



Ministry of ~~you~~ Higher Education

And scientific Research

University of Diyala

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Human sciences

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The fate In the mayor of casterbridge

By

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April 2016

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Dedication

All praise to Allah

Today we fold the day's tiredness
between the cover of this humble work.

To the woman with compassionate and
kind heart,

To each of the following in the presence
of God and his messenger.

My dear mother.

To the man whose name I bear with
pride, my beloved father.

To the wonderful supervisor, Hadeel
Hatif Jassam. She was inspiration
for doing my research. I will always
remember her and appreciate her supporting
to me.

I guide this research.

Chapter One

Introduction

Life and work of Thomas Hardy

Thomas Hardy was born at Upper Bockhampton near Stinsford in Dorset, on the 2nd June, 1840. His father was a master mason, his mother came of a family long established in Dorset. Hardy owed much to his parents and their background, inheriting from his father a love of music, from his mother a love of reading, and from both, strength of personality (LALL, 2010 : 1).

He was educated first at the village school and then in Dorchester. His mother harboured intellectual ambitions for him and encouraged him to read widely, at the age of sixteen, however, he was apprenticed to John Hicks, a local architect, where he was trained in the architecture of Gothic revival, an interest that stayed with Hardy for the rest of his life (penguin Group, 1994 : 1).

In 1848, Hardy became a pupil at the new school which Mrs. Martin had established at lower Bockhampton, he is said to have been so weak physically that he was never allowed to walk there. In 1849 Hardy was transferred to a school in Dorchester, principally because the headmaster

was an excellent teacher of Latin. The walk to and from the new school helped to make him strong. In 1852, Hardy began learning Latin at school, played the fiddle at local weddings and dances, taught in the school, and acquired a taste for the romances of Dumas père and Harrison Ainsworth. In 1856, Hardy left school and joined to John Hicks, a Dorchester architect and church restorer, for whom his father worked a builder. The offices were in South Street, next door to the school kept by William Barnes, the Dorset poet. Hardy's study of Latin classic continued. He began to study Greek, and discussed his constructions with Hicks. In 1858, he was now much stronger physically, and could maintain his studies in the early morning. He began writing poems at this time, among them 'Domicilium' the earliest of his poem to be preserved (Pinion, 1968: 2-3).

Hardy moved to London in 1862 to follow his profession working for the architect Arthur Blomfield. It was during his busy years in London that Hardy started to write, greatly encouraged by his close friends Horace Moule (Penguin Group, 1994: 1).

When he was 22, Hardy left Dorchester for London. There he began writing essays and poetry, studying Greek tragedy and reading modern philosophy. He stayed in London for four years but was never really happy there. In 1867, he returned home to continue restoring churches and to begin his literary career in earnest (Salami, 1999: 299).

Before Hardy's leaving London, he agreed with the Macmillans to take in hand later a story of twelve numbers for their magazine, on time being fixed. It came out two years later under the title of The Woodlanders (Robinson, 1977:295).

During 1867 and 1868, he wrote a purpose story The poor Man and the lady. It was read

by George Meredith who asked Hardy not to published but to write another story with more plot. In 1870, Hardy took Meredith's advice too literally, and wrote a novel which was all plot and which was published in 1871 under the title of Desperate Remedies. In 1872, he wrote his

next novel Under the Greenwood Tree in which

Hardy found himself. A pair of Blue Eyes, in

which tragedy and irony come into his work together, was published in 1873 (Lall, 2010: 2).

Hardy's first marriage was in September, 1874. His wife was Emma Gifford. Although their marriage was often strained, it was Emma who encouraged Hardy to renounce architecture in favour of writing full time. Hardy wrote eleven

novels between his first success with Far From the Madding Crowd in 1874, and the publication of Jude the Obscure in 1896 (penguin Group, 1994: 1).

Hardy's principal literary achievement during the period 1876 was The Return of Native. Rightly or wrongly, in 1878 Hardy had come to the conclusion that it was necessary for a novelist to live in or near London. So he moved to Upper Tooting. He did research in the British Museum and visited South Dorset. The result was The Trumpet Major, which appeared in serial form in 1880. Hardy and his wife visited Scotland in 1881. On his return, he set to work on his next novel Two on a Tower (pinion, 1968: 9).

