

Chapter IV

Aristotle's emotive vision in Hardy's Novels

Writer Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) is a later Victorian novelist, with his early education in the classes and architecture reached almost unsalable heights in the presentation of emotive tensions of his real time. He left his name Wessex 'the name he gave a Lennon to a region of the West Country' for London in 1862 Victorianism was understood to be an insensate devotion to respectability and with all that this suggests of compromise and conventionality, of concealment and dissembling. In this endeavour, Victorian sensibility drew on an intelligence of having a particular destiny changed with a particular assignment. While most important Victorians were pre-occupied with the national and cultural consciousness, which presents itself as a principle of integration overriding all social, cultural and political differences, Hardy was affianced in the primary questions regarding the survival of human in a dark and dismissal globe governed by powers beyond the control of man.

Henry Thomas and Dana Lee Thomas point out that the strengthening of Hardy's emotive perception was mostly due to his usual inclination to drink in plenty of sunlight. It is remarkable that he "became familiar with living things through all the five senses.

It seems justifiable to believe that Hardy's early days experiences exposed to him both the covert of Nature and of human nature and the latter appeared to him as a replica of the previous but his mind and heart responded only to the "*still, and sad music of mankind*"¹, Perhaps, this kind of semi ability, deeply rooted as it is, is at the back of all his writings, poems and novels, It developed to him a starkness of outlook and an impatience with the decorative and the self indulgent. Bleakness of Nature hardly, goes through glee and this is why the unbounded joy of 'The Darkling Thrush' is not spontaneously received. Composed at the close of the nineteenth century on 31 December 1900 this well-known poem only restates what has been Hardy's unbroken absorption: his vision of bleakness and starkness that could never welcome joyousness.

It is cleared that Hardy used to sense one with all nature a blood relationship "*with the clouds, the butterflies and the bees, the sparrows and the squirrels and the lambs*"² but why did he fails to contribute emotionally in the 'evensong' of the darkling thrush ? Obviously, saddened at heart, his obsessions throughout his creative time were the 'bleak twigs' and 'the growing gloom'. Hardy's fascination of gloom and bleakness is so influential that a number of his critics of the twentieth century think of him as under:

"Hardy sees only the ugly side of the world", remarked a recent reviewer. And another reviewer, equally one-sided, observed,

“One of Hardy’s ancestors must have married a weeping willow-tree”³

The darkness of 31st December 1900 does not have anything unexpected regarding it. Much of its intensity is reasonably anticipated in Hardy’s early poems in the vein of “Hap” and “Neutral Tones. It appears that the opening lines of the first poem, self-possessed in 1866, set in motion an abiding emotion.

Since Hardy was subtle from the very beginning, external impressions and experiences turned him introspective his substantial fragility was compensated by his psychological precocity. With the improvement of his sense of colour and drama, his emotive development is intimately linked and this development of his sensibility is echoed in his description of Jude who, as a boy, is conscious of his feelings:

Nature’s logic was too hurried for him to care for. That mercy towards one set of creatures was cruelty towards another sickened his sense of harmony. As you got older, and felt yourself to be at the centre of your time, and not a point on its circumference, as you had felt when you were little, you were seized with a sort of shuddering, he perceived. All around you there seemed to be something glaring, garish, rattling, and the noises and glares hit upon the little cell called your life, and shook it, and scorched it. If

he could only prevent himself growing up! He did not want to be a man.⁴

Creativity, no doubt, in a blissful act but for Hardy, with his proneness to catastrophic visions, it was more a reflection on the phenomena than a pleasure- looking for exercise. William Barnes and Horatio M. Maule were of very little help to him in spite of the farmer's love and affection for knowledge and the latter's divine gift of importing knowledge to his pupils. Moule was a very well Greek scholar however he was not very clear regarding Hardy's natural gifts. Hardy at the age of nineteen asked Maule "*whether he thought it best to go on with his study of the Greek tragedians. Moule reluctantly suggested him against this, on purely realistic grounds, for if Hardy was to be an architect, and was to earn his own living, further study of the Greek texts would be wasted time*".⁵ While giving this recommendation to Hardy, Moules was not unconscious of Hardy's creative urge. In his memoirs, Moules's brother wrote that the line Greek scholar "*firmly believed in Hardy's potentialities as a writer, and said he hoped he still kept a hand on the pen*".⁶

