

ATILIM UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT
ENGLISH CULTURE AND LITERATURE MASTER'S
PROGRAMME

**THE TRAGIC VISION OF THOMAS HARDY: *THE MAYOR OF
CASTERBRIDGE, TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES AND JUDE
THE OBSCURE.***

Master's Thesis

Aaya Yousif Al Bayati

Ankara-2018

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Supervisor

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ACCEPTION AND APPROVAL

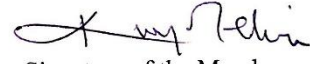
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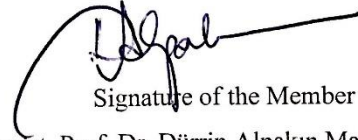
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ETHICS DECLARATION

I hereby declare that;

- I prepared this thesis in accordance with Atılım University Graduate School of Social Sciences Thesis Writing Directive,
- I prepared this thesis within the framework of academic and ethics rules,
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- I cited all sources to which I made reference in my thesis,
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24 May, 2018

Aaya Yousif Al Bayati

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ÖZ

[YOUSIF, Aaya]. [Thomas Hardy: *Casterbridge'in Belediye Başkanı, Tess of The D'Urbervilles ve Adsız Sansız Bir Jude* Romanlarındaki Trajik Bakış Açısı], [Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, [2018].

Bu tez, Thomas Hardy'nin *Casterbridge'in Belediye Başkanı, Tess of the D'Urbervilles* ve *Adsız Sansız Bir Jude* adlı eserlerindeki Henchard, Tess ve Jude'a hayat veren başkahramanların yaşamlarını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, eserdeki ana karakterlerin trajik yaşamlarını Klasik ve Elizabeth dönemi trajedi kavramları açısından ele almaktadır. Bu çalışma Thomas Hardy tarafından roman biçiminde sunulan Shakespeare ve Aristoteles trajedisinin temel unsurlarına ve yapısına bakış açısına yoğunlaşmaktadır. Buna ek olarak, bu tez, Thomas Hardy'nin üç romanındaki kader düşüncesinin, Klasik ve Shakespeare bakış açısından benzerliklerini ve farklılıklarını incelemektedir. Esas olarak, romanlardaki başkahramanların trajik yaşamları üzerinden trajik insanlık halini ortaya koymaktadır. *Casterbridge'in Belediye Başkanı'nda*, Michael Henchard daha romanın ilk bölümünde kendi kaderini yazmış ve geçmişinde yapmış olduğu hata onun bugününde bile peşini bırakmamış ve hatta bu hata onun trajik çöküşüne neden olmuştur.

Öte yandan, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* romanında, Tess Durbeyfield'in kaderi ilahi adaletin elindedir. Rastlantı eseri, Tess'in babası soylu bir ataya mensup olduklarını öğrenir ve kızının kaderini akrabalarıyla tanıştırmak için değiştirir. Tess, ahlak kurallarına karşı geldiği için toplum tarafından yargılanır ve cezalandırılır. Cezası kendi karakterinin sonucu olan Henchard'ın aksine. Bununla birlikte, *Adsız Sansız Bir Jude* romanında, Jude sınıf farklılıkları tarafından kurban edilmiş ve toplumun eğitim ve evlenme yasalarına boyun eğmek zorunda bırakılmıştır.

Bu tez, okuyucunun üç ana karakterin içinde buldukları farklı koşulları ve bu koşulların onları felakete ve trajik hayatlara sürükleyecek kararlar almada nasıl etkili olduğunu anlamada yardımcı olmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, kahramanların yaşamlarını “ gaflet”, “ farkına varma”, “arınma”, “dönüm noktası” ve benzeri. trajik unsurlar açısından ele almaktadır. Bu tez, Hardy’nin kendi toplumuna olan eleştirisini, Sofokles ve Shakespeare gibi büyük trajedi oyun yazarlarının eserlerinden esinlenerek incelemektedir. Ayrıca, bu tez yazarın Geç Viktorya Dönemindeki trajik vizyonunu ve karamsar tavrını incelemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Trajedi, Hardy, Aristoteles, Gaflet, Arınma, Henchard, Tess, Jude, Farkına Varma, Dönüm Noktası

ABSTRACT

[YOUSIF, Aaya]. [The Tragic Vision of Thomas Hardy: *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of The D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*], [Postgraduate Thesis, Ankara, [2018].

This thesis aims to study the lives of the protagonists of Thomas Hardy, Henchard, Tess and Jude who are the leading characters in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. This study examines the tragic lives of these main characters in terms of the classical and Elizabethan concepts of tragedy. It concentrates on the elements and construction of tragedy from Aristotle and Shakespeare's points of view that are developed and executed by Thomas Hardy in the form of novel. Moreover, the thesis examines the similarities and differences between the Classical and the Shakespearean perspective on the idea of fate in the three novels of Thomas Hardy. It mainly studies the tragic human condition throughout the tragic lives of the protagonists of the novels. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Michael Henchard seals his fate in the first chapter of the novel and his mistake of the past haunts his present, this mistake collaborates with his tragic flaw resulting his downfall. On the other hand, in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Tess Durbeyfield's fate is in the hand of the divine justice. By chance, Tess's father learns about his noble ancestry and changes her fate into meeting her kin. Tess is judged by the society and punished by God for an unintentional immoral mistake. Unlike Henchard whose punishment is an outcome of his own choices and character. Moreover, in *Jude the Obscure*, Jude is victimized by the distinctions of class and he submits to the laws of education and marriage of his society.

This thesis aims to help the reader comprehend the different circumstances for the three leading characters and how these circumstances affect making their decisions leading to their catastrophes and tragic lives. This study analyzes the lives of the protagonists in terms of tragic elements such as “hamartia”, “anagnorisis”, “catharsis”, “peripeteia” and so on. The thesis examines Hardy’s critique of his society in the form of novel inspired by the work of previous dramatists of great tragedies like Sophocles and Shakespeare. It studies the tragic vision and the pessimistic attitude of Thomas Hardy in the late Victorian age.

Keywords: Tragedy, Hardy, Aristotle, Hamartia, Catharsis, Henchard, Tess, Jude, Anagnorisis, Peripeteia.

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INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, three novels of Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) in the nineteenth century will be discussed and analyzed from his viewpoint on tragedy and the tragic sense of life, the plot of the novels and its effects on the heroes, the tragic heroes of Hardy and finally their tragedies connected to their surroundings such as the settings and social conventions. The perspective of Thomas Hardy's tragic vision in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), and *Jude the Obscure* (1895) correspond with the classical concept of tragedy. The above-mentioned novels are written and published during the late Victorian period which is characterized by a sense of loss in every kind of faith. The peculiarities of the period are varied from religious skepticism, gradual loss of tradition because of the modern world, and so on, which are clearly reflected in the above-mentioned novels.

The novels begin with the protagonists' early stages of their lives to their maturity, they live through several social, moral and virtuous challenges, and those challenges situate them in serious encounters as tragic events. This thesis will study the protagonists and their tragic journeys who suffer from the injustice of society and God, or the disappointments of marriage and education. The readers witness their greatness and downfalls inside and outside the social circles they are forced to live because of their gender, class, and social status. The tragic heroes struggle through the course of the novels, for example Michael Henchard suffers an inner conflict, and in between the thought of taking revenge and having sympathy on his beloved ones, which makes him even greater as a tragic hero. He finds himself in a negative situation because of his rashness and poor judgement, however; his fall is not just an outcome of his doings and decisions but it has another factor, which is identified as "fate".

