERARY ART

In a comparative study of the two different phases of Iiterary art: nanoly, drama and the novel, which this ono includes, it is obvious that similarities in every respect will not be evident. It is surprising, however, that so maxy points in the novels of Thomas Hardy conform to the prineiples established by the Greek tragedians.

Since the most concentrated theory of Greek drama may be found in Aristotle, in the form of conclusions which have been dravn from his study of what the earlier dreanatists had done, the work of this first critio will be used as the basis for the Greek theory.

Tragedy, acoording to Aristotle, is an "imitation of an action that is complote, whole, and of a certain magnitude." Furthemore, It must have six parts to determine its quality, namely: plot, character, dietion, thought, spectacle and song. Most important of these is plot. Aristotle says:

But most important of all is the structure of incidents. For tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of an action and of 11 fe , and 11 fe consists in action, and its ond is a mode of aotion, not a quality. Row character determines men's qualities, but it is by their actions that they are happy or the reverse. Dramatic action, therefore, is not with a view to the representation of character: character comes in as subsidiary to the action. Hence the inoidents and the plot are the end of a tragedy; and the ond is the chief thing of all. Again, without action there cannot be a tragedy; there may be without character ${ }^{1}$
Since plot, then, ves the most important part of a drama, Aristotle found that the notable Greok tragedians had adhered rather rigorously I
James Henry Smith and Bdd Winfield Parks, The Great Critios, Axistotle's "Pootics," pu 9.
to certain principles of construction. First, the action must be complete, whole, and of a certain magnitude. In his Poetios he says that a plot must consist of:

* . a whole thet has a beginning, a middle, and an ond. A beginning is that which does not itself follow anything by casual necessity, but after which something naturally is or comes to be. An end, on the contrary, is that which itself naturally follows sone other thing, either by necessity or as a rule, but has nothing following it. A well constructed plot, therefore, must neither begin nor ond at haphazard, but confona to these prinoiples. ${ }^{2}$

All of the major tragic dremas in Greek literature, it will be reoalled, follow these prinolples. Sophocles begins his tragedy, Oedipus Rex, some ten or twelve years after Cedipus had taken the throne, and at a point when the pestilence whioh had befallen the country had reached a orisis. Bach indident thereafter arises fron some previous action, and is followed by the result of that aotion until the final scone, when Oodipus, now blinded, is led away, as the chorus laments:

Ye eftizens of Thebes behold, 'tis Oedipus passeth here,
Who read the riddlemword of death, and mightiest stood of mortal men,
And fortune loved him, and the folks that vay him turned and looked again.
Lo, he is fallen, and around great storms and the outstretching seat
Therefore, 0 man, beware, and look toward the ond of things that be,
The last of sights, the last of days; and no man's life accounts as gain
Bre the full tale be finished and darkness find him without pain. ${ }^{3}$

Here we have the final, clear cut onding of the action which was started in the first sceno. Antigone also has that very sharp 2
Aristotie, Pootios, op. oit*, p. 11. 3
Gilbert Murray's translation of Ten Greek Plays: Sophooles, Oedipus Rex, p. 49 .
beginning, opening on a specifio inoident, far into the story. After the death of her brother, Polynices, the king has decreed that he shall not be given the burial rites. She defles the king and determines to avert this fate. From the begiming, then, the action falls through a series of olosely intervoven inoidonts, to a definite finish. In this, again, as in all of the Greok tragio masterpieces, there can be no doubt in the mind of the reader when the action is completed. Magnitude, another essential to a well formed plot, is that which sets the scope of the action. Aristotie maintained that beauty, which, of necessity, accompanies a work of art, depends upon magnitude and order. He explained:

* . an axoeodingly mall pioture camot be beautiful, for the view of it is confused, the objeots being seen in an alnost imperceptible moment of time. Wor, again, can one of vast aize be beautiful; for as the eye carmot talce it in all at once, the unity and sense of the whole is lost for the speotator; for instance, if there were a picture a thousand miles longe

The fundanental situations out of which tragedy arose were already established for the Greeks. They treatod their subjects according to the episodes which cane in the lives of their heroes, and these dranses portrayed one action.

In addition to magnitude, a well formed plot, according to Aristotle, must have complexity. This complexity was brought about when a change of fortune was accompanied by reversal of intention, recognition, or both.

Reversal of intention was stated to be a change in the action which was caused by an attempt to alleviate impending misfortune, but

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4
Aristotle, Poetios, op- cit. , pe 11.
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wiioh, instead, intensified the tragedy. This point is cleariy illustrated in the Oedipus, when the messenger oanes to earfort Oedipus and free him fran his worry about the fate that was predicted for him by the oracle of Delphi, but by revealing that Queen Merope vas not his mother, he produces the opposite offect. Also in the Iymoens, Lymoers is led away to his death, and Densus goes with him, intonding to kill him, but the action reverses and Danuas is slain and Lynceus is saved.

Recognition, vhich is most offective when socompanied by revergal of intention, is a change from ignorance to lonowledge by sane relevant action, thus produoing love or hate between the characters. Recognition, such as that found in the oedipus, when Jooasta definitely realizes, from the convergation between Oedipus and the stranger, that Oedipus is her som, is most effeotive. Similar uses of this device may be oited in the works of Aeschylus and Buripides.

Dramatio aotion of the Greoks was tragio and terrible, but never squalid, and its purpose vas to excite pity and fear. In Aristotle's words:

> - . the change of fortune presented mast not be the spectaele of a virtuous man brought from prosperity to adversity; for this moves neither pity nor fear; it merely shocks us. Nor, again, that of a bed men passing fran adversity to prosperity. for for pity is aroused by wmerited misfortume, fear by the misfortune of a man like ourselves. . There remains, then, the oharactor between these two extromes a that of a man who is not eninently good and just, yet whose misfortume is brought about not by vice or depravity, but by sane error or frailty.