Hardy was emotionally anxious when his first novel, *Desperate Remedies* (1871) appeared because it was not received well. Set in Dorset, Hardy's maiden make an effort to aggravate the emotions of shame, fear and love fails to attract the readers mostly because of

unstreamlined plot. Depicting the welfare of Cytherea Graye, the novelist in the background of intrigue, violence and deception transforms these emotions into solid experience, although the story is far from being convincing because the circumstances that force Cytherea to become maid and companion to the imperious Miss Aldelyffe, mistress of the khawater House. With one murder and one suicide and one natural death, the novel is not for from pervasive shade in spite of the amalgamation of Cytherea and Springrove.

It is the first example of Hardy's treatment of some fundamental emotions. There is emotive happiness in *Desperate Remedies* and this haziness blurs the transparence of emotions. And the breakdown of this novel is attributable to the novelist's lack of firm grasp of the art that lends emotions magnificent grace. This novel clearly shows that, Hardy's tragic vision of life and his ability to transform it into a work of drawing were at the innovative experimental level in 1871. He was yet to learn more regarding his emotions and art what Jude Says regarding the loss of illumination on his return to Christminster is partially true of Hardy's mental development regarding this year.

There was aggravation in Hardy as it is in *Jude* here but it could not paralyze his imaginative instincts. After the ill-reception of *Desperate Remedies*, he scrupulously examined his sensitive and architectural experience in order to get out of this stasis.

Through this self assessment, he wanted to be sure of (a) his language and phrases and movement of thoughts, feelings & emotions; (b) his full understanding of country voices as well as the idiom of local speech; and (c) his cultivation of the larger rhythm of the balled -tale.

Hardy's concentration on these elements was aimed at achieving grandeur of expression. In this process, he exposed that easy or devastating emotion could be effectively expressed by adhering to the values of evocative language. Gradually, he has learnt the language that produces narrative imagery. *"The number of metaphors and similes concerned with sunsets, moonlight and snow light, the leafy gloom of a woodland at dusk, and (a favorite of Hardy) the indescribable point where shade merges with shade (whether it is heath land meeting oncoming night, or dusk descending on water), is astonishing"*⁷ How Hardy came to express his emotive experience, may be illustrated by a passage from *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886). It describes the Casterbridge market scene.

What followed after *Desperate Remedies* was the novelist's move violently with form. A writer dealing in fundamental propositions should have been gifted with such an extraordinary power of artistic form" is to locate aside the outlook that art and artistic form need training just as those dancers move easiest who have learnt to dance. Ideas and visions come in flashes but form. It is, however, sensible to say that the formative

desire for shapeliness, order, symmetry, completeness, significance, definiteness is the hungriest lust the spirit possesses, and one whose satisfaction yields the deepest enjoyment.

Since words and phrases, similes and metaphors, rhythm & imagery are the foundation on which any emotion be able to thrive, it is necessary to be acquainted with how he learnt regarding the evocative power of words. We are said that *“he continued his study of painting well on into old period making journeys to make out collections in private country, houses when he no longer went to London, and when any exhibit of his knowledge in writing style was out of the question ever since he had long ceased to write it”*⁷

Love for painting was innate in Hardy. The painted landscape in his novels is without exception an emotional equivalent because he sees it in his mind and trusts that his readers will observe it. He makes a conscious attempt to paint the landscape of Dorsetshire with a view to projecting the emotions of his characters. Among the Victorians, say later Victorians, it is Hardy who lends emotive effect and meaning to the landscape.