The novels became progressively darker and more pessimistic over time as Hardy showed characters increasingly dominated by fate and by guilt over their misdeeds. Far From the Madding Crowd (1874) ends on happy note, The Mayor of Casterbridge (1886) ends on a clam note, and Jude the Obscure (1896) ends on a totally bleak (Salami, 1999: 300).

Hardy finished the Woodlanders in February 1887, and soon Hardy and his wife began their journey to Italy, and then they went to London. Finally they returned home in July, and it is clear from Hardy's outgoing that he was already planning Tess of the d'Urbervilles in 1891. This was set aside for the writing of short stories (Pinion, 1968: 9).

When the criticism became too intense, he chose to stop writing novels entirely. From 1897 until his death, Hardy wrote poetry and stories exclusively. He published more than 800 poems, the most famous of which was The Dynasts, a long epic poem about Napoleonic wars, Times Laughing Stocks in 1909, Satires of Circumstance 1914, Moments of Vision 1917, and Human Snow and Far Phantasies 1925 (Lall, 2010: 4).

Hardy's second marriage was in 1914. He married Florence Emily Dugdale, a charming and sympathetic woman much younger than he, and with her his domestic life became peaceful and orderly (Ibid: 3).

Hardy may have felt strong links to the past he was also a writer of his time. Like many Victorian writers, Hardy was troubled by a dwindling of his religious faith. He had carefully read the writing of Charles Darwin and other scientists and had lost some of his belief that a controlling force governed the universe. This loss of faith is reflected in the bleakness of the landscape in Wessex and the harshness of the fate that plague many of Hardy's major characters. Hardy's novels also reflect Victorian realism. They are filled not with knights and other Romantic characters, but with real people encountering their own weakness and trials (Salami, 1999: 300).

Hardy came from a religious background, and his architectural career was spent in restoring churches. He admired the security of Christian faith, yet he was also drawn to the writings of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer about evolution and religious scepticism. Hardy grew to believe that what happened to people was determined by fate; people could not really overcome fate. Thus, what seem to be coincidences that occur in one's life are actually events controlled by an unknown, and often uncaring, outside force (Ibid: 311).

Hardy had a sharp heart attack on 10 January, 1928. The doctor was called. Hardy remained conscious until a few minutes before the end. Shortly after nine he died (Pinion, 1968:14).

Hardy's death was felt as a loss, not only of a figure unique in literature because of his great age of eminence, but also as a snapping of the last link with the nineteenth century, and he was mourned as "the last of the great Victorians". His ashes were buried in Westminster Abbey, but in consideration of his deep affection for his native Wessex and the peculiar inspiration it gave him, his heart was buried in his parish churchyard (Lall, 2010:3).

Chapter Two

The Mayor of Casterbridge

Thomas Hardy spent only a small part of his life in London. Instead, he built a house in Dorchester, not far from his birthplace in Upper Bockhampton. While the house was being built, Hardy and his wife lived in Dorchester, and there he wrote The Mayor of Casterbridge (Salami, 1999: 298).

Hardy wrote the Mayor of Casterbridge in his mid Forties, between the spring of 1884 and that of 1885, while he was living at Shire Hall place, Dorchester, the country town of Dorset and the 'Casterbridge' of the novel (Robinson, 1977: 27).

The Mayor of Casterbridge (1886), subtitled "The life and Death of a Man of Character", is a novel by British author Thomas Hardy. It is set in the fictional town of Casterbridge. The book is one of Hardy's Wessex novels, all set in a fictional rural England (Kramer, 2004: 13).

Hardy began writing the book in 1884 and wrote the last page in 1885. Within the book, he writes that events took place "before the nineteenth century had reached one third of its span".

literary critic Dale Kramer sees it as being set some what later - in the late 1840, corresponding to Hardy's youth in Dorchester (Ibid).

The Mayor of Casterbridge was issued complete about the end of May - 1886. It was a story which Hardy believe he had damaged more recklessly as an artistic whole, in the interest of newspaper in which it appeared serially, than perhaps any other of his novels, his aiming to get an incident into almost every week's part causing him in his own judgment to add events to the narrative somewhat too freely. However, as at this time he called his novel writing "mere journey work" he cared little about it as art, though it must be said in favour of the plot, as he admitted later, that it was quite coherent and organic, inspite of its complication (Robinson, 1977: 295).

