Preface

During my postgraduate studies, I got an opportunity to read some of the novels of Thomas Hardy in detail; and gradually I became conscious that "there are many good Hardy critics but it is true that there is no single critic who seems to have taken the full measure of his subject and whose book one could recommend to the new comer to Hardy the critical account"[Draper]. Most criticism on him appears to be fragmentary and peripheral, for no critic has so far attempted a detailed analysis of the emotive structure in his novels; and the critical framework of the West is confined to studies such as biographical, structural, philosophical etc. It is believed that a novel, above every thing else, is remarkable for its emotive presentation which centers on a specific emotion. The emotion in Hardy’s novels is said to be tragic but how it is created and brought to maturation are questions that have not been attempted or answered in any critical work on Hardy. If we want to straighten out the complexities of emotion in his novels, we have to turn to Sanskrit aesthetics which alone can illumine the reader’s path beyond the Western conception of pity and fear. With this belief I decided to apply, especially, the Ras-theory to the squads of emotion in Hardy’s novels. Judged from this angle the novels will appear to the reader in their intrinsic meaning and actual significance.

To do full justice to a subject of research like the present one – “The Rasa-Theory and the Novels of Thomas Hardy,” seemed extremely difficult in the beginning but with my progress in understanding Hardy’s emotive field, it was rendered plausible. Initially, I also realized the inadequacies of
the Poetics even in experiencing tragic emotion and this situation gave way to the following hypotheses:

(a) The novels of Hardy are not so significant for their ideas or philosophy as for their devastating emotion.

(b) The Poetics is inadequate in explaining to us the structure of emotions. It cannot gloss the emotive range of Hardy’s novels.

(c) The Rasa-theory appears to provide an effective critical framework to analyse the emotion of any complexity, be it tragic or comic.

(d) Each novel of Hardy should embody a particular emotion which must have a structure. This means that there must be an emotive climax in each novel.

(e) Hardy’s philosophy of life should emerge not as much from his perception of ideas as from the feelings and emotions concretized in his novels.

(f) All these hypotheses are dependent on the central hypothesis that the requirements of the Rasa-Theory for maturing a particular emotion are fulfilled in Hardy’s novels which acquire a new significance when this theory is applied.

Hardy’s natural inclination towards the delineation of tragic emotion requires the perspective of his predilections; and this requisition is met in Chapter- I of the dissertation, which traces his development as a novelist especially from the viewpoint of his major emotive concerns. In Chapter II Aristotle’s theory of emotion has been compared to that of Bharat with a view to surfacing their points of view with regard to emotion. As it is well known, Aristotle concentrates only on pity and fear and in this lies the inadequacy of Aristotle’s theory. Bharat is much more comprehensive
than Aristotle, for the former has endeavoured to understand the structure of
the gamut of emotions. Naturally Bharat provides an eternal example of
eliciting emotions in a literary work. With this background, an attempt,
perhaps, first of its kind, has been made in Chapter III to analyse art-
experience in the early novels such as Under the Greenwood Tree [1872], A
Pair of Blue Eyes [1873], Far From the Madding Crowd [1874], The
Return of the Native [1878], The Trumpet Major [1880] The Mayor of
Casterbridge [1886], The Woodlanders [1887], etc. The later novels like
The Tess of the d’Urbervilles [1891], Jude the Obscure [1895] and The
Well-Beloved [1897] are examined from the aforesaid point of view in
Chapter IV. This analysis tends to show that each novel has an emotive
centre, which is brought to consummation by a compilation of thoughts,
feelings and emotions.

All the major novels bring a particular emotion to its climax and
considering this, Chapter V projects the climactic scenes and situations,
underlining their impact on the characters caught in the fire of their own
emotions. Much of the value of emotions is surfaced in these emotive
climaxes; and the predominant rasas or art-emotions are traced. It is through
emotive representation that any philosophy can be transmuted into a work
of literature and following this belief, the implicit relation between the
rasa-theory and Hardy’s philosophy of life has been explored in Chapter
VI, which is followed by the inumeration of the findings in the concluding
Chapter.

There exist two banks of the river of life that flows in Hardy’s
novels— the first is embellished with the emotive colouring, having a
variegated field of experience, intriguing and involving the reader, giving
him sensuous pleasure that overwhelms his whole being, and the second,
depending on the first, is embodied in man’s quest of his spirit, his ability to philosophize on the foundation of his soulful experience of life in its elusiveness. The two banks are clearly explained in Hardy’s final remark on Elizabeth-Jane Farfrae:

As the lively and sparkling emotions of her early married life cohered into an equable scantily, the finer movements of her nature found scope in discovering to the narrow-lived ones around her the secret... of making limited opportunities endurable; which she deemed to consist in the cunning enlargement, by a species of microscopic treatment, of those minute forms of satisfaction that offer themselves to everybody, not in positive pain; which, thus handled, have much of the same inspiring effect upon life, as wider interest cursorily embraced [MC, 269].

Much that is discussed as philosophy in Hardy’s novels emerges from “the lively and sparkling emotions” of the characters like Elizabeth-Jane; and this is precisely what is projected in this dissertation—at least a sincere effort has been made to focus it. How far I have succeeded in this effort, can be ascertained only by the judicious readers who will, above other things, experience that a fresh breeze is blowing in the ensuing pages. If this experience becomes real, the toil will not go in vain. It is hoped that the point of view, initiated and developed in this thesis, will prove eluminating to its readers.

Raipur,

[Signature]

[Sushama Tiwari]
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Raipur,

Dated

[Sushama Tiwari]
Abbreviations

AL. : The Laodicean [1882].

APBE : A Pair of Blue Eyes [1873].

DR. : Desperate Remedies [1871].

FMC. : Far From the Madding Crowd [1874].

HEB. : The Hand of Ethelberta [1876].

JO. : Jude the Obscure [1895].

MC. : The Mayor of Casterbridge [1886].

RN. : The Return of the Native [1878].

Tess/TD. : Tess of the d’Urbervilles [1897].

TM. : The Trumpet Major [1880].

TT. : Two on a Tower [1882].

TW. : The Woodlanders [1887].

WB. : The Well-Beloved [1887].

UGT : Under the Greenwood Tree [1872].

Note: The bibliographical details of all the novels are given in the primary sources.