

UNIVERZITA KONŠTANTÍNA FILOZOFA V NITRE

FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA

Porovnanie hlavných ženských hrdiniek v dielach Thomasa Hardyho *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* a Johna Fowlesa *The French Lieutenants' Woman*

Comparison of the Main Female Characters of Works of Thomas Hardy *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and John Fowles *The French Lieutenants' Woman*

BAKALÁRSKA PRÁCA

2010

Mgr. Lívia Szakszonová

UNIVERZITA KONŠTANTÍNA FILOZOFA V NITRE

FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA

Porovnanie hlavných ženských hrdiniek v dielach Thomasa Hardyho *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* a Johna Fowlesa *The French Lieutenants' Woman*

Comparison of the Main Female Characters of Works of Thomas Hardy *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and John Fowles *The French Lieutenants' Woman*

Bakalárska práca

Učiteľstvo akademických predmetov: Anglický jazyk a literatúra

Filozofická fakulta, Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Konzultant: PhDr. Mária Kiššová, PhD.

Nitra 2010

Mgr. Lívia Szakszonová

Čestné vyhlásenie

Čestne vyhlasujem, že bakalársku prácu som písala samostatne na základe preštudovaného materiálu a použité zdroje som na príslušných miestach uviedla.

Declaration of originality

I, the undersigned, solemnly declare that this Bachelor thesis is a result of my own independent research and was written solely by me using the literature and resources listed in Bibliography.

Zvolen, 27 May 2010.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my consultant PhDr. Maria Kiššová, PhD. for supervising my thesis and for her advice during the process of writing.

My acknowledgement goes to my family for their support and patience.

Abstrakt

Szakszonová, Lívia: Porovnanie hlavných ženských hrdiniek v dielach Thomasa Hardyho *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* a Johna Fowlesa *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. [Bakalárska práca]. Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa v Nitre. Filozofická fakulta; Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky. Odbor štúdia: učiteľstvo akademických predmetov: Anglický jazyk a literatúra. Školiteľ: PhDr. Mária Kiššová, PhD.

Ženské literárne hrdinky vždy prinášajú pohľad do života žien danej doby. V tejto bakalárskej práci sme porovnávali dve ženské hrdinky, ktoré žili vo Viktoriánskom Anglicku a ktorých životný príbeh je postihnutý podobnými problémami spojenými s morálkou, sociálnou nespravodlivosťou a rodovou nerovnosťou. Jedna postava je opísaná spisovateľom, ktorý v danej dobe žil, Thomasom Hardym a druhá je opísaná súčasným spisovateľom Johnom Fowlesom. Obaja autori vykresľujú ženu 19. storočia, ale každý z inej perspektívy. Cieľom tejto práce je odhaliť podobnosti a odlišnosti týchto dvoch hrdiniek. Taktiež chceme zistiť či sú tieto odlišnosti dôsledkom toho, že sú opisované spisovateľmi žijúcimi v dvoch rôznych storočiach. Hlavná časť bakalárskej práce podrobne analyzuje obe postavy. Táto analýza viedla k zisteniu mnohých podobností: obe ženy pochádzajú z chudobného sociálneho prostredia, obe sú obvinené z prečinu voči morálke, dôsledkom čoho je vylúčenie z plnohodnotného spoločenského uplatnenia a vedie k neschopnosti naplniť svoju túžbu po šťastnom manželstve. Hlavnou odlišnosťou oboch postáv je, že jedna je tragickou obeťou a nedokáže prekonať svoje problémy, zatiaľ čo druhá nájde svoje miesto v spoločnosti.

Kľúčové slová: ženská hrdinka, Viktoriánska éra, morálka, komparácia

Abstract

Szakszonová, Lívía: Comparison of the Main Female Characters of Works of Thomas Hardy *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and John Fowles *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. [Bachelor Thesis]. University of Konstantin Philosopher in Nitra. Faculty of Arts; Department of English and American Studies. Major: English language and Literature. Consultant: PhDr. Mária Kiššová, PhD.

Female characters in literature always bring view of women's lives in certain age. In this bachelor thesis we compare two female characters who live in Victorian England and both suffer the same problems connected with morals, social injustice and gender inequality. One of the characters is described by an author who lived in that era, Thomas Hardy, the other is described by a contemporary writer, John Fowles. They both depict a woman of 19th century however from a different perspective. The main objective of this work is to compare the two women in order to find out similarities and differences between them. We also search whether the differences point out that the writers lived in different centuries. The main part of the bachelor work compares the two characters in detail. The analyses show that there are great similarities between the women, for example their low social background, the same experience of pre-marital sexual behaviour and as a consequence they become outcasts unable to take part in proper social life and fulfil their dreams of a happy marriage. The main difference between the women is their ability or inability to solve the problems. One ends up tragically while the other finds her way of a happy life.

Key words: female characters, Victorian Age, morals, comparison

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. BIOGRAPHY OF THOMAS HARDY	6
3. BIOGRAPHY OF JOHN FOWLES	9
4. THOMAS HARDY AND JOHN FOWLES	12
5. COMPARISON OF TESS AND SARAH	14
5.1. Characterization of Tess and Sarah	14
5.1.1. Physical Appearance	14
5.1.2. Social Background	16
5.1.3. Personality	17
5.2. Relation to Male Characters and Attitudes to Marriage	21
5.3. Attitudes of Societies to Tess and Sarah and their Moral Falls	23
6. CONCLUSION	26
RESUME	29
BIBLIOGRAPHY	33

1. INTRODUCTION

Female characters in literature always bring view of women's lives in a certain age. Set in any age of history from the ancient times to the present female characters are connected with the same themes – love, marriage, motherhood, relation to men, status and roles of women in the society. In my bachelor thesis I compare two female protagonists Tess Durbeyfield the character of Thomas Hardy's novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and Sarah Woodruff of John Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Both novels describe a Victorian woman. Hardy in his novel depicts a woman of his era however a contemporary writer John Fowles portrays a woman who lived a hundred years before him.

The aim of this thesis is to compare the two women in order to find out how much they resemble. We analyze their portrayal to identify similarities and differences between the two characters. We also examine whether the differences are consequences of being created by writers living in different times. To what extent the story setting in the 19th century influences perception of the text while one is written by an author living in the 19th century and the other who writes story of the 19th century woman but sees it from a perspective of 20th. In order to compare the two characters we work with texts and quotations and analyze the two literary works closely.

I chose the topic of this thesis simply by coming across a piece of internet information that Fowles was inspired by Hardy's Tess to create Sarah. This information made me curious to find out more. There are certain links between the two novels, similarities in plots, novel structures, themes, and most of all similarities between the two characters of female protagonist.

The first part of this work is devoted to biographies of the two important English novelists Thomas Hardy and John Fowles. It gives an overview of their lives and work. In their brief biographies we concentrate on the role of women in their lives and in their work. Chapter four depicts many similarities of the two writers and Fowles' love and admiration of Hardy. The comparison presumes difficulty in finding parallels between the two literary works and influence of Hardy on Fowles' writing.

The female protagonists of the novels have many similar characteristics that we analyze in the following chapters and subchapters. Chapter five is divided into three parts:

characteristics of the female protagonists, their relation to male characters of the novels and attitudes of societies to the protagonists. In the characteristics of Tess and Sarah we first compare their physical appearance, the way they look and dress. Next we compare their family background and its influence on their lives, the role of their fathers and their education. The last subchapter describes personalities of the two women, their strength, intelligence but also fatalism and sense of responsibility ending in sacrifice. Second part of comparison examines a relation of female and male characters. The male characters of the novels influence the female characters and play a crucial role in their lives. Both, Tess and Sarah meet three important men in their lives, their fathers, their seducers and their true loved ones. The last part of the comparison explores social and gender injustice described in the novels as well as prejudices of Victorian people and its consequences on the protagonists' lives.

This work can serve as a basis of more detailed analyses of characters of the two novels as well as a basis of more detailed characteristics of Victorian women in literature. There are many essays analysing Hardy's Tess and Fowles' Sarah separately however our work compare the two and shows them from a new perspective. This work can be used as a source for further study of the two characters as it brings a different view of them.

2. BIOGRAPHY OF THOMAS HARDY

Thomas Hardy was born 1st June, 1840 in Bockhampton, Dorset as the first child of four. The Hardys were simple country people, his father was a builder and his mother worked as a servant before she got married. Hardy's parents were loving and attentive and the children were brought up learning reading, playing musical instruments and they were regular churchgoers. They lived in a hamlet near Dorchester surrounded by beautiful nature.