Hardy focuses on the idea of fate as the puppet master of the show, it affects several incidents in the lives of his heroes. Chance and accident are also relevant to their fate such as the accident of the misplaced confession letter of Tess to Angel in *Tess of the D'Urvilles*, and the major loss of Henchard's fortune or the delivery of his letters to Lucetta in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, and also Jude's finding his son hanging himself and the other siblings in *Jude the Obscure*. Accidents and chances in the name of "fate" are important factors in tragedy, and it will be discussed in detail in the thesis.

These novels are similar to the classical forms of tragedy of drama, such as the Greek's Aeschylus and Sophocles, the Roman's Seneca, Geoffrey Chaucer and William Shakespeare. Tragedy is basically centered on the sufferings of the heroes, the emphasis on the sorrow and misery of the protagonists has a big function to evoke readers or audiences -in the case of drama- to feel sorry for those characters, to trigger their feelings of pity, sadness, and fear; which is called "Catharsis" by Aristotle. Aristotle's definition of the term "Tragedy" as the form of drama that puts emphasis on the human misfortune and agonies and it concentrates on the sufferings, but its events -such as the dramatic actions, "Peripeteia" and so on- are carefully structured from the beginning of the tragic hero's introduction to the misfortunes he goes through, and then to his downfall leading to his death. The Shakespearean tragedies are also similar to the idea of the tragic hero from Aristotle's perspective. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle defines tragedy as an "imitation" of actions of a man which means a representation of the lives of men that produce the tragic effect (27). The Greek and Roman forms of drama link the misfortunes of the tragic hero to "fate", whilst Shakespeare links it to the flaws of the tragic hero. However, Thomas Hardy makes room for both the mysterious power of fate, and the choices or the error of judgments

as factors to contribute to his heroes' downfall. However, the concepts of tragedy through the ages, from classical to the middle-ages share the same idea of the tragic hero, which is that the hero should be exclusive to high positions as leaders and kings. In the modern concept, ordinary men are considered tragic heroes.

Hardy shows -in each of these three novels- certain factors that affect the heroes' choices. For instance, the lack of education, and the restricting social conventions. For instance, the social standards and requirements in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, as Michael Henchard is forced to keep the secret from his own daughter and court his wife to remarry her, so that no one in the town of Casterbridge can know about his shameful act of selling his wife to a sailor while being drunk, to save his own reputation. Moreover, in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Tess makes a mistake with Alec in the first phase of the novel, because of her lack of education; she later on, blames her mother for not teaching her what is right or wrong to keep her from sinning. Jude also fails his attempt to apply for Christminster university because of his social class in *Jude the Obscure* and blames the society to put him in this unfair situation. Thomas Hardy reflects these concerns in the three novels; of how society, religion and morals chain humans as individuals and erase their identities. The heroes' shortcomings will affect their decisions, in addition to the element of "fate" in the form of his vision of tragedy.

The thesis will study Hardy's three novels in terms of tragedy. It will consist of four main chapters. The first chapter will explore the historical background related to the term "Tragedy" and connect it to Hardy's vision of tragic life, including the explanation of "Tragedy" and "the tragic hero" from the viewpoint of Plato, Aristotle, Shakespeare and A. C. Bradley. Moreover, it will include important quotations from

various relevant critics in the field as well. The second chapter will sketch and analyze *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and its protagonist Michael Henchard in relation to tragedy. The third chapter will focus on Tess as the tragic heroine and her tragedy in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. And the fourth chapter will study Jude as the tragic hero and his tragedy in *Jude the Obscure*.

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Tragedy is a type of drama as a literary genre, it is usually written in the form of verse or prose, and that its events are centered on the life of an individual who is put through serious incidents that lead to a “catastrophe” due to a certain flaw of that individual, therefore, causing his/her downfall and death. The term “tragedy” is deducted from “tragos” which is a Greek word that means a goat-song. The goat-song is originated from the Greek rituals of goat-sacrifice to the god of wine Dionysus. After then tragedy has developed, and its focus is on the question of human sufferings and the conflicts between good and evil, deception and honour, justice and injustice, and so on. The protagonist who is a man of a high value or status in his community undergoes and suffers from difficult challenges. Such challenges are determined by God, fate, society, and so on. These kinds of challenges are not accidental, but they occur as an outcome of the hero/heroine’s flaws leading him/her to a change of fortune and his/her downfall. The purpose of tragedy is to ennoble the hero and to make the audience feel pity due to his misfortunes and sufferings. The plot is divided into two parts. The first part is called the “Complication” which starts from the beginning of the play until the turning point. The second one is the “Denouement” which starts after the turning point to the end of the play. The plot could be of two kinds: simple or complex. The complex plot includes the “reversal” which is the turning of events to the hero’s fortune and the “recognition” or “anagnorisis” when the hero realizes his own mistakes.

The history of tragedy begins in the first centuries and is originated in Athens by Greek writers and Roman writers such as Aeschylus (525 B.C.), Euripides (480-

406 B.C.) and Sophocles (497-405 B.C.). These writers portray the rituals of sacrifice to Dionysus in the form of drama. The Greek ritual of the goat's sacrifice is referred as the "goat-song". It is a song that is sung while the goat is offered for sacrifice. This ritual is an important part of the drama, it is usually performed by a chorus. Therefore, Fredrick Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) believes that the birth of fear, struggles and greatness of tragedy come from the expressions and symbols. Hence, music is another symbol to express such struggles and the main trait of the music and the Dionysian music is the emergence of symbols that result from the rhythm and melody of the music (26).

The plots of Greek tragedies are inspired by Greek religion and mythology, and focus on the moralities of human beings; what is right and what is wrong according to their culture. The Greek drama witnesses the rise of the tragedy in the fourth century, and it has produced great dramatists who have created tragedies as masterpieces, and these dramatists are also inspired by their mythology. Playwrights such as Aeschylus and Sophocles have an influential contribution to the history of literature and drama in particular. Sophocles has produced tragedies that are called Theban plays and his famous *Oedipus the King* (409 B.C.) is still widely studied and analyzed by different theorists and critics.

The Roman dramatist and philosopher Seneca (4 B.C. - 65 A.D.) who has written the memorable play *Phaedra*, has a major influence on the English playwrights later during the medieval times. Seneca's tragedies are based on Greek characters and are of a historical content mixed with mythological ideas. The historical content is related to the Roman conditions, such as social and political conditions of that time. R. B. Steele confirms in his essay "Some Roman Elements in the tragedies of Seneca"

that those conditions are of the social conditions which are ruled by the way of life through chance and fate. He asserts that the “excessive” change is inevitable in life, and that is the most harmful influence on the fortunes of the characters in Seneca’s tragedies. Seneca ends his tragedies with the stoical death of his hero because death is a “haven” for the individual (6-7).

The history of the philosophy or the theory of tragedy begins with Plato (427-347 B.C.). In his *Republic*, where the tragic hero –the philosopher- is a man of great value who has a conflict with himself and commits his mistake due to his weakness. A. D. Lindsay says in the introduction to *The Republic* that Plato questions the meaning of justice and injustice for the individual (tragic hero) and whether injustice might give greater happiness to the individual than justice (xxx). And this question is based on the moral choices in which the individual goes through. Plato further adds to his argument in Book VI and VII by establishing qualities for the nature of individuals or “philosophers” who suffer from an unjust life. Plato exhibits the quality of being truthful to one’s self as the first important quality. He explains that an individual should deny the wrongdoing instead of accepting it. Therefore, the individual should be truthful to himself (176). Moreover, Plato mentions other qualities such as “[C]ourage, loftiness of spirit, readiness for learning, and memory” (182) which means that the hero or individual have other major qualities like being eager for knowledge and of high status. Then, he declares that all of these qualities destroy the individual and lead him to his downfall.

