

# **Women and their relationships in novels of Thomas Hardy and D.H. Lawrence**

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## **ABSTRAKT**

V této bakalářské práci se zabývám postavením žen v dílech Thomase Hardyho a Davida Herberta Lawrence.

V první části předkládám stručný životopis obou autorů a stručný obsah děl *Lesáci* a *Ženy milující*. V části druhé charakterizuji jednotlivé ženské postavy a jejich zobrazení a postavení. Část poslední ukazuje, jak se ženy projevují ve vztazích s muži.

Klíčová slova:

Thomas Hardy, D.H. Lawrence, vztahy, ženy, láska, nezávislost, ekonomická situace, manželství, pasivita, bohatství, pesimismus

## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to compare the position of women in novels of Thomas Hardy and David Herbert Lawrence.

In the first part I submit brief biographies of both authors and brief content of novels *The Woodlanders* and *Women in Love*. The second part describes characterization of the main female characters and how they are depicted. The last part describes how women behave in relationships with men.

Keywords:

Thomas Hardy, D.H. Lawrence, relationships, women, love, independence, economic situation, marriage, passivity, wealth, pessimism

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**DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY**

I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own and certify that any secondary material used has been acknowledged in the text and listed in the bibliography.

April 22, 2009

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## INTRODUCTION

The focus of my thesis is to compare *The Woodlanders* by Hardy and *Women in Love* by Lawrence and find out if there are any similarities in the way how they depicted their female characters.

In the first chapter there will be short biographies of both authors and short summaries of the books. Then I will focus on characterization of the main female characters, how they are depicted. In the last part of my thesis I will focus on relationships of the female characters with men, because the character of women can be seen in their behavior in relationships.

The analysis is made of opinions of modern authors of different books or thesis about English literature and of short fragments from the books *The Woodlanders* and *Women in Love* and my comments on them.

Thomas Hardy and David Herbert Lawrence belong to the best English writers of the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Both were quite prolific writers. Hardy wrote about forty novels, Lawrence wrote about thirteen novels. Their novels are ones of the best ever written, although during their lives the books were criticised and both authors were accused of pornography. Their books became reputable a few years later. Nowadays it can be considered as quite ridiculous because there is basically no pornography. Both Hardy and Lawrence also indirectly criticised contemporary society, in the case of Lawrence it was society influenced by World War I., Hardy criticised education of working class or laws about marriage. There are many problems that can be discussed about novels of Thomas Hardy and D.H. Lawrence. Great number of critics has been written about a lot of themes, there are for example politics, economic contexts, gender matters, relationships or setting.

The most discussed are the gender matters. The most criticised part of the gender matters is position of women in Hardy's and Lawrence's novels. The opinions can vary quite a lot. The feminists have strong opinions about their female characters. The others critics are not so strict. This is very crucial theme because women and their relationships with men is the basic topic of all novels of Thomas Hardy and D.H. Lawrence. The novels of Thomas Hardy are set in the past, at the beginning or in the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Lawrence's novels are set at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, so at time when women had

basically no rights and they had to obey men. Notwithstanding women battle for their rights and they try to extricate themselves from will of men.

The other themes are relationships of the main characters. Both Lawrence and Hardy are focused on relationships between man and woman. Their characters come through very complicated relationships and very hard marriages. Very often they are relationships not only of two people, but complex relationships of three people. The complexity of the relationships is given by the time, when the novels take place. It is time, when divorce is very complicated and difficult, especially for lower classes. Women try to find their true love and struggle for it. However this struggle is often unsuccessful, especially Thomas Hardy is pessimist and only few of his novels have happy end, for example *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *Return of the Native*.

Lawrence and Hardy are authors from different time, they wrote in different literary stream and they had different opinions. Thomas Hardy was late Victorian author and he influenced the work of D.H. Lawrence and Lawrence was author of early modernism. Although they were criticised and cursed during their lives, nowadays they are considered as really great English authors who enriched English literature.

# 1 THOMAS HARDY

## 1.1 Biography

Thomas Hardy was born on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1840 in Upper Bockhampton and he died on 11<sup>th</sup> January 1928 in Dorchester. Thomas Hardy was son of builder, he worked in an architect's office and for some time he was an architect. Since 1867 he turned to the literature. He wrote about native Dorset and he depicted plain scenes from life of peasants, rural girls and handicraftsmen. Very often he idealizes life in the country and he puts into contrast with metropolitan rush. Thomas Hardy shows cruelty and pitiless essence of capitalistic system. He was a representative of realism and naturalism.<sup>1</sup>

“Naturalistic authors tend to choose characters who exhibit strong animal drives such as greed and sexual desire, and who are helpless victims both of glandular secretions within and of sociological pressures without. The end of the naturalistic novel is usually ‘tragic’, but not, as in classical and Elizabethan tragedy, because of a heroic but losing struggle of the individual mind and will against gods, enemies, and circumstances.”<sup>2</sup>

Among his novels we can find *Under the Greenwood Tree*, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *The Return of the Native*, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *The Woodlanders*, *Tess of the D'urbervilles* or *Jude the Obscure*. Among his poetry we can find *Wessex Poems*, *Moments of Vision* and *The Dynasts*.<sup>3</sup>

## 1.2 The Woodlanders

*The Woodlanders* take place in the nineteenth century. It is novel about four main characters – Grace Melbury, Giles Winterborne, Edred Fitzpiers, and Felice Charmond. The story begins with return of Grace from the city, where she studied, back to the village Little Hintock. There she met again Giles Winterborne, young rural boy who loved Grace. Grace's father, George Melbury, promised to Giles that Grace would be his wife. However, when Grace came back, she was well-educated and sophisticated and both George and

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<sup>1</sup> Štefan Povchanič and co, *Malá encyklopédia spisovatel'ov sveta* (Bratislava: Vydavatel'stvo Obzor, 1978), 224.

<sup>2</sup> M.H. Abrams, *Glossary of Literary Terms* (United States of America: Thomson Wadsworth, 2005), 271.

<sup>3</sup> Štefan Povchanič and co, *Malá encyklopédia spisovatel'ov sveta* (Bratislava: Vydavatel'stvo Obzor, 1978), 224.

Grace were not excited that Grace should marry Giles. George Melbury broke his promise to Giles and Grace met Dr Edred Fitzpiers. Fitzpiers was fascinated by Grace and he proposed her. George was very pleased that Grace found so wealthy, educated and reputable suitor.

Even if Grace suspected Edred that he was cheating on her, she married him. Few days after wedding Edred was called to mansion of Mrs. Charmond, a local noble woman. They fell in love and they had love affair. After some time both Grace and her father found out that Edred had affair. George tried to persuade Felice Charmond to leave Edred. She tried to leave him, but she loved him really much and she run off with him to continental Europe.

Grace wanted to get divorced with Fitzpiers and marry Giles Winterborne. However, the divorce could not be finished, Edred came back to Little Hintock and he wanted to reconcile with Grace. First Grace did not want to meet Edred, and she run away, but after Giles' death she decided to forgive Edred.

## 2 DAVID HERBERT LAWRENCE

### 2.1 Biography

David Herbert Lawrence was born in 1885 in Eastwood and he died in 1930 in Vence. He is English writer and poet, notable representative of English modernism.<sup>4</sup> He was son of a miner and Lawrence confidentially saw hard life of workmen and their problems. Decisive influence on Lawrence had his mother, she was a teacher and she wanted her son receive higher education.<sup>5</sup> He studied at university in Nottingham and later he was a teacher. After publication of his first novel *Sons and Lovers* he decided to turn to literature. Lawrence's works are characterized by penetration of naturalism, realism, psychology, and mysticism.<sup>6</sup>

Lawrence wrote in period of modernism. "The authors experimented with new forms and a new style they would render contemporary disorder, often contrasting it to a lost order and integration that had been based on the religion and myths of the cultural past. Major works of modernist fiction subvert the basic conventions of earlier prose fiction by breaking up the narrative continuity, departing from the standard ways of representing characters, and violating the traditional syntax and coherence narrative language by the use of stream of consciousness and other innovative modes of narration."<sup>7</sup>

Several of his early novels were forbidden as immoral in England because of his rendering of relationship between man and woman. They were novels *The White Peacock*, *The Trespasser*, *The Rainbow*, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was in full published in 1960. It was because people considered it as real pornography and the book was banned both in Great Britain and United States of America. He did not change the themes even in other novels.<sup>8</sup>

He wrote also travel books, for example *Kangaroo*, *The Plumet Serpent*, short stories, plays, and historic works, for example *Movement in European History*, *Studies in Classic*

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<sup>4</sup> Štefan Povchanič and co, *Encyklopédia spisovateľ'ov sveta* (Bratislava: Vydavateľ'stvo Obzor, 1978), 321.