Hardy seems to be taking care by women all his life. As Tomalin (2007, p48) points out the first and very important was Hardy's grandmother. After her husband's death she was in charge of the family business and also the head of the family. Hardy's mother, Jemima, was also a strong woman and wanted better life for her children. Thomas and his sisters got good education - an unusual thing for a peasant family of the 18th century. It was her who could have taught Tom to read. Her and his grandmother's stories were preserved and used in Hardy's novels many years later. There was also Hardy's younger sister Mary, who must have been close to him as there was only a year between them.

Young Thomas - even though physically not well built - showed his genius early. Thomas could read very early according to Tomalin (2007, p19), "by the time he could walk he could also read", and he read a lot. He was sent to school at the age of eight where he became a favourite of school's sponsor Mrs. Martin. She was the first lady whom he saw closely and she impressed Hardy a lot. Little Thomas, a bright and sensitive pupil, fell in love with her. Thomas, at the age of ten, changed the school for a better one in Dorchester. He walked three miles to and fro every day enjoying walks through nature. He learned Latin and read a lot - not only classics but also Darwin. The school in town broadened his mind; he could observe life of the town people and made friends with boys of different social classes. The Hardys had financially stable life however they could not afford sending Hardy to a university. They decided to send him to an architecture apprenticeship. Ambitious and intelligent Hardy was very disappointed but he knew his parents gave him a big privilege by sending him to any school. At that time he wrote his first poems. As we read in Tomalin's biography of Hardy (2007, p55) these first poems were about time, place, and change which were main Hardy's themes throughout his writing carrier.

Bright Hardy was successful in his architecture work and decided to move to London. He was lucky to get a job for a successful architect Arthur Blomfield. Hardy wrote a lot of poems in that time. His writings however were rejected by publishers what did not discourage him. He learned French and read Comte, among others, who influenced his religious believes ever after (ibid, p78). His London life was great experience for Hardy; he matured there and was able to make his life decision: to become a writer. He returned to Dorchester to his previous job in order to spend more time writing and wrote his first novel.

Hardy's architecture work brought him to St Juliot in Cornwall where he met another important woman of his life Emma Gifford. He fell in love with her because of her free spirit (ibid, p104) and love of wild nature so close to him. Emma came from a middle class family not very rich however she was a lady, the fact important for Hardy. Hardy's love for Emma was not only inspiration for his writing but he knew he had to be successful to be worth her. He worked hard and managed his first novel to be published in 1871 and another one the following year. His second novel *Under the Greenwood Tree* became his first success. Being paid well he could afford a marriage as well as to quit his architect job. Tomalin (2007, p122) states that Hardy was "a quick writer" and he managed to finish another novel in 1873 and another, successful one, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, in 1874. These make four novels in four years which is incredible amount of work. After their successful publication Hardy became "recognized as an author" as Tomalin states in his biography (2007, p137). Although he was a successful writer, he was not accepted by Emma's family nor his mother approved of their marriage. In spite of the disapproval they got married in 1874.

A lot is said about marriage of Emma and Thomas Hardy in Tomalin's biography. In so many years of marriage, the Hardys were together for more than thirty years, not only happy days came. For a hard working writer like Hardy Emma created a stable and safe environment. Hardy had to fight for a long time to be accepted in the middle-class society (ibid, p123) and Emma had to take it with him. It was always his success and his goals to be taken into considerations not hers. However the Hardys became a respectable couple, invited to many public events at various occasions. After some years of moving from one rented house to another, Hardy decided to build his own house. He designed it himself and

it stood on the outskirts of Dorchester. He became interested in history of Dorchester and set his famous novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge* there.

Fifty years old Hardy looked for inspiration in pretty women. He had many close female friends who were his muses. Hardy's marriage was slowly falling apart but the Hardys led it with great decorum for many years says Tomalin (2007, p231). They took holidays together, rode bicycles and read to each other. Among the novels of this period *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* became a great success. It received so diverse critics and responses that it became a bestseller. The novel made Hardy rich and made him part of the highest social circles (ibid, p231). Although successful, Hardy did not work less. After *Tess* he published another three novels in the next six years, the most famous of them *Jude the Obscure*. After that he quit writing novels saying he did novels only to make money.

In 1905 the University of Aberdeen proposed honorary degree to Hardy the first of more to come, which satisfied Hardy's hurt feelings for his academic failure. His success as a writer did not bring him success in his personal life. Emma Hardy being more and more eccentric (ibid, p289) gave Hardy no credit, neither as a writer nor as a husband. Hardy fell in love with Florence Dugdale who later became his second wife. Hardy concentrated on writing poems and being as productive as Hardy the novelist. His home life devoted almost only to writing he failed to see Emma's health problems. Emma died alone after undiagnosed illness in 1912. Nobody knew about her pain (ibid, p311) and Hardy felt guilty after discovering it. In order to get over her death Hardy wrote poems about Emma and their early life and love.

Shortly after Emma's death Hardy married Florence Dugdale. It was not expected as he could be Florence's grandfather by age. However Hardy in his seventies was an active man: he wrote poems, met many people: writers, students, admirers, attended many public occasions and was very popular among his friends. He kept good health till his eighties. Florence's life with Hardy was not easy as she felt lonely many times, had to fight for all modern appliances in the house (ibid, p352) nor she could leave the house as Hardy was afraid to stay home alone (ibid, p357). Despite of this she took care of him lovingly until his death. Thomas Hardy died 11th of January 1928 as a rich famous man who reached everything he wanted by his hard work.

3. **BIOGRAPHY OF JOHN FOWLES**

John Robert Fowles was born on March 31, 1926 in Leigh-on-Sea in a middle class family of a tobacco merchant Robert Fowles. John Fowles had one sister who was fifteen years younger. He grew up surrounded by children as his father took care of his five siblings and other five half siblings after John's grandfather's early death and they were all living in close neighbourhood.

Fowles' parents were very attentive to him as he was an only child for almost 15 years. As Warburton says, "The parents directed the family resources, financial and otherwise, toward the boy's success for many years" (2004, p10). Although his father was a very busy man he influenced John by his love for philosophy and poetry. It was him who taught young John to play golf, tennis and cricket. Fowles' mother, who was a house wife, loved her only son deeply and introduced him to the natural world that they both admired.

John started his education in Alleyn Court Preparatory School in Leigh-on-Sea where he was a talented pupil. School paid close attention to their students. Here Fowles began his lifelong love for French (ibid, p11), he also became an eager reader and a passionate sportsman. In 1939, after a successful exam, Fowles changed to Bedford School which was a great opportunity to get a decent education. He struggled at the beginning. He was homesick, the boys were bullied and the rules of everyday life at boarding school were strict. It influenced his health and Fowles suffered many illnesses during his studies. It was also the war time. The Fowles moved to Ipplepen where they stayed during the war. John did not go to school for a year due to the war and spent all his free time enjoying the countryside of Devon. After he returned to school, he got used to the Bedford community (ibid, p30) and despite illness and the war distractions his marks were good. He became a cricket hero and "a model head boy" (ibid, p38). Fowles finished his Bedford studies in 1944 and joined the Royal Marines. After a short military training the war ended, and so, his military carrier.

He went to Oxford where he studied French. As we read in his biography by Warburton (2004, p48-49) he made his decision to become a writer there. When translating sixteenth century French poetry he started writing his own poems and continued through his Oxford years. Reading a great number of books, French and English, Fowles became an

intellectual. Among others writers he read Camus, Sartre but also Pascal (ibid, p58) who influenced his thinking and his beliefs. During his studies he made short journeys to France and Norway. Both trips made a strong impression on him and he later used some of those impressions in his works. Fowles' illness reappeared throughout his Oxford years. During his lonely days when he suffered pain he kept long journals. As Worburton (2004, p68) points out his diaries and journals substituted his need for writing a narrative. He completed his studies successfully in 1950 and got a teaching job at the University of Poitiers in France.

Poitiers was first Fowles' job abroad and surely an important part of his teaching career but it was his teaching on the Greek island of Spetsai that changed his life. It was Spetsai where he set his famous novel *The Magus*. His travels around Greece inspired him for writing a travel book that he finished some years later but was never published. In his second year on Spetsai he met his future wife Elizabeth Christy then married to his colleague. They fell deeply in love and despite their difficult situation decided to live together after returning to England in 1953. Their love caused many emotional pain and sacrifices especially from Elizabeth's side. Her husband made her decide between their daughter and Fowles. Fowles found other teaching jobs first in Ashridge and in 1954 in London at St. Gordic Secretarial School. He found teaching job comfortable for his writing but he also developed a liking for it and became a "respected colleague" (ibid, p205) and teacher.

