



DIALECTICAL FEATURES OF THE HUMAN-NATURE-SOCIETY TRIAD IN THE WORKS OF THOMAS HARDY AND KHURSHID DO'STMUHAMMAD

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Annotation: This article comparatively examines the dialectical features of the human–nature–society triad in the prose of Thomas Hardy and Khurshid Do'stmuhammad. The triad is treated not as a mechanical combination of three separate themes, but as a dynamic system in which individual choice, the natural environment, and social institutions continuously reshape one another. The analysis focuses on Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *Jude the Obscure*, and Do'stmuhammad's *Kuza...* and *Sohildagi nash'u namo*. The findings show that Hardy frequently presents nature as an objective force that tests economic and social decisions, whereas Do'stmuhammad turns natural space into a symbolic medium revealing surveillance, freedom, alienation, and moral self-awareness. In both writers, the individual can be understood only within a conflictual and interdependent relationship with nature and society.

Keywords: human, nature, society, dialectics, ecocriticism, social environment, artistic space, Thomas Hardy, Khurshid Do'stmuhammad.

Modern comparative literary studies increasingly recognize that it is insufficient to interpret the human being merely as a psychological subject and nature merely as the background of events. In literary texts, individual decisions emerge within an integrated network involving natural space, economic conditions, custom, social control, and historical change. In this sense, the human–nature–society triad provides an effective framework for studying character, conflict, and the ethical-philosophical meaning of a work at the same time. A broad understanding of ecocriticism likewise identifies the relationship between human beings and the non-human world within cultural history as one of its central concerns [1, p. 5].

Although Thomas Hardy and Khurshid Do'stmuhammad belong to different historical periods, languages, and cultural traditions, the confrontation between the individual and the surrounding environment performs an important aesthetic function in the prose of both writers. In Hardy's fiction, the Wessex landscape, agriculture, weather, urbanization, and social stratification directly



affect the destinies of characters. In Do'stmuhammad's prose, everyday spaces such as the room, street, shore, and public environment activate questions of inner freedom, self-observation, the awareness of being watched by others, and moral choice. These features make it possible to regard the triad not as a static scheme but as a dynamic system that generates meaning through contradiction.

Previous studies have discussed the concept of nature and the artistic-philosophical interpretation of the nature–society relationship in the works of Hardy and Do'stmuhammad. Such research has systematized the functions of landscape, natural symbolism, artistic space, and social environment [6]. The present article differs from those studies by shifting attention from a binary relationship to a three-sided dialectical mechanism: how the individual's relationship with nature changes under social influence, and, conversely, how natural conditions reorganize social relations.

The purpose of the research is to identify the artistic mechanisms through which the human–nature–society triad operates in the works of Thomas Hardy and Khurshid Do'stmuhammad and to reveal their similarities and differences on a comparative basis. Accordingly, the study examines the influence of natural environment on individual decisions, the restriction of personal freedom by social norms, the ethical-evaluative function of space, and the ways in which contradictions are transformed into artistic resolution.

The study employs comparative-typological, ecocritical, hermeneutic, and close-reading methods. The comparative-typological approach is used to explain similar artistic mechanisms in two national literatures primarily through typological affinity rather than direct historical influence. Ecocritical analysis makes it possible to reveal nature not as a passive background, but as an agent capable of limiting, redirecting, or testing human activity. Hermeneutic interpretation is applied to uncover the implicit semantic layers of natural images and social spaces.

In selecting the primary material, the study deliberately avoids making the works most frequently discussed in earlier analyses the central corpus. Therefore, Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *Jude the Obscure* and Do'stmuhammad's *Kuza...* and *Sohildagi nash'u namo* were chosen. This corpus allows the researcher to observe the relations of nature and economy, countryside and city, individual and surveillance, and natural space and cultural norm within a single comparative framework.

The analysis identifies four principal dialectical features of the human–nature–society triad: (1) mutual conditioning; (2) movement through contradiction; (3) the acquisition of social meaning by space; and (4) the transformation of personal decisions into systemic consequences. Although these features are expressed through different poetic devices in the two writers,



their internal logic is similar: the human being changes the external environment, while the external environment redefines the individual's opportunities and limitations.

In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Michael Henchard's fate is determined not only by personal character and social rivalry but also by natural-economic factors such as weather, harvest, and market price. Studies of the Victorian regional novel emphasize that in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* the experience of climate and weather is mediated through the economic system [2]. This demonstrates the first major feature of the triad: a change in nature can become an economic decision, and an economic decision can, in turn, become a change in social status and human destiny. Henchard's risky reliance on predictions of harvest and weather exposes the tragedy of treating nature as a resource that can be fully mastered. Nature does not submit to his will; consequently, economic loss accelerates the destruction of social prestige and personal stability.

The opposition between Henchard and Farfrae further strengthens the social dimension of the triad. Critical scholarship has interpreted their conflict as a confrontation between older and newer forms of socio-economic organization [3]. The protagonist therefore competes not only with nature but also with a new social knowledge about how nature should be used, measured, and economically planned. Henchard's dependence on experience and intuition and Farfrae's preference for calculation, system, and rational management represent two cultural models of human interaction with nature. At this point, the human–nature–society triad develops into a relationship of character–environment–system.

In *Jude the Obscure*, the triad is articulated through movement between countryside and city. Jude's desire for education is not simply a separation from nature; it is an attempt to change social space. The countryside binds him to labor, origin, and tradition, whereas Christminster appears as a symbol of knowledge and higher social status. Yet geographical movement does not automatically abolish social barriers. Space in the novel therefore functions less as a geographical point than as a hierarchy of opportunities. The individual changes location in order to realize a dream, but social institutions reconstruct the limitations around that movement. Hardy thus reveals the difference between physical mobility and social mobility.

In Khurshid Do'stmuhammad's novella *Kuza...*, nature functions differently. Rather than appearing mainly through climate or harvest, it emerges in an expanded sense as the psychological and social "environment" of the individual. The central situation is one of observing and being observed. As the protagonist increasingly feels exposed to the gaze of the community, the



contradiction between inner freedom and external behavior intensifies. A study devoted to the novella notes that the work reveals the inner world of the human being and the individual’s relationship with social position, memory, and values through philosophical reflection [4]. Here society does not operate as an institution that openly commands; instead, it acts through a constant gaze and the mechanism of evaluation.

In Kuza..., the natural component of the triad is primarily expressed through the interaction between human nature and external environment. The protagonist’s need for peace, privacy, and freedom represents a natural psychological demand, while the social environment forces the individual into continuous self-monitoring. Research on the writer’s style similarly emphasizes that constant observation may suppress a person’s will and freedom [5]. The individual therefore remains between the desire to live naturally and the socially constructed demands of appearance, propriety, and the gaze of others. Do’stmuhammad organizes this dialectical conflict less through external action than through inner monologue, memory, fragmented plot structure, and the semantics of vision.

Sohildagi nash’u namo presents the human–nature–society triad in a completely different setting: the seashore. Sunlight, sand, sea, waves, and birds create an attractive, open, and almost universal natural environment. At the same time, representatives of different ages, races, nationalities, and cultures occupy the same space, turning the shore into a model of a “small society.” Although nature is equally open to everyone, ideas about the body, clothing, intimacy, and looking are shaped by cultural norms. Thus, the same natural environment is interpreted differently through different social codes. Through humor, perceptive detail, and contrast, the writer exposes the difference between the universality of nature and the relativity of culture.

The direction of movement within the triad is therefore not identical in the two writers. Hardy often constructs a chain of “nature → economic/social system → individual destiny,” whereas Do’stmuhammad tends toward “social gaze/cultural norm → individual psychology → perception of natural space.” In the first case, nature acts as objective resistance; in the second, it becomes a mirror that exposes moral and cultural differences.

Table 1. Comparative model of the human–nature–society triad

Writer / work	Function of nature	Function of society	Human condition
T. Hardy, The Mayor of Casterbridge	Climate, harvest, and environment as objective forces	Market, competition, and new management methods	Conflict between individual will and external law



T. Hardy, Jude the Obscure	Countryside–city space as a field of movement	Education, class, institutions, and norms	Conflict between aspiration and social restriction
Kh. Do‘stmuhammad, Kuza...	Human nature and the need for privacy	Gaze, surveillance, and collective evaluation	Inner freedom versus self-monitoring
Kh. Do‘stmuhammad, Sohildagi nash’u namo	Open and universal natural space	Cultural codes, propriety, and norms of acceptance	Observation of difference and recognition of one’s own norm

The findings show that the triad should be interpreted not as a list of themes but as a literary system of cause and consequence. The human relationship with nature is never formed outside society: every decision concerning land, harvest, city, seashore, or weather is associated with economic, moral, and cultural norms. Likewise, society is not independent of nature; systems of labor, markets, urbanization, leisure culture, and even concepts of propriety emerge within particular spaces and depend on material resources. For this reason, in both Hardy and Do‘stmuhammad, nature and society function not as background elements around the individual but as interacting forces that shape human destiny.

In Hardy’s works, this dialectic generally develops in a tragic direction. The more the protagonist attempts to adapt the external system to personal will, the more clearly the complexity of natural and social laws becomes apparent. Henchard’s mistake lies not merely in his temperamental character; he absolutizes personal experience and assumes that the multifactorial movement of nature and the market can be controlled by individual will. Jude, by contrast, discovers that individual aspiration alone is insufficient to overcome social barriers. Through these two characters, Hardy neither denies human agency nor portrays it as an absolutely free force.

In Do‘stmuhammad, the dialectic is more moral-reflective. In Kuza..., external surveillance gradually becomes internal self-surveillance; in Sohildagi nash’u namo, exposure to another cultural environment causes the observer to reconsider familiar norms. Nature in these works is not a punitive force. Rather, it often functions as a neutral or alternative space through which the artificiality of certain social rules becomes visible. On the shore, the sun and sea affect everyone in the same way, yet the judgments attached to human behavior arise from different cultural experiences. The universality of nature therefore reveals the conditional character of social norms.



Another important comparative difference concerns authorial distance. Hardy frequently presents landscape, climate, and social transformation through a broad epic panorama, connecting individual tragedy with wider historical processes. Do'stmuhammad, by contrast, shows the penetration of society into individual consciousness through small details, glances, brief episodes, and psychological shifts. Nevertheless, both methods lead to a similar conclusion: in order to understand the self, the individual must understand the relationship with the surrounding environment. Separation from nature and complete absorption into social expectations alike threaten inner equilibrium.

From this perspective, the human–nature–society triad can serve as a productive analytical model in comparative literary studies. It brings together the ecocritical concern with relations between human beings and the non-human world and the sociological-psychological concern with relations between the individual and institutions. Such an approach is especially useful in comparing writers from different cultural traditions because it reveals functional correspondences rather than merely external similarities.

The dialectical nature of the triad is also evident in the fact that a change in one component reorganizes the meaning of the other two. In Hardy's novel, weather does not remain a simple natural phenomenon: through harvest it becomes an economic factor, and economic decision then influences an individual's position in society. In Do'stmuhammad's story, the shore is not merely scenery; it becomes an open laboratory in which different cultural norms are simultaneously visible. The literary meaning of nature therefore expands when it is connected with human experience and social codes. This allows the triad to be understood not as three separate objects but as a system of meanings that continuously translate and transform one another.

The historical-cultural distance between the two writers further strengthens the value of comparison. Hardy observed the commercialization of agrarian life, new technologies, education, and urbanization in late Victorian England, whereas Do'stmuhammad portrays the effects of globalization, information culture, personal space, and cultural difference on consciousness in modern Uzbek prose. Accordingly, "society" is not identical in the two writers: for Hardy it often appears through class, institutions, labor, and economic order; for Do'stmuhammad it is more often sensed through gaze, communication, propriety, and mechanisms of internal self-censorship. Yet in both cases, society regulates natural needs, and the individual recognizes the self precisely through pressure, negotiation, and adaptation.

The dialectical approach also prevents a simplistic opposition in which nature is always "good" and society always "negative." In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, natural regularity exposes erroneous human calculation, while



new social knowledge and methods of management also demonstrate a degree of effectiveness. In *Sohildagi nash'u namo*, cultural norms function at once as limitations and as rules that make coexistence possible. Dialectics therefore presents contradiction not as absolute opposition but as a search for balance among interdependent forces. This is the principal theoretical result of the article: despite the distance between the two national literatures, both reveal a typological affinity in representing the individual's adaptation to the environment and the moral reinterpretation of that environment.

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that the human-nature-society triad constitutes an important structural basis of literary conflict in the works of Thomas Hardy and Khurshid Do'stmuhammad. In Hardy's fiction, nature often operates together with economic and social systems as an objective force that tests human will. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, climate, harvest, and market relations transform personal decisions into social consequences, while *Jude the Obscure* shows that changing geographical space does not necessarily guarantee social mobility.

In Do'stmuhammad's prose, natural and everyday spaces become fields in which the individual recognizes inner freedom and social norms. In *Kuza...*, surveillance and evaluation conflict with the human need for natural freedom; in *Sohildagi nash'u namo*, a universal natural environment exposes the relativity of cultural norms. The common dialectical principle in both writers is therefore that the human being cannot exist outside nature and society: individual destiny is formed through an uninterrupted relationship with both.

The scholarly significance of the article lies in moving beyond a repeated description of the theme of nature and instead revealing a three-sided mechanism in which the individual, environment, and social system continuously transform one another. Future research may extend this model through categories such as gender, labor, urbanization, technological environment, and ecological responsibility.

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