The Relationship of Hardy's Temperament to His Novels

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Marjory, who court and then conduct a marriage which is celibate at her request while they search for treasure and fend off villains who try to kidnap her. Roth notes that "there is no Oedipal rivalry, no father figure, and no ambivalence toward the female. Moreover, the hero and heroine ... function as equal partners." Because of these qualities she finds the story "uncharacteristic for Stoker" (p. 105). She has missed, I think, the point that Marjory has been embarrassed at the start by giving Archie a spontaneous, friendly kiss, that she keeps herself from him physically as his wife, and that at the end she tacitly becomes his sexual partner and vows to "never willingly leave my husband's side again" (MS, p. 453). The theme of love's sexuality is present but obscure in The Man (1905), and it is explicit in the last novel of the group, Lady Athlyne (1908), in which an American girl falls in love with a Britisher, wakes up one morning in the same bedroom with him, and tells her outraged father she regrets that she is still chaste. The narrator declares, "It is a mistake to suppose ... that the love of a man and a woman is, even at its very highest, devoid of physical emotion. ... The world of the flesh is real" (pp. 168-69). Of this novel Roth notes only that it ends with its "two protagonists ... locked in a triangular embrace including the heroine's father, an awkward image of which unfortunately Stoker was especially fond" (p. 23). The image is not "awkward," however, because in this novel as in The Mystery of the Sea and The Man Stoker has made the naturalness of sexual love his theme. Stoker's fiction clearly implies not only a mechanistic, unconscious authorial psyche but also an active consciousness responding to the ideas of its time and place. A study of his literary work should consider him not simply as a victim of Freudian neuroses but also as a disciple of such predecessors as Tennyson and Whitman and an alert contemporary of the New Woman and the sort of sexual liberation preached, for example, by Havelock Ellis.

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3. THE RELATIONSHIP OF HARDY'S TEMPERAMENT TO HIS NOVELS


Unity in Hardy's Novels is an interesting but troublesome examination of Hardy's "deterioristic mode of regard" and the influence of this temperament on his work. Peter Casagrande offers some insight into Hardy's life and suggests unifying characteristics in the novels, but this study contains a number of problems for serious readers of Hardy.

Casagrande has arranged his discussion "around the premise that there is a pattern and a unity in Hardy's novels, and that by describing this pattern we can discern a unity, that is, a number of structural and thematic kinships and concerns that can help us to view the novels as parts of a single process and as expressions of a particular temperament." He develops two classifications: the major novels of return (Under the Greenwood Tree, The Return of the Native, and The Woodlanders), and the major novels of restoration (Far From the Madding Crowd, The Mayor of Casterbridge, Tess, and Jude), all of which have their antecedents or rehearsals in early or minor novels, such as Madding Crowd and Tess in A Pair of Blue Eyes; Return in A Laodicean; Mayor in The Trumpet-Major, A Laodicean, and Two

137
on a Tower. Behind these two lines of development lies a single unifying vision:
deteriorism, "the view that time, history and consciousness are caught up in an
irreversible process of decline or decay."

Casagrande finds the roots of Hardy's deterioristic mode of regard in "four
encounters with irretrievable loss" that occurred between 1840 and 1880: (1) his
personal and social separation by education, work, and marriage from his beloved
family, natal spot, and "an almost ghostly 'simpler self' that for him always re-
sided at Higher Bockhampton"; (2) the failure of his marriage to Emma Gifford; (3)
his rejection of Christian supernaturalism, in particular his childhood faith's
promise of spiritual renewal and everlasting life"; (4) "his gradual realization
by 1872 that his work as a restorer of crumbling Gothic churches was false and
destructive." Each of these aspects of Hardy's personal development receives care-
ful treatment. Casagrande begins with biographical data, moves to conclusions
about Hardy's development, then reads Hardy's poetry biographically to corroborate
these conclusions. Once he has established Hardy's deterioristic temperament, he
examines each of the novels as products of this world view.