All of the qualities are proofs or factors which affect the individual in making his/her decisions and choices, and his/her sufferings are dependent on society, morals and also human nature. John D. Harman further explains, Plato believes that dramas

in his time are based on “ignorant imitation” instead of logical or authentic course of life and that such dramas aim to stimulate certain emotions of the audience for a dramatic effect. Therefore, the dramatists’ objective is only to please the audience. Plato’s point of view contradicts with this objective by believing that the dramatists should be more in touch with reasoning, this point of view does not apply to the “essential elements of tragedy” in which the arousal of emotions is required to sympathize with the character and relate his tragic life to the human life (588).

Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) is another Greek philosopher who investigated the term “tragedy” in detail based on classical Greek tragedies such as Sophocles’ *Oedipus the King* (429 B.C.) and Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon* (458 B.C.), and so on. The analysis of tragedy in the thesis will be partially from Aristotle’s perspective. In *Poetics* (335 B.C.) Aristotle defines tragedy as “[A]n imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament [...] in the form of action not narrative through pity and fear affecting the proper purgation of these emotions” (23). Aristotle suggests that tragedy is a reflection of actions and behaviour of mankind, the action or demeanor of men evokes feelings of fright and compassion. Through his studies of tragedies in his time, Aristotle sets forth four types of tragedy in the form of drama. Firstly the “complex tragedy” that depends on the “reversal of intention” and “recognition”, that is to say, the turn of fortune for the hero and his realization of his tragic mistakes. Secondly, the “pathetic tragedy” when the hero is motivated by passion. “The ethical tragedy” which is based on ethical motives. And the final one is the “simple tragedy” (Aristotle 65). The critic further adds to his concept that each tragedy consists of two parts; the “complication” and the “unraveling” or “denouement”. The Complication starts at the beginning of

the action until the turning point of the hero's fortune and the rest is the Unraveling (67). Hence, the type of tragedy is identified by the character's motive. It can be a result of passion or moral ethics. The simple tragedy lacks the complexity of the plot that is offered by the complex tragedy.

Furthermore, according to Aristotle, the construction of tragedy is divided into six parts: the "plot", "thought", "character", "diction", "spectacle" and "song" (29). The plot as mentioned before has two types. It can be either simple or complex depending on the action itself. The simple plot occurs when the action proceeds without the elements of "Recognition" and "Peripeteia". These elements occur in the complex plot. For Aristotle, the plot is the first principle in tragedy or "the soul of tragedy" and the second principle is the character. The character determines the qualities and traits of the heroes. The character is the part of tragedy that determines and uncovers the "moral purpose" of the hero, it discloses the decisions and choices of the hero (Aristotle 29). The third part is the Thought, which is the most relevant and suitable way to say, according to the situation, and that the poets make use of the art of rhetoric that their characters speak the "civic language". Diction is the expressions and the meaning behind them. The Spectacle is the "the power of tragedy". It is not connected to the aesthetic and artistic side of tragedy which is poetry. The final one is the Song which is considered to be an ornament and is irrelevant to our study.

There are different elements in tragedy. One of the most important elements is "Peripeteia" or "Reversal of Intention", which is the change of fortune for the character that leads to his downfall. The other emotional element is the "Recognition". The recognition or "anagnorisis" is initiated when something unknown becomes known to the tragic hero that makes him/her in a state of realization for his/her mistakes.

Aristotle lists several types of recognition in his *Poetics*, the first one is recognition by a sign in which he considers it to be a “less artistic mode of recognition”, such as scars, necklaces and body marks, and that the best way to present it in an accidental discovery. The second type of recognition is “invented at will” by the writer, which happens when the character himself reveals a hidden fact about himself. The third type happens when a certain memory of the hero triggers his realization about something, like living the memory all over again. Another type is recognition by reason, as he calls it “a process of reasoning”. The final type is the preferable way of recognition that arises from a natural discovery, by a natural process. (57-59-61). Aristotle argues that whenever “recognition” and “reversal” are combined, they produce feelings of fear and pity which is known as “Catharsis”. The recognition of the hero is a part of the plot. When the form of recognition merges with a change of fortune, it produces the tragic effect of compassion and fear which is the substantial goal of tragedy (41).

According to *A Handbook to Literature*, unlike Plato, Aristotle believes that the goal of tragedy is to arouse the feelings of pity and sadness and not to undervalue the use of these feelings because that is the very aim of tragedy to produce what is called the “Catharsis” of these feelings (488). Catharsis is the feeling of release or relief of those repressed emotions from the audience or the readers. Furthermore, Aristotle implies that pity and fear may emerge from spectacular reasons which totally depend on the poet (writer) himself to give the sense of pleasure of their tragedies. Aristotle criticizes the writers who use the spectacular means only to give pleasure from a bad situation and that tragedy should not give pleasure in this way. The pleasure of tragedy should be connected to catharsis. Aristotle explains that the poet (the dramatist or author) must not intend to create pleasure or rejoice from the sufferings

of the hero; they can only offer an appropriate magnitude of pity and compassion with the character through his actions (Aristotle 49). Aristotle's comment highlights the fact that there should not be exaggerated amount of emotions, but a limited amount of it, and the point of tragedy as mentioned is to evoke a proper scale of emotions. Julian Young agrees with Aristotle's argument in *The Philosophy of Tragedy: From Plato to Žizek*, by saying "Aristotle argues that while there are things it is perfectly proper to feel anger, pity or fear towards, one must do so to the correct degree. Too much fear amounts to cowardice, too little to foolhardiness. Courage, therefore virtue in general, is the mean, the midpoint between two extremes" (29-30). Young further explains that the audience should experience this kind of compassion with the tragic hero's grief or calamity, so it would increase their ability to cope with their actual life experiences of grief and so on (30).

Another element in tragedy that Aristotle mentions is the element of wonderful and which are the elements of telling a false information and believe this information to be the truth. Aristotle believes that this element is irrational. It is present in epic poetry and should be excluded from the action in a tragedy because lying is not a trait of the heroes' character, "[I]t should lie outside the action of the play" (Aristotle 97). However, Shakespeare presents a different element when it comes to the irrational. He introduces the "supernatural element" in his tragedies. A. C. Bradley confirms that Shakespeare introduces witches and ghosts who have supernatural information, but these are just illusions that the tragic hero experiences and they do not affect the action eventually (14).

The most important part of tragedy -other than the well-constructed plot- is the character. The tragic hero of the play is another important element in *Poetics* of

Aristotle. Classical tragedies attempt to relate the human condition to the universe and put the tragic hero through sufferings and moral conflicts. The tragic hero is a victim or an offering for the good of mankind. To be a tragic protagonist, there must be an error or frail in his judgment. Aristotle confirms that the character must be prosperous “highly renowned and prosperous” (45). Moreover, Shakespeare presents his tragic heroes to be mostly kings, princes and leaders; in which a further discussion of Shakespeare’s vision will be discussed later in this chapter. The tragic persona should be moderate and “intermediate”, a man not necessarily “virtuous and just” and his fall must be out of a misjudgment and not a vice. Furthermore, Aristotle suggests some characteristics or traits that should be considered when it comes to the tragic hero. Firstly, and most importantly the hero should manifest a “moral purpose”, he believes that if the hero has a fine purpose then he is a fine person. Secondly, he must have modesty, integrity and righteousness. Thirdly, he must be “true to life”. And finally, the individual who fits the qualities of the tragic hero must be “consistent” (55).