His London life brought him to discover cinemas, theatres and museums that influenced his work. He started to write plays but destroyed them later having considered them not to be good. He and Elizabeth got married in 1957. His wife Elizabeth became his "professional support and confidante" (ibid, p266). Fowles enjoyed his marriage life routine and was very creative and hard working at that time. He was working on *The Magus*, *The Aristos*, but also wrote poetry and other works. He sent the finished novel *The Magus* to Jonathan Cape publishing house and they liked it immediately. The book was published in 1962 and was well received. By that time Fowles had already finished *The Collector* which was also successful. Fowles felt very anxious about publishing his books. As we read in his biography by Warburton (2004, p206) he feared "public scrutiny and criticism". However his two first published novels enabled him to give up his teaching job and move to a better house. *The Collector* became a bestseller in the USA and the rights were sold for filming. In his late 30s Fowles became famous and rich.

Following years of his career were busy and creative. As Fowles did not like fame and publicity he moved to Lyme Regis, a small coastal town in Dorset. Here he found his first house Underhill Farm and wrote his next famous novel *The French Lieutenant's Woman* there. The setting of the novel was right in his house's neighbourhood. He was fascinated by a rock called Cob that stood high above the sea and was haunted by a woman standing there staring to the distance (ibid, p292). Among other his work of that time he began to write *Daniel Martin*. Fowles visited the USA many times either to present his novels or to work on films based on his novels. On his US tours he did a lot of TV and radio interviews, lectures and he was extremely popular there. He disliked the American way of life however and wrote an essay *America I Weep for Thee* criticising it. Fowles visited Egypt and used his travelling experience in *Daniel Martin* (ibid, p344). He was very busy, locked in his study for most of the days. He started to write *The Ebony Tower*, translated plays for London's National Theatre, and wrote texts for photography books, reviews, and newspaper articles. His hard work influenced his health. "He suffered high blood pressure, varicose veins, breathlessness and pain" as Warburton names it in his biography (2004, p372). In 1978 he gained another time consuming job he became Honorary Curator of the Philpot Museum in Lyme Regis. While working there he wrote pamphlets and booklets for museum. His never ending work caused his marriage to fall apart. Elizabeth was no longer his editor and co-worker and she felt alone. In 1980 after publishing of *The Magus Revised Version* and *Mantissa* Fowles became "a subject for classroom study" (ibid, p415). BBC filmed three of his novels. *The French Lieutenant's Woman* was made into a successful film.

In his 60s Fowles suffered a stroke caused by his high pressure and went to hospital. Elizabeth taking care of him failed to recognize her own health problems. When she saw a doctor it was too late and she died of cancer in 1990. It was unexpected and a great shock for Fowles. After Elizabeth's death he was not able to live on his own. Eight years after Elizabeth's death he married Sarah Smith, his long time friend. After six years of his second marriage, the literary giant John Fowles died. It was November the 5th, 2005 in Axminster Hospital after a long illness.

4. THOMAS HARDY AND JOHN FOWLES

Many writers are inspired by works or lives of other authors. *The Hours* by Michael Cunningham was inspired by Virginia Woolf and her Mrs. Dalloway or James Joys' Ulysses was inspired by Homer's *Odysseus*. There are many evidences that John Fowles admired Thomas Hardy and felt close to him as an author but also as a man. Warburton (2000) in Fowles' biography mentions Hardy many times. Some of Fowles' works are devoted to Hardy for example John Fowles: "*Hardy and the Hag*" in *Thomas Hardy after Fifty Years* ed. Lance St. John Butler (1977); Jo Draper, John Fowles: *Thomas Hardy's England* (1984), or inspired by Hardy's work and life. Fowles' novel *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is a good example. It is interesting that one of Hardy's working names for his famous Tess was Sue Woodrow and a protagonist of Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is called Sarah Woodruff.

As we can read in John Fowles' biography (Warburton, 2004, p275) Fowles with his exploration of Dorset also explored Hardy and his life. They both loved the countryside of Dorset as we learn from their detailed descriptions of it in their works. Fowles showed it best in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* that was set in Lyme Regis a town he lived in almost all his life. It is also interesting that he started to write the novel at the same time – the time of his exploration of Hardy. Hardy is called a regional novelist in *The Oxford Illustrated History of English Literature* (1987). For example in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* he described nature around his birth place Bockhampton or *The Mayor of Casterbridge* which is set in Dorchester.

They both showed a deep interest in the natural world and used it to create mood of the stories but also as metaphors for characters' feelings and emotions. It is also evident, that they shared the same belief in man as a part of nature, and that man is better when living according to nature and so that a simple country man is better than a man of modern town (Fowles, 1967, p67; Hardy, 1994, p240). It is interesting how love for nature made them both disgust and quit shooting game.

Fowles uses Hardy's life in his work *The French Lieutenant's Woman* as an example of a Victorian man. He mentioned him in many chapters and used many of his poems, his *The Riddle* as an opening one, to begin the chapters with. He believed in a legend of Hardy's

affair with his cousin Tryphena and their illegitimate daughter (Warburton, 2000, p373) which was never proved but for Fowles it was more than a myth. As Wilson points out Fowles made the story public in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and is responsible for "its widest dissemination" (Wilson, 2005). Fowles did not judge Hardy nor made comments on his behaviour but used his affair as an example for his fiction to prove morals of Victorian era. Fowles in his essay *Notes on an unfinished novel* writes, "It is somehow encouraging that while my fictitious characters weave their own story in their 1867, only thirty miles away in the real 1867 the pale young architect was entering his own fatal life-incident (in: Bradbury, ed., 1999, p158)." Later he writes that he could not avoid the shadow of Thomas Hardy so he used it in the novel. He also said that the book (*The French Lieutenant's Woman*) tormented him and he called it "a clumsy pastiche of Hardy" (ibid).

A woman was for both a mysterious creature – a muse that inspired their literary works. However in their real lives their wives were an essential part of their literary carriers. Both, Emma Hardy and Elizabeth Fowles, were close co-writers and editors of their early works. They both played an important part in socializing with public but the most important was their everyday work: running the households, dealing with mail, welcoming visitors and admirers. At the same time they both had to fight for their husbands' attention and were lonely. They were disappointed by their own carriers. They were great wives but wanted to be also writers and co-workers of their husbands (Tomalin, 2007, p100, 269; Warburton, 2000, p329, 373) and that was not possible in the shade of their famous husbands. Warburton believes (2000, p374) that in Fowles' work *Hardy and the Hag* (1976), where Fowles analyses Hardy's relationship with his wife Emma and his novel writings, he made, although unconsciously, comparisons of his marriage and Hardy's marriage. The marriages were childless, the wives were denied of their husbands' company, husbands –writers were hunted or "pursuit", as Fowles put it, by "original other Woman" who existed only in fiction (Warburton, 2000, 373).

In the same biography Warburton (2000, p372) citing Fowles' diaries states that Hardy was like a brother to Fowles. As we mentioned above there are many reasons for it. It is hard to say to what extent Hardy influenced Fowles' work. Well read Fowles surely put together many of his knowledge and personal experience into his writings. It is obvious that there are certain links between these two writers and that Hardy is part of Fowles' work especially of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*.

5. COMPARISON OF TESS AND SARAH

In this part of the work we compare the two female protagonists of Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* Tess and Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman* Sarah. The themes of both novels are the same: Double morals of Victorian era different for men and women. There are many parallels between the two – their low social backgrounds, their pre-marital sexual behaviour, their exclusion by society and its dramatic influence on their lives. There are however certain changes in description of a Victorian woman by Hardy and by Fowles.

The female protagonists of the two novels mentioned above are both described in detail. We feel for them, we share their problems, we want to help them. We, as readers, know what they think, how they look and how they act in every situation.