<sup>5</sup> Jozef Olexa at al., *Dejiny anglickej a americkej literatúry* (Bratislava: Vydavateľ'stvo Obzor, 1993), 172.

<sup>6</sup> Štefan Povchanič and co, *Encyklopédia spisovateľ'ov sveta*, 321.

<sup>7</sup> M.H. Abrams, *Glossary of Literary Terms* (United States of America: Thomson Wadsworth, 2005), 175.

<sup>8</sup> Štefan Povchanič and co, *Encyklopédia spisovateľ'ov sveta*, 321.

*American Literature*. As a poet he wrote collections of poems *Love Poems and Others*, *Last Poems*.<sup>9</sup>

## 2.2 Women in Love

The novel *Women in Love* is set in the first part of the twentieth century after World War I and it takes place in Midlands in England. It is a story about four main characters – Ursula Brangwen, Gudrun Brangwen, Gerald Crich, and Rupert Birkin. The story begins with a wedding where Gudrun and Ursula saw Birkin and Gerald for the first time. Then we can see how the relationships between Birkin and Ursula and between Gerald and Gudrun are developing. Ursula had to struggle for her relationship against Hermione Roddice and finally she won and she married Birkin. Gerald struggled for a relationship with Gudrun, but their relationship ended tragically. Gudrun met artist Loerke, she went with him to Dresden and Gerald committed suicide.

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<sup>9</sup> Štefan Povchanič and co, *Encyklopédia spisovateľ'ov sveta* (Bratislava: Vydavateľ'stvo Obzor, 1978), 321.

### 3 WOMEN IN NOVELS OF THOMAS HARDY AND D.H. LAWRENCE

#### 3.1 Characterization of the main female characters

##### 3.1.1 Thomas Hardy – The Woodlanders

In this chapter I am going to describe the main female character of *The Woodlanders*, Grace Melbury, Felice Charmond and Marty South. Mainly Grace and Felice are very important for the story.

###### 3.1.1.1 Grace Melbury

Grace Melbury is the main female character of *The Woodlanders*.<sup>10</sup> She can be described as a very beautiful, couth young lady with abnormal enchantment.<sup>11</sup>

She is a girl who grew up in village and who was educated in city, world absolutely different from her homeland. Her targets are adequate to her age and to the time, when Grace lives, however some readers do not have to understand them.<sup>12</sup> Her main aim is to marry somebody.

After her studies, Grace came home, back to the village.<sup>13</sup> She became an independent woman, who is able to make her own decisions about her life.<sup>14</sup> Grace's father sees in Grace his dreams and his only joy.<sup>15</sup>

Grace Melbury is village girl, who was accorded high education in city. She is very sophisticated, she has fine behaviour, and she is very beautiful. She is so charming that she infatuated Dr Edred Fitzpiers, who was always convinced that he would marry wealthy woman. After school Grace came back to her native village and she had to get familiarized with rural life again. It was very hard for her, because she lived in city for a long time and

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<sup>10</sup> B. Thekkeveetil, "The 'Femme Fatale' in the Major Novels of Thomas Hardy" (PhD diss., St. John's University, 1983), 179.

<sup>11</sup> B. Thekkeveetil, "The 'Femme Fatale' in the Major Novels of Thomas Hardy", 183.

<sup>12</sup> Shirley A. Stave, *The Decline of the Goddess: Nature, Culture, and Women in Thomas Hardy's Fiction* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1995), 71.

<sup>13</sup> S. Sadao, "Hardy and Women" (Thesis, Nazan Junior College, 1987), 77.

<sup>14</sup> S. Sadao, "Hardy and Women", 76.



she forgot how the life in the village is. She was accustomed to comfortable life in the city with many educated people. When she came back to the village, she despised the uneducated and poor people a little bit.

“After supper there was a dance, the bandsmen from Great Hintock having arrived some time before. Grace had been away from home so long that she had forgotten the old figures, and hence did not join in the movement. Then Giles felt that all was over. As for her, she was thinking, as she watched the gyrations, of a very different measure that she had been accustomed to tread with a bevy of sylph-like creatures in muslin, in the music-room of a large house, most of whom were now moving in scenes widely removed from this, both as regarded place and character.”<sup>16</sup>

Grace also found out that now she had only a few things in common with Giles, to whom she was promised, she liked him, but she did not love him. She was very sorry when her father persuaded her not to marry Giles. She realized that he was right, that she would have very hard life with him, but she was very honest and she felt guilty because her father wanted to break his promise to Giles.

“She looked calmly at him. "And how about Mr. Winterborne?" she asked. "I mention it, father, not as a matter of sentiment, but as a question of keeping faith.”<sup>17</sup>

Although she has high education, her only aim is to marry somebody. At that time it was common for girls to marry some man and do not work, but now it is quite unusual. It is also true that Grace's father loves her, she is his only child and he wants the best for Grace, he wants her to live like in the fairy tale, but not always it repays. He spent high amount of money on Grace's education, therefore he changed his mind and he did not want Grace to marry Giles Winterborne, because he was too ordinary for his only daughter.

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<sup>15</sup> S. Sadao, “Hardy and Women”, 75.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders* (Los Angeles: Reprint Services Corp, 2007), 89.

<sup>17</sup> Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders* (Los Angeles: Reprint Services Corp, 2007), 102.

During the whole story Grace came through radical change in her behaviour, she became more independent on her father as I will discuss later in chapter “Comparison of women in novels of Thomas Hardy and D.H. Lawrence”.

### 3.1.1.2 Felice Charmond

Felice Charmond is impulsive and egoistical woman.<sup>18</sup> Her egocentricity can be clearly seen at the beginning of *The Woodlanders* when Felice wants beautiful hair of Marty South in order to she looks better.<sup>19</sup> She prides on her appearance and she wears remarkable dress.<sup>20</sup>

“Marty, now hearken. The lady that wants it wants it badly. And, between you and me, you'd better let her have it. 'Twill be bad for you if you don't.”<sup>21</sup>

Felice is very passionate woman<sup>22</sup>, she has a lot of love affairs, and therefore a lot of rumors began to appear.<sup>23</sup> Because of being very passionate, Felice is not tied-up by traditional Victorian morality, she does not feel any guilt over her affairs.<sup>24</sup>

Some of her traits of character are malicious and black. She always travels in clouded brougham. The inhabitants of Little Hintock are not sure about her staying. They are afraid of her because she owns their houses and she has the right to eject them.<sup>25</sup>

Felice is woman of several faces. She can be very sensitive, but on the other hand she can be baleful. She showed her sensitiveness when George Melbury came to her because of her affair with Edred Fitzpiers. She first really realized that Edred had wife and that his wife did not merit to be cheated. Felice first really felt qualms.

“Melbury started, and looked at her simply. "But surely, ma'am, you know the truth better than I?"

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<sup>18</sup> B. Thekkeveetil, “The ‘Femme Fatale’ in the Major Novels of Thomas Hardy” (PhD diss., St. John’s University, 1983), 196.

<sup>19</sup> B. Thekkeveetil, “The ‘Femme Fatale’ in the Major Novels of Thomas Hardy”, 175.

<sup>20</sup> B. Thekkeveetil, “The ‘Femme Fatale’ in the Major Novels of Thomas Hardy”, 176.

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders*, 10.

<sup>22</sup> B. Thekkeveetil, “The ‘Femme Fatale’ in the Major Novels of Thomas Hardy”, 185.

<sup>23</sup> B. Thekkeveetil, “The ‘Femme Fatale’ in the Major Novels of Thomas Hardy”, 176.

<sup>24</sup> B. Thekkeveetil, “The ‘Femme Fatale’ in the Major Novels of Thomas Hardy”, 185.