The unities of time, place, and action, which have been the subject of muoh disoussion, and the cause of much misundorstanding,

## 5

Aristotle, Poetics, op. oit. , p. 16.
in the iiterary world since the Greek period, were adhered to, in the main, in all of the Greok tragedies. The only unity, howevor, which Aristotle considers essential, is that of aotion, but he points out that the use of the other two wns so frequent that they must be contributing factors to a good plot. The action of a drama, according to the practices of the Greeks and as mentioned by Aristotle, should be complete, in that it concerns one definite theme and aims toward one end.

## He says:

Unity of plot does not, as some persons think, consist in the
unity of the hero. For infinitely various are the incidents
in one man's life, which camot be reduced to unity; and so,
too, there are many actions of one man out of which we cannot
malke one action. Hence the error, as it appears, of all poets
who have composed a Fleracleid, or a Theseid, or other poems of
the kind. They inagine that as Heraeles was one man, the
story of heracles must also be a unity. But Homer, as in all
else he is of surpessing merit, here too -- whether from art
or natural genius -- seems to have happily discemed the
truth. In composing the Odyssey he did not inelude all the
adventures of Odyssens - suoh as his wound on Pernassus, or
his feigned madness at the mustering of the host -- inoidents
between which there was no necessary or probable comnoxiont
but he made the Odyssey, and likewise the Iliad, to centre
round an action that in our sonse of the word is one. As
therefore, in the other initative arts, the imitation is one
whon the object imitated is one, so the being an initation of
en action, must minitate one eotion and that a whole, the
structural union of the parts boing suoh that, if any one of
them Is displaced or removed, the whole will be disjointod and
disturbed. For a thing whose presence of absence malces no
visible differenoe, is not an organie part of the whole. ${ }^{6}$

Furthermore, when the unities of place and time were observed (as they usually were except in the epie plots) the action should occur in a place where all the scenes could be enacted or related, and within a period of time whioh could be held in the memory.

In the matter of unity in plot, however, Aristotle makes a very 6
Aristotle, Pootios, ope oite, p. 12.
definite distinction between the epic and the drametic types of action. He says:

Epio poetry agroes with tragedy in so far as it is an initation in verse of characters of a higher type. They differ in that epic poetry . . . is narrative in form. They differ, again, in their length; for tragedy endeavors as far as possible to confine itself to a single revolution of the sum, or but slightly to exceed this limit; whereas the epic action has no limits of time. This, then, is a second point of differences though at first the same freedom was admitted in tragedy as in epic poetry. ${ }^{7}$

Purthemore, he points out, in epie structure is found a multiplicity of incidents with each part assuming its proper magnitude, while the tragedy conters on one portion of a long tale and develops one definite action.

Just as the tragedy presents a single action, and includes evory part of that aotion, so ahould the epic structure include a single period of time, and all that happenod within that period to one person or to many, little cornected together as the events may be. For instance, the epie plot of the Iliad and the Odyssey conforms to this plan.

The chorus in the Greek tragedy from Sophooles on was recognized as an integral part of the plot. It is only through this medium, at oortain stages, that the drama oan progress. The chorus eoquaints the audience with importent actions that have taken place outside the drama and often serves as the turning point in the plot, either with the introduction of a new situation or the explanation of an old.

In the matter of character, which Aristotle believes holds second place in the struoture of a tragedy, two specific purposes are noted.

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7
    Aristotle, Poetios, op. cit., p. 8.
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Pirst, oharacter is introdueed to carry out the action in the plot, and sacond, it is through oharacter, showing what kind of things a man chooses or evoids, that the moral purpose is revealed.

In order to fulfillthese two purposes, Aristotie maintains that character should be devoloped with four essential qualitios in mind. First of all, it must be good, and in keeping with the prupose for which it was ereated. Of propriety, as another requisite, Aristotle says:

> "There is a type of manly valour; but valour in a woman, or unsorupulous oleverness, is inappropriate."8 Furthemore, character should be true to life and oonform to the prinoiples known and accepted, and must be consistent. And as in the strueture of the plot, character portraiture should always aim at the necessary or the probable. A person or a given character should speak or act in a given way, either by the rule of necessity or probability, just as events in the action should follow each other by nocessity or probable sequenoe.

The Greek drama was dowinated by a strong sense of fate, conbined with what Aristotle calls the "tragic frailty." The philosophy of life which wrs ocmanily acoepted is olearly expressed in the literature of the time, by such statements as the following: "The strength of necessity camnot be resisted." ${ }^{9}$ "Fram ills given by the gods there is no escape." ${ }^{10}$ This wres a naturel judgnent to make, for over and over again charaoters are portrayed vainly struggling against fate $\overline{8}$ Ibid, p. 18.
Aeschyluso Promothous. Bound, 1. 105. 10

Aeschyluse Sespen Againsti the Thobes, 1. 719.
or henvonty porem that contritw disastor for fhers Bypolytus was a viatia of the jorlons Aphratef grestas, oomanded by Apollo, slen


 fyeek tragie baraotorg was scmotimes isposed beamse of muses thut restoc on sorbin houses. This in true of bedipus, of orestes, mon at Agamman and be house of Atrous.


 altocother, the theory of coternintme. Greck drem cocemmed itsela
 and the foilures and chibevmenta of hume freedok.

 oubline Athletion, lyrio potry ard the rise of the drame cen be
 of tize semse for fork wath is fundnombat is themberstanding of both Grock hajogonhy and Greck axt. Anter the gexeral plan of a tregody wos etahished, the filliny in of inotomes or apisodes Folevant to the action was artaticnily and. Proportion was ara of tha orident requisites to the etructure.

Another characteristho zotahe in the work of tho Groek tragie



the incident is closed. Only that part of the life of a character whith has definite bearing on the story ${ }^{\boldsymbol{*}}$ s develogment is ineluded.

Since Aristotlets Pootios, which as has beon stated before, was a series of oonelusions drawn from the works of the Greek tragie dramatiste, consideration of the characteristio qualities of the three major dramatists, Aeschylus, Muripides, and Sophoclos, is important in this study.

Aeschylus, who represented the suffering of humanity, attompted to justify the law of the gods against the presumption of man. Religion was prominent in all Greek drama, but with Aeschylus religious feeling sooms to be more profound. He dealt with the sadness of the human lot, the power and 耳qsterious dealings of the gods, their terrible and insorutable wrath and jealousy, and their certain vengeance upon sinners. Hie is distinguished by his power and grandeur of concoption, presentation and expression.

While Aeschylus wrestles with the gods, Sophocles aceepts, with sane question, the fate imposed by them, and in his dramns emphasis is placed on the human tragedy. He has been praised for his sldilful construction, the secret of thich depends, in a large measure, on the profound wey in vinich the eentral situation of each tragedy has been conceived and felt. Concentration, them, is the distinguishing note, his tragedies being carried steadily and swiftly orwerd, looking neither right nor left, and the more elaborately any scene is wrought, the more it contributes to enhanoe the main cmotion.

Suripides, the most tragio of all Greek poets, is in open rebellion against the gods and the fate which they impose upon the charaotars. From a mechanical stendpoint, Euripides favors formality. His plays,
as a rule, open with one solitary figure, often supernatural, in darimess or before daum, speaking a prologue. Thus the atanosphere is areated and the play is started with dignity and quiet. Thereafter, carefully, by set stages, the ection quickens, risee to olimax after elimax, and then sinks again into a calm in the last scene. The last some is often like the first. In about half his plays the last scene contains the opiphany (gemerally on a device in the air) of a god or goddess who calms the strife, explains the mystery, reconciles the combatants of the play itself, and by the foretelling of the future fates of the characters, gradually brings the performance down from the stir of drama to the caln of narrative. This peaceful ond was almost essential to Greek art.

The foreshadowing in the opening scenes which forecast the tragedy is a notable devioe used by the Greeks. The total effect is given in the beginning, but this effect is intensified by its measured advance into the slowly darkening suspense until the elimax is reachod.

Direct contrast, where all the forces of the pley are brought into sharp focus in a scene, is anothor notable device of the Greeks. For instance, in the Agomemon, all the tragic elements in the extire drame are collected and intensified in the soene preceding the murder of Agamemon. Also, through the conversation of Medea with her nurse, the audience learns the full significance of Jason's actions with regard to Medea.

All of these foroes are significant in considering the degree of perfection which the Greeks attained in the matter of dromatic fome.

WBSSEX NGVELS OF THCSAS HARDY AMD GREIK TRAGIC DRAMA

Evidences of kinship in spirit and form with the Greeks which are traocable in the Wessox novels sometimes have been mentioned by oritios but they have failod to do more than mention them. J. W. Cunliffe, In his introduction to The Retum of the Native, states that Hardy's idoal of literary art is Greok tragedy, "and it is an 1deal With which, in spite of obvious differences, he has much in cormon." But although he mentions casually the possibility of an influence from Aeschylus and Sophocles (apparemtly with a total misunderstanding of Sophooles, whose spirit is oertainly more then reverent accoptance of the fate which the gods sent), he fails entirely to recognize Euripides, with whose spirit Hardy is most closely in sympatiy.

As shown in the introduction and reflected in some of the prefaces of Herdy's novels, the atanosphere of the age in which the author of the Wessex novels livod had many resemblanoes to the age of Greek drana. The three greatest tragodians, Aosahylus, Sophooles, and Buripides, represented, in varying degrees, the spirit of their age. These Grook tragis poots were exmest studenta of the problems and mysteries of hunan life. Man's relation to the universe about him, his obligation to the unseen powers which control the universe, his duties to his fellow-men, the seering confliots botween human and divine law, all formed the material for Greek tragedy. Thomas Hardy, Like the Greek poets, brooded over the unsolvable mysteries of Iife


 thene treatamt of theso idear.

Angeiglus, whe livac during the timo whon thenicu dowoorecy wer fe its hotght, acoeptod anguestomingly the cate inposed by the


 once does the action of the gods in fruocing this rate some inte mastion.



 but as a rule pat his antacis on the haman crana and loft the soone



 meneratuat.

A shady of fardy's movela, ag woll as his poetry, revents a





Whon I look forth at dawning, pool, Field, Flook, and lonely tree.
All seem to gaze at me
Like chastemed children sitting silent in a schoolz
Their faces dulled, constrained, and worn,
As though the master ${ }^{\text {Is }}$ ways
Through the long teaching days
Had covred them till their early zest wes overborne.
Upon them atirs in lippings mere
(As if once olear in call,
But now scarce breathed at all)-
TVe wonder, over wonder, vihy we find us here!
Plias sane Vast Tribeoiliity
Wighty to build and blend,
But impotant to tend,
Framed us in jest, and left us now to hazardry?
'Or cane we of an Axtomaton
Unconsolous of our pains? . . .
Or are we live remains
of Godhead dying downards, brain and eye now gone?
*Or is it that some high Plan betides,
As yet not understood
of Evil stommed by Good,
We the Forlorn Hope over which Achievement strides?*
Thas things around. No answerer I . .
Hearwhile the winds, and rains,
And Barth's old glocns and pains
Are still the same and Depath and glad Life noighbors nigh ${ }^{1}$

Hardy here in the recognition of and pity for the suffering of humanity, shows that his interest is like that of Sophooles, and also that like Buripides he is questioning and oftem openly rebelling against these powers that are behind man's destiry. For instance, in the drama of Iom and Crousa, Creusa has beon soduced by Apollo and has borno him a ohild, Ion. Hore the poet is insistent on questioning the conduct of 1
Thonas Hardy, Nature's Quostioning, from A Book of English Literature, by Synder aad Yartin, p. 796.

Apollow Wat is wight about the rather of a god sacuatag a rarta
 haceod won hith by trousa?
onila of latonc, I cry to when sum will publigh fuy shazel
mon with thy trosses achamer wita goid, through Whe flowers as I chac
Mueling the crocuaes, heaping wy woll with their ooldmlititen fleme.
Gan'st on me, sughtest the poor puilid weists ont mane hancts, and atedthele
What thy couch in the cavo thotherl Rothert it shrioled mit my mail-
Wroughtest tho pleasure of Igpris no stwate made the red-Iovor guail.
Mretehed I bare twoe andid, and I anct hata what shaduerinat throo
Forth on thy counh where finu forooust thy wioting a bridemee of voe.
Lost-my poor baky and thinel For the aches devoured hire aza lol
Wietory-songe to tig lyre dost thou chant - Ho, $x$ call to thoe, 60 r
Lomy to latone, Disponsor op boding on goid-glensm fint throne
Wid most of earth who arc citting*-thino ars shall be pierced with xy moant
Thy Delow doth hate thee, thy hay-bough abhor thee,
By the palu-trae of foathery frondage that rose
Were in sacred brevan lotona bore thea In Zens"s gurder close. ${ }^{2}$

This point of view is tike polnt of viaw of harty in his rebellioa ageinst the tate of tesc, a belploss mortal semving as a mere play

 and the nomt farible) an Leden fe the wiotim of hor ow barbarte
ancestry*:
2
Muxipters, Ion, 2. 205.

In addition to this similarity to the spirit of Euripides, there is a notable likeness in the tone of the Sophoelean tragedies and those of Thanes Fardy. Sophocles conoentrated on one character and carried the tragedy steadily and swiftly forward, eawh scene ocatributing to enhance the main anotion. The concontration of tregic happenings which oecur in logioal sequence in the life of Tess, or of Jude, shows a strilking similarity with the tone of Sophoeles* works. The oharacter of 10 cheel Henchard in The Mayor of Costerbridge, who may be eompared with Ajex, is developed in a truly Sophoclean mamer, each Incident serving only to deepen the tragedy and center it more definitely on one man, who is the viotim of his own frailty of oharacter. The story is told, and onds whon fate, which was felt to be inevitable in the beginning, has destroyed its viotim.

In the light of the lnowledge that we lonow Hardy had of Greek literature, his interest in the developnent of prose narrative as an art would naturally take him to the art in whioh form played such a part, namely, the Greek drana. As shown in the introduction, Herdy felt that earlier novels lacked form, thereby losing a beauty which that phase of art could legitimately elain. He not only chose tragody, the field in which the Greoks had been so suocessfin, as his mediun of expression, but he also seleated one partioular setting for his stories. He says of this choiee:

> It has sometimes been conceived of novels that evolve their action on a circuuscribed scene-as do many (though not all) of these-mat they comnot be so inclusive in their exhibitions of hunan nature as novels wherein the scenes cover large extents of country, in whioh events figure aund tows and oities, and even wander over the four quarters of the globe. I onn not concerned to argue this point further than to suggest that the oonception is an untrue one in respect to the elementary
passions. But I would state that the geographical limits of the stage here trodden were not absolutely forood upon the wirter by oircunstarces; he forced them upon hinself from judgront. I consider that our mannificont heritage from the Groelce in dramatios literature found suffiojent room for a Targe proportion of 1ts action in an extent of their country not much larger than the half-dozen ocuntios here reunited under the old neme of Wessex, that the domestic emotions have throbbed in wessex nooks with as much intensity as in the palaces of Burope, and that, ayyhow, there was quite enough human nature in Vessex for one man's literary purpose. So far wras I possessed with this idea that I have kept within the frontiers when it would have been easier to overleap them and give nore cosmopolitan features to the narrative. ${ }^{3}$

Hardy shows that even in suoh a matter as choosing a background for his novels he has learned a lesson from the Greeks.

Obviously it is in the plots of the novels consiaered in this study that one will find most olearly shown the influence of Greek drama on Hardy. The artistic sequence of incidents which form the framework of his novels was one of the means with which the author of the Wessex plots hoped to achievo his ain of adding "a stroke or two toward ultinate perfection" in the art of prose narrative. The plot of The Return of the Mative seoms a good point of departure, since it is dramatic in type and presents more obvious evidences of similerity.

The story appears in five books, and these divisions alone give the plot a strong sense of form which approxinates that of Greek drama. Aristotle, in his Poetios, pointed out that the drama consisted of quantitative parts, and usage showed them to be of 4 approximately equal length. The first book of The Return of the 3

Thonas Hardy, General Preface to the Movels and Poems, po viis. 4
(By the time of Horace, the number had orystallized to five.)
Horace, Arrs Pootioa, 1. 212.

Native contains 104 pages; the second, 62 pages; the third, 82 pages; the fourth, 71 pages; and the fifth, 74 pages. A sixth book, entitled "Afteroourses," 17 pages in length, was added to the story, much against the convictions of the author, because his publisher demanded. a happy ending. The bolance of forces is ensily shown in skeletonized form as Hardy had done in his own summary:

First book: depiots the scones which result from an antagonism between the hopes of four persons. By reason of this strife of wishes, a happy consumation for all concorned is impossible, as matters stands but on easing of the aituation is begun by the inevitable decadonce of a too oapricious love, ance the rumors of a now arrival.

Second book: The stranger's arrival by giving new bias to amotions in one quarter, precipitates affairs in another with expected rapidity.

Third book: Clyms love for Bustacia hempers his plans, and causes a sharp divergence of opinion, coumitting him to an irretrievable step.

Fourth book: The old affection between mother and son reasserts itself; but a aritical juncture insues, truly the turning point in the lives of all concerned--Eusta.aia hes the move and she makes it; but not until the sum has set does she suspect the oonsequences involved in her choice of courses.

Fifth book: The natural offects of the foregoing misadventure. ${ }^{5}$

The plot of this story is ceveloped from the point of view of tragedy throughout, opening with the tragic foreshedowing of Egdon Heath, and onding sharply with the death of the two main characters. It has the Aristotelian boginning, opening far into the story, after cortain incidents had ocourred whieh insured a tragio outcome. Difficulty had arisen over the intended marriage of Thomesin and 5
Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, Preface, p. vil.
wildeve, which had finally been overcome; they had bought the license, had set out to be married, had changed their minds and deelded to go to another county, had arrived there too late to have the marriage 1iconse changed after they found that was necesaary, and Thomasin was on her why howe, alone, when Digeory Vemn enoountered her and took her into his oart. Here the story opans. The plot follows a series of incidents, each one evolving out of a previous action, to a definite midale, when, as Hardy states it, "Clyn's love for Eustacia haupers his plans, and causes a sharp divergence of opinion, comitting hire to an irretrievable step." The last half of the story is just as artistically built, and the real tragedy ends, with Bustacia and wildeve destroyed, clym barely alive, and Thomasin left a widow. Diggory Vemn, of all the cirole, was the only one whose situation had not materially changed, and as he is the first one whom we see, he is also the last.

The novel is told largely by scones, as in a drana, where the action is advanoed by the dialogue. It contains the confliot that makes for magnitude in drama in the irreconcilable ideas of Clym and Pustacia, he loving the heath and longing to return to it, seoing in her his help and inspiration for his work there; she hating the hoath and longing to loave it, and seeing in him a chance of esoaping to a larger world.

Complex situations arise throughout. Wildeve's misconception of the reason for Bustacia's bonfire complicates a situation which forces the tragedy to a greater depth. An example of the Greek theory of reversal of intention ocours when lirs. Yoebright, definitely decided upon elearing up her difficulty with her son and his wife,
 ally thmod away * we wity, than seasom of wheh was aiso in keoping Wit the sotion, wnis plamect to awoid tragedy ext resulted in arzesasifying the tracedy for ail concernet.

It will be noter that the wities are observed as moch wis is porsblo 5 n a rovel. Tho whity of action, the only one of the three which Arictotile maintatued was escential, is evident, and the poea,



 botweon two colebretions of Guy hewses right.

No Gregle Chorus, as fristotle tolls us, was an integral nart of tha arwa. It was Sohooles, howevor, who first introduced tho home
 sarve as the whoru to the tragedy hay keen the story moving, give tho escontial information which is not revenled by the action of the mank obaractars, and at oritical moments (buch as the grabling some 0 ( 7 in book II wad the muming scene in Book It), bring the action to detiniter turning points. Juat as gophoolos, in gedipus Rex, veen the bhona to acquant the audience of with the nossage of tho Grude




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C
    Wook III, p.22%.
7
    3002 17, %. 143.
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rusties not only assemble for thoir quasi-pagan bonfire festival at the begiming and introduce the audienoe to the atmosphere and chara.oters to come, but also indulge on this occasion in a wild sort of chorio danoe, and at other times in similar manifestations of emotion.

The plot of The Woodlanders, Hardy's own favorite, has a definiteness of form whiah is comparable to the Greek. The story concerns a little group of woodlanders, showing the "elosely-lmit interdependence of a group of lives, and has a unity gained at least as much from the part the baekground plays as from the singlemess of aotion. Judged from the point of view of Hardy's aims, the form is in keoping with his own standards. Ie says at the beginaing:

It was one of those sequestered spots outside the gates of the world where may usually be found more meditation than action, and more iistlessness than meditation; where reasoning proceeds on narrow premisses, and results in inferences wildly inaginative; yet, where, from time to tine, dramas of a grandeur and unity truly Sophoclean are onacted in the real, by virtue of the concentrated passions and elosely-lonit interdependence of the lives therein. 8

9
While the story is said by Beach to be told in chronicle style, it would appear that he overlooked the matter that vas of ohfef concern to Hardy, that is, the edjustanent of Grace to her home and the woodlanders after she has been subjected to the influence of a foreign atmosphere. The novels opens with a joumey from the outside world, down the road and through the heavily wooded lanes to Little Hintook, each step leading deoper and deeper into the woodlands and more oompletely excluding the outside world. Once inside the setting, the

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8
    Thouas Hardy, The Woodlanderg, po 19.
9
    Beach, The Teohnique of Thomas Hardy, pp- 158-176.
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 Gorves had woved into the 14 fe of tistle kintock in the beciming theg mow out at the alocg, and with tho doble darkess of Eorrow
 Is seez th the lat, still alone*

The whity of whec is observeã in this novel oven more olosely than ins The Betura of the Hative. The region "eutwide the gates of
 It is a spot where the woetable world ia moro gontnatheg thas doninatod by man This potut ik eloarly showa by the affeot that the oreat olan



 the dinges of the throo years have onewred.
 plot four is Sonooles. It as the story of the donatill of a na,





bit by his vow to refrain from intoxicating liquors for the number of yoers equaling his present age. During the next seventeen years nothing is known of $\begin{aligned} & \text { it chael Henchard or of his wife Susan. The inter- }\end{aligned}$ vening incidents have no bearing on the plot, and for that reason they are omitted. As the plot continues it is learned that Henchard has risen to flame and acquired a cortain amount of wealth, but because of those unsurnountable wooknesses of drink, greed, pride, and ignorance, (Aristotelian "tragic frailty") he falls again, and the story closes with Honchard in the sane state as he was in the beginning, a poor man who had achieved no permanent sucoess. He died in desolate loneliness, a victim of his own inherent wealoness.

Although in Far From the Madding Crowd, Hardy is interested in a Biblical pattern rather than a Greek, yet the form, in many particulars, shows traces of his Greek study. The setting, a pastoral one, is alvays the same. The main incidents in the outline form show that here too is the regular structure whioh Hardy felt essential to a work of art. Bathsheba comes into the story from the outside world, and it is through the oyes of Gabriel dak that she first appears. Cabriel carries the main thread of the story throughout, with no superfluous inoident, and his stebility of charactor is the driving force which keops the plot moving. The technique which Hardy used in handing this plot is so perfect that the art is concealed, which is, as expressed by Horace in his Ars Poetica, the greatest art.

While The Return of the Native is an exomple of an almost perfect use of the dranatie form in the novel, the last two novels of Thomas Hardy, Tess of the D'Urbervilles, and Jude, the Obscure, are equally perfect, but are epie in form. Crities have often failed to see the
definite structure of these plots and have oonpared them unfavorably with the plot of the earlier novel, only beaause they failed to distinguish, as Aristotle does, between epio and dramatic forma Toss is told in the style of opic tragedy, similar to that found in the NIiad and the Odyssey. Just as in The Return of the Nativo, there is found in both Tess and Jude that power of total offect, that feeling of an irresistible onvard, sweoping movement, and that Sophoelean tone of sympathy for the suffering of humanity, and that Buripidian revolt at the injustice of such fate.

In the division of the novels into elearly defined parts, or books, in the eoonomy of inoident, in the oareful anission of antecedent aation, and in the use of soenes to further the steady formard movement of the action, in the use of tragic antioipation, in the artistic sounding of the keynote at the beginning, Herdy reveals the care which he has given to the craftemanship of his work and the relation to olassic models. There are two speoohes from oedipus Rex of Sophooles, which could be used as the motto for these novels:

If one should dream that such a world begon In some slow devil's heart that hated man, Who should deny him? ${ }^{10}$

No man's life accounts as gain
Bre the full tale be finished and the darkness find him without pain. ${ }^{11}$

It seoms possible to believe that Hardy used the tragie form as ocmpletely and locially as he could in The Return of the Mative, and then, conscious of his power, turned to the freer and more

## 10

Sophoeles, Dedipus Rex (Gilbert Murray Translation), p. 40. 11

Sophoeles, Oedipus Rex (Gilbert llurray Translation), pe 49.
flexible opio form in Tess and Jude, not failing to use its advantages, and ot the same time making freer use of the peculiar qualities that belong to the novel.

In the design of Toss there is much greater simplicity than in The Roturn of the Native. Instoad of the usual group of from three to five characters in each book of the Native, Hardy follows the form of Tess and Alec flrst, then Tess and Angel Clare, then Tess and Alec sgain, and at the close, once more Tess and Angel Clare. Though the form is epic rather than dramatic, the few main charaoters, the broad simple lines of relationship, the time given to the idyll of the love story, all show much care in the craftamenship and are in harnony with Aristotle's idea of epic art as he gives it in the last part of the

## Pootios.

As the story opens, the totality of offect is given in the pioture drawm of the Durbeyfield family:

All these young souls were passengers in the Durbeyfield shipentirely dependent on the judgnent of the two Durbeyfield adults for their pleasures, their necessities, their health, even their existence. If the heeds of the Durboyfield housohold chose to sail into difficulty, disaster, starvation, disease, degradation, death, thit ther were these half-dozen little captives under hatches compelled to sail with themsix helpless oreatures, who had never been asked if they wished for life on any terms, much less if they wished for it on such hard conditions as were involved in being of the shiftlese house of Durbeyfield. Some people would like to know whence the poet whose philosophy is in these days deoned as profound and trustworthy as his song is breezy and puyg gets his authority for speaking of 'Wature's holy plan. ${ }^{\text {P }}$. 12

The fate of Tess, the momber of the hapless Durbeyfield feanily around which the story is built, is evident fron the beginninge Her life 12

Thomes Hardy, Tess of the D'Urbervilles, p. 24.
in foreshadowed by her heritage, and her doomis inevitable, much the same as in the life of Oedipus or Orestes.

There is not the unity of time and place in Tess that is found in The Return of the Mative, but the hamony between the narrative and the setting helps to give that effect. The story opons in the spring, itt is sumaner whem Tess goes to the D'Urbervilles, auturm when she returns. It is sumer again at Talbothays at the dairy, when her love affair with Angel Clare blooss in full, winter whon Angel deserts her in the gloany D'Urbervilie house and winter in the dreary turnip fields of Flinteomb Ash. And the hamony of place is oonsistent with the hamony of time. The village of Marlott, in which Tess first lived, lay in a secluded region, "enclosed in bad weather by narrow, tortuous, and miry ways." The farms were narrow, the arable lands were few and limited and bounded by turbid rivers over which the inhabitants had no oontrol.

The world around Talbothays wes drawn on a larger scale. The air was lighter, braeing ethereal, the Broom waters clear, and there was room for breathing, expanding, living. And then the cold, barren upland of Plinteamb Ash in the turnip fields offered an effective setting for Tess, who, later a viotim of social coavention, found shelter on the sacrificial stone of an old barbarous religion where human seorifice had been made. Throughout the book the seasons and the settings harmonize with the circumstances of the oharacters, and thus helps to give in the more discursive novel the unity which is more easily obtainable in drama.

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& \text { LI R } \\
& \text { JUN } 271939
\end{aligned}
$$

The famous phrase,
TJustice" was đone, and the President of the Imortals, in Aoschylean phrase, had onded his aport with Tess. 15
eloses this tragedy in the same vein that it was opened, and while disester was inevitable fram tho boginning, Tess had struggled through, always with superb action on her part, and had arrived at the destiny which, it would seem, was planned for her.

It was with Jude the Obscure that Hardy reached the height of his power in his expression of a life overshadowed by an evil fate. Jude, the most misunderstood of all his works, was severely oritioized by readors throughout Ingland and Anerica, and was suppressed for sixteon years. Hardy, in explaining the meaning and purpose of the story, says in his preface to the first edition:

Like former productions of this pen, Jude the Obseure is simply an endeavor to give shape and coherence to a series of semings, or personal tmpressions, the question of their consistency, or their discordance, of their permanence or of their transitoriness, being regarded not as of the first moment. 14

Thus it ean be seen that those who raised such violent oriticism to the story were those who had failed to catch the proper conception. After Hardy's purpose in the novel was explained as follows:

- . It semed a good foundation for the fable of a tragedy, told for its own sake as a presentation of particulars containing a good deal that mas universal, and not without a hope that certain cathartic, Aristotelian qualities might be found therein. ${ }^{15}$


## 15

Thomas Hardy, Tess of the DrUrbervilles, p. 508. 14

Thomas Hardy, Jude the Obsoure, Preface, pe vili. 15

Ibid., $\mathrm{P}_{*} \mathrm{x}_{*}$
the readers and oritios began to look on the work as a whole, an artistic whole, rather than concentrating upon a dozen or more pages which are not the most important in the book. Then they could see that, as Hardy states:

It is a novel addressod by a man to men and women of full age; which attempts to doal unaffectedly with the fret and fever, division and disaster, that may press in the wake of the strongest passions knowm to huaanity; to tell without mineing of words of a deadly war between the flesh and the spirit; and to point to the tragedy of unfulfilled ains. 16

By these lines from the prefaces to the novel, it oan be olearly seen that the author built the story on a solid, definite plan, and a study of the book itself reveals the metioulous precision with which each detail in the plot is developed.

Jude Pawley, a lonely and unwanted ohild In his aunt's hone, a child owershadowed by a heritage of unhappiness which had followed the Fawley fanily for many generations, is the oharacter with whioh the story opons. He was learning his first lessoms in the ways of the world, and vas alroedy questioning, much es Buripides would have done, why the soheme of nature was so set up that "what was good for God's birds was bad for God's gardenere" From the beginning Jude wes reminded of the destiny which overshadoved the members of his family in marriage. His own father and sother had separated and his mother had dromed herselfy his graat aunt, Drucilla, with whom he ifved, as well as all the other menbers of the farily about wham he was informed, had beon unsuecessful in their efforts to attain happiness through marriage.

## 16

## Ibid.

While the plot of Jude is opic in type, Hardy makes use of an essentially ohorus-like figure in Awnt Drucilla. It is through her that Jude, as well as the audience, learns of the curse that hangs over the Pawleys with regard to marriage. He also learms other details of the family history winich lceep the aotion moving.

The story opens with Jude, a lonely orphaned boy who has been awalcened to the ambition of soneday going to Christmineter to study, and dreans of nothing more sublime. It ends with hin still alone and still outside the real Christainster. He hid. $1 . i$ ved with the ambition to be a scholar before hin, whioh hope was symbolized by Christminster: and he died alone at home one sumener day, Remembrance Day at the University, with the happy shouts coming through the window, with the sound of the organ notes mingling with his repeating the terrible words from Job:

Let the day perish wherein I was born, the night in whioh it was said "there is a man dhild conceived." Let that day be darkness ${ }^{17}$

By ton otelook that night Jude was dead, and the celebration at the University contimued to completion, the institution still, as alvays, unconsolous of the bearing that it had had in the life of Jude Fawley.

Prom the beginning to the end, the story moves definitely and steadily onward, weaving the four lives of Jude and Arabella, Sue and Phillotson, into a pattern, different fram the patterns of the other novel plots he has developed, but just as carefully and artistically dosigned. In the first book Jude's ambitions are shattered by his unfortunate marriage with Arabella, but he is still left with a spark 17 Thamas Hardy, Jude the Obsoure, p. 488.
of the ald fire alive in hin. The second book finds him, as he supposes, free of Arabe11a, and at Christminster, in his first intoxiaetion with the spirit of the colleges, and his eagemess to work. Then comes the love of Sue, his lass of her and his rejection by the college, and he goes hame to Harygreen defeated.

He thought of that previous abyss into which he had fallen before leaving this part of the country; the deopest deep he had supposed it then; but it was not so deop as this. That had been the breaking in of the outer bulvarks of his hopes this was of his second line. 18

Book Three shows hin hopefully beginning again, with the chance of beoaning a curate. He tells Sue of his love for her, but it is only to learn thet she is already promised to Phillotson, whan she marries. Jude then reonocunters Arabella, later learns of Sue's unhappiness, and in the same book aolonowledges to himself a fact that he know in the beginning but folt that ho might with will overoone, that he was totally unfit for the clergy-another bulwark gone. The remaining books trace in sequence the steps which lead to Jude's defeett his loss of aubition, his loss of faith, and after the death of his children, the loss of Sue as well. Faoh aotion evolves out of the proceding one, and the tragio significance of the story is heightened by each essential development. The novel ends with the purely personsl note of human suffering as old and as universal as that in Job or Euripides or Sophooles:

She said she had found peacel She may swear that on her knees to the holy oross upon her neoklace till she's hoarse, but it wom't be true. She's never found peace since she left his arms, and never will again till she'g as he is nowe ${ }^{19}$

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18
    Tbid.: p. 147.
1 9
    Tbid., 494.
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The esseatial unity of the story, the use of tragio entioipation, the moveriont by scomos, the senso of fonm and totality of effoct show the work of a oonscious artist. The misterly use of dialogue, the malding of the tragedy the result of a tragie "fault" in Jude, the overshadowing of all with the unhappy history of the family from winich both Jude and Sue cane, -like the curse on the house of Atreus, give to the novel, as these some qualities do to all of Hardy's greater work, that which he felt the Bnglish novel lacked--the symmetry and artistio maturity of the classical forms of Iiterature.

Although, as previously shown, more obvious qualities of the Greeks are found in the plots of Hardy's novels, sane are also found in character. Haxdy's characters are drawn in great simple lines, portroying primitive simpliaity daninated by a few motives. Giles Winterbourne, Diggory Venn, and Gabriel Gak are all men off the sane mould. They represent the homor, integrity and gentlaness found anong the real gentlemen of the peesant class. No attempt is made by Hardy to portray physical appoarance, but the reader feels after meeting these universal aharacters in the novels that they have met sountime before. They are consistent and in keeping with the action in which they take part, and are, as were the Greek characters, of ixportance secondary to the action. They merely serve to keop the aotion moving. Hardy writes of men and women of the soil, of the peasant classes, beaause he felt that through characterg of this olass can be portrayed the more natural and human enotions, which wore of paramount concern to hin. While the earlier Figlish novelists had expanded their art upon the realization of the infinite number of minute differences between individuals, Hardy seeks to show how closely
aldin all men are. He thus reduces to a minimari individual differences and emphasizes the tratits that are possessed by all in common. Hence, as compared with the Greek 1 dea of charaoter developnent he attampts to unfvergalize his men and wowen and level the eecentrioities of individuals into a genoral humanity, moved by comon basic impulse and suffering, each person in his own way, from the fundamental fact of the tragedy of the conflict of reason and instinct.

The women in Hardy's novels are akin in spirit to those of the Greek tragedies. They are oreatures of eircunstance, ruled by thoix emotions, in most instanoes the root of the tragedy, and rarely, if ever, are their actions other than unfortunate errors. Bustacia, around whom the tragedy of the Return of the Native revolved, is piotured by Hardy:

Bustacia Vyo was the raw matorial of a divinity. On Olympus she would have done well with a little preparation. She had the passions and instincts which make a model goddess, that is, those which make not quite the model woman. Had it been possible for the earth and mankind to be ontirely in her grasp for a while, had she handled the distaff, the spindle, and the shears at her own free will, few in the world would have noticed the ohange of govermmont. There would have been the same inequality of lot, the same heaping up of favors here, of contrunely there, the same generosity before justice, the same perpetual dilemas, the same captious alternation of caresses end blows that wo endure now. 20

Just as Clytemmestra, al though a strong character, was forced by fate to her actions, so wes Bustacia, equally deminant, helpless in the hands of aircumstances, to avert the tragedy she never meant to cause.




 shocensful in bushass, is found to sonform to Mandy' poime an vion (which was not opposect to thet of the Groeke), in her hasty and rogret tuble maniage to Iroy.
 Ev fate. Nichoel Henchard, He best oxampla at wan dectroyed by






Whef, whose fragedy vas that of wirenized aines, was fuct as
 Henohard. Deouse ho onno of tajnted stociz, was of low birtin and infrow ctronastanees, he wa eonstantly aragged dom by hite tomporaMost Hmost tho opening words desorito dude as "The sort of man wo
 whocessary life thond signify thet all was well with hin agoine

Gartain gradeations of Grook influgnce may be found in the texture of the Messoz novels. Atg has ben soted betore, the opaning


concentrated on a solitary figure, as is found in the Roturn of the Native:

A Saturday afternoon in November wus approaching the tine of twilight, and the vast tract of umenclosed wild known as Egdon Heath embrowned itself moment by monent. Overheed the hollow stretch of whitish oloud shutting out the sly was as a teat which had the whole heath for its floor. 21

With such a begiming the reader has the feeling of the force of the heath and of being enclosed within its boundaries. Diggory Vern, the reddlaman, is the solitary figure in this soene. Likewise, The Woodlanders opens with the lonely figure of larty South, just as definitely enelosed in the tragic atnosphere of Little Hintook, and just as The Roturn of the Mative oloses with Diggory Venn still on the Heath, so does The Woodlanders leave Marty South, broken hearted and even more lonely, in Little Hiatook.

The quality of universality, that consoiousness of the importance of time and races of people, and the relative insignificance of the individual, is evident in such passages as the following:

He had fallen into thought on what struggling people like hinm self had stood on that Crossway, whom nobody ever thought of now. It had more history than the oldest college in the oity. It was literally teaning, stratified, with the shades of human groups, who had met there for tragedy, comedy, farces real enactanents of the intensest kind. At Fourways men had stood and talked of Napoleon, the loss of America, the execution of King Charles, the burming of Martyrs, the arusades, the Morman Conquest, possibly of tho arrival of Cassar. Here the two semes had met for loving, hating, coupling, parting; cursed, each other in jeelousy, blessed each other in forgiveness. 22

## 21

Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, pe 1. 22

Thanas Haxdy, Judo, the Obsoure, p. 359.

The spectral, hali-counpounded, aqueous light which pervaded the open mead, inpressed then with a feeling of isolation, as if they were Adam and Bve.

- . The mixed, singular, Iuvinous gloom in which they walked along together to the spot where the cows lay, orten made him think of the Resurrection Hour. He little thought that the liagdalen might be at his side. ${ }^{23}$

Betwoen the posts were ranged the mileherrs--while the sum lowering itself behind the patient row, throw their shadows accurately immard on the mall. Thus it threw shedows of these obsoure and hanely figures every evening with as much oare over each contour as if it had been the profile of a oourt beauty on a palace wall; copied then as diligently as it had copied Olympian shapes on marble facades long ago, or the outline of Caesar, Alexander, and the Pharaohss 24

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. 25

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28
    Thames Hardy, Tess of the DYUrbervilles, p. 167.
24
    Tbid., pp. 136-137.
25
    Thomes Hardy, The Woodlanders, p. 1.
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At the bogiming of this study it was shown that Thonses Harly saw the need for groater artistic maturity in the fleld of the novel, espeoially in the matter of form. It wes also shown that while he spont $s 1 x$ years of his early ilfe studying and woricing in the fi.eld of architecture, his primary interest at all times vas in literature.

While Hardy saw olearly the imaturity of the prose narrative, he also felt that the process of development would be gradual, and wont to the Greeks, the masters of literary form, for his lessoms In that field. Jumerous evidences have been given of his interest in and mastery of the Greak tragic dramae, and many similarities with regard to plot structure, characterization and use of tragio dovices, have beem pointed out.

In view of the interest which Hardy openly expressed in Greek tragedy, and because of his ambition for artistic maturity in the art of prose narrative, it would appear from my study that the Influenee of Greek Drana on the Wessex Novels vas no small ane.

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