However, the tragic hero in general is a person of power, title, and position, who experiences continuous disasters and misfortunes in his life, before he surrenders to fate and then dies due to a flaw of character. His fate affects the state of his society as well. What makes the hero an exception from ordinary people is his passion, virtues, and nobleness. However, those great qualities contribute to his downfall. At the end of the tragedy, the protagonist’s misery and downfall are inevitable, but there is hope for the rest of the society. The hero’s death symbolizes the morality of the humankind and its relation to the universe. In the modern concept of tragedy, the tragic hero is not exclusive to kings and leaders but includes ordinary men as well.

The tragic flaw defines the hero in his actions and makes him commit his tragic mistake. This flaw could be an outcome of weakness such as ambition, jealousy, pride and vanity. Tragic flaw or “hamartia” has the same definition at all times, from the classical Greek and medieval times to the modern concept of tragedy. C. Hugh Holman explains that the “great error or frailty” known as “hamartia” is created by the tragic hero’s ill decisions. This error can be an outcome of his weakness or certain circumstances depending on the action itself (217).

The ancient ethical attitude is different from the modern one when it comes to the tragic flaw of the hero. Somehow the classical dramatists justify the error of the tragic hero for intellectual reasons to make his bad judgment or decision, but the modern dramatist often blames the human desire to justify the bad behaviour of the hero. Aristotle states in his *Ethics* that “[B]y sending it [pleasure] away from us, we shall err the less” (Aristotle 62). By saying so, he also links the desires of the hero to his misjudgments. D. W. Lucas further explains that the nature of hamartia always originates from ignorance, and that ignorance influences the hero’s moral principles, and that would mislead him into wrongdoings. Then the critic further explains Aristotle’s comment, the root of “hamartia” is the absence of knowledge and the good intention of the hero. If the hero is aware enough he will make the right decision (301-302). Lucas adds to his argument that the errors of the Greek tragic heroes represent a part of their human condition and they are also part of their mythology: “The tragedy of error, of that blindness which is part of the human condition [...], represents an experience and a vision of life peculiarly Greek. It is an intrinsic part of their myth” (307).

The tragic concept in the tragedies of the Greeks and the Romans –which are based on Greek mythology- completely depends on the judgments of the gods. It is obvious to trace this concept through the tragedies of the playwrights in the middle ages. The Roman elements (Seneca) can be detected in the Shakespearean tragedies. The medieval idea of tragedy is connected to a higher power that brings the hero down from his past glories. Shakespeare’s Gloucester speaks the truth about the gods, relating the human suffering to the divine justice in *King Lear* (1606) “They kill us for their sport” (80). But then Shakespeare also links this damnable fate to the human’s own vice as instruments to commit mistakes,

The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices,
Make instruments to plague us (115).

During the middle ages and especially the Elizabethan era, Tragedies are dependent on the idea of “Fortune” which is connected to the poetic justice. At that time, the form of Tragedy was mixed between the classical forms and the new English elements. The English tragedy introduced the term “comic relief” to give the audience a break from all the seriousness and the rigorous sense of the play, and also included sub-plots to it to make it more complex. It also depicts a total reversal of fortune for a man who has a high position and value. The writers of the medieval period selected several conflicts, such as honour, revenge, domestic and love. *A Glossary of Literary Terms* illustrates the dramatists of the Elizabethan period are influenced by the Roman author Seneca. These dramatists have developed their writings depending on the classical works. However, their dramas reflect the religious and moral values of that period (409). Furthermore, the revenge tragedy or “tragedy of blood¹” by the English

¹ Tragedy of Blood is a form of revenge tragedy performed on stage during the middle ages to please the spectators’ thirst for violence through assassinations, murders, and executions.

playwrights is inspired from Seneca as well, such as *Hamlet* (1609) which is one of the greatest tragedies of Shakespeare.

William Shakespeare (1564-1616) has a major and historical impact on many critics and philosophers from his age to the present, because of his modern and creative application of the human condition in his great tragedies. However, his concept of the tragic fact is, much larger than the presentation of the playwrights of the medieval times. One of the English literature scholars, namely A. C. Bradley (1851-1935) has studied Shakespeare's great tragedies in detail. Bradley's study in *Shakespearean Tragedy* in 1904 contains the construction and substance of Shakespeare's tragedies and some elements that are used in the modern concept of tragedy which is adopted by several Victorian writers, such as Thomas Hardy in the nineteenth century. However, those writers have much awareness of humanism and realism in relation to the human condition in their time. In one way or another Shakespeare's tragic hero is similar to Hardy's; they share the internal conflicts and the external reaction based on their different circumstances. Both Hardy and Shakespeare have created their tragedies as an influence by fate (the divine justice) and the hero's character. The hero struggles between good and evil, fate and human nature, and questions what is ethical and moral in association with society and religion. Shakespeare's tragedies focus on the tragic aspect of life, not necessarily from a religious point of view. As Bradley illustrates that Shakespeare does not reflect personal religious ideologies in his work. Shakespeare proposes meaningful debates that are connected to the human condition and convictions (6).

In Shakespeare's tragedies, the heroes can be of both gender. In his tragedies such as *Romeo and Juliet* (1594), and *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1606), the hero and

heroine are the centres of the action in the play. As for the rest, the focus is only on one single tragic hero. Bradley sums up the tragedy of Shakespeare by saying “It is, in fact, essentially a tale of suffering and calamity conducting to death” (7), but this suffering must be exceptional and not of ordinary causes; it has to be an outcome of an inner and tremendous conflict of the hero. The hero’s calamity cannot occur by an accident, or from an illness and so on, otherwise, it cannot be called a tragedy from Shakespeare’s perspective.

Shakespeare’s tragic hero has to be in a high position (princes, kings or leaders) and the hero is aware of his high value all the time, his tragic trait is great, but also fatal to him, and that his fate affects the rest of the people in his society and nation. The centre of the action in Shakespeare’s tragedies is a result of the human deeds. Bradley confirms that the downfall and catastrophe of the tragic hero are deducted from his wrongdoings and that the major cause of these wrongdoings is the hero’s personality and character (Bradley 12). Bradley explains and studies the substance of Shakespeare’s tragedies in the first lecture of *Shakespearean Tragedy*. He mentions three elements that are subordinate and affect the heroes to trigger the action. The first element is the hallucinations that are experienced by the characters and defines them as the “abnormal conditions of mind” (13). Secondly the “supernatural element” which can be in the shape of ghosts and witches. Finally, and most importantly, is the element of “chance” or “accident”. These elements contribute to the inner conflict of the hero: “they are [...] characteristically, generating disturbance and even conflict in the soul of the hero” (19). The tragic hero is not necessarily a good person, but he has a trait that is tragic, great and it is the main reason for his constant sufferings.

For Shakespeare, the conflict can be between two persons, the tragic hero and the antagonist, or it can be between two parties and the hero is the leading figure. And finally, the “inward” conflict which is identified when the tragic hero who struggles with his desires, passions, principles, forces and thoughts. The “inward” and “outward” struggles of the hero’s soul situate him or force him to commit his actions. Still, the action is the centre of the tragedy, because the conflict itself is not enough. (Bradley 18) The sufferings of the tragic hero generate from these conflicts.