If a reader desires to understand the emotive pasture of the novels of Hardy, he has to know the intimacy stuck between his hallucination of the landscape of Dorsetshire and the emotion that occupies the novelist's mind. The human characters through their thoughts and feelings come

into view to be closely tied with the landscape, with the descriptions that mould them. There is a transmutation of emotions into a variety of images; and the change is so rare that the particular convincingly becomes the universal: It is universal experience that the scene in

It may exemplify how the landscape becomes expectant with the emotion, “*seething in the human spirit by the following scene in which the objects of Nature are picturized as symbols of innocence*”⁸

This landscape serves as the background in which the modesty of Tess Durbey field is dishonoured and the contravention arouses the emotion of shame and compassion for the victim and anger for the predator. Donald Hall is of the view that the “*Stories of deer mistakenly killed are mythic reminders of the rites of ritual murder. Tess the white hart, Tess the field, is the innocent victim*”⁹ This is worth pointing out that the landscape in Tess of the D’Urbervilles is central to the gamut of emotions that shape and mature the artistic effect of the novel. Hardy’s depiction of the landscape from Chapter 2 to the final execution of Tess in Chapter 59 is essentially an epitaph for Tess.

Hardy’s liveliness to landscape is coupled with his poetic imagination which provides ineffaceable colouring to his emotive experience. He believes to facilitate the ‘poetry of a scene varies with the minds of perceivers. Indeed, it does not recline in the sight at all’. Hardy

shows his understanding of the natural world and function of poetry novel-writing in his remark of June 1877.

Poetry lies not in the automatic representation of nature but in discovering its impact on the different mental states, the emotive personality of the poet or novelist; and these mental states outcome in a sweet pattern of beauty which is the ultimate aim of creativity. As far as the imitation of emotions is concerned, the poet-novelist sees into the heart of things and discovers the mental states, they are capable of forming. Hardy explains how a pattern is formed out of objective experience.

Without a pattern of emotive perception, poetic or novelistic art is almost not possible. Objects may arouse a diversity of emotions when they are inwardly perceived, but the novelist's creativity organizes these motions and produces a pattern.

In March 1902, Hardy commented on the relation among a novelistic pattern and emotion and wrote, "*There is a latent music in the sincere utterance of deep emotion, however expressed, which fills the place of the real word-music in rhythmic phraseology on thinner emotive subjects, or on subjects with next to none at all*"¹⁰

The first three clauses of the extract are 'emotive in effect. A well summer morning' is the anxiety by 'the more industrious bees' and the blue and red flowers' that are cups for them. It is a example of sweetness

and beauty of the summer morning in England and in its association it is naturally realized that Anne Garland is a beautiful lady, and she is sure to attract young men, like bees towards her. Further the progressive verbs sitting, measuring and making are as rhythmical as they picturize Anne in action.

In depicting the emotive life of the men and women of Wessex Hardy has hardly deviated from his poetic mind's eye, which remains the source of light and sweetness. Like Mathew Arnold he believes in the maxim- "*The pursuit of perfection, then, is the pursuit of sweetness and light*"¹¹ Hardy's poetic imagination brings the Victorian narrative from "*the drawing room into the open air of fields and woods, creating a kind of pastoral tragedy in prose*"¹² Nature in its shifting moods, represents the emotions of man, or man at his best, in spite of his conscious culture, succumbs to the moods of Nature.

A high-quality deal of nature images in Hardy's novels are "*assembled from things actually seen and intimated, known*"¹³. These kinds of imagery grades in the juxta position of the country side and the urban Scene; of inhabitant simplicity and urban wickedness; of light and darkness and of spontaneity and artificiality. We know that while writing *For From the Madding Crowd* (1874) that Hardy "*first ventured to adopt the word 'Wessex'*"¹⁴. Borrowing the title of this novel from Gray's 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard', Hardy envisions Gabriel Oak's

*“attachment to the soil of one particular spot”*¹⁵ delineating him as the son of the soil. Hardy describes his smile *“like rays in a rudimentary sketch of the rising sun”*¹⁶. A similar approach is observed in *The Woodlanders* (1887). Presented as a rustic Giles Winterbourne is completely identified with nature so much so that he looks and smells ‘like Autumn’s very brother’. This novel results the beginning of the dark images in Hardy’s novels. Rich in colour and movement, *The Woodlanders* is stuffed with such images as are remarkable for full identification of man and nature; and the resultant emotion becomes conceived of sincerity and depth. Man and Nature are inseparable in were and it is seen in the mood of the wood subsequent to the death of Giles.