5.1. Characterizations of Tess and Sarah

5.1.1. Physical Appearance

Hardy's Tess is a very beautiful woman. Her beauty is astonishing. She has long rich hair; nice, strong body; pretty, fine face. From the beginning of the novel she is described as superior to other country girls - she is prettier, more sensitive, more intelligent (Hardy, 1994, p12, 14). In her many descriptions we see Hardy a poet creating her image. "*Minute diamonds of moisture from the mist hung, too, upon Tess's eyelashes, and drops upon her hair, like seed pearls*" (ibid, p168). Tess is very young at the beginning of the novel around 16 or 17 and we watch her to mature physically and in personality, her maturity adding her prettiness. Tess's beauty is compared to regal but better by its imperfectness, "*Eyes almost as deep and speaking he had seen before, and cheeks perhaps as fair; brows as arched, a chin and throat almost as shapely; her mouth he had seen nothing to equal on the face of the earth. ... And it was the touch of imperfect upon the would-be perfect that gave the sweetness, because it was that which gave the humanity*" (ibid, p192). Tess is a simple country girl who does not make herself beautiful wearing nice dresses or doing her

hair. “*What a fresh and virginal daughter of Nature that milkmaid is!*” exclaims her future husband Angel (ibid, p155). And it is her natural beauty that makes her remarkably pretty.

To compare Tess’s and Sarah’s appearance Sarah is not beautiful but she has some pretty features: rich hair, a slim figure, she is physically strong. Especially her dark-red, curly hair is very nice, described as “*her one great jewel*” (Fowles, 2004, p.248). She evokes strong feelings by her look as shown in this example of her description “*It was not a beautiful face, by any period's standard or taste. But it was unforgettable face, and tragic face. ... There was no artifice there, no hypocrisy, no hysteria, no mask; and above all, no sign of madness*” (ibid, p10). The most famous description of Sarah is the one that describes her standing on the Cobb, a deserted quay, staring out to the sea. The image haunted Fowles as he said in his essay *Notes on an Unfinished Novel* and it recurred with such power that it made him write the book (in: Bradbury, ed., 1999, p147, 148).

Both Sarah and Tess dresses symbolise their social status. As it was said before it is not the way they dress that makes them beautiful. The writers use their clothes to complete description of their personalities as well as their feelings. Sarah’s clothes is described as rather worn, simple black dress, and coat that looked more for men than for women and a bonnet that she takes off in the country (Fowles, 2004, p10). Her black dress does not follow the fashion but still does not fully hide her womanliness (ibid, p168). She dresses simply not only because she cannot afford anything else but it also helps to express her depression and the way she is alienated from the society. It also is a protest to wear fashionable women’s clothes as a symbol of their status in society. In her change at the end of the novel she is described wearing very fashionable clothes, free, American style. Once again Sarah’s clothes represent her free will, her independence and her dislike of social conventions. To compare Hardy’s descriptions of Tess’s clothes it always adds to her prettiness. Tess has a good taste and her simple dress always matches situation and her status. Clothing is described in rich detail, “*... to clothe her very charmingly as a simple country girl with no pretensions to recent fashion; a soft gray woollen gown, with white crape quilling against the pink skin of her face and neck, and a black velvet jacket and hat*” (Hardy, 1994, p377). At the end of Hardy’s novel he also uses the change in clothing to express a change in personality. Tess wears fashionable clothes when Angel meets her after a year of their separation. She looks very ladylike but she is not herself (ibid, p483, 484).

Both women have troubles for their looks. Tess tries to hide her prettiness in order not to draw men's attention to her, "*Then with her little scissors, by the aid of a pocket looking glass, she mercilessly nipped her eyebrows off, and thus insured against aggressive admiration she went on her uneven way*" (ibid, p356). Sarah also hides in her black dress in order to hide her attractiveness, her womanliness, but also for protection (Fowles, 2004, p118).

Both protagonists are remarkable women. They are described as common Victorian women but still different. Tess is extraordinarily beautiful and nice. She looks beautiful in every situation and her beauty is always visible and makes people wonder and feel sorry at the same time. Such beauty should not suffer. Sarah is also pretty but in a very different way. Her beauty is more boyish, she does not have masculine look but her boyish features make her different and so attractive. Both women are young, healthy and physically strong. Their youth gives them energy and liveliness but is also their personality that gives them the power to go through all the troubles and obstacles.

5.1.2. Social Background

Both women come from low social class. Tess is a daughter of a peddler, a poor man who is not able to support his family due to alcoholism and laziness (Hardy, 1994, p31, 329). Sarah is a daughter of an unsuccessful farmer, who dies in asylum for insane (Fowles, 2004, p171). None of the women have a happy family. Hardy describes Tess's family as one that, "*... the household had not been shining examples either of temperance, soberness, or chastity. The father, and even the mother, had got drunk at time, the younger children seldom had gone to church ...*" (Hardy, 1994, p450). Tess is the oldest of seven children and her mother leaves many of the domestic duties to her. Her parents make her responsible for the whole family's future and give her little financial and mentally support (ibid, p329, 330). Fowles does not describe Sarah's family much. We only know that she does not have any relatives after her father's death. Sarah's father is described as easily tempered and boastful (Fowles, 2004, p55).

Both fathers are obsessed by their distant rich ancestors: Sarah's father's relatives being ones of the Drake family (ibid, p55) and Tess's father's ones of D'Urbervilles (Hardy, 1994, p4). Having now impact on present families their fathers find false pride in it. Tess's

unhappy life was blamed for her unhappy ancestors. The D'Urbervilles extinct in mysterious way and Hardy uses the old family as a symbol of a bad spell over Tess (ibid, p272, 276).

Education of both women is mentioned as very influential. Although Tess only finishes Sixth Standard in the National School it gave her a chance to see things from a different perspective. It definitely broadens her mind for example by teaching her standard English (ibid, p21). She was a good student and had an ambition to become a teacher (ibid, p55). Sarah gets better education than Tess by her father's wish (Fowles, 2004, p54) but it seems to bring her more trouble than good. She finishes "third-rate" seminary for young ladies. As she comes from low social class she is looked down by her class mates. She also becomes "too" educated for a man of her class to be interested in, " ...*you are not a woman who was born to be a farmer's wife but educated to be something ...better*" (ibid, p170). However it gave her opportunity to read, which extended her knowledge greatly.

Social background is the feature that connects Sarah and Tess. It is for both of them disadvantage that they cannot influence or change. Both women and their families are good examples of life of low social class in the 19th century. The chances of improvement were minute despite the characters intellect abilities. The education is for both a way to extend their intellect on the other hand they can see better how poor their lives are.

5.1.3. Personality

Both Sarah and Tess are unusual women who catch attention of people. It is more than their physical appearance it is their whole personality that makes people, not only males, interested in them. At the same time the women evoke mixture of positive and negative feelings. Some people love them and feel for them some people hate them. For example Tess is loved by her female friends Izz, Retty and Marian (Hardy, 1994, p254) but female workers of Trantridge, the village she works for Alec d'Urberville, hate her (ibid, p82-83). Mrs. Poulteney (Fowles, 2004, p37) hates Sarah, Dr. Grogan (ibid, p155) feels sorry for her and Mrs. Talbot loves her (ibid, p36). It seems that both women cannot help evoking mixed feelings. They are both portrayed as neither ordinary nor conventional. As Fowles describes Sarah in his own words "*The woman had no face, no particular degree of sexuality. But she was Victorian; and since I always saw her in the same static long shot,*

with her back turned, she represented a reproach on the Victorian Age. An Outcast. I didn't know her crime but I wished to protect her" (Fowles, in: Bradbury ed., 1990, p147-148).

Both characters undergo a dramatic change throughout the story. The change is shown in the change of clothes, place of life, behaviour, their whole look. Tess is very young at the beginning of the story, 16 or 17. She is very mature for her age but she lacks experience of the world beyond the borders of her village. As her parents are not very wise they let Tess gain her experience all by herself and she pays for every mistake she makes. We follow her through the story to her early 20s when she becomes a mature woman but broken by her experience of the world and its injustice. At the end she has all the materialistic goods: she lives in a villa, wears pretty clothes, but she loses herself, her dreams, faith in life. Angel sees her beauty but she is not pure virgin of nature any more. In comparison Sarah's maturity adds her more balance. She finds her way of life although not a typical Victorian way of life for a woman but she is happy at the end. Charles is kind of shocked by her look, *"And her dress! It was so different that he thought for a moment she was someone else. ... But this was someone in the full uniform of the New Woman, fragrantly rejecting all formal contemporary notions of female fashion"* (ibid, p446). He does not expect poor broken Sarah to become an attractive woman. We feel sorry for Tess's misfortune but Sarah's life takes off after she leaves Lyme.