Bradley further studies the reasons for the tragic hero’s sufferings and agonies. Bradley is not sure whether they are fully the results of their deeds, or that “fate” is the controller when it comes to their destruction and falls. On the one hand, the critic claims that human nature is of a blind and helpless nature, and it will be the cause of their wrongdoings. On the other hand, he underlines that accidents and luck have a major contribution to the hero’s decisions. In *Shakespearean Tragedies*, Bradley explains the situations that those characters are in, as they do not even understand their actions, actions that are major and complicated in their lives. These actions are determined by a bigger force than the circumstances they live through, which is the whole order. As long as the characters do not understand their actions, these actions are out of their control. The actions eventually change the course of life of the characters, regardless of their desire. He implies that the identity of “fate” refers to the system and order of society. However, Bradley includes all those ideas in his argument and then elaborates that all is vain and that “fate” sometimes stands for meaningless or alien endings to great characters. And that is when Bradley asserts his opinion about “fate” saying “[W]hether this system or order is best called by the name of fate or no. [...] the name ‘fate’ may be intended to imply something more to imply that this order

is a blank necessity” (30). Thus, whether their fate is represented by society or poetic justice, the heroes’ errors of judgment result from their vices, and their tragedies and sufferings are outcomes of their actions and tragic mistakes.

Shakespeare’s idea of God as the controller of his tragic hero’s fate or destiny is not always precise. Although, he is influenced by Seneca’s wheel of fortune and he implies divinity -in some of his tragedies- in the shape of ghosts and accidents, he also puts in mind that the character is responsible for their fate and catastrophe: “[M]an as in some degree, however slight, the cause of his own undoing” (Bradley 28). Shakespeare is always fixated on the character’s trait, the tragic flaw that misleads the hero to his mistake and fall. Again, it varies and the main source is the human vanity, from pride to ambition, and so on. Hence, the “tragic fact” in Shakespeare’s world is the “human action” and tragic life is beyond our expectations, and it relates to the moral order. Bradley states that the “tragic fact” can be in the shape of fate. Fate can also be in multiple and various shapes of the moral order. The moral order is not necessarily a person but it can be nature itself, and that is how the idea of fate originates from a “moral power” (36).

Thomas Hardy’s concept is not very distant, it has some continuity with those of Shakespeare’s. But, the main difference is that God has the ultimate impact on his tragic hero’s fate. The similarities are: firstly, the element of accident. Secondly, the element of the abnormal state of mind which is obvious in Tess’s anxiety and her reaction to murderer Alec. The tragic flaw, greatness, and the tragic sense of life are also important and visible in Hardy’s tragedies.

During the nineteenth century, the English society has witnessed many changes which can be identified with political issues, social conventions, scientific discoveries,

and technological progress that put the English society in a state of anxiety. In his introduction to *The Victorian Period*, Robin Gilmour states that, “The frequency of Victorian retrospect and cultural evaluation –their debates about ‘the spirit of the age’ or ‘the condition of England’, their anxious scrutiny of the reality or otherwise of their ‘progress’- testifies their historical exposure” (2). The social and political changes, from the late Victorian period to the age of modernism -that is the early twentieth century- are partly collaborators to influence or probably are the cause of this kind of pessimistic characteristic in Thomas Hardy’s works, and of course other writers such as George Eliot. Tragedy is executed in the form of prose instead of drama. As stated by Abrams and Harpham in *A Glossary of Literary Terms*; that until the late seventeenth century tragedy is written in verse and in the form of drama, and its tragic heroes are men of high position whose fate is the fate of their nation as well. In the subsequent centuries, the “domestic tragedy” was introduced, written in prose in the form of novels. Authors often present the tragic hero as a man of the middle class and suffers from domestic issues (489). Furthermore, such tragedies cover the social and political questions in a time that is considered to be a significant period in witnessing the rise of the manufacturing middle-class. The heroes have to tolerate a complex life and its seriousness. Abrams and Harpham claim that most of the tragic heroes of the recent dramas are not of heroic nature as the heroes of the classical or traditional tragedies who face their dilemmas with utter dignity and bravery (410).

As for Hardy’s tragic heroes, they face multiple challenges in their lives, from greatness, punishment, prosperity, and downfall. Hardy manages to give a room for both accepting one’s fate and accepting the fact that one is also responsible for the consequences of his actions. Hardy acknowledges that, “A Plot, or Tragedy, should

arise from the gradual closing of a situation that comes of ordinary human passions, prejudices, and ambitions, by reason of the characters taking no trouble to ward off the disastrous events produced by the said passions, prejudices, and ambitions” (Hardy 120). This comment is accurate to Aristotle’s concept of tragedy that the tragic lives for the characters come from their shortcomings as he describes them as “vices” and “error of judgments”. The tragic heroes’ flaws that force them to commit their mistakes come together with their greatness.

The heroes’ greatness and weaknesses situate them in a state of ambivalence. In “Tragedy and the Novel”, Terry Eagleton describes the leading characters in the modern times who are trapped between the traditions of the past and the revolutionary present, and that makes them in a state of standing still as individuals; they struggle to find their positions as humans or intellectuals in their new society.

[They are s]plit between worldly ambition and *contemptus mundi*, their uncanny outer conformity is matched by an obdurate inner refusal, in an epoch when power and idealism are no longer reconcilable. The very impulse which drives them to scale the social hierarchy is also the sense of spiritual superiority which leads them finally to spurn it (182).

It is evident to see the skepticism of the divine justice in Hardy’s fiction as he relates the human condition in tragic terms, and that he pictures the modern world as ignorant to the individuals. In his poem “Hap” (1866) he declares that the divine justice is morally ignorant of the human sufferings and questions its existence,

If but some vengeful god would call me
From up the sky, and laugh: ‘Thou suffering thing,
Know that thy sorrow is my ecstasy (Norton Anthology 1932).

Hence, the skepticism in Hardy's works is an outcome of questioning the existence of God. *The Norton Anthology* states that Thomas Hardy's skepticism of a just God and his sense of loss and waste of human life is a part of the Victorian disposition and attitude (1915). For instance, in *Jude the Obscure* (1895), readers witness the change of Jude's faith in God after being through multiple disappointments. Hardy was also influenced by Darwin's natural view of the world, and also of Nietzsche's bold statement in *The Gay Science* that "God is dead" (125) by presenting characters who go through hardships to prove their worthiness in order to survive among the conventions of society and customs, and such characters are also ruled by the mishaps of chance. George Levine states in his article "Hardy and Darwin: An Enchanting Hardy?" that: "Through all the darkness of a chance-driven, mindless world against thought-endowed animals like humans have to struggle hopelessly, there glimmers steadily a strong moral vision and even a life-affirming Hardy" (37). As mentioned above, Thomas Hardy's statement in 1890 -in spite of his religious upbringing- confesses that: "I have been looking for God 50 years, and I think that if he had existed I should have discovered him. As an external personality, of course - the only true meaning of the word" (Hardy 224).

Despite the pessimism that is depicted in Hardy's work, and the critics' comments upon them, he claims in his preface to the Wessex edition of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* that he is portraying the truth, "[T]hese impressions have been condemned as 'pessimistic'- as if that they were a very wicked adjective – shows a curious muddle-mindedness. It must be obvious that there is a higher characteristic of philosophy than pessimism or than meliorism... which is truth" (6). Sheila Smith

confirms that the “crudity” of Hardy expresses the truth and fidelity of the human condition and its complex organism in an aesthetic way (349).

