

Method used in the Ph. D. work -“A Critical Study of Major Novels of Thomas Hardy”

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Out of various methods of criticism : sociological, psychological, historical, biographical, archetypal, deconstruction, dialogic criticism, Discourse Analysis, Feminist criticism, Influence and the Anxiety of Influence, Marxist criticism, Reader-Response criticism and other schools of criticism I consider, the Chicago school the best.

The amalgamation anticipated in the previous paragraph, has been to some extent a project of the developing group at the University of Chicago of which Ronald Crane is the centre. There is, however, a heavy scholarship in the writings of its members that may weaken its influence by severely limiting its readers. It has collected ideas into a volume of essays, *Critics and Criticism* (1952) and other volumes.

The Chicago critics study literature as a part of a larger whole connected with well-known concern of their universality in humane education for the present age. They concentrate upon literary and artistic criticism, and history. In higher education, they believe that all four such as, linguistics, analysis of ideas, literary and artistic criticism and history should have adequate representation.

The linguistic aspect of a given text is very essential from the literary writer's, i.e., a novelist's point of view. Style is the personality. The language which the literary writer uses expresses his personality. Hardy's novels express his personal linguistic style of writing. The first major undertaking of Hardy was the firm establishment of his imaginative world of Wessex – geography, landscape, folk-ways, agricultural pursuits, quaint peasantry – as a background for the drama of his main characters. Beginning with the full length pastoral scenery of *Far From the Madding Crowd* and reached the height of this faculty in *The Return of the Native* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. They live a rustic life. Their speeches are

rustic, so are their lives and manners.

Their analysis of ideas too is simple. In *The Return of the Native*, *Tess*, *D'Urbervilles* the hero and the heroine think in terms of simplicity of ideas. Once, Clym returns from Paris. He takes up furze-cutting; his feelings of love are simple or Tess's feelings as the eldest daughter are simple. She follows her parent's desire to visit the D'Urbervilles who are said to be of common ancestry, not knowing the fact that Alec, of the ancestry, would seduce her and be the destroyer of her hopes. Hardy's analysis of ideas of tragedy through the course of her actions ultimately falling a victim to *Fate* or *Destiny*. Thirdly, here lies the mode of literary and artistic criticism and fourthly the *history* of the great artistic creation and almost all his characters in the novels of creations lead to tragic end and others are left alone with a sense of living-death.

In higher education, they believe that all four really have adequate representation.

Although, the critics do not lose sight of other three arts, the business of Chicago critics is literary criticism.

According to this School of criticism, the study as they envisage is not designed to develop any new or peculiar critical method, but to examine and evaluate those approaches to literature which have been or currently are being used for interpretation and judgement. Their work includes therefore, the criticism of criticism.

As Elder Olson and others of their group have stated, they stand opposed to dogmatic assumption by any critic that his position and method are alone correct. Crane's attack on Cleanth-Brooks as a stalking horse for the New critics is an onslaught upon critical monism quite in harmony with the pluralistic approach of these critics. Criticism being a branch of philosophy, Olson writes, *the number of possible critical positions is determined by the number of philosophical positions*. These latter are determined by the number of aspects of a subject capable of being

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brought to bear upon the subject-matter.

Criticisms differ accordingly as they centre upon one or another facet of art : its medium, its productive cause, its end, or as they focus upon several of these facets of life at once. They differ also as they proceed integrally in the manner of Plato, or differently in the manner of Aristotle. Each criticism however, is valid within its limits.

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