Both of the women are portrayed as very intelligent and bright. Their intelligence is natural, somehow inborn. Although neither of them knows how to use it for their own welfare they cannot hide it. Sarah's intelligence is described lengthily on two pages (Fowles, 2004, p53, 54) as the one that is much higher than intelligence of others. Charles, her later lover, finds an unusually bright person in her when they talk. For instance when Sarah talks about cruelty and stupidity of people she must live with (ibid, p142) or the way she manages her life with Mrs. Poultney, *"Sarah had twigged Mrs. Poultney, and she was soon as adept at handling her as a skilled cardinal, a weak pope; though for nobler ends"* (ibid, p57). Tess is also very wise. We can see it reading about her thoughts and description of her doings. For example when she expresses her ideas about life to Angel, her later husband, she impresses him by her intelligence (Hardy, 1994, p159, 160) or we read how quickly she extended her knowledge by Angel's influence, *"her natural quickness, and her admiration for him, having led her to pick up his vocabulary, his accent, and fragments of his knowledge, to a surprising extent"* (ibid, p225).

Sarah and Tess are both very sensitive and empathic. They are in difficult life situations, they have their own worries and still they care for others, they help as much as they can. Sarah for example takes care of an ill servant of Mrs. Poulney, Milli (Fowles, 2004, p159). She is also concerned about Charles and his future. She sacrifices herself for Charles. Tess caring and loving feels responsible for her younger siblings, "*This leaving of the younger children she had decided to be for the best ;were she to remain they would probably gain less good by her precepts than harm by her example*"(Hardy, 1994, p131). Tess sacrifices herself even to a greater extent. She wants to commit suicide to help her husband to get rid of her (Hardy, 1994, p305, 306), she lives with Alec d'Urberville for her family's sake but hurts herself doing it (ibid, p457). This feature of her is so strong that it destroys her own life, her own happiness. As many of their features the good ones are not used in their favour but are turned against them.

Both characters are fatalists. Neither of them sees any good waiting for them in future (Fowles, 2004, p171; Hardy, 1994, p162). They both feel that their low social class has a bad impact on their lives and they cannot do anything about it. They are smart enough to understand the way the society is limited by its own rules. There is not much hope in the world and they believe there is certainly no hope for them – poor women with the past. As Hardy explains, "*To her and her like, birth itself was an ordeal of degrading personal compulsion, whose gratuitousness nothing in the result seemed to justify, and at best could only palliate*" (Hardy, 1994, p456). They victimize themselves. Sarah thinks that it is her punishment to be called French Lieutenant's Whore and that she must suffer for all her life. Using her words, "*What has kept me alive is my shame, my knowing that I am truly not like other women. I shall never have children, a husband, and those innocent happiness they have*" (Fowles, 2004, p176). Very similarly Tess believes she must leave her new husband as the right punishment that she deserves (Hardy, 1994, p323). They both believe they have no right to be happy. What they did cannot be undone and they believe they were predestined for it.

There are not only similarities in personalities of the two women. They are both different in their perception of freedom and independence. We cannot omit their independence that reflects their strong personalities. Victorian women were not allowed to live on their own, the means of support and the chances to make living were very limited. Sarah does not have any relatives but she manages to make some money and live on her own as a governess. Tess is also able to find a job and support her and her family however for Tess

it is not the right way of life. She knows she can do it only for some time while she is young and strong. At the end of Fowles' novel Sarah lives in a house of an artist Mr. Rossetti who takes care of her. We cannot imagine such ending of Tess' story. Tess also lives with a man at the end of novel but the man is her hated seducer Alec d'Urbelville. She does not do it willingly or happily. For Sarah her life with The Rossettis is a way how not only she can survive but also have a happy and a full, independent life.

Sarah has free mind and inner love of freedom (Fowles, 2004, p119) that Tess definitely lacks. Sarah cannot show it openly but people can see it. Sarah is rebellious in some way for instance when she walks out of the wood in presence of Mrs. Fairley knowing she will report it to Mrs. Poultney who forbade it (ibid, p199). Tess is not rebellious but we can say that she provokes but it is her meekness that provokes, it is injustice to her that provokes. Sarah is compared to man a few times in the novel. Her strong personality, her intelligence was not a quality that was given or expected of a Victorian woman. Sarah is compared to man equal to Charles, "*He perceived that her directness of look was matched by a directness of thought and language – that what had on occasion struck him before as a presumption of intellectual equality (therefore a suspect resentment against man) ...*" (ibid, p183). She is not equal to him in sex nor in social status and so for male of Victorian time a shocking experience. Also when Sarah leaves Mrs. Poultney she dares to tell her what she thinks of her and her cruel manners (ibid, p246, 247). Doing so Sarah shows behaviour not acceptable for a Victorian governess.

Sarah is eccentric in a way. Her eccentricity is considered an evidence of her madness (ibid, p156). Dr. Grogan believes strongly that she should be placed in an asylum for mentally sick (ibid, p228). Fowles makes us doubt Sarah's mental health a few times but at the end we see that it is only another prejudice of the time that makes Dr. Grogan to believe so. Sarah is portrayed as a mysterious woman. We do not know whether we can trust her or pity her; whether she is a victim or a bright liar.

Although there are some similar features of Sarah's and Tess's personalities there are also some great differences. Sarah fights, Tess accepts. Sarah does not want to accept her role of an outcast. She does not want to accept the fate society offers her. She cannot do much in her desperate situation so she shocks. She shows injustice of her treatment by playing her role of a victim but not like people expect her. She is intelligent and strong (compared to man in these two features) and she finds her way at the end. Tess accepts her fate. She

undertakes everything that her hard life brings her. She never opposes anybody, she does not blame other people or her destiny for her hard life, she fulfils all her duties and still she is the one who is punished. As her beauty also her good-hearted personality brings her no good.

5.2 Influence of Male Characters on the Protagonists' Lives and Their Attitudes to Marriage

Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and Fowles' *The French Lieutenant's Woman* are both love stories. The story tells a lot about relation of man and woman, traditions, cultural and social conventions of the era. In some way, both stories follow an easy fairy tale pattern of love between two young people from different social class.

Tess's first man of her life is arrogant and proud Alec d'Urberville, a young aristocrat. He represents higher class and its spoiled morals. He likes Tess very much and does anything to make her his. He does not care about her feeling and is very self-confident. He knows he can do everything he wishes because he is rich. He does not care of any conventions, of anybody as shows this example of his behaviour after Tess refuses to kiss him, "*Then d'Urberille cursed and sore at her, and called her everything he could think of for the trick. Turning the horse suddenly he tried to drive back upon her, and so hem her between the gig and the hedge*" (Hardy, 1994, p66). He seduces Tess and his violent behaviour has an irreversible impact on Tess's life. We can say that he is the one to be blamed for Tess's tragedy.

Another man of her life is Angel Clare, a son of a parson. He represents an educated middle class man of fine manners but unable to see pragmatic reality of the world. Tess likes him. She adores his fine features but also his gentle manners and his intellectual qualities, "*She thought every line in the contour of his person the perfection of masculine beauty, his soul the soul of a saint, his intellect that of a seer*" (ibid, 246). His influence on Tess is great. At the beginning she falls in love with him but cannot get over her past. She believes that love and marriage are only for pure, innocent people, like Angel, not for sinners, like her. Instead of enjoying her love she suffers from doubts. She also feels that

she is not equal to him because of her low social background. When she finally marries Angel he leaves her. It is a climax of the story when Angel learns of Tess's unwanted relation with young d'Urberville, it is the end of Tess's hopes of a happy life. He cannot get over it. He is shocked that his pure Tess had become a sinner.

Sarah's first man was a French sailor, Vargueness. After the shipwreck Sarah takes care of him as she speaks some French. He obviously takes advantage of her. We do not know much about him only that he is married and a liar. Innocent Sarah falls in love with him so passionately that she is willing to go to meet him alone in a cheap hotel before he leaves for France. As she explains, "*He made me believe that his whole happiness depended on my accompanying him when he left – more than that, that my happiness depended on it as well*" (Fowles, 2004, p171). Sarah tells Charles two different stories about their last meeting. First she says that she had sex with him, which he finds out later is not true, the other story says that she saw him with another woman and it broke her heart. Whatever happened, the people accused her of low morals and she has to suffer a lot for it.