Tragedy is one of the most recognizable elements in Thomas Hardy’s novels. He draws tragic incidents in *Jude the Obscure* (1895), *The Return of the Native* (1878), *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* (1891), *From the Madding Crowd* (1874), and so on. The sense of pessimism is noticeable in Hardy’s fiction. He considers “Fate” to be the master of humankind and reflects its role in his characters, and designs the idea that chance determines the characters’ fate. However, in Hardy’s vision, the gloomy and obscure fate is inevitable for most of his characters, or at least the leading characters. Thomas Hardy’s fiction reflects his pessimistic attitude towards the tragic sense of life. He insists upon the idea that fate if not by the shape of God, then by the shape of a man (character) comes the conflict of conscience. Nonetheless, Hardy’s awareness in conveying the human sufferings in his fiction is nothing but telling the truth, in order to picture the bleak life for his characters specifically, and for mankind generally in that time. Howard R. Fink endorses in his thesis that, “Hardy’s theory is no more than hypothesis; the tragedy of the human condition can only be suggested. It is well that Hardy thinks in this way, for he does not explain away the mystery of life, upon which tragedy is based” (18).

Still, Hardy reflects the seriousness and complexity of life from his time in his fiction, and specifically in his presentation of the tragic life in his novels. F. B. Pinion mentions Hardy’s claim that novels of his time lack sincerity and that nature is based unconsciously on the laws of the environment, and those laws are caused by humanity itself (150). Moreover, Hardy portrays an ordinary man/woman who attempts to ascend the social scale and achieve greatness, falls down due to his/her vices and

shortcomings and finds himself/herself in a dilemma victimized by the social and religious conventions. Still this tragic hero always recognizes his faults and helplessly faces his fate to maintain his dignity. "Fate" is implied to be of both; an implication as a God, in his novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* God, is referred as "The President of Immortals", and it can be the moral requirements of the society in other novels like *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. He demonstrates the higher justice -or injustice in his case- of ruling the tragic character's fate in his tragedies, and on the other hand, the idea of the character's frailty to initiate the tragic catastrophe.

Over the ages, the concept of tragedy in all its elements and variations -whether it reflects mythological or realist elements- pictures, criticizes and reflects life through the tragic heroes who face their calamities stoically. Tragedy also depicts characters who rebel against the odds of fate to understand their relation to the universe. Tragedies from the classical to the modern ages show multiple reasons for the human sufferings and miseries of the individuals.

Thus, the following chapters of this study will seek some answers regarding Thomas Hardy's pessimistic concept and vision of tragedy. The leading characters of the chosen novels and their lives will be analyzed from Hardy's perspective. Moreover, to provide answers about their encounters, attitudes, and choices of their past to their present and relate them to the tragic sense of life. How does the character develop according to his/her environment? And how does society treat or judge the tragic heroes? Does his/her behaviour affect his/her fate? And, in what ways does "fate" determine their tragedy? Do the characters share similarities in their tragedies? Lastly, how does Hardy's concept of tragedy resemble the classical dramas?

CHAPTER TWO

THE MAYOR OF CASTERBRIDGE

The Mayor of Casterbridge subtitled “A Story of a Man of Character” was first published in a serial form and later in a book form by the British newspaper *The Graphic* in 1886. It posits the importance of a man’s character and intersects his private and public life that is haunted by his past. The novel anticipates several challenges for the character that are dictated by the traditions of culture and the social values. It reveals Thomas Hardy’s questions about the tragic life. Dale Kramer describes it in the introductory essay of the Oxford edition, “*The Mayor of Casterbridge* is one of a handful of novels that justify being considered as tragedies in near-classical terms [...] *The Mayor of Casterbridge* [adheres] to traditional criteria of tragedy” (xxv).

Micheal Henchard, the protagonist is a hay-trusser who begins his tragic journey in a village called Weydon-Priors in Upper Wessex. A picture of alienated husband and wife is presented walking alongside each other to attend the fair in that village. Henchard occupies himself with trivial activities to avoid contact with his wife, “[O]n a closer view it could be the man was reading, or pretending to read [...] Whether this apparent cause were real cause, or whether it were an assumed one to escape an intercourse that would have been irksome to him” (Hardy 10). Henchard is introduced as an alcoholic person and being an alcoholic is considered a weakness or a vice, he drinks in the fair and starts complaining about marriage, and his attitude towards his wife (Susan) leads to his first mistake which is selling his wife to a sailor, “I married at eighteen, like the fool that I was [...] The woman is no good to me. Who’ll have her?” (15-17) by selling his wife, Henchard has made his first regrettable mistake because of his lack of awareness of the situation and he completely does not

understand the nature of his deed, “Now, what am I to do – am I sober enough to walk, I wonder?” (24). Afterwards, he sobers up and finds out that neither his wife nor his daughter is with him anymore. Henchard makes an oath to God that he will never sip any alcoholic drink for twenty-one years, which is a number of his age, “I swear upon the book before me; and may I be strook dumb, blind, and helpless, if I break this my oath!” (26). Then, he urges to seek out for his deserted family to redeem himself for his action. However, his attempts fail and he cannot find a trail of them.

For Thomas Hardy, “Nature” has many faces and it does not show mercy to human beings; nature rewards and punishes people according to their deeds. Hence, people in the fair have lost their humanity and are cruel to each other; they do not realize how wicked their character is. The more ignorantly people treat each other the more indifferent and dour nature would be to them. Hardy deems nature of having multiple faces and that human beings do not grasp what is true and what is fake due to nature’s manifestations. Hardy states that “The Hypocrisy of things. Nature is an arch-dissembler. [...] [Human beings] seldom get to realize that *nothing* is as it appears” (F. E. Hardy 176). Although, Henchard commits his disheartening action in Weydon-Priors fair, several people are doing the same and more. Hardy describes the act of nature in the first chapter that brutal things are happening but life and nature do not cease from moving on, “The difference between the peacefulness of interior nature and the willful hostilities of mankind was very apparent at this place. In contrast with the harshness of the act just ended within the tent was the sight of several horses crossing their necks and rubbing each other lovingly” (Hardy 21). Henchard does not seem to understand the nature of his weakness, he tries to unravel his dilemma and restore himself from his frailty. Therefore, these attempts designate his tragic life. Hardy

asserts that a tragic life naturally obliges the individual to fix his mistakes. He acknowledges that tragedy presents various circumstances and encounters in an individual's life, it pushes the individual to terminate his catastrophic situation naturally (F. E. Hardy 176).