It is fair day in the large Wessex village of Weydon priors. Michael Henchard, a young hay-trusser looking for work, enters the village with his wife (Susan) and infant daughter (Elizabeth-Jane). When they stop to eat, Henchard gets drunk, Henchard threatens to auction his family. The auction begins as a kind of cruel joke but turns serious, Susan Henchard in anger retaliates by leaving with a sailor, who makes the highest bid (five guineas). Henchard regrets his rash act the next day, but he is unable to find his family. He vows not to drink again for 21 years, his present age (Salami, 1999: 301).

The scene changes. It is eighteen years later. Susan and Elizabeth-Jane return to Weydon priors to track Henchard. The Sailor, whose name was Newson, has been lost at sea. It is to such a town that Susan and her daughter are directed by the old woman, who at last dimly recalls that a man had returned a year after selling his wife and his daughter to tell her that if ever a woman asked for him she was to say he had settled in Casterbridge. Then Susan and her daughter go to Casterbridge to see Henchard. Susan has decided that it is only right to return to her first husband to see if he can do anything

for Elizabeth Jan. When they arrive in Casterbridge, they find that Henchard has transformed from hay-trusser to Mayor. Now he is wealthy and he is the Mayor of Casterbridge (Pinion, 1966: 7-8-9).

When he learns that Susan and Elizabeth Jan are not only still alive, but in Casterbridge, he decides that it is only right to take them in and support them. He does not want to admit to any one that he auctioned off his wife eighteen years earlier. So he suggests that Susan lives in Casterbridge and calls herself the widow Mrs. Newson, and he will pretend to fall in love with her and propose to marry her. Then they can all live together, with Elizabeth Jan as his "stepdaughter" instead of as his real daughter. Susan and Elizabeth Jan are soon living in the Mayor's house (www.shmoop.com, 2016).

A young Scotsman named Donald Farfrae enters Casterbridge on the same day as do Susan and Elizabeth Jan. Henchard takes an instant liking to the total stranger and convinces Farfrae to stay on in Casterbridge as his right-hand man. Henchard

even confides to Farfrae the two greatest secrets of his life: the sale of his wife and his daughter and the affair he has had with a Jersey woman, Lucetta, whose reputation has been destroyed by the affair. Henchard is perplexed about how to make amends to both women (Salami, 1999: 302).

Henchard remarries Susan. Henchard's loneliness is like Elizabeth's. Susan 'was dis-severed from him by death; his friend and helper Farfrae by estrangement; Elizabeth-Jane by ignorance'. He yearns for her affection. When he tells her that he is her father, there follows one of the most tender and poignant scenes in the novel, unusually expressive for Henchard. She agrees that she will take his name, though some thing within her makes her feel she is wronging Newson whom she had always regarded as her father. Henchard's happiness is extremely short-lived. He has hardly retired to his room before. He finds the letter which his wife had addressed to him with the injunction 'Not to be opened till Elizabeth-Jane's wedding day'. The seal is cracked and the letter open, and there he learns that Elizabeth-Jane had died, and that the living Elizabeth-Jane is Newson's daughter (Pinson, 1966: 16).

Henchard feels conflicted, but he refrains from telling Elizabeth Jan the truth. He continues to live with her as her father. However, he becomes stern and demanding in his demeanor toward her, and she desires to get away from him. Farfrae becomes popular in community, and Henchard, resenting this, fires him. Farfrae opens his own business as an agricultural merchant, in competition with Henchard. Farfrae is elected mayor. Henchard's fortunes soon decline, and he is forced to declare bankruptcy and sells his house. He has no choice but to become a farm laborer, working for Farfrae (www.study.com, 2018).

Meanwhile, Lucetta has moved to Casterbridge and comes back to Henchard's life, to become not the consolation she had been and hoped to be again, but a further cause of unhappiness. So that she may attract Henchard and encourage him to propose marriage. Lucetta meets Elizabeth Jan and the two become close friend. Lucetta invites Elizabeth Jan to stay with her and Elizabeth Jan accepts. One day, the latter is not at home when Farfrae calls to see her; he becomes enamored of Lucetta, thus leaving Elizabeth Jan and her step-father comfortless. They fall in love with each other. Then, they get married (Sen, 1984 : 191).

Lucetta asks Henchard to return to her all letters she has sent him. On his way to deliver the letters, the messenger, Jopp, stops at an inn. The peasant there convince him to open and read the letters aloud. Discovering that Lucetta and Henchard have been romantically involved, the peasants decide to hold a "skimmity ride", a humiliating parade portraying Lucetta and Henchard together. The event takes place one afternoon when Farfrae is away. Lucetta faints upon seeing the spectacle and becomes very ill. Shortly afterward, she dies (www.sparknotes.com, 2003).

Henchard's business and love life are failing; his social position in Casterbridge is also lost. Henchard is soon bankrupt and forced by his poverty to become Farfrae's employee. Henchard's 21 years abstinence also end; and he begins drinking heavily again. He moves to the poorest section of town (Salami, 1999: 302).

Hardy has only Elizabeth to turn to for affection and hope. When he returns to Jopp's cottage for rest after the most exhausting day of his life, it is only to hear that someone has called for him, 'A kind of traveller, or sea captain of some sort'. The next morning, as he was indulging the hope that Elizabeth-Jan would remain as a daughter to him, Newson calls. Henchard lies 'like a child' to keep Elizabeth, and says she died a year ago. Newson leaves without further inquiry, and Henchard is staggered by what he has done. The thought of what will happen when Newson returns, and he loses Elizabeth Jan and all affection, is unendurable 'Susan, Farfrae, Lucetta, Elizabeth-Jan all gone from him, one after one, either by his fault or by his misfortune (Pinion, 1986: 130)'.

Meanwhile, Farfrae returns to court Elizabeth Jan. Michael is nervous about their courtship, and he becomes even more nervous when Elizabeth says she must meet someone. She meets Newson, who tells her the truth about her birth (www.gradesavers.com, 2016).

Henchard returns to the country whence he had come as a simple but ambitious hay-frusser. He is weaker physically and bent, but he pursues his way with stoical determination. The genial Newson belongs to a different world and atmosphere from those of Casterbridge. He does not take Henchard's deception too seriously, and is prepared to forget it (Pinion, 1966: 32).

Henchard goes his penitential way to Weydon priors, but such is his love for his stepdaughter that he can not move too far from Casterbridge. He returns to his former occupation. He lives on 'against his will'. When he hears that Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae are to be married, he allows himself three days to reach Casterbridge. On the way he buys a caged goldfinch as a wedding present. He reaches Farfrae's when the entertainment is at its highest, glimpses 'the once despised daughter who had mastered him, and made his heart ache', and sees the happiness of his supplanter Newson, 'who out-farfraed Farfrae in saltatory intenseness'. It requires a special effort for the agitated Henchard, to

move to the door, where a 'dark ruin', he is met by Elizabeth Jan, who rejects his overtures of forgiveness. Tired of life, he makes no excuses, and departs, leaving the caged bird under a bush in the garden, where he had placed it on his arrival. When the caged bird is found too late by Elizabeth Jan - it had starved to death - she at last perceives the truth, and relents.

She and Farfrae go in search of Henchard. Too late, they learn he had just died in the hovel where he had been living with the humblest of his former employees. The young couple read Henchard's pitiful will, in which Henchard asks that no one remember him (Ibid; 32-33)

Conclusion

In the *Mayer of Casterbridge*, the writer sees that Henchard undergoes a change from nobody becomes somebody and turns back as nobody. Henchard's hard work and cleverness in persuading Farfrae to be become his employee makes him as a successful businessman and Mayer of Casterbridge. Yet, his glory as number one person in Casterbridge ends to suffering, loneliness even death because of either mistakes in his deeds and personality.

This novel focuses on how Henchard's qualities enable him to endure. One tends to think of character, especially in terms of a "Man of character", as the product of such values as honor and moral righteousness. Certainly Michael Henchard does not fit neatly into such category throughout the novel.

Henchard's judgement error and his poor personality play a significant role in leading him to the fall rather than his misfortunes. His failure to keep his wealth, his social life and his relationship with those who care for him

are mostly caused by these both. In taking actions and making decisions, Hunchard comes up with his excessive pride rather than uses his brain. The excessive pride, then, led to the tragic downfall of the character. The reader may take lesson that excessive pride can lead someone to zero point.

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