As compared to the emotive representation of the Nature in *The Woodlanders*, the earlier novel, *The Return of the Native* (1878) is, perhaps, Hardy’s last word on the harrowing bleakness of Nature. Here, Hardy’s poetic imagination attains incredible transparence in this novel. Let us read the breach sentences of the novel which picturize the heath.

A better deal of the description of the Egdon, Heath is purely emotive because it tells upon the emotions of its inhabitants in addition to determining their destiny. What becomes increasingly clear is the state of mind in which the characters appear with their hopeless struggle not in favour of its forces like storm, darkness and solitude. Desolation is

widespread. As the story progresses, the Heath becomes a symbol for a complexity of emotions ranging from terror and pity to Jove and hate.

Hardy's emphasis on the terrible features of the Heath is indicative of the moods and impulses which are progressively generated in the novel. Egdon is magnified to epic proportions only with a view to intensifying the emotive facts of human nature. Hardy similar to the Greeks in dramatic literature believes in creating intensity by exploring the vitality of a particular area. He sincerely feels that "*the domestic emotions have throbbed in Wessex corners with as much intensity, as in the chairs of Europe, and that, anyhow, there was sufficient human nature in Wessex for one man's literary purpose. So far was I impressed by this idea that I kept within the frontiers when it would have been easier to overleap them and give more cosmopolitan features to the narrative*"¹⁷. Nature for Hardy is precious for its beauty as for its changing moods.

Egdon is one example of lands cape description that has been done from the genuine. Localized descriptions of human emotions turn out to be convincing and really universal just because the novelist enjoys intimacy with them. Nature and human nature can hardly be understood in segregation. They are inseparable and in this passion of Hardy lies the secret of the passions and emotions of his characters.

It is beyond uncertainty that Nature and human nature in Hardy's novels are admirably dovetailed by emotive pressures. Nowhere is nature painted for its own sake as all nature paintings in his said novels are important only in relation to the emotion simmering surrounded by them.

Nature not only defines, sustains and opens the emotion petal by petal, it is itself modified by the rush of emotion. This approach to his novels tends to show that Hardy wants to reflect a fictional imitation of character in relation to Nature and circumstance. 'The appropriate question,' says Professor R.P. Draper, "*to ask, then, with regard to Hardy's fiction is whether Characters, setting, plot and language combine in an imaginatively effective whole. The novels should be judged by their in her coherence rather than by their faithfulness in reflecting the real conditions of the external world*"¹⁸ Hardy's deep feeling for 'Wessex' makes his characters throb with such emotions as would make them representatives of the humankind.

During his novels Hardy reveals his consciousness of a vanishing world with its thought, feelings and emotions which outline the value structure of a 'society. A good deal of the natural background, he says, "*has been done from the real-that is to say, has something real for its basis, yet illusively treated*".¹⁹ A lot of the vigour of his thoughts and feelings comes from the specific natural background.

Hardy enjoys full artistic freedom to create a world of external objects or ‘objective correlatives’ to express the pressures of feeling experience in a way of living. This view of the communication between nature and human nature is emphasized in these words:

The background and human nature are inseparable in Hardy’s novels. To experience the background is to have a foretaste of his dominant emotions. Like him, his characters passionately contribute in the varying moods of nature what follows is the analysis that man’s happiness can be constant only when he attains emotive balance. The search for this balance is stressed in the statement that “*the business of the poet and novelist is to show the sorriness underlying the grandest things and the grandeur underlying the sorriest things*”²⁰

Human nature in Hardy’s novels throbs and thrives in a province “*bounded on the north by the Thames, on the South by the English Channel, on the east by a line running from Hayling Island to Windsor Forest, and on the west by the Cornish Coast, they were meant to be typically and essentially those of any and every place ...*”²¹ His is Hardy’s ‘Wessex’ and its villages used to contain a variety of inhabitants like farmers, a better informed class above the blacksmiths, carpenters, shoemakers, little hagglers, shopkeepers, farm labourers and non-descript employees.