The next man she falls in love with is Charles Smithson, a young gentleman, who makes a fine example of a man of his class and time – with a good education, and a scientific hobby, travelled, Darwinian, with a good family roots, and a reasonable income. Sarah likes him from the first moment but she knows that a woman of her class and her record can never become his wife. However she cannot help trying to meet him and spend some time with him. Her confusion ends up in asking him to leave after they have sex, "*You have given me a consolation of believing that in another world, another age, another life, I might have been your wife...*" (ibid, 2004, p358) and she continues, "*Today I have thought of my own happiness. If we were to meet again I could think only of yours. There can be no happiness for you and me. You cannot marry me, Mr. Smithson*" (ibid, p359).

The men play an important role in both stories. They are catalysts of the protagonists' dramatic actions and changes. Almost all the male characters are negative. Almost all the men in the stories bring troubles to the protagonists' lives. The first men of their lives, their fathers, are not good examples of their sex – weak, unsuccessful, not able to take care of their families. Also their first lovers, Alec d'Urberville and Vargueness are men of poor qualities – capricious, irresponsible, and violent. Except the ones we mentioned already there are other men who treat the women badly. For example Tess has to suffer a bad treatment from her master, farmer Groby (Hardy, 1994, p370, 371) or misjudgement of her

brothers-in-law. They talk about her without knowing she is walking behind them, “... *More regretting his precipitancy in throwing himself away upon a dairymaid, or whatever she may be. It is a queer business, apparently*” (ibid, p382). Sarah is more obvious outcast so not only men treat her badly. She is seen morally weak if not crazy. Every man feels free to call her a whore without any hesitation, “*The dairymaid continues to stare. Then he said, “And been’n no lady. She be the French Loot’n’nt’s Hoer*” (Fowles, 2004, p86).

As a result of the characters relationships they both become single mothers. Tess’s child is an unwanted consequence of her relation with Alec. It dies shortly after birth but it leaves Tess very confused. However difficult her situation with the child is she does not accept Alec’s help and decides consciously to become a single mother. Similarly Sarah knowing that Charles is looking for her does not ask for his help in raising of their child. She also decide to care of her alone however one end of Fowles’ novel doubts existence of a child. Decision to raise a child as a single mother is a difficult one and it shows strong personalities of both women.

Both women fall in love with a man who are not of their class and see it as a barrier. Both women have pre-marital sex experience and give birth to an illegitimate child which put them into category of fallen women. This experience, however consciously or unconsciously gained, makes another unbreakable obstacle to their marriage. Both women strongly believe they are not good enough for a marriage. They think themselves weak sinners who would make a man unhappy. This belief and protagonists fight with it is the main motif of both stories. There is also another obvious similarity – both main male characters leave their women. One of the men learns about a sin of his love one at the beginning of the story and the other one in the middle both of them leave for America to find a solution to their unhappiness in love. They both learn of their mistakes and return back after some time to find their women changed.

5.3. Attitudes of Societies to Tess and Sarah and their Moral Falls

As it was said before both women have an experience of pre-marital sex and both suffer from it. They are disgraced - not only they feel guilty themselves but also society looks

them down. They are accused of a low moral but they are both victims not criminals, they are victims of the notion of gender.

Sarah is described with ambiguity. We are not sure of her motifs and her real intentions but we are sure that society treats her unfair. Belief that she could have sex puts her into a very difficult situation. She is not promiscuous, she is not a prostitute and still she is given the same social credit. She becomes outcast, a woman that has no place in society and therefore no future. Although she is accused of something that did not happen she is given the name The French lieutenant's woman. Society tries to solve her problem - the priest, representative of religion, is concerned about her situation as well as her employer Mrs. Talbot and Dr. Grogan, we can say that also Mrs. Poultney is concerned however they all treat her badly. They think Sarah is not able to take care of herself that she is weak, immature, immoral, pitiful, and mentally ill and Sarah is none of it nor she wants to accept such help. On the other hand, part of society ignores her and her like. For example for Ernestina, Charles' fiancé, a daughter of a rich businessman, Sarah is distasteful (Fowles, 2004, p88). Ernestina does not want to see nor admit such people exist and should be helped.

Society of a small Victorian town thrills in a story such as Sarah's. There is nobody to stand for her, she is an easy victim – she has no family, no money. A good example is Mrs. Poultney who takes care of Sarah tries to be seen as charitable and deeply humanistic but her true nature is cruel and she tortures Sarah mentally. “ *I shall see that you are locked away. You are a public scandal*” (ibid, p246), cries she when dismissing Sarah. On the other hand we see that Sarah is aware of her situation. She victimizes herself, she knows she would be nothing without her story however at the end she finds out she can bear it no longer and flees. Society really ostracizes Sarah. People are cruel to her. She expresses it herself, “... *But I am like this thorn tree, Mr. Smithson. No one reproaches it for growing here in this solitude. It is when it walks down Broad Street that it offends society*” (ibid, p 182). Her life in the big town of London, even London of Victorian times, is more acceptable. (However, not many Victorian women could lead life as Sarah did at the end of Fowles' novel.) People are more liberal there, but not all the people. We can see an example of Charles who comes from London, he travelled a lot so he is an experienced, educated man and still he fights with his own prejudices toward women, toward modern women, “*In the United States Charles had found the style, with its sly and paradoxically coquettish hints at emancipation in other ways, very charming; now, and under so many*

other new suspicions, his cheeks took a colour not far removed from the dianthus pink of the stripes on her shirt" (ibid, p446). It is important to say that society of Fowles' novel is described with irony. Fowles mocks all the characters and their prejudices, he mocks everybody except Sarah.

Tess's fate is very much the same as Sarah's. She is punished for a crime she did not commit. She does not have sex with Alec d'Urberville willingly but still it gives her a mark of a sinner. She comes home instead of happy and rich pregnant and broken. Even though she avoids people her illegitimate child cannot be unseen. She suffers a lot and is ashamed but it is not the people of her home village who makes her feel guilty. Society does not blame Tess, they accept her behaviour as nothing unusual but unhappy. It is her own feeling of failure and injustice that troubles her. "*... a thousand pities that it should have happened to she, of all the others. But 'tis always the comeliest! ...*" (Hardy, 1994, p114). There is lot of injustice to Tess. She mostly suffers for her poor social background. People of her own social class feel sorry for her. They do not judge her bad.

Social injustice of poor compared to rich is more highlighted in the Hardy's book. Alec is not punished for his behaviour by society; he is even looked up because he is rich. Also Angel who admits having pre-marital sex does not feel any guilt. In contrast, Tess is considered immoral or weak for her sin and though must be punished. Here we also notice double morals for men and women.

There is a big difference how people think of Tess and what they think of Sarah. Both stories happen at the same era, they both have to face the same problem but Hardy seems to try to excuse pre-marital sex while Fowles shows its harsh treatment. Hardy points out injustice of class differences and the failure of his perfect heroine to fight against her own feelings of guilt and responsibility while Fowles points out injustice of society as a whole towards an individual whom they condemn. Unequal status of men and women shown in combination with low social background puts the female characters of both novels into unsolvable situation. They are pushed by society to behave like they do however it is them who have to take consequences.

6. CONCLUSION

In this bachelor thesis we compare two female characters whose stories are both set in Victorian era. We compare two Victorian women whose stories are very similar: after experience of pre-marital sex they fall in love but find themselves unsuitable to become wives. The men of their love are of different social class and both women find the two obstacles unbreakable. Both stories put together difficult issues of morals, social differences and gender inequality.

In the first part of the bachelor work we concentrated on the writers, their lives and work. There is one chapter devoted to Thomas Hardy and one devoted to John Fowles. Chapter three finds out many connections between the two writers and described Hardy's influence on Fowles' work.

In the second part of the bachelor work we began with comparison of characters of Tess and Sarah and we found parallels mostly in social background. Both women come from low social class and from families of unsuccessful fathers unable to support their families. These unhappy family histories give them both difficult start of their lives. Their education helps Tess and Sarah to improve their intellect abilities but they find it useless as they cannot fulfil their intellectual needs because of their low social background. It makes them both painfully aware of the differences between classes. In contrast when we compared protagonists' physical appearance we found that the women are very different. Sarah does not possess Tess's beauty, she has more masculine features that also appear in description of her personality and make her different from other women. We can say that Tess is also different of other women but it is her great beauty that makes her superior. Hardy and Fowles both use detailed description of clothes to complete protagonists' appearance but also to show their feelings and state of mind. Both women change their look dramatically at the end of the story and that change completes description of their change of personalities and lives. To compare personalities of the two women it is worth mentioning that both women resemble in some parts but we claim that their personalities are different in one overall feature. Tess is strong to bare all her life difficulties but Sarah is strong to overcome them. Tess undergoes everything without complaining as it has been said before she accepts it however Sarah does not want to accept. Sarah openly complains and criticizes. Tess is unable to solve her situation and her life ends up in tragedy. In

comparison Sarah finds the way of life that makes her happy. There are two (or three) endings of Fowles' novel but in both Sarah finds her own way of life. To summarize we understand that both women resemble in their social background but not in their physical appearance although they are both remarkable women and the biggest difference is in depiction of their personalities.

