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LITR 202-02

15 September 2021

After reading over the poem “Drummer Hodge” by Thomas Hardy. I first began by deciphering which words I did and did not recognize. The selected terms I struggled to comprehend and needed to search were the terms; “kopje-crest” (I), “veldt” (I), and lastly, “Karoo” (II). After reviewing the definitions I found for kopje crest, I was taught that this is a foreign term, specifically Afrikaans for a “small hill” according to [ibiblio.org](#). Veldt then was the second term I searched and stated by [merriam-webster.com](#) is a term which is also spelled “veld” and stands for “a grassland especially of southern Africa usually with scattered shrubs or trees.” Then lastly, the final term I researched a definition for was Karoo. Karoo according to [ibiblio.org](#) is considered “A dry tableland region in South Africa”, and from plenty of research, it is seemingly just a “high plateau” according to [collinsdictionary.com](#).

Understanding the terms of the poem which I was unaware of prior, I think allows me to now fully capture what the poem’s intention was supposed to have when Hardy was writing the piece. Now that I comprehend what was being written I was able to envision and place the story in a specific landscape, and scenery. I think this is extremely important because if I had never researched the terms I did not know I would have not been able to truly understand the story at all. Now that I am aware of what was written I believe that understanding these terms led me to my conclusion of what the poem means in regards to Hardy's writing in regards to war. The “Drummer Hodge” passed away early on into the war most likely. I believe that in history many

of the people who carried war drums were often very young men. Therefore, in the story, Hardy describes the drummer boy's death. He writes of an unmarked burial, and how a small mound of the hill is the only thing that indicates that the boy had been buried there. This shows that the boy was buried far from home, in an unknown place. A place he barely became familiar with. This can be figured out through Hardy's statements such as " Strange stars amid the gloam" (II). or "strange-eyed constellations reign" (III). Hardy discusses how he does not recognize the constellations, and how it's something the boy did not know before death. I believe Hardy wrote this against the war efforts, by almost starting to ask people if this was how they wanted to see loved ones die. To never have them found, or returned home. Also, I believe he was making a statement to the youth who found themselves wanting to almost go off to war, to almost scare them of the idea of never returning to what they know, their comfort. Although I cannot be entirely sure that this is what Thomas Hardy wanted to let people know. I do believe he wanted to change the minds of those around him. To teach them that war was nothing but senseless, and heart-wrenching.

Works Cited:

<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english/karoo>

http://www.ibiblio.org/sally/Hardy_Drummer_Hodge.html

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/veld>