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TOPIC – **FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD**

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SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TITLE OF THE NOVEL, “FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD”

The title of a literary work has great significance. It signifies the idea of the concept of creative art with the author's intention behind creation. Thomas Hardy's novel, "Far from the Madding Crowd" also foreshadows its theme before the readers. Actually the title is a phrase occurring in Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard". Hardy found it to be fit for this novel.

In this elegy, Gray pays tribute to the humble and peaceful, homely ancestors of village people, who lie buried in the country churchyard. The “madding crowd” represents the crowd, congested, suffocating life of the city. The scenes of all the stories of Hardy is laid in the countryside, in a region of England to which he gives the name of Wessex. Through this title, Hardy wishes to imply that the life of the country people is peaceful and calm and free from the tumult and chaos which mark the life style of the urban people.

The novel deals with the rustic people like Joseph Poorgrass, Jan Coggan which is clearly suggested in the title. Most of the characters are quite homely and simple minded. They are very far from the hustle bustle of city life.

Among the major characters except Troy, all other characters are rural. Oak is an idealized rustic. On the other hand, Boldwood and Bathsheba are farmers.

The title also bears an ironical significance. Although Boldwood , Bathsheba and Fanny live in the countryside, far from the madding crowd, they are neither happy nor contented. All of them face vicissitudes in their lives. Hardy wants to suggest that even in the countryside misfortune and suffering are the usual part of human life.

The novel presents before us the mental state of the homely and humble people of the countryside delineating their joys and sorrows, so its title is apt and fully justified.