However, Henchard decides to start his life over in a town called Casterbridge. Somehow, he manages to climb the social scale and achieves a respectable position amongst his fellow townsmen as a hay merchant and the mayor of the town. Casterbridge is described as a town that is untouched by modernism, it carries traditional aspects from the nineteenth century “[D]iffering from the many manufacturing towns [...] Casterbridge lived by agriculture at one remove further from the fountain-head than the adjoining villages no more” (Hardy 77) and the townsmen are described to be convenient to their town, “The townsfolk understood every fluctuation in the rustic's condition [...] the subjects of discussion [between them] were corn, cattle-disease, sowing and reaping, fencing and planting” (77). Eighteen years have passed, and the wife who is presented as Mrs. Newson visits the fair again with her daughter Elizabeth-Jane to look for her former and legal husband. They show up to the town of Casterbridge, that is when Susan is struck by the sight of Henchard without a glass of liquor. She finds out that he does not drink alcohol any longer. Henchard arranges a plan to court Susan and marry her again to save his reputation and their daughter from his tainted past, “These things, as well as the dread of the girl discovering our disgrace, make it necessary to act with extreme caution” (91). Meanwhile, Henchard meets a young Scotchman called Donald Farfrae, Henchard insists on employing him as a manager for his trade business because of his youth and knowledge. Henchard entrusts Farfrae of his past, “I made such an impression on me

that I swore, there and then, that I'd drink nothing stronger than tea for as many years as I was old that day. I have kept my oath" (62).

Henchard also confesses to Farfrae of his dilemma that he has a relationship with another woman, but his wife has showed up in Casterbridge with his daughter. Henchard feels bitter by the fact that by making amends to a woman he would be unfair to another, "Heaven knows why, for I wasn't worth it. But being together in the same house, and her feelings warm, we got naturally intimate" (97). After the marriage proposal, Susan grows ill and concedes her truth in a note to Henchard that says Elizabeth-Jane's father is the sailor and that his Elizabeth-Jane has died several months after he has sold them. This event shocks Henchard, he begins to despise Elizabeth-Jane and treat her callously. Thereafter, he unkindly lets her go away without informing her of the dense truth. Henchard regrets his action at once. Elizabeth, therefore, lives with a new inhabitant of the town called Lucetta. Lucetta happens to be the same young woman whom Henchard has had a relationship with in Jersey.

In the meantime, Farfrae thrives in his profession as a manager and gets close to Elizabeth-Jane, and this closeness makes Henchard feel threatened. In addition to the fear of losing Elizabeth-Jane as a daughter, Henchard believes that he will lose his well position as a corn merchant to Farfrae and that Farfrae as his friend will outrank him, "Well, he's a friend of mine, and I'm a friend of his [...] Didn't I help him to money, or whatever he wanted? [...] I liked him so well. And now he's defied me!" (Hardy 135). Henchard's anger emerges the feeling of jealousy and forces him into constraining Farfrae to resign from his position. Farfrae's rivalry in the business is not the only motive to trigger Henchard's jealousy, but he starts to notice that Farfrae is getting people's attention as well, they admire him more than Henchard because of his

better-temper and understanding nature, “They like him because he’s cleverer than Mr Henchard [...] He’s the most understanding man o’ them two by long chalks. I wish he was the master instead of Henchard” (Hardy 122). After listening to the gossip of the town, Henchard feels remorseful for trusting Farfrae and telling him about his encounters in the past, “[H]e often regretted that he had told the young man his whole heart, and confided him the secrets of his life” (123).

Henchard finds out that Elizabeth-Jane is living with his former mistress, Lucetta. Therefore, he decides to meet her again to make amends. In the meantime, he wants to make amends with Elizabeth as well, he is her father and she should selfishly be his, “His bitter disappointment at finding Elizabeth-Jane to be none of his, and himself a childless man, had left an emotional void in Henchard that he unconsciously craved to fill” (Hardy 176). By chance, Farfrae meets Lucetta, they fall in love and decide to get married. The seeds of Henchard’s grudge towards Farfrae grow when he discovers about Lucetta and Farfrae’s marriage. Henchard constantly finds himself in a far worse situation than the last. His rashness has cost him to lose his fortune in the corn business, and a mere coincidence has cost him to lose his reputation when a woman shows up in the court of Casterbridge unmasking his past, “[H]e passed the ridge of prosperity and honour, and began to descend rapidly on the other side. It was strange how he soon sank in esteem. Socially he had received a startling fillip downwards; and, having already lost commercial buoyancy from rash transactions” (257). Therefore, Henchard reckons to drink again because his vow has been expired, “[T]he era of recklessness begun anew” (273). Lucetta asks Henchard to return back their love letters. Still, the thought of revenge haunts him and he decides to tell Farfrae that Lucetta is his mistress, “He has taken away everything from me, and by heavens,

if I meet him I won't answer for my deeds!" (277) but his weakness prevents him from exposing Lucetta, hence, he still cares for both of them, "The truth was that, as may be divided, he had quiet intended to effect a grand catastrophe at the end of this drama by reading out the name [...] But sitting there in cold blood he could not do it" (290) Henchard feels that his grudge and hate are trivial, and there is no reason for him to ruin the lives of two people he cares for, so he retreats his decree, "[H]e felt ashamed, lost all zest and desire to humiliate Lucetta there and then, and no longer envied Farfrae his bargain" (295). In a short time, Lucetta dies of illness. Farfrae decides to proceed his relationship with Elizabeth-Jane. Meanwhile, Richard Newson –Elizabeth's real father- comes to Casterbridge looking for her. Henchard lies to him by saying that Elizabeth has died a long time ago, but his plan does not last. Newson returns again and finds out that she is still alive and well. Henchard runs away from his situation and inhabits the countryside because he no longer feels that he belongs in Casterbridge, "[I]t was not Elizabeth or Farfrae who had driven him away from them, but his own haughty sense that his presence was no longer desired" (375). He tries to go back and face Elizabeth on her wedding day but he never gets the courage to do so. Therefore, Henchard dies alone in his bed, leaving behind a will that says

[N]o man remember me.

To this I put my name.

Michael Henchard. (388)

Although Henchard considers himself to be an outcast and a victim of fate, he stoically accepts his encumbered miserable fate. Hardy verifies that the course of nature hits harder when disturbed by mankind by presenting Michael Henchard as an old-fashioned man who wrongs multiple people because of his frailty, and nature punishes

him for his deeds, the narrator adds, “[Henchard’s] attempts to replace ambition by love had been as fully foiled as his ambition itself [...] It was an odd sequence that out of all this tampering with social law came that flower of Nature” (Hardy 372-373).

Both a tragic life and a forlorn death are the consequences of his errors of judgment and rashness. Henchard can avoid this fate by making decisions according to the moral laws of nature and his society, albeit, he commits his mistakes regardless of those laws. However, Henchard’s vices manufacture his character to be great and tragic at the same time.

Hardy’s vision of life itself is tragic and he attempts to make readers understand that the human condition can be related to tragedy and enforces this idea in the lives of certain individuals in his novels. Approximately, the lives and deaths of these individuals are determined by the force of fate, yet, they also have certain frailties that demonstrate their actions. Hardy exhibits Henchard the mayor for the role of the tragic hero in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Henchard is subdued by his ambition and vanity that place him into uneasy situations. His downfall is of a physical nature that costs him his fortune and family, and of a psychological nature that cost him his reputation. He is under the obligation to act according to his circumstances, he is forced to search for his wife and daughter so that his society would not disgrace him. He is tied to the social laws of Casterbridge, which are described to be of traditional nature. The settings of the novel itself have a modicum contribution to his reaction, the coldness of the town brings out the anxious attitude that evokes the character’s memories. Thomas Hardy acknowledges in a statement about writing *The Mayor of Casterbridge* in 1886 that the cold weather shows the bad habits and natures, it manifests the past of the characters and their memories into a prude state of mind (F. E. Hardy 177). The

coldness brings out the negative face or side of the personality and Henchard's drunkness and ill manners can be a reflection of the coldness of the environment. The significance of Hardy's comment is that Henchard's attitude and lack of communication can be manipulated by the atmosphere that surrounds him. At the beginning of the first chapter, the settings of Weydon-Priors are described to be of a dusty, secluded, idle and lifeless, "The grassy margin of the bank, and the nearest hedgerow boughs, were powdered by the dust that had been stirred over them by hasty vehicles [...] with the aforesaid total absence of conversation, allowed every extraneous sound to be heard" (Hardy 11). Hence, this atmosphere helps Henchard to build anxious feelings that will affect his judgment later in the chapter. However, in the second chapter, Henchard wakes up to a new day witnessing the warmth of the sun which helps him recognize his misjudgment of the former night, "The morning sun was streaming through the crevices of the canvas when the man awoke. A warm glow pervaded the whole atmosphere of the marquee" (23).

