

Preface

My first exposure to Thomas Hardy, was when as a graduate student, I read The Mayor of Casterbridge. Michael Henchard and his creator began to exert a profound fascination for me from that day onwards. In the years that followed, I perused most of the Hardy Literature.

The initial admiration and awe I felt while reading The Mayor of Casterbridge, gradually turned into a dedicated pursuit of the Hardy scholarship in the later years as a student of English Literature.

I grew up with a generation for whom O.V.Vijayan has been an icon and a cultural landmark. I remember the days when Campus made a virtual celebration of Khasakinte Ithihasam and lived through the angst and trepidations of the characters who inhabited the primeval landscape of Khasak.

So when it came to the question of selecting Authors for this Dissertation, I had little hesitation, in opting for the icons of my student days, who exerted immense influence in shaping my thoughts and belief systems.