This approach affords many provocative insights, especially into the rela-
tionship of Hardy's life to the novels and their unifying themes. Casagrande makes
some sense of the unevenness of Hardy's career as a novelist by reading the novels
as essays on two abiding themes: return and restoration. Although his study is
synthetic and leads to a "pessimistic" interpretation, Casagrande demonstrates
deteriorism to be the dominant pattern of thinking that arose from the events of
Hardy's personal, public, emotional, and intellectual lives. This leads to a uni-
fying vision, but a dark one, that must account for the comic, tragico-comic, and
satiric novels, as well as those clearly tragic and ironic. In this context, the
reader can see Greenwood Tree as a "comedy of forgiveness," a "story of regenera-
tion through return" in which "the elements of disorder, implacable and immune
to human means of remedy, are simply kept beneath the surface, though they threaten
to break through at every turn." Blue Eyes is a searching self-critical brand of
autobiographical fiction in which there is "no return to or recovery of things
past, no redemption for the sinner . . . no restoration of the old." In Madding
Crowd, "the law of decay seems temporarily suspended, even reversed," but this
novel brings "to an end the first phase of his exploration of a personal and
mythical drama in which a radiant dream-world, simple and good, has deteriorated
into a complex and faulty one. In the world of this drama, history is decline,
maturing is decaying, and disillusionment is the unavoidable condition of living."
The turn to the past in Ethelberta, Return, Woodlanders, and Well-Beloved proves
futile and destructive because "both the return and its failure are inevitable and
irremediable." In Trumpet-Major, Laodicean, Tower, and Mayor, Hardy uses "archi-
tectural settings to exhibit his increasingly gloomy view of human possibilities."
Tess exhibits "the regenerative power of nature for a tragic life lived in harmony
with nature"; Jude shows "both the destructiveness of nature and the absurdity of
tragic values."

Unfortunately, Casagrande's study is marred by problems with supporting
evidence, confusing terminology, factual errors, and biographical inconsistencies.
For example, Casagrande variously refers to the ending which marries Diggory and
Thomasin in Return as "the reunion . . . that Hardy provided in his 1912 amend-
ment," "the amended conclusion," and the "second ending," and he notes that
"Hardy's 1912 changes in the ending of The Return . . . were designed to rescue
Diggory and Thomasin from utter loss." He wonders why Hardy found "the original conclusion ... which would have left Thomasin and Diggory unmarried, superior to the second, the happy, one" and later refers to the novel's conclusion as, "the original ending." In other references, he mentions both the first and second conclusion, a "divided conclusion," and notes that Return has "a tragic homecoming with a happy ending (later altered)." In addition to being inconsistent, these claims to different endings seem aimed at supporting the thesis since the conclusion suggested in the note fits much more neatly into a deterioristic view than the marriage of Thomasin and Venn. Even though Hardy added the postscript to the Preface and the provocative note in the 1912 edition, the union of Diggory and Thomasin was always present. Casagrande acknowledges the note (quoted in full), but he does not seem aware of the letter from Hardy to his illustrator, Arthur Hopkins (8 February 1878), suggesting that the conclusion was not a last minute product (see Millgate and Purdy, Collected Letters, I, p. 53). This type of confusion detracts from Casagrande's interpretation.

Another difficulty is following some of Casagrande's chronology, a problem complicated by confusing terminology. He argues, for example, that Hardy's marriage, which began happily in 1874, was in trouble by January 1879 and perhaps earlier. "But," Casagrande believes, "love and marriage, as well as life among the London literati—the stuff of his second dream—failed to provide the yearned-for thing; and so in the 1870s we find Hardy again contemplating his first dream, the childhood idyll the vehicle for whose recovery, the story of the return of a native, had been one of his earliest narrative strategies. But now success and marriage had removed him from the primal place. And so, in The Hand of Ethelberta, in The Return of the Native, in The Woodlanders, as earlier in Under the Greenwood Tree, Hardy brought his own dilemma, the dilemma of the uprooted native, to centre stage." However, Casagrande points out that the Sturminster Newton idyll was the Hardys' "happiest time" (1876-78 when he wrote Return), that Hardy looked "back to the 1870's as years of intense joy deriving from 'certain starry thoughts' and from a sustaining 'vision' that Emma, of all his associates, most encouraged," and that "between 1870-74 Hardy thought in his love for Emma he had recaptured the ideal bliss that he thought he had lost forever when he left Higher Bockhampton and the sphere of his mother in 1862." Since Ethelberta and Return were written during this happy time, and, as Casagrande argues, Woodlanders was probably conceived and outlined in the mid-1870s, it is difficult to understand how this happy time brought Hardy the dilemma of the uprooted native that somehow led to Return and Woodlanders.

In discussing his concept of Hardy's cycle of restoration and return, Casagrande argues that "Hardy's way of depicting the drama of restoration in novels between 1871 and 1895 repeats his way of depicting the drama of return in novels between 1872 and 1897. In both cycles he moved from romantic comedy, through tragedy or near-tragedy, to tragic realism. His progress from Desperate Remedies, A Pair of Blue Eyes, Far From the Madding Crowd and The Trumpet-Major through A Laodicean and Two on a Tower, to The Mayor, Tess and Jude retraces his progress through Under the Greenwood Tree, The Return of the Native, The Woodlanders and The Well-Beloved." This explanation omits Ethelberta and seems confused about "retraced" and "repeats" and the concept of cycles. Since these two threads of development were occurring together through the same general period of years they might be synchronous, but hardly cyclic, and certainly not in the sense that one
one cycle retraces the other. This makes it difficult to understand the novels of
restoration and the novels of return as aspects of one unifying vision.

The study is further troubled by some factual errors. Casagrande states, for
example, that in Greenwood Tree Enoch is excluded from the festivities in the
closing episode, and Maybold steps aside in order that Dick and Fancy might marry.
But in the novel Dick invites Enoch to join the wedding party as they are marching
two by two—it is Enoch who refuses. And Maybold's note to Fancy neither concedes
defeat nor gives her up. She writes him and refuses his offer prior to receiving
his note. In his discussion of Desperate Remedies, Casagrande claims that Cytherea
Aldclyffe left Ambrose Graye because "she found herself with child by another man,
a cousin." But Chapter 1, part 1 of the book indicates that the incident with the
cousin took place two to three years before Graye met her. And in Chapter 21, part
3, Miss Aldclyffe admits to Cytherea that the incident at the inn in Hammersmith
(after she had given the baby away) took place twelve to fifteen months before she
met Ambrose. In the discussion of The Trumpet-Major, Casagrande indicates that
Bob Loveday is given command of a coastal vessel and that John sets aside his love
for Anne in order that Bob may reunite with her. But in the novel Bob is only
appointed to a coastal sloop, and Anne rejects John. Casagrande finds also that
Bishop Helmsdale of Two on a Tower is made a cuckold. In the novel the Bishop is
anticipated, but there is no evidence that Viviette is unfaithful to him after
their marriage.

In addition to some other nuisances—a regular reference to "Blakemore" Vale
rather than Blackmoor or Blackmore, and the repetition in the introduction and in
the discussion of Woodlanders of Marty's lengthy closing paean to Giles—there is
a further and more grievous problem: many citations of the texts are questionable.
The discussion of Desperate Remedies contains over thirty quotations, all from the
1912 Wessex Edition. These are sometimes attributed to the wrong portions of the
text. One lengthy quotation has no citation at all. Some quotations contain
incorrect words, inaccurate word orders, additional words, misspellings, and mis-
punctuations. In indicating chapters and parts, Casagrande does not follow the
Arabic number designations Hardy employs in his novel (e.g., Chapter 2, part 2),
but uses Arabic numbers with small Roman numerals (e.g., Chapter 2, part iii). The
number of errors in the discussion of Desperate Remedies, and further errors noted
in checking quotations from discussions of other novels against the New Wessex
edition, suggests that this problem exists throughout Casagrande's study.

Despite these problems Unity in Hardy's Novels does provide some insights
into the relationship of Hardy's temperament to the novels and the unifying forces
that such a relationship creates. Most valuable is the opening examination of
Hardy's development in relation to the novels—the discussions of the novels them-
selves sometimes become repetitive. In any event, Casagrande's study should be
read judiciously.

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