Furthermore, the sub-title for *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is "A Story of a Man of Character" in which Hardy implies that the tragic life and fate of Henchard are the consequences of his deeds and ill decisions. Henchard's fate is not majorly determined by the divine or higher powers as it is in the classical forms of tragedy. Hardy acknowledges that the traits of the character are responsible for its misfortunes no matter how many accidents it may face, "[I]s not improbabilities of incident but improbabilities of character that matter" (F. E. Hardy 176). It is evident to notice the similarities of Henchard as a tragic hero to the classical aspects of the tragic hero. Some critics appoint that the mayor resembles Sophocles' Oedipus. Henchard and Oedipus share the ultimate rivalry of Farfrae and Creon, a struggle between the old

traditional character and the new. Henchard's attempts to atone affect him to commit other misjudgments and lead him to lose his authority as mayor, merchant and father. Henchard discovers new endeavours in the novel that lead him to suffering. He finds out that Elizabeth-Jane is not his real daughter and afterwards, he learns about Lucetta's sudden marriage to Farfrae. According to D. A. Dike, the form of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* agrees with that of the Greek *Oedipus Rex*, in which Michael Henchard is the tragic hero who tries to atone and clear his conscience, by trying to share his fortunes with his so-called family to purge himself from his foolish mistake in his previous life. Dike states in his essay that Farfrae is a tool of Henchard's constant sufferings. The critic claims that the "central agon" of the novel is the rivalry between the old generation and the new. Henchard versus Farfrae is a reminder of the struggle between Creon and Oedipus. Dike asserts that Farfrae is the son figure for Henchard and that Henchard has lost his earthly possessions and authority to his figurative son (169).

Hardy conveys the classical rivals of *Oedipus Rex* by the competition between the old and the new represented by Henchard and Farfrae in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* which is a product of the nineteenth century. He extracts the moral values in that time and relates it to his own time. The Greek playwrights recite the deities and myths into their dramas and mainly connect them to the wheel of fortune, but Hardy manipulates these aspects into symbolic and realistic form that pertains to the norms of the Victorian attitude. Dike mentions Hardy's awareness in his essay and explains that Hardy takes the beliefs and theories of the Greek dramatists who take the idea of the wheel of fortune seriously, he creates his tragic novels that symbolically reflect beliefs of the Greeks myths (Dike 170). Nevertheless, Casterbridge's society lives on

traditional terms and it is distant from the new Victorian mode, people find pleasure by spoiling other's reputations and gossiping about them, "When all has been said about busy rumourers, a superficial and temporary thing is the interest of anybody in affairs which do not directly touch them" (Hardy 361). Casterbridge is dependent on the moral and religious continuities of the past generations. Thomas Hardy is aware of the moralities and the social convictions in his society and their consequences; he depicts them in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* by breaking the moral order through his tragic hero. Therefore, Michael Henchard breaches the moral code by selling his wife and abandoning his family in Weydon-Priors fair, but he recognizes his fault the preceding day. According to Dike, Henchard has a limited understanding of morals, and that his character is defined by his restricted society and he is forced to live by such restrictions (175).

As a tragic hero, Henchard's tragedy agrees with Aristotle's definition of tragedy which is "[A]n imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life [...] character determines men's qualities, but it is by their actions that they are happy or the reverse" (Aristotle 27). Hence, the qualities of the tragic hero initiate the misjudgments into actions, and according to Thomas Hardy's sub-title for the novel "A Story of a Man of Character" he aims to take the reader's attention to Henchard's character and his qualities that qualify him to be a tragic hero. Michael Henchard is not a virtuous man, and his flaws such as jealousy, recklessness and doubt force him to besmirch his value and jump into conclusions regardless of the outcomes. As Dike asserts, "Henchard's pride, jealousy, ambition, and violent temper are the tragic vices associated with nobility; his sense of duty" (171). However, Dike's comment is associated with Shakespeare's tragic hero whose status and position comes from a noble ancestry.

Meanwhile, Henchard is a middle-class individual who has a sense of duty to fulfil his need to repair the wrongdoing against his family, and also yearns to be a better father to Elizabeth-Jane.

Although Henchard blames Farfrae for his later sufferings, he believes that his doubts and wonders are connected to something that is bigger than Farfrae and himself and it has a control over his misery “These isolated hours of superstition came to Henchard in time of moody depression, when all his practical largeness of view had oozed out of him” (Hardy 225). The isolation of Henchard has an influence on his observations and decisions; he continuously thinks and overdoes his actions because of his rashness and lack of communication with his companions. J. Hillis Miller states that, “*The Mayor* is presented from the perspective of a somewhat detached spectator who sees what anyone who was there might have seen, often as a kind of spy, voyeur, or invisible looker-on seeing from the outside in, or from the inside out” (435). This detachment gives Henchard’s character the tragic aspect and it is well portrayed by Hardy in the shape of Michael Henchard. His fault haunts him for the rest of his life and situates him into living in a lonesome life, and then he dies in isolation as well, “I - Cain – go alone as I deserve – an outcast and vagabond. But my punishment is not greater than I can bear!” (Hardy 366).

It is true that Henchard has made several bad judgements in his life, but there are some coincidences and incidents that shape obstacles in his way. He is shocked at the beginning of knowing that Susan has taken his word seriously and has moved on with the sailor. Later on, Susan and Elizabeth-Jane show up in his town, and Lucetta afterwards. Susan’s death and her unexpected note have left him stunned, and then Elizabeth’s real father comes back from the dead looking for his daughter. It is only a

chance that Henchard meets Farfrae and convinces him to stay in Casterbridge to help him with business. These incidents happen by chance. R. P. Draper acknowledges in "*The Mayor of Casterbridge*" that "Hardy's novel character is not exclusively fate. Chance, or coincidence, also plays a significant part in determining the form of action in which character can express itself" (Draper 58).

The above-mentioned incidents have made him anxious and fearful of losing his daughter, and therefore have made his life more difficult to endure. The element of accident or chance is important in tragedy, it contributes to the character's action but not in a direct way. A. C. Bradley acknowledges that the element of chance exists to produce a dramatic effect to sympathize with the character (15). Bradley's comment agrees with Aristotle's theory that tragedy aims to trigger the feelings of fear and sympathy. Henchard's weakness and greatness are sympathetic even though his misfortunes are outcomes of his actions.

Thomas Hardy's concept of tragedy is much related to the idea of "fate" as a dominant organism for his heroes' misery, Hardy says "God' nowadays, the only reasonable meaning being the *Cause of Things*, whatever that cause may be" (F. E. Hardy 376) and this concept highly applies with *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. However, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* as a tragic novel that corresponds with the classical form of tragedy but it disagrees with the idea of God determining the fