

## CHAPTER THREE

### CONCLUSION

Having analysed the portrayal of the protagonist in Alan Hollinghurst's The Line of Beauty, I conclude that Alan Hollinghurst succeeds in portraying the protagonist. Hollinghurst presents a clear portrayal of the protagonist's characteristics when the protagonist comes from a small village, Barwick. Hollinghurst also successfully presents the protagonist's characteristics when he has just arrived at the Feddens' mansion together with the changes that he experiences as he moves into a new social environment in London.

Hollinghurst succeeds in disclosing the protagonist's change from a naive into a manipulative person. The glamour and luxury in the metropolitan city are too hard for him to resist. Hollinghurst actually suggests that in real life, the temptation is frequently so great that one is very often tempted to be manipulative in spite of one's incapability to achieve his dreams scrupulously. Nick's homosexual relationship with the man whom he does not really love provides appropriate evidence that living in a metropolitan city may make people believe in the principle that the end must justify the means. In this case, Nick's manipulates Wani in order to achieve his goal, namely to make money easily.

Hollinghurst's portrayal of the protagonist's honesty is also realistic. It is generally accepted that people living in small villages are more honest than urban or metropolitan people. I agree with the novelist that living in a metropolitan city may frequently change an honest into a dishonest person. This occurs because one often has to compete very seriously with others in order to be able to survive. Ferdinand Tonnies, a sociologist states that there are two basic human associations or two contrasting types of human social life. In his opinion, most people living in rural areas are "humble, friendly and more honest." (urban\_sociology) He further states that, "city life is a mechanical aggregate characterized by selfishness." (urban\_sociology)

Hollinghurst's description of the protagonist's inconfidence when he has just moved into the Feddens' mansion is also realistic. It is universally true that most villagers are not confident when they have just come to the civic centre. They may be hesitant, nervous, and clumsy, especially when they are among upper class people. Several episodes reveal Nick's embarrassment when he is together with the members of the Feddens. So far as the protagonist's experience in dating with men, I believe that the novelist has given a realistic picture of this abnormal relationship.

I am of the opinion that the protagonist of the novel is a dynamic character; he changes from a naive into a manipulative, from an honest into a dishonest, from an inconfident into a confident man. Nick, who is at first inexperienced in dating with men, is later described to be experienced in dating with men.

The protagonist's original characteristics are revealed mainly through speech and direct comment. However, thought is also an important technique in the revelation of those characteristics.

In revealing the protagonist's later characteristics, the novelist successfully employs direct comment, conversation of others, and thought, the most of important of which is speech.

I think Hollinghurst's purpose in presenting Nick's characteristic from being naive into being manipulative is to show the negative influence of urban life, particularly that of the upper class. Nick dreams to lead a life like those of the Feddens, who have wealth and great authority. His lust for money and power causes him to take full advantage of his relationship with Wani, the son of a millionaire.

Through Nick's change from an honest into a dishonest person, Hollinghurst criticizes unscrupulous people who force themselves to pursue their goals by justifying any means whether 'fair or foul'. In this case, the novelist develops the protagonist's naivety into manipulative with a purpose. He obviously intends to reveal that the lure of materialistic metropolitan life and permissive affluent environment tends to have a harmful impact; if one is not aware of the hazard, one may inevitably be led into evil, which finally causes one's tragic undoing.

Through Nick's change from an inconfident into a confident man, Hollinghurst implies that one may feel confident when he feels that he has something that he can be proud of. The kindness of the Feddens' family who accept Nick gives Nick more confidence. Moreover, by having wealth and authority from Wani, Nick feels that he is accepted in high class society.

Nick's change from being an inexperienced into an experienced man in dating is also presented with a purpose. He obviously indicates that people should be aware of the danger of promiscuity and therefore should avoid promiscuous sexual intercourse. The disease that finally claims Nick's life is a concrete example of the negative impact of promiscuity.

Alan Hollinghurst is a great novelist for he is able to write The Line of Beauty, which is very touching, informative, daring and enjoyable to read. Through this novel, Hollinghurst wants to warn the reader against the horrible things that lurk behind the lure of false pleasure. Hollinghurst has successfully presented a life-like character, a protagonist who changes from a morally good character into a very immoral man because of the negative influence of metropolitan life.