To sum up the second part of comparison that compares a relation between male and female characters we found many similarities. We analyzed what men the two characters met and how they influenced the women's lives. Both women's relationships resemble the same pattern. First they meet capricious seducers and as a consequence of this unhappy and unwanted relation they are unable to fulfil their dreams of a happy marriage. They become women of low morals although they are victims of men's sexual desire. The women but also their true lovers cannot get over their past and they are abandoned. Both men also come from higher social class and social inequality is described as a strong influence on the both relations. Other male characters of the novels are mostly negative characters and both women are treated badly by men. To conclude both characters have the same unhappy relations to male characters and have to face strong gender inequality.

In the last part of the comparison we compared society and its attitudes to the main protagonists. We mostly deal with the same problem of gender inequality but also prejudices about morals especially double morals for poor and rich but also for men and women. Although the women face the same difficulties of social injustice, society has very different attitudes to them. Both women are excluded by society because of pre-marital sexual behaviour however both of them are innocent victims. Tess's behaviour is accepted by part of the society in contrast Sarah's is considered absolutely unacceptable and the one that must be punished. Sarah is a real outcast but Tess is believed only unlucky. Both women suffer for their deed internally but also society punishes them. In this part of the comparison we also found similarities but also great differences. The women resemble in suffering from social injustice in perception of their morals, but Tess is blamed by her close ones (her father and her husband) and herself while Sarah is denounced by larger society, she becomes a "fallen woman of Lyme".

At the beginning of the bachelor work we presumed that although both stories describe women of Victorian England they depict them from a different perspective. One woman is portrayed by a writer of her era, a writer of the 19th century and the other by a writer of the

20th century. Both authors, however big was Fowles' inspiration by Hardy, created different women although similar in many ways. We believe that differences in description of the main female characters are in writers' perception of Victorian world. For a representative of realism, Thomas Hardy, life of poor was unhappy; issues of low social class seemed unsolvable. Postmodernist Fowles saw Victorian world from distance of a hundred years. Fowles also uses different means of describing his characters. He uses ambiguity, pastiche, and irony. He gives Sarah free mind, masculine look and finds her a happy free life at the end despite of fact that she is a single mother of no means of support. He created a woman who lives in 19th century but thinks as a woman of 20th. He created his contemporary woman and by setting her life to Victorian era he linked the woman of 19th century to women of 20th century.

This bachelor work points out some interesting features of female characters of Victorian era. By comparing Tess and Sarah we show them from a new point of view. Our work could be used for larger analysis of female characters of Victorian era that we could not do due to limited length of bachelor thesis.

At the end we would like to summarize that there are many similarities in depictions of characters of Tess and Sarah. They both represent a Victorian woman accused of unacceptable moral behaviour who suffers hard its consequences. Can we say that these women resemble also a woman of the 21st century? Don't we face the same problems of gender inequality, double morals for men and women and social injustice?

RESUME

Ženské literárne hrdinky vždy prinášajú pohľad na život žien v určitej dobe. Ak už hrdinka žije v akejkoľvek dobe vždy sú hlavné témy, s ktorými sa ženské hrdinky spájajú podobné: láska, manželstvo, materstvo, vzťahy s mužmi, postavenie a rola ženy v spoločnosti. Táto bakalárska práca porovnáva dve literárne hrdinky žijúce vo viktoriánskej dobe. Jednou je Tess Durbeyfield z diela Thomasa Hardyho *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* a druhou je Sarah Woodruff hlavná hrdinka románu Johna Fowlesa *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Hardy opisuje vo svojom románe svoju súčasníčku, zatiaľ čo Fowles opisuje ženu, ktorá žila sto rokov pred ním.

Cieľom tejto práce je porovnať obe ženské hrdinky a nájsť ako veľmi sa podobajú a či ich spoločné a odlišné črty môžu byť dôsledkom toho, že boli opisované autormi žijúcimi v dvoch rozličných storočiach. Zároveň chceme zistiť do akej miery ovplyvňuje vsadenie románu do prostredia 19. storočia vnímanie textu, ak je jedno opisované autorom žijúcim v 19. storočí a druhé autorom žijúcim v 20. storočí. Pri porovnávaní používame texty a citácie z textov a podrobne analyzujeme obe literárne diela.

Prvá časť práce sa venuje autorom. Prvá kapitola stručne zhŕňa životopis Thomasa Hardyho. Tento významný spisovateľ 19. storočia opisoval vo svojej próze hlavne život ľudí z Anglického vidieka, konkrétne z oblasti Dorset. Napriek tomu že sa vyučil za architekta, stal sa spisovateľom, čím naplnil svoj sen. Hardy bol veľmi produktívny poet a prozaik. Napísal stovky básní a množstvo románov. Narodil sa v roku 1840 v rodine chudobného murára a detstvo strávil na vidieku. Napriek nízkemu vzdelaniu rodičov Hardy dostal dobré vzdelanie. Po prvých spisovateľských úspechoch zanechal prácu architekta a venoval sa len písaniu. Ako tridsaťštyri ročný sa oženil so svojou dlhoročnou láskou Emmou Gifford. Manželstvo bolo bezdetné s pre ženu zaneprázdneného spisovateľa neľahké. Po rokoch spoločného života si Emma a Thomas Hardyovci vydobyli svoje miesto v spoločnosti, ale nevytvorili šťastný pár. Hardy skončil s písaním prózy po dokončení románu *Jude the Obscure* a venoval sa už len poézii. Básne písal s rovnakým nasadením ako prózu, a tak nezbadal, že jeho manželka Emma je vážne chorá. Emma zomrela opustená vo svojej podkrovnej izbe v roku 1912. Krátko po jej smrti sa Hardy znovu oženil. Hardy sa stal ešte za života legendou a bol ocenený mnohými čestnými doktorátmi. Zomrel v roku 1928 ako úspešný a bohatý muž.

Druhá kapitola stručne opisuje život Johna Fowlesa, významného postmodernistu. Fowles sa narodil v roku 1926 v rodine obchodníka. Ako jedináčikovi (Fowles mal jednu sestru, avšak o pätnásť rokov mladšiu) sa mu dostalo veľkej pozornosti rodičov a dobrého vzdelania, ktoré Fowles ukončil na univerzite v Oxforde. Na Oxforde študoval francúzštinu a tu začal uvažovať o kariére spisovateľa. Po doštudovaní pôsobil Fowles ako učiteľ angličtiny. V roku 1957 sa Fowles oženil s Elizabeth Christy. Hneď jeho prvý román *The Magus* sa stal veľmi úspešným a umožnil Fowlesovi zanechať učenie a venovať sa len písaniu. Takmer každý ďalší jeho román bol úspechom a mnohé boli sfilmované. Fowles sa presťahoval po krátkom čase života v Londýne na vidiek a okrem písaniu románov sa venoval aj regionálnej histórii Dorsetu a mestečka Lyme Regis. Elizabeth nenávidela život v malom meste a trpela samotou počas mnohých dní, keď Fowles písal takmer dvadsaťštyri hodín denne. Elizabeth náhle zomrela na rakovinu v roku 1980 a Fowles s podlomeným zdravím sa po ôsmich rokoch znovu oženil. Zomrel v roku 2007.

V ďalšej kapitole porovnáваме životy oboch spisovateľov a nachádzame množstvo súvislostí. Fowlesov obdiv Thomasa Hardyho bol verejne známy. Fowlesovo a Hardyho manželstvo sa v mnohom podobali, obaja tiež zdieľali lásku ku krajine Dorsetu. Vo svojom románe *The French Lieutenant's Woman* Fowles použil príbeh Hardyho aféry s jeho sesternicou Tryphenou, ako príklad morálky Viktoriánco. Tento príbeh, historikmi nikdy nedokázaný, bol pre Fowlesa viac ako legendou a jeho uverejnením vo svojom románe sa pričínili o jeho šírenie. V tom istom románe Fowles použil, ako úvod niektorých kapitol, úryvky Hardyho básní. Nie je len náhoda, že pracovné meno Hardyho hrdinky Tess bolo Sue Woodrow a Fowlesova hrdinka sa volá Sarah Woodruff. Taktiež je zaujímavé, že Fowles napísal román *The French Lieutenat's Woman* v tom istom čase ako sa presťahoval do Dorsetu a objavil Hardyho. Aj keď Fowles nikdy netvrdil, že by mal konkrétnu inšpiráciu na vytvorenie Sarah, určite sa do značnej miery nechal ovplyvniť Hardym a jeho dielom.

Hlavná časť tejto práce porovnáva Tess a Sarah, ženy žijúce v tej istej dobe a tej istej krajine, ktoré spája veľmi podobný osud. Oba romány opisujú ženy odsúdené za morálny prečin, ktorý sa spája s problémom dvojitej morálky pre mužov a ženy a so sociálnou nespravodlivosťou. Obe Viktoriánske ženy majú rovnaký osudom a predsa sú iné. Hrdinky porovnáваме v troch podkapitolách jedna porovnáva charakteristiky oboch hrdiniek, ďalšia ich vzťah k mužským postavám a posledná postoj spoločnosti k obom ženám.

Prvá podkapitola je rozdelená na ďalšie tri časti. Porovnáваме v nich vzhl'ad hrdiniek, sociálne prostredie z ktorého pochádzajú a ich osobnosti. Pri porovnaní vzhl'adu hrdiniek sme zistili že pokiaľ Tess je výnimočná kráska, Sarah má skôr mužské črty. Obe ženy však svojim vzhl'adom hneď zaujmú, aj keď z úplne odlišných dôvodov. Obe ženy však na konci románov zmenia svoj vzhl'ad radikálne, čo odráža aj radikálnu zmenu v ich živote. Pri porovnávaní sociálneho prostredia, z ktorého hrdinky pochádzajú, sme našli zhodu. Obe pochádzajú z chudobnej vrstvy. Rovnako obe majú neúspešných otcov, ktorí nie sú schopní postarať sa o rodinu a ktorí sa pýšia aristokratickým pôvodom, ktorý vôbec neodráža biedu v ktorej žijú. Obe hrdinky tiež dostanú vzdelanie, ktoré však len prehľbi ich vnímanie sociálnej nerovnosti a nespravodlivosti. Posledná časť tejto podkapitoly porovnáva a analyzuje osobnosti oboch hrdiniek. Tu sme našli ako podobnosti, tak aj veľké odlišnosti. Obe ženy sú charakterizované ako veľmi inteligentné, silné osobnosti. Obe majú zmysel pre zodpovednosť, sú empatické voči problémom iných, a sú fatalistky vo vnímaní vlastného osudu a budúcnosti. Avšak napriek týmto podobnostiam Sarah na rozdiel od Tess je rebelka, je excentrická, má rada slobodu a nezávislosť a je vykreslená s veľkou mierou ambivalencie, čo ju robí záhadnou. Sarah kritizuje nespravodlivosť voči sebe a bojuje proti nej, aj keď len v tichej forme. Hlavným rozdielom medzi týmito dvoma ženami je ich boj s osudom, ktorý jedna prehráva a druhá vyhráva.

Druhá podkapitola hlavnej časti analyzuje vzťahy hlavných hrdiniek k mužom. Tieto vzťahy poznačia osudy oboch žien. Obe ženy stretnú vo svojom živote troch významných mužov. Najprv sú to ich neúspešný otcovia, potom ľstivý zvodcovia a napokon obe stretnú tých pravých mužov svojho srdca. Obe ženy sa stanú obeťami sexuálnej nenásytosti mužov. Tess, aj keď nevedome, sa nechá zviest' nafúkaným a sebeckým mladým aristokratom Alecom d'Urbervilleom, s ktorým počne dieťa. Sarah síce nemá pomer s námorníkom Varguenessom, ale slepo sa do neho zaľúbi a vydá sa za ním do prístavu, kde ho uvidí s inou ženou. Tento jej nevinný výlet ju v očiach ľudí zmení na pobehticu. Paralely sú aj v opisoch mužov, ktorých obe ženy ľúbia a túžia sa stať ich životnými partnerkami. Tess sa zaľúbi do Angela Clare, syna farára, mladého a naivného intelektuála, ktorý nedokáže Tess odpustiť jej predmanželskú sexuálnu skúsenosť, akokoľvek nechcenú. Sarah sa tiež zaľúbi do muža, ktorý jej nie je rovný v pôvode. Mladý aristokrat Charles Smithon je tiež naivný a napriek tomu že je scestovaný, je neskúsený a plný predsudkov. Obe ženy vedia, že nie sú vhodné partnerky pre ich milovaných a to nielen pre ich pôvod, ale aj pre ich povesť pobehtice. Obe ženy tiež otehotnejú a porodia nemanželské dieťa a

rovnako obe sa rozhodnú vychovávať ho samé. Tato časť práce objavila mnohé zhody v osude oboch hrdiniek a ich vzťahu k mužom.

Ďalšia časť taktiež odhalila mnohé podobnosti. Tu sme porovnávali postoj spoločnosti k oboj ženám. Obe sú obvinené z neprípustného morálneho prečinu a to s predmanželského sexuálneho pomeru. Sarah sa dostane na okraj spoločnosti, aj keď nič nespáchala a Tess, aj keď nie je vyhnancom, nesie známku hriešnice. Obe sú však viac obeťami ako páchatelkami. Spoločnosť ich správanie odsudzuje, aj keď v prípade Tess je jej osud hodnotený skôr ako nešťastie, zatiaľ čo Sarah, je obeťou ohovárania a nespravodlivého zaobchádzania malomeštiackej spoločnosti. Aj keď Tess je obeťou svojich vlastných výčitiek svedomia, viac ako obeťou sociálnej nespravodlivosti, ako je to u Sarah, obe trpia a prekonávajú problém žien, ktoré spoločnosť, odsúdi do ťažkej situácie nemravných hriešnic, ktorými v skutočnosti nie sú.

V závere práce sme zhrnuli výsledky ako veľmi zaujímavé, ktoré by sa mohli použiť na ďalšiu a podrobnejšiu analýzu oboch spomínaných diel alebo na ďalšiu analýzu ženských literárnych hrdiniek žijúcich vo Viktoriánskej dobe. Práca prináša nový pohľad na obe hrdinky vo svetle ich porovnania. Fowles aj Hardy opísali obaja svoje súčasníčky, aj keď Fowles zasadil svoj román do 19. storočia. Nepodobajú sa tieto ženy aj na ženu 21. storočia? Nezapasíme aj my s problémami dvojitej morálky, sociálnej nespravodlivosti a rodovej nerovnosti?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- DRABBLE, M., ed. *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*. Sixth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. 1184p. ISBN 0-19-866244-0
- FOWLES, J. *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. London: Vintage, 2004. 470p. ISBN 0-099-47833-1.
- FOWLES, J. *Notes on an Unfinished Novel* in Bradbury, M., ed. *The Novel Today. Contemporary Writers on Modern Fiction*. Revised Edition. London: Fontana Press, 1990. 249p. ISBN 0-00-686-183-0
- FRANKE, D. *Hardy's Ur-priestess and the Phases of a Novel*. Studies in the Novel, Volume 39, number 2 (Summer 2007) University of North Texas, 2007.
- HARDY, T. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1994. 508p. ISBN 0-14-062020-6.
- ROGERS, P., ed. *The Oxford Illustrated History of English Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987. 519p. ISBN 0-19-285437-2
- STEFENSON, W. *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. *The Literary Encyclopedia*. 10 October 2002 (online). Available on Internet
<<http://www.litencyc.com/php/sworks.php?rec=true&UID=796>> (retrieved 2009-06-17)
- STEWART, J. I M. *The Oxford History of English Literature. Writers of the Early Twentieth Century Hardy to Lawrence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963. 704p. ISBN 0-19-812240-3.
- WARBURTON, E. *John Fowles. A Life in Two Worlds*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2004. 510p. ISBN 0-224-05951-3
- WILSON, K. *John Fowles and Thomas Hardy*. 2005 (online). Available on Internet
<<http://cozote.csusm.edu/pipermail/hardy-1/2005-November/000057.html>> (retrieved 2009-06-17)
- TOMALIN, C. *Thomas Hardy the Time Torn Man*. London: Penguin Books, 2007. 512p. ISBN 978-0141017419