This variegated humanity with its native emotions is delineated in his novels. Their characteristic emotions in order to be universal required a vast artist's sensibility which might transform their tears into diamonds and smiles into rubies. The novelist's infiltration in their feelings and emotions enabled him to create palpable and permanent what was conceptual and fleeting in human character.

The reader of Hardy's novels is thrilled by dipping into the river of rasas or art-emotions that has flowed unabated in the wilderness of 'Wessex', imbuing the human heart with its primitive beauty and grandeur. Of all the rasas, it is Sringara or its sthayibhava, ration love which is at the middle of his novels. It is supported, enriched and heightened with art-emotions like utsah, hasya, Krodha, bhaya etc. Artfulness sometimes obstructs the natural flow of emotions which needs a certain degree of naivety which draws more on the artist's character than on his reason or intelligence. In the conscious life of a person, the sensations of pain or pleasure, emotions of hatred or of love do not have objective existence. Hardy with the delicacy and mobility of his mind efficiently captures the erotic and the daring in the lives of the men and women of Wessex. The erotic emotion is, however, transitory in Hardy's novels; undoubtedly it is taken over by the emotions of pity and fear, known as catastrophic emotions but the relish of love still remains. It is true that the death of a hero or heroine is catastrophic but no great artist

will leave his readers in unredeemable soreness. A symbolic and artistic effort is completed in his novels to bring regarding the resolution of pain by the lasting strokes of beauty and love. On this point of view, his novels contain a complete sight of life, not just a pessimistic conception of existence as has been so far propagated by his critics.

As suggested earlier in this chapter, Hardy's endeavour to produce *rasas* or art-emotions always keeps in the perspective a fusion of nature and human nature, the latter seen as an extension of the former. The aptness of the natural background has enduring impact on the curves of emotion. For instance, in an early novel *From the Madding Crowd* (1874) every action takes place in the background of immutable Weatherbury where goodness and purity law the roost. Gabriel Oak represents this type of unalloyed purity of mind and when he meets 'a vain Bathsheba Everdene for the first time he barely knows what to do:

"I am sorry", he said the instant after."What for" "Letting your hand go so quick" "You may have it again if you like, there it is" She gave him her hand again. Oak held it longer this time- indeed curiously long. "How soft it is - being winter time, too-not chapped or rough, or any thing !" he said. "There, that's long enough", said she, though without pulling it away. "But I suppose you are thinking you would like to kiss it? You may if you want to". "I won't thinking of

any such thing, said Gabriel simply; but I will 'That you won't !' She snatched back her hand. Gabriel felt himself guilty, of another want of tact ²²

This is an example of the beginning of untaught, natural love. Gabriel's growing consciousness of love will thrust him into a whirlpool of accompanying emotions. To him Bathsheba, vivacious as she is, seems to be unconquerable. Contrasted to this purity is a deceptive Sergeant Troy; the jealous love of Boldwood and the factual love of Gabriel.

Love in this novel is the central emotion and in its diversity requires a comprehensive literary theory for its clarification. We may, then, look at the theories that can enlighten us on the full scope of the art-emotion in Hardy's novels.

Generally critics of Hardy, it desires to be remembered, have not unspoken the significance of the impulses that cross and recross a character's mind to shape an emotion. Just as the foundation of Bharata's theory is a union of nature and human nature, Hardy's world of events and characters is based on a cosmic principle. No western theory of emotions yet that of T S Eliot's, which was the Holy Grad of twentieth century literary criticism, is unequal to the task of surfacing the value of Hardy's novels.

It is, however, not to advise that the Rasa-theory is indispensable for understanding his novels. And it is only to demonstrate the

examination that the inadequacies of criticism on Hardy may be removed by applying the Rasa theory to his novels as the critical perceptions from Aristotle to Eliot and Denida are partially helpful.

After examining the doctrines of emotion and art- emotion, the reading of Hardy's novels becomes a pleasurable implement. We believe ourselves involved in the subtleties of surging emotions of his novels. To know what really makes most of his novels tragic are to experience the emotion at work naturally, Hardy is especially successful in creating some devastating emotions and our appreciation of them have to begin with his first novel, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, closely followed by the estimation of all the early novels.

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