<sup>25</sup> B. Thekkeveetil, “The ‘Femme Fatale’ in the Major Novels of Thomas Hardy”, 177.

Her features became a little pinched, and the touches of powder on her handsome face for the first time showed themselves as an extrinsic film. "Will you leave me to myself?" she said, with a faintness which suggested a guilty conscience."<sup>26</sup>

However, she loved Edred very much and she showed her dark face, when Edred was injured and came to her, she took care about him and then they run off to continental Europe.

Felice had a lot of affairs with lot of men. She is a woman who is handled by her feelings. She loves men and they love her. And even there were strict moral rules at that time, she was not afraid to succumb to her lusts. She loves Edred Fitzpiers and even if she knew that he was married, she seduced him.

Felice is very egoistical woman. She is solicitous about her appearance, she wants to be the most beautiful woman, she wears expensive and ostentatious dress, she even bought Marty's hair because she wanted voluminous hairdo.

Felice Charmond is woman very independent, she is determined and she cannot be manipulated by other people. She is also beautiful and passionate, she succumbs to her lusts. She has very rarely qualms and even she has them, she does not consider them.

### 3.1.1.3 Marty South

Marty is a typical country girl, she lived for all her life in woods, she understands the processes in the nature and she has close relationship to the nature. She lives only with her ill father and she does the hard work instead of him. She lives quite solitary life and she meets only workers in the woods.<sup>27</sup>

Marty South is a girl from poor family with no education and even if she is trammelled by this, she is a woman of fine character. Directly in the first chapter we can see Marty as an extraordinary countrywoman because she is really hand-minded and disciplined. Despite of

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<sup>26</sup> Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders* (Los Angeles: Reprint Services Corp, 2007), 280.

<sup>27</sup> X. Wang, "Exploration into Characters' Psychological Complex in *The woodlanders*" (Essay, Zhejiang University, 2007), 58.

her illness she works with Giles in the woods, she does not complain even she feels cold and tired. Nothing can prohibit her in helping Giles.<sup>28</sup>

Marty is a rural girl with strong relationship to the nature. She always lived in the woods, she has no experience with life in the city. Because of her rural life close to nature, she understands the processes in the nature, she knows what to do in order to survive in hard conditions of life in woods. It is true that she has no education, she never studied at university in metropolitan city as Grace Melbury. She also does not have much money, she has to work really hard to have money at least for food. Nevertheless, it does not mean that Marty is not person of exquisite character.

She lives only with her father and she does his work. It is really hard work but Marty never complains about it and she never told anybody she did the work. She did not want her father to lose the job just because he was ill. After his death she lived alone and meets people only when she works in the woods.

Marty South always loves Giles Winterborne, she loves him for all her life, but she can never be with him. Giles loved Grace and Marty knew it, so she never told Giles about her feelings. She loves Giles so much that she risks her health, she helped him to plant trees even she was ill. She just wanted to be with him.

“But she was a heroic girl, and though her out-stretched hand was chill as a stone, and her cheeks blue, and her cold worse than ever, she would not complain while he was disposed to continue work. But when he paused she said, "Mr. Winterborne, can I run down the lane and back to warm my feet?"”<sup>29</sup>

Marty can show her feelings after Giles' death when she goes to his tomb. First she went there with Grace Melbury, but when Grace reconciled with Dr Fitzpiers, Marty was the only person who came to Giles' tomb. Now she does not have to dissemble her love to Giles.

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<sup>28</sup> X. Wang, “Exploration into Characters' Psychological Complex in *The woodlanders*” (Essay, Zhejiang University, 2007), 58.

<sup>29</sup> Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders* (Los Angeles: Reprint Services Corp, 2007), 73-74.

These three women are the main female characters of *The Woodlanders*. Grace Melbury is a girl originally from village but she lived for some time in the city. She is a strong woman, first she was very passive, she had to go through some hard situation after which she became more determined and less dependent on her father. Felice Charmond is wealthy young widow, she always lived in luxury. She is sophisticated and she is very determined, she does only what she wants. Marty South is a typical rural girl, she is poor and without any type of education. She is very passive, she does not fight for her happiness.

### 3.1.2 David Herbert Lawrence – Women in Love

In Ursula and Gudrun Brangwen David Herbert Lawrence constructed two characters which seems to be quite assonant and yet contradictory. Their personalities seem to be very close to each other but at the end of the novel their personalities are quite conflicting.<sup>30</sup>

#### 3.1.2.1 Ursula Brangwen

The novel *Women in Love* begins with conversation of Gudrun and Ursula about the marriage. With regard to this conversation, Ursula acts as a dreamer and a romanticist. She is certain that marriage is likely the final station, the “end of experience”.<sup>31</sup>

“You don't think one needs the experience of having been married?” she asked.

‘Do you think it need be an experience?’ replied Ursula.

‘Bound to be, in some way or other,’ said Gudrun, coolly. ‘Possibly undesirable, but bound to be an experience of some sort.’

‘Not really,’ said Ursula. ‘More likely to be the end of experience.’<sup>32</sup>

She is the oldest from all Brangwens’ children. She is reliable, forethoughted, a little bit timid, and polite. She is a teacher at elementary school and she indulges herself in doing this job. She has modest character and she does not view beauty in bodily appearance but in

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<sup>30</sup> Literature Study Online Essays, “The Sisters in DH Lawrence’s *Women in Love*,” Literature Study Online, <http://www.literature-study-online.com/essays/lawrence.html>.

<sup>31</sup> Literature Study Online Essays, “The Sisters in DH Lawrence’s *Women in Love*,” Literature Study Online, <http://www.literature-study-online.com/essays/lawrence.html>.

<sup>32</sup> David Herbert Lawrence, *Women in Love* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1992), 7.

ingenuity. She perceives the feelings of other people and, in spite of they are not on the same social level, she respects them.<sup>33</sup>

She is modern, emancipated woman. She is more independent and without compare more educated than her ancestry. She has typical Lawrence's problem: she wants to find herself.<sup>34</sup> She thirsts for independence.<sup>35</sup>

Ursula is young, beautiful, and educated girl. She is quite romantic person and she believes that one day she will find love and she will be happy. She wants to find love and to have relationship with somebody. However, she does not want man in order to have not to work, she does not want to be supported by man, whether by her father or by her husband. She wants to be independent so she found a job. She is a teacher and even she did not like the job at the beginning, now she likes it.

She is quite emancipated woman and she tries to struggle for her rights. She lives in time when she has to struggle for all her rights, she has to be strong and it is not always so easy. Ursula is more emancipated and independent than her parentage. She respects her parents but she not always does what they want.

Ursula is a very sensitive girl. She respects the feelings of other people and also feelings of animals. When Gerald forced his mare to stay in front of passing train, she hated him for doing that.

“The fool!” cried Ursula loudly. “Why doesn't he ride away till it's gone by?”  
Gudrun was looking at him with black-dilated, spellbound eyes.”<sup>36</sup>

### 3.1.2.2 Gudrun Brangwen

Gudrun is more practical than Ursula. Gudrun is quite cynic and she is sure of that marriage has to be only an experience.<sup>37</sup> Gudrun is vital, original and attractive, but she has need to

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<sup>33</sup> Literature Study Online Essays, “The Sisters in DH Lawrence's *Women in Love*,” Literature Study Online, <http://www.literature-study-online.com/essays/lawrence.html>.

<sup>34</sup> Martin Hilský, *Modernisté* (Praha: TORST, 1995), 202.

<sup>35</sup> Zdeněk Stříbrný, *Dějiny anglické literatury 2* (Praha: Academia Praha, 1987), 685.

<sup>36</sup> David Herbert Lawrence, *Women in Love*, 114.

<sup>37</sup> Literature Study Online Essays, “The Sisters in DH Lawrence's *Women in Love*,” Literature Study Online, <http://www.literature-study-online.com/essays/lawrence.html>.

possess and control, moreover she has an ambition to exploit other people.<sup>38</sup> She has a little insubordinate character and she also needs to control and have influence over her lover. She is aware of her beauty, so it is easy for her to take a control over her lover. Maybe Gudrun appears to be quite cagily, and hard-nosed but she is able to show her feelings sincerely. She also wants to find herself as Ursula does but in different way, she is interested “why she is where she is rather than who she is”.<sup>39</sup>

Gudrun is younger than Ursula, she is teacher as her sister is and she is also an artist, she has talent for painting. Because her paintings are good, she is not dependent on her teaching in elementary school, her paintings can earn her enough money. She feels better when she was in the city where she can meet with people as she is, artists who live bohemian life and who do not look back to social rules.

“And it did rather annoy him, that Gudrun came dressed in startling colours, like a macaw, when the family was in mourning. Like a macaw she was!”<sup>40</sup>

She is not satisfied in the village, she is afraid of ordinary workmen, she looks forward to her leaving. She is also requested not only in England, so she can travel abroad. She likes travelling, she does not want to live in England for all her life. She goes abroad whenever she could. It is true that she refused to go to Russia, she stayed at Shortlands in order to teach Gerald’s younger sister painting. She stayed in order to be with Gerald even she was not sure, if she really wanted it.

She does not dream about love and about marriage as her sister does. She wants to love somebody but it seems she is not able to love anybody. She needs to control her lover, she is not able to make any compromises. She had relationship with Gerald but she never really loved him. Maybe she wanted to love him but she just was not able to love.

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<sup>38</sup> Robert Barnard, *A Short History of English Literature* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1994), 172.

<sup>39</sup> Literature Study Online Essays, “The Sisters in DH Lawrence’s *Women in Love*,” Literature Study Online, <http://www.literature-study-online.com/essays/lawrence.html>.

<sup>40</sup> David Herbert Lawrence, *Women in Love* Hertfordshire: (Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1992), 250.

### 3.1.2.3 Hermione Roddice

“Hermione, with her long face and her weight of heavy dull hair, her queer clothes, her strange appearance that made people want to jeer yet held them silent till she passed.” She behaves very egoistical.<sup>41</sup>

Hermione Roddice is a cocky person, she thinks that she is somebody better than other people. She always feigns that she likes you in order to force you to do what she wants. She feigned she likes Ursula and Gudrun and she forced them to come to her mansion and to stay over. She is always very pleasant, it happens very rarely that she is impolite. However, it is only an appearance.

“‘How do you do,’ sang Hermione, from out of the field, the moment she could make her voice heard. ‘It’s nice now. Are you going for a walk? Yes. Isn’t the young green beautiful? So beautiful -- quite burning. Good morning -- good morning -- you’ll come and see me? -- thank you so much -- next week -- yes -- good-bye, g-o-o-d b-y-e.’”<sup>42</sup>

Hermione loves Birkin, she always loved him and she wants to be with him, but she was so dominating that Birkin gave way to Ursula. Nevertheless Hermione still has some influence on Birkin which was frequent cause of quarrels between Birkin and Ursula.

At the beginning of the story, Gudrun and Ursula seemed to be quite similar. They both are young, educated women, their job is teaching at elementary school, they both want to be independent. However, Ursula longs for love and for marriage, and Gudrun longs for travelling, painting and for absolute independence. Hermione is supercilious and imperious woman, who is hopelessly in love with Birkin. She thirsts for comfortable life with him.

## 3.2 Comparison of women in novels of Thomas Hardy and

### D.H. Lawrence

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<sup>41</sup> New Statesman Society, “Women in Love,” New Statesman, <http://www.newstatesman.com/200611130060>.

<sup>42</sup> David Herbert Lawrence, *Women in Love* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1992), 51.



Women from middle class in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Great Britain had only one honesty privilege – to refuse marriage proposal of potential swain. Hardy placed his stories about several generations before he wrote them so he tried to examine relative helplessness of such women. And he found out that they had only one weapon – beauty.<sup>43</sup>

I do not agree with this opinion so much. Women in nineteenth century did not have many rights and the right to say “No” belonged to them. Of course women could say no to suitor, but somebody could force them to say “yes”. Grace was in position where she had to obey her father. When her father said she could not marry Giles, she had to conform. When Dr Fitzpiers proposed Grace to marry him, she was not sure what to do but her father forced her to marry him. Even when she suspected him that he was cheating on her and she told it to father, he was still forcing her to marry Edred.

“Now, hearken to me,” he said. “There's a time for a woman to alter her mind; and there's a time when she can no longer alter it, if she has any right eye to her parents' honor and the seemliness of things. That time has come. I won't say to ye, you SHALL marry him. But I will say that if you refuse, I shall forever be ashamed and a-weary of ye as a daughter, and shall look upon you as the hope of my life no more.”<sup>44</sup>

On one hand Grace knew that George Melbury wanted the best for her only daughter, he provided her with high-quality education and he wished her better husband than Giles Winterborne who was just ordinary rural man without money and education. George thought that Dr Fitzpiers was the best for Grace, he was quite rich, well-educated, and sophisticated. On the other hand Grace knew that she did not love Edred and she would not be happy with him. Dr Fitzpiers attracted her, he had some influence on her but she never felt love to him. Nevertheless, at that time it was very rude and ill-behaved if daughter did not obey her father. It was quite hard for women to say “no”, the nineteenth century was period when women had to obey men, especially if it was their father or husband. It was basically impossible to say “no” to father or husband.

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<sup>43</sup> The Victorian Web Thomas Hardy, Gender Matters, “The Power of 'No' in Hardy's Heroines,” The Victorian Web, <http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/hardy/pva214.html>.

<sup>44</sup> Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders* (Los Angeles: Reprint Services Corp, 2007), 201.

And also it is not true that women had only one weapon – beauty. Grace was really beautiful and thanks to her beauty she held Edred's interest. Nevertheless, if she was not educated, well-behaved and intelligent young lady, he would never propose her. Dr Fitzpiers always wanted to marry wealthy woman. When he met Grace Melbury, he was fascinated by her beauty, he thought that she was noble woman. When he found out that Grace was ordinary rural girl, he was very disillusioned and he was thinking about ending of their relationship. Despite the fact of Grace's rural background he found out that Grace is not only beautiful, but also intelligent and with exquisite behaviour. All these facts together caused that Dr Fitzpiers changed his mind and he married Grace Melbury.

So women did not have only one currency. The beauty was the most visible women weapon but not the only one. If the woman was only beautiful but she was not intelligent and well-behaved, she could not marry wealthy and educated man. Of course the beauty holds somebody's interest as the first, but when the woman had something more, she could achieve more. This can be seen on Marty's life. She is not so beautiful girl, she has no education, and moreover she has no money and fine behaviour. Because she is not so beautiful, any man does not notice her. Even though some man notices her, she has nothing to keep his interest. She can hold interest of some ordinary rural man, but she cannot hold interest of some noble man.

If women from middle class wanted to have status in society and if she wanted to be economically secure, she had only one possibility – to marry somebody. At that time the accessibility to get divorce was very restricted and women had scarcely any property rights, so they often vexed. “The only acceptable alternative to marriage for Victorian women of the middle class was entering one of a limited number of professions, including teaching, nursing, social work, and ( despite the limited number of subject that society expected them to deal with ) journalism and writing”.<sup>45</sup>

I definitely have to agree with this opinion. Grace Melbury in Hardy's *The Woodlanders* was on one hand very educated woman but on the other hand her only aim

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<sup>45</sup> The Victorian Web Thomas Hardy, Gender Matters, “The Power of 'No' in Hardy's Heroines,” The Victorian Web, <http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/hardy/pva214.html>.

was to marry somebody, it was the only possibility for her how to get social status. At that time it was very unusual when woman was not married, when she lived alone and worked. To be married was something like prestige and people could look down their nose at single woman.

When woman wanted to get financial security she had to marry somebody. At nineteenth century women could work but the range of professions for women was very limited. However, when woman was married, she did not have to work. She had to do all the housework but she did not have to earn money. Grace Melbury wanted to find husband. She never thought about possibility she could work. Partly it could be because she lived in Little Hintock, quite small village in South England, and there were not many possibilities for woman where to work. However, she never thought about it. For short time she thought about working as a companion for Mrs. Charmond. Felice offered to Grace that she could accompany her on her travel in continental Europe, but Felice did not contact Grace again, so Grace understood that Felice changed her mind and Grace herself did not educe any endeavour to persuade Felice. Grace, or nobody else in her family, never suggested any other possibility where she could work, everybody thought that now Grace had only one alternative - to marry some man and to be woman in household. Of course she knew that if she marries a wealthy man, she does not have to do a lot of housework and she can put her mind to reading and cultivating her inner life, her father was conscious of this fact even more. So George forced Grace to marry Dr Fitzpiers, not Giles Winterborne. Giles was very poor and if Grace marries him, she has to do a lot of hard work in house. Later she changed her mind, she realized that love is more than money and exquisite life style.

“Grace was borne along upon a stream of reasonings, arguments, and persuasions, supplemented, it must be added, by inclinations of her own at times. No woman is without aspirations, which may be innocent enough within certain limits; and Grace had been so trained socially, and educated intellectually, as to see clearly enough a pleasure in the position of wife to such a man as Fitzpiers. His material standing of itself, either present or future, had little in it to give her ambition, but the possibilities of a refined and cultivated inner life, of subtle psychological intercourse, had their charm.”<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders* (Los Angeles: Reprint Services Corp, 2007), 196.

At that time it was very hard to get divorced, especially for people from lower class. So women very often sorrowed because they had to get married very young, they had to live with man whom they did not love and moreover they could not get divorced. Grace also wanted to get divorce when she found out that Dr Fitzpiers was cheating on her, she felt very humiliated, and she sorrowed because of her marriage. Regrettably, the divorce was not realized and Grace's expectations that she could marry Giles broke down.

When we talk about Felice Charmond, she also wanted to marry rich and noble man. When she first met Edred Fitzpiers when she was young, she fell in love with him but he was not rich enough, so Felice was forced by her mother to break all connections with him. Later she fell in love with him again but now she was a widow and she had enough money from her dead husband, so it did not embarrass her that Edred did not have much money. Felice already had social status and economical security and she did not have to take into account economical situation of her suitor so much. It is true that Felice would never marry some ordinary rural man, it was unimaginable for noble woman like Felice. Moreover, Dr Fitzpiers was not poor and he had great reputation as a doctor and scientist. And Felice would have married Edred, if she had known earlier that Edred lived in Little Hintock. Regrettably, Edred was married to Grace. When Edred met Felice, he was really sorry that he had been so rash and he had married Grace. Edred never thought about possibility of divorce, he wished for Grace's death, when she was ill, it would be simpler for him. He would be free and he would marry Felice Charmond. Notwithstanding, the Edred's marriage did not hamper Felice to seduce him.

This opinion can be also applied on Lawrence's *Women in Love*. When woman wanted to have social status, she still had to marry somebody. It was not so crucial requirement as in *The Woodlanders*, but it still was better for woman to have husband. Ursula was a woman who wanted to be married. It was unimaginable for her to stay single for whole life. However, she was not so eager to marry somebody that she would marry the first suitor. At the beginning she was not sure if she really wanted marriage, but when she met Birkin, she wanted to be with him. For Gudrun it was not so unimaginable to stay single. She was not an enemy of marriage, but she was not able to imagine that she would marry some ordinary man; she was willing to get married only if her husband was the same as she was – the bohemian who wanted to be free.

From the economical point of view, to have husband was more important for poor women. When woman was born in wealthy family, she had more possibilities, she could educate herself, she could work, she did not have to find wealthy husband. When woman was poor, she had to be married to have some economic security. Poor women had no or very little possibilities to educate and even if the number of professions for women was limited, they mostly required at least some education; Ursula also had to have education in order to teach. It means that poor women could not work, therefore they had to find husband.

Ursula and Gudrun are the only women in the Brangwen family who work. At that time women have not many possibilities where to work, even if their possibilities at the beginning of twentieth century were more extensive than in nineteenth century. Both sisters were teachers, Gudrun was moreover an artist, they had their own income, they were independent on money of any man. So the wealth of their suitor was not important to them. Ursula never thought about money when she loved somebody. In Lawrence's books it is more common that women work than in Hardy's novels, but still there exist a lot of men who do not understand it. For example father of Ursula, when he found out that Ursula wanted to work, he was very angry. He felt it as a kind of mistrust of himself. He thought he was able to earn living for his family, hence none of his daughters had to work. At that times man was still the breadwinner of the family and woman was supposed to take care of the household and children. Nevertheless, both Ursula and Gudrun were modern and emancipated women, they would never be satisfied with taking care about children and household. Moreover, their mother was able to do all the housework by herself, so Gudrun and Ursula would be bored. Especially Ursula did not want to be at home all day and just help to her mother and wait for the right suitor.

Hermione Roddice was also woman who wanted to marry somebody. Because of her wealth Hermione did not have to take into account economic and social status of her suitor, but she was quite supercilious and she wanted reputable man. Her friends, who were mostly rich and from higher class, would look down their noses at her if she married poor man. Hermione fell in love with Birkin and she indeed wanted to marry him. She thought that he was the right man for her. He was handsome, well-educated and he had enough money.

The similarity between Hardy and Lawrence is that their female characters have to be married to get social status. In Hardy's books it was more crucial requirement than in

Lawrence's books, but the marriage still gave women some social status. Almost every woman in their books wanted to be married, they longed for love. The only exception was Gudrun Brangwen, she also longed for love but not so much as the other women.

Regarding the economical status of women, Hardy's women were in worse position than Lawrence's women. In *The Woodlanders* it was not common that women worked, so women had to married somebody to have some financial status.

"Now, Marty, I believe--" he said, and shook his head.

"What?"

"That you've done the work yourself."

"Don't you tell anybody, will you, Mr. Winterborne?" she pleaded, by way of answer. "Because I am afraid Mr. Melbury may refuse my work if he knows it is mine."<sup>47</sup>

And when women worked she had to do jobs specified for women, she could not do men's work. It was believed that women could not manage it, because women were considered as inferior and weak. In *Women in Love* the work of women was more common and women were not so dependent on men but women still did not have the same rights as men.

"The 1860s had witnessed the emergence of the so-called 'New Woman', educated, individualistic, but still unfulfilled by the very fact of her continued subservience to men. Through the whole range of his fiction, Hardy's women are neither metropolitan bluestockings nor university educated campaigners, yet they generally emerge as both more determined and more truly sophisticated than his male characters."<sup>48</sup>

"Grace grows to be an independent woman who determines her own way of life at the end of her long sufferings. Her final aim is to choose a suitable spouse and on the way to her goal she sets herself against three male persons: her father, Giles and Dr Fitzpiers. The

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<sup>47</sup> Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders* (Los Angeles: Reprint Services Corp, 2007), 21-22.

<sup>48</sup> Andrew Sanders, *The Short History of English Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 473.

proces toward the acquisition of her power to decide is her circular evolvment in connection with these three male persons.”<sup>49</sup>

This is true. Grace was accorded high education, she is very intelligent but she still has to obey men, she is still under dominium of men, she is not wholly independent. She had to conform to the will of her father. She also is not independent because she is dependent on work of men, she needs their money. They have to support her. She never worked and she never thought about it, so she never had her own money. Hence she definitely needs a husband in order to have where to live and what to eat. Of course, the wealthier husband, the more comfortable life she would have, and she would not do the housework, she would hire a servant.

Grace has pure character, she is innocent, sincere and her love is pure. On the other hand Fitzpiers is a liar and his character is everything but pure. He is educated man, he has some property and he acts as respectable man. However, it is just an appearance.

Hardy's women are more determined and sophisticated than his male characters. At the beginning of the novel, Grace is not very determined. She had her own thoughts, dreams and opinions, but she was also very susceptible, she always obeyed her father. He promised Grace's hand to Giles so Grace was conciliated to marry him. When Grace came back from the city and her father saw how beautiful, educated, and sophisticated she was, he broke his promise and he refused to espouse Grace to Giles and she forced her to marry Dr Fitzpiers. Till now Grace did what her father said, but when she found out that Dr Fitzpiers had liaison with Mrs. Charmond she began to realize that she had to emancipate from her father's influence. She realized that it was her life and only she could make the decisions about it. Therefore she run off when she found out that Dr Fitzpiers came back to Little Hintock and he wanted to see her even if her father wanted it. After Edred's getaway, Grace wanted to begin relationship with Giles. Her father wanted that too, but now it was more Grace's decision than her father's. George Grace and Giles wanted to be together, but they wanted to wait with their relationship, when Grace's divorce would be finished. And it was also only Grace's decision when she began to meet Edred Fitzpiers again and she decided to forgive him. George Melbury did not agree with this decision of Grace, but now Grace was not under dominion of men.

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<sup>49</sup> S. Sadao, "Hardy and Women" (Thesis, Nazan Junior College, 1987), 75.

“Then bain't you coming home with us?” he asked.

“I--I think not,” said Grace, blushing.

“H'm--very well--you are your own mistress,” he returned, in tones which seemed to assert otherwise. “Good-night;” and Melbury retreated towards the door.”<sup>50</sup>

She made her own decision and it would be only her fault, if this decision had been mistake. Considering Edred Fitzpiers, he is not as determined as Grace. He makes his own decisions, but he always has to think about them for quite a long time and when he finally makes the decision, in most cases he regrets it.

In *Women in Love*, women can achieve almost the same level of education as men so the differences between them are not so crucial as in *The Woodlanders*. At that time it was more common not only that women worked, but also that they studied. Women at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were more educated and more independent than ever before, however, they were still quite dependent on men. Men were still the ones who earn the money and women were the ones who care about family and household. Both Ursula and Gudrun are educated ladies who want to be independent and make their own decisions, especially Gudrun does not want to be dependent on any man. It is true that Ursula quitted her job when she had engaged with Birkin, but it was because she wanted to travel with Birkin, not because she wanted to be supported by him. Nevertheless, she was still a little bit subservient to men, she wanted to marry somebody, she wanted to find love, and she did not want to live alone. Gudrun was more independent, she also wanted to love somebody but it was just accessory aim for her. Her freedom was more important for her than love of some man.

“But with the ordinary man, who has his life fixed in one place, marriage is just impossible. There may be, and there are, thousands of women who want it, and could conceive of nothing else. But the very thought of it sends me mad. One must be free, above all, one must be free. One may forfeit everything else, but one must be free.”<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders* (Los Angeles: Reprint Services Corp, 2007), 438.

<sup>51</sup> David Herbert Lawrence, *Women in Love* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1992), 395.



However, it is not true that women are more determined than men. Ursula, Gudrun and Hermione are able to make their own decisions, they have their own dreams and opinions and nobody can persuade them. But they have to think for some time till they make the final decision, for example Ursula was thinking about marriage with Birkin for quite a long time, she still was not able to make the final decision. Gudrun was thinking about staying at Shortlands with Gerald and teaching his younger sister. Birkin is more determined than Ursula, one day he made a decision he wanted to marry Ursula and immediately he went to her and proposed her.

There are visible bigger differences between Hardy and Lawrence. Grace was not very determined at the beginning, she had to experience some faults till she realized that she should make her own decisions, that she did not have to every time obey her father. Unlike Grace, Gudrun and Hermione were determined from the very beginning, they always fight for their decisions and for their dreams. They never obeyed some man. Ursula was also determined woman, she was irresolute only in the case of marriage.

Rosemarie Morgan in her book *“Women and Sexuality in the Novels of Thomas Hardy”* is sure that female characters of Thomas Hardy fight, they sometimes win, but more often they lose, however they are not just object you can manipulate with. The contumacy became to appear in their sexuality, and thanks to this Hardy was forced to conceal or cover it.<sup>52</sup>

I agree with this opinion. Women, for example Grace, Marty or Mrs. Charmond, are not objects you can manipulate with. Sometimes they have to conform to will of men because the time was like this, women had to conform to men. However, they still have their own thoughts, opinions, dreams and attitudes, and if these opinions and attitudes are very important to them, they are able to fight for them. For example, Grace run away because she did not want to see her husband, or Felice run off with Edred to continental Europe because they wanted to be together. They knew that what they had just done was

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<sup>52</sup> Comment on “Women and Sexuality in the Novels of Thomas Hardy by Rosemarie Morgan,” Routledge, <http://www.routledge.com/books/Women-and-Sexuality-in-the-Novels-of-Thomas-Hardy-ISBN9780415002684>. (accessed January 14, 2009).

not right but their desire for felicity was stronger than Victorian idea what was right. Felice was always determined and she never allowed somebody to manipulate with her, she always made her own decisions and fought for them. Unlike Felice, Grace at first did not fight for her dreams. After some time she realized that she had to fight, that she had to emancipate from influence of her father if she wanted to be happy.

However, this opinion does not obtain for every woman. Marty does not struggle, she loves Giles but she never does anything for it. She does what is necessary for life – to have food and to have where to live, but she does not do anything about her opinions and her wishes. It is true that Marty is not object you can manipulate with, anybody never persuaded her to do what she did not want. However, concerning her wishes and feelings she is not able to struggle for them.

Women often fight for their wishes, for their love, they do not just watch how their happiness is sailing away. However, even if they thought that they won this fight, they were losing. It can be seen when Grace again began to meet Giles, they wanted to be together and they thought that they had won, they thought that the Grace's divorce would be soon finished and they could get married. However, the divorce could not be realized, Grace was still married to Dr Fitzpiers and even he was not here, she could not be with Giles. The same is when Felice run off with Edred and she thought that now they would be happy. However, Edred found out that Felice was not so amazing how she seemed, so he decided to come back to Grace. Thus we can see that women in Hardy's novels fight but they win very rarely.

Concerning the sexuality of women, it seems that Felice was the only one who was aware of her sexuality. She tried to emphasize her beauty and she derived benefits from it. She wanted to look the best she could, she even bought Marty South's hair in order to look better. She was attractive woman and thanks to it she had a lot of men, she had a lot of affairs, and they were not just platonic relationships. On the other hand she was not the most beautiful woman, so when there was somebody more attractive than her, she did not want to meet them. This is case of Grace, she wanted to be friend of Felice, but when Felice found out that Grace was more beautiful than she was, she never invited Grace to her mansion again.

“Both looked attractive as glassed back by the faithful reflector; but Grace's countenance had the effect of making Mrs. Charmond appear more than her full age. There are

complexions which set off each other to great advantage, and there are those which antagonize, the one killing or damaging its neighbor unmercifully. This was unhappily the case here.<sup>53</sup>

Grace is also very beautiful woman, maybe she is more beautiful than Felice but she does not try to emphasize her beauty and she does not derive benefits from it. She had only one man, her husband; with Giles she had always platonic relationship. It seems that she is not passionate at all, that she is not aware of her sexuality. If she has any lust, she does not succumb to them.

This opinion can be also applied on *Women in Love*. Ursula, Gudrun or Hermione are not objects you can manipulate with. Women in Lawrence's novels are more independent and emancipated than Hardy's female characters. All of them have their own discretion and they do not conform to will of men if they do not want it. For example when Birkin proposed Ursula to marry him she did not reply immediately even if her father pushes on her, or when Ursula decided to find a job as a teacher. Her father did not agree with this, but he was not able to discourage her from it. Ursula is nice person, if somebody needs help, she helps. However, she is not stupid, she does not let other people manipulate with her.

"You heard what was asked you, didn't you?" cried her father in anger.

"Of course I heard."

"Well then, can't you answer?" thundered her father.

"Why should I?"<sup>54</sup>

Gudrun is even more independent than Ursula, she is not interested in opinions of other people. She does only what she wants, she seems to be cold and egoistic. And when we talk about Hermione, she cannot be manipulated by other people, she is the one who manipulates with other people.

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<sup>53</sup> Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders* (Los Angeles: Reprint Services Corp, 2007), 70-71.

<sup>54</sup> David Herbert Lawrence, *Women in Love* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1992), 274.

On the other hand it is not true that Lawrence's female characters often lose. They struggle and they often win. This is at least case of Ursula. Ursula struggled against her father when she had wanted to work, and she won, she struggled for her love to Birkin against Hermione, and Hermione was powerful rival, and she won. It can seem that Ursula always wins. She has to struggle, and it is not easy but she almost always wins.

Gudrun does not win so often. Gudrun's relationship with Gerald did not end very well, but Gudrun never struggled for this relationship. She could not win because she never displayed any endeavour to struggle. However, she struggled for her independence and this struggle she won. She is absolutely independent, she is able to earn money, whether as a teacher or as a painter.

Also Hermione struggles for her opinions and wishes. She is able to convince other people that her opinions are true, so it can seem that she always wins. Nevertheless, she could not win struggle for her love. She was not able to convince Birkin that she was better than Ursula.

Concerning the sexuality of Lawrence's women, it seems that Lawrence's female characters are more aware of their sexuality than Hardy's female characters. In *Women in Love*, Ursula, Gudrun and Hermione are finding the relationships and love, they reveal the meaning of relationship and love, and they do not keep away from physical contact. They are not bound by Victorian morals, so they are not afraid to succumb to their passions.

"Inside the church, the wedding was going on. Hermione Roddice was thinking only of Birkin. He stood near her. She seemed to gravitate physically towards him. She wanted to stand touching him."

Female characters fought for their dreams in both books. However, Grace, Marty and Felice mostly lose. Hardy is more pessimist than Lawrence and his characters win very rarely. Ursula often wins, but Gudrun and Hermione not. They were not able to win their fight for love and satisfied relationship.

Women in *Women in Love* are not bound by Victorian morals, they can display their sexuality more openly, but still not openly as nowadays. Gudrun, Ursula and Hermione were not afraid to succumb to their lusts. In *The Woodlanders* women were bound by strict Victorian morals, there were strict rules how women should behave and how women should dress. Not always Felice kept them.

“My brother-in-law told me, and I have no reason to doubt it,” said Creedle, “that she'd sit down to her dinner with a frock hardly higher than her elbows.”<sup>55</sup>

Nowadays it seems quite ridiculous, but at that time the rules was really strict. Women did not display their sexuality openly, only Felice Charmond displayed her sexuality, not much, but more than the other female characters.

Female characters of both Hardy and Lawrence had the same dream, they wanted to marry somebody. Only Gudrun did not long for marriage. And only Ursula was able to achieve satisfied marriage, the other characters just fought for it but did not win. All the women wanted to be independent. Ursula, Gudrun, Hermione and Felice were independent all time, but Grace had to fight for her independence, she had to realize what she really wanted. Marty was not dependent on any man and she also wanted to be married, but she was too passive, she did not fight for it.

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<sup>55</sup> Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders* (Los Angeles: Reprint Services Corp, 2007), 28.

## 4 RELATIONSHIPS OF MAIN FEMALE CHARACTERS

### 4.1 Pessimism and passivity in *The Woodlanders*

In many novels of Thomas Hardy we can see a lot of pessimism. He maintained that in case, that the character had more distinguished mind, that the character had more auspicious potential, thereby the worst perdition would be plant to this character.<sup>56</sup>

By my opinion this is definitely true. It can be obviously seen in *The Woodlanders*. Marty is a very kind person, she is nice to everyone; she works all night because her father is ill and she does not want him to lose a job. She loves Giles Winterborne, but she knows he loves Grace, so Marty does not do anything to make Giles love her. She always worked hard, she never hurts anybody and she is never happy. She had to see how Giles died because of his love to Grace. And finally she stayed alone, both her father and Giles, the nearest people in her life, were dead.

I also agree that there is a lot of pessimism in Hardy's novels. It seems that *The Woodlanders* have not clear end. For some people it can be happy end and for other people it is not. It is because on one hand Grace reverted to Fitzpiers who seemed that he redeemed himself, but on the other hand she did not stay with Giles, whom she really loved. On one hand Dr Fitzpiers seems that now he is aware of Grace's qualities, that he realizes that money and social status are not everything. On the other hand the true love between Grace and Giles never reaches the impletion. They had to experience a lot of bad to realize that they would be really blissful and satisfied only if they had been together. Basically it can be said that all the relationships end tragically, most of them end with death, only relationship of Grace and Edred ends relatively good.

The pessimism can be seen through the whole novel. During the whole story anybody is not really blissful and satisfied. Grace was forced by her father to marry somebody whom she did not love, then she found out how bad was really her husband and moreover that they could not be divorced. And finally her only love, Giles, died, basically because of her. The same obtains for Giles. Also the other characters fight for their joy, father of Grace is also not happy because he is afraid of Grace's future, he wants to find her the perfect husband.

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<sup>56</sup> Robert Barnard, *A Short History of English Literature* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1994), 146.

The worst moment for him was when he found out that Edred had an affair with Mrs. Charmond.

In all Hardy's novels the characters have problems with their love affairs and with their marriages, they also struggle with their private interests or with the fact that they have to refuse the things they really want. They know that other people have opposite opinions how the characters should behave, but they do not listen to them.<sup>57</sup>

It is true that the major themes of Hardy's novels are relationships, the characters struggle with their marriages and lovers. And the relationships are very complicated. In *The Woodlanders* we read about relationships of four people – Grace Melbury, Giles Winterborne, Edred Fitzpiers and Felice Charmond. Grace struggles with her love to Giles, her relationship to him is still changing. Grace always liked Giles, they grew up together and they were always friends, and she knew that Giles loved her but she was educated, young lady and she thought that she wanted somebody better than Giles, that she deserved somebody more educated, more sophisticated than Giles. Then Grace met Dr Fitzpiers and for some time she was enchanted by him, he was young, handsome and so different than Giles. But when she finds out what she really wants, it is too late, she is married and she cannot change it. Grace also has to struggle with miserable marriage. She is married to man who is cheating on her, who does not appreciate her. Grace is distressed, she began to realize that with Giles she would be glad. Felice has also very complicated relationships, she is not afraid to succumb to her passions, so she has a lot of affairs. And when she finally found man whom she really loved, when she found Edred Fitzpiers, she is murdered by one of her former lover.

Grace's nature can be visible in her relationships. First she is very irresolute and susceptible. She was very nice, she would marry Giles if her father would not have persuaded her, and honestly it was not hard to persuade her. When she came back from the city she was cultivated and she wanted comfortable life during which she would cultivated further. Later she accustomed to rural life, she recognised that life in comfort did not bring her what she wanted. She fought with her interests, she decided between love and long for cultivated life.

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<sup>57</sup> Robert Barnard, *A Short History of English Literature* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1994), 148.

The characters in *The Woodlanders* also fight with their personal interests. They often do what the others say they should do, or they do things against their persuasion. Grace did only what her father said regardless her own dreams and she also always observed Victorian rules of behaviour, when her divorce was proceeding, she met Giles but she did not want anybody saw them, because she was still married to Dr Fitzpiers. Unlike Grace, Felice was not so bound by the Victorian rules, she did only what she wanted, and even if lots of rumours appeared, she did not let other people to hamper her. She possessed majority of Little Hintock, so people could talk about her affairs and they could slander Felice, but in her presence they always behaved respectfully because she could take their houses.

Also Marty South fought with her interests. She loved Giles all her life, they were friends, they knew each other very well. Marty was same kind of person as Giles, both of them grew up in the woods, they worked together very often, but Giles always loved Grace and Marty never indicated her feelings. She was aware that he would never feel the same as her.

Grace Melbury is very nice person, she was aware of promise of her father to Giles and she was willing to marry Giles even she was very cultivated when she came from the city. She was willing to get used to rural life, but then Dr Fitzpiers appeared and she was lured by life in comfort in which she could put her mind into highbred interests. Later she realized that this marriage was really big fault. But she stayed strong and she still fought for her happiness.

Marty South manifest herself as a person who is very passive. She tried to be with Giles very often but she did not say anything about her feelings. Her only action was when she wrote on Giles' house notice "O Giles, you've lost your dwelling-place, and therefore, Giles, you'll lose your Grace"<sup>58</sup>. But no one saw her.

Felice Charmond manifest herself in relationships as woman egoistic, she cares only of things important for her, she does not care about feelings of other people.

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<sup>58</sup> Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders* (Los Angeles: Reprint Services Corp, 2007), 128.



## 4.2 Dualism, passion and long for independence in *Women in Love*

The axis of *Women in Love* is formed by love of Ursula to Birkin guided and contrasted at the same time by love of Gudrun to Crich. The first couple reaches the threshold of the life impletion despite of incisive conflicts, whereas the second tragically breaks down. It can be said that Ursula with Birkin and against them Gudrun with Crich personify characteristic Lawrence's polarity of love and hate, life and death, growth and destruction graduated to self-destruction.<sup>59</sup>

In *Women in Love* there is a story of two main relationships, Ursula with Birkin, and Gudrun with Gerald. They have one thing in common; both sisters are from lower class, they are teachers, whereas Gerald and Birkin are from higher class. Nevertheless, Lawrence depicts these relationships as perfect opposites. He illustrates the relationship of Ursula and Birkin as the right one, it is built on sound bases. Their relationship is not perfect and without errors but they were able to find the way how to be together. They found the balance. Lawrence represents this relationship as the good example for other couples. On the other hand, the relationship of Gerald and Gudrun is illustrated as the wrong one. This relationship is considerably unequal. Gudrun has need to have control over her lover, and she is not willing to sacrifice anything to this relationship. She needs her own independence.

“Her contrariness prevents her taking it seriously -- she must never be too serious, she feels she might give herself away. And she won't give herself away -- she's always on the defensive. That's what I can't stand about her type.”

Gudrun always stayed quite back, she never wholly put herself into the relationship. Her relationship with Gerald was not only platonic, but Gudrun did not want to do something more for the relationship, she was not willing to sacrifice part of her independence. Their relationship was so destructive that it conducted to Gerald's suicide.

There is on more relationship, Hermione and Birkin. Hermione is strong and egoistic women. She loved Birkin, but in relationship with him she manifested herself as timid woman. She was afraid that he would never love her and that he would break up with her. She was aware of her influence on Birkin but also she was aware of the fact that he did not

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<sup>59</sup> Zdeněk Stříbrný, *Dějiny anglické literatury 2* (Praha: Academia Praha, 1987), 686.

love her. She tried to obtain Birkin's love and admiration, she changed her appearance, she tried to be outstanding, and she also tried to get his attention by humiliating and mocking Birkin. When she found out that Birkin disengaged from her, she was furious, she raged at Birkin and maybe also at herself because she was not able to gain his love. Her rage discharged when she tried to murder him.

In all Lawrence's works we can see philosophical dualism which is manifested in line of constantly recurrent contrasts: esprit - body, male principle - female principle, sun - moon, fire - water, life - death and so on. According to Lawrence, every being is dualistic and it is not accidental, that he put characters and setting into dualistic position in all his novels and short stories: Birkin - Ursula, Gerald - Gudrun, Birkin - Gerald, Ursula - Gudrun.<sup>60</sup>

Lawrence's hero has to belong to somebody in order to be one's own man. And if he wants to belong to somebody and love somebody, he has to keep impersonal himself, his individuality otherwise he will be absorbed by the love and this absorb means death.<sup>61</sup>

I agree with this opinion. In *Women in Love* the main topic is relationship between man and woman; all Lawrence's characters need some kind of relationship, no matter if it is friendship or love relationship. It is human nature to live with somebody, to live in a couple. All of the characters, Ursula, Gudrun, Hermione, Birkin and Gerald, long for contact with somebody else, whether physical or psychical, they need the relationship with somebody else, they need to love and to be loved and they are not afraid to succumb to their lusts.

Relationships in Lawrence's novel are always realized in couples. These couples can have family relationship, as Ursula and Gudrun, friendly relationship, as Gerald and Birkin, or love relationship, like Ursula and Birkin, or Gudrun and Gerald. The other couple, Hermione and Birkin, had first love relationship but then they broke up and they became friends. The whole story rotates around these couples, their relationships are mutually interlocked and they influence each other. Hermione has influence on Birkin. Even if they are not lovers, Birkin very often succumbs to her opinions and wishes which conduct to frequent quarrels between Ursula and Birkin; she does not understand why he is not able to disengage from her.

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<sup>60</sup> Martin Hilský, *Modernisté* (Praha: TORST, 1995), 197.

<sup>61</sup> Martin Hilský, *Modernisté*, 209.

The relationship should not be only physical connection of two people, it should be something more, it should be spiritual connection of two minds. Characters should not let themselves absorbed by the love, by the relationship. They need love of somebody but at the same time they still need their own independence, they need freedom, they have to keep their own personality. They should not lose their personalities. Because of this Birkin broke up with Hermione. Hermione was too proprietary, she was not able to provide Birkin with freedom which Birkin wanted, which he needed. The couple which won this struggle for independence and balance is Ursula and Birkin, they found the equilibrium, they found the way how to be together and still keep their own personality.

Gerald and Gudrun did not achieve that. Gudrun and Gerald had really different personalities. Gudrun wanted to travel, she did not want to live in Great Britain for all her life. She, as an artist, could work everywhere in the world but Gerald could not do so, he could work only in England where the coal-mines were situated and where he had the necessary equipment. For a while Gudrun conformed to Gerald's wish and she stayed with him at Shortlands. However, their relationship cannot work too long, Gudrun needs to be free and independent.

Lawrence's concept of sex and erotic: merely physical passion, forceful, cold passion is not enough, erotic love is not isolated relationship of two people, it has to insist on something outside them, on something overindividual.<sup>62</sup>

This is definitely true. Throughout the whole book Birkin wants something more than just physical passion, or erotic love. He argues to Ursula that love is not the only emotional thing that has to be between two people. He wants the psychical connection of two equal people, connection of two equal minds. He tried to explain this to Ursula, he does not want to have ordinary relationship and ordinary marriage. On one hand Ursula was a romanticist, she wanted love at common way, but she did not want to be bound by the love. On the other hand she did not understand Birkin's way of love. She also did not understand why he needed friendship of Gerald, why he needed contact with other people.

“Aren't I enough for you?” she asked.

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<sup>62</sup> Martin Hilský, *Modernisté* (Praha: TORST, 1995), 203.

'No,' he said. 'You are enough for me, as far as a woman is concerned. You are all women to me. But I wanted a man friend, as eternal as you and I are eternal.'

'Why aren't I enough?' she said. 'You are enough for me. I don't want anybody else but you. Why isn't it the same with you?''<sup>63</sup>

In the relationship with Birkin Ursula manifests herself as romanticist, she wants love and she wants to be with Birkin, but on the other hand she does not want to be bound by the relationship, she still wants her independence, she does not want to sacrifice her personality. She does not understand the way of love which Birkin wants, she tries to persuade him that her way of love is enough.

Gudrun manifests herself as egoistic woman to which is important only her independence and nothing else. Hermione shows herself as timid woman who desperately tries to gain Birkin's love.

Grace Melbury and Ursula Brangwen seem to be quite similar. Both are young, educated and both long for love and marriage. However, Grace longs for marriage not only because of being with man whom she loves but also because of her economical situation. Ursula is more independent than Grace, she does not need man to support her.

Felice Charmond and Hermione Roddice are also very similar characters. They both are wealthy, they both are quite negative female character, and they both are rivals of the main characters Ursula and Grace. They are also egoistic and arrogant.

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<sup>63</sup> David Herbert Lawrence, *Women in Love* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1992), 507.

## CONCLUSION

The aim of this bachelor thesis was to compare women and their relationships in novels of Thomas Hardy and D.H. Lawrence. This thesis discovered certain similarities in works of Thomas Hardy and D.H. Lawrence.

Both authors have similar theme of their books. The basic theme of the books by Thomas Hardy and David Herbert Lawrence is women and their relationships with men. Both authors depict women as human beings who are quite inferior to men. All female characters have their dreams, they want to find love and mostly they want to get married. Women fight for their dreams and for their independence. In the nineteenth century and at the beginning of twentieth century women did not have lot of rights. Hence both authors could not depict women as absolutely independent on men as they are nowadays.

In *The Woodlanders* women are less independent than in *Women in Love*, they are mostly passive and they conform to will of men. Grace Melbury was the kind of woman who was dependent on man, she did not work, she needed the money of her husband. First she always obeyed her father, she did everything he wanted. Later she realized that she was individual person and she had to make decisions herself. Marty South is very passive woman, she never fights for her dreams. Unlike Grace and Marty, Felice Charmond is egoistical woman who is definitely not passive, she always fight for her interests.

In *Women in Love* women are more independent than ever before, but still they are a little bit inferior to men. Both Gudrun and Ursula worked, they were more independent than Grace was, they do not need man who has to support them. They still do not have the same rights as men but they do not obey men. They behave according to their own opinions what is the best.

Both authors were accused of pornography, but Hardy's characters do not show their sexuality so much, the story take place in Victorian times, there were strict rules of behaviour and about sexuality nobody talked. The only exception is Felice, she is not afraid to show her sexuality. However, Lawrence's characters show their sexuality more openly, they are not bound by strict moral rules.

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