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HAWKINS, H., 2018. Recovering the rural: form, dialect and society in poetry of Thomas Hardy. PhD, Nottingham Trent University.



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Abstract

In this thesis I identify the limited research into Hardy's use of dialect and metre in his poetry. I argue that critics assume a narrow textual approach that disregards Hardy's broad thematic, linguistic and metrical range. To redress this anomaly, I propose a broader critical methodology which reflects and accommodates the multi-faceted nature of Hardy's poems. I employ a combination of post-colonialism and textual criticism to place Hardy's work in its socio-historic and textual contexts. Intrinsic to this study is an acknowledgement of the cultural and linguistic disparities between Victorian social classes and the cultural subjugation of the rural labouring class by the middle and landowning classes.

I conduct an examination of Victorian prosodic and philological debates in relation to Hardy's poetry. I demonstrate that Hardy was familiar with these debates and fuses standard poetic devices and language with the non-standard devices and dialect of his native rural culture. In doing so, Hardy proposes the equality of rural and urban cultures in order to reclaim rural culture from the subjugation of the dominant urban centre. I propose that this fusion reflects increasing nineteenth-century urbanisation and renders rural culture inherent to Victorian social evolution. Conversely, I consider whether Hardy's fusion of cultures articulates growing anxiety expressed by Victorian liberals regarding the morality and maintenance of the British empire. I argue that the increased Victorian interest in philology indicates a middle-class desire to return to pre-imperial identities.

I demonstrate that Hardy's poetry assumes an anti-imperialist stance in which he contends that all empires fail and result in the loss of imperial identities. His migration poems provide a detached view of society in which non-fixation of identities becomes possible. My multi-theoretical stance permits Hardy's multi-cultural understanding of society, which he articulates through dialect and standard English, and speaks for all mankind.

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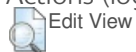
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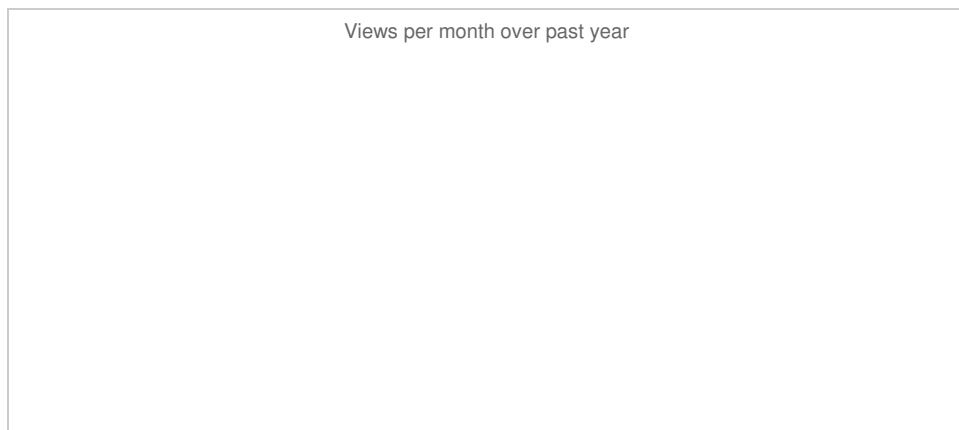
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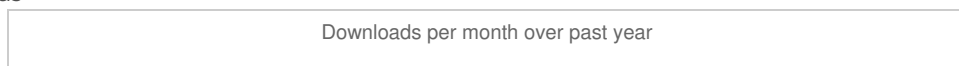
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Thomas Hardy accomplished poetic bloom late in his life. He began his literary career with poetry but shifted to novels in 1870 and made his mark as a novelist; he continued writing novels till 1895 and then he stopped writing novels and more. Thomas Hardy accomplished poetic bloom late in his life. He began his literary career with poetry but shifted to novels in 1870 and made his mark as a novelist; he continued writing novels till 1895 and then he stopped writing novels and shifted to poetry. He produced his first volume of poems "Wessex Poems" in 1898. The elegy not only pays tribute to a personal friend but acknowledges, in its form, diction and imagery, the vital influence that Barnes's poetry had on Hardy's own poetry. Save to Library. Download. Thomas Hardy, English novelist and poet, was born near Dorchester in England. He was one of the great English writers of the 19th and early 20th century. Hardy's father was a stonemason and influenced Thomas to take up a career as an architect. Gothic architecture influenced Hardy's poetry. It provided a powerful model for artistic unity and complexity in his works. Beginning at the age of 58, Hardy published many volumes of poetry-over 900 poems in all. His poetry is straight to the point [sparse and unadorned]. Though some consider his poetry to be unromantic, Hardy was imaginative and explored interesting feelings, just like the Romantic poets did. Hardy's most common theme is humanity's struggle against fate. Thomas Hardy as a Novelist. You're here: Home » English Novel Summary. Ad. It has its own history, culture, superstitions, and dialect. Thus Wessex is itself a character. Unity of Time and Place. As Hardy's novels have been set in a small area, the characters live near one another and often meet each other. They do not meet accidentally but because they desire to meet each other. Thus one witness various co-incidences in Hardy's novels which have often been criticized by the readers. Instead of criticizing society, Hardy is interested in human aspirations and relationships. Love, marriage, and family form the central themes of his novels. Hardy was the first novelist to explore man-woman relationship out of the marriage that caused a scandal in the Victorian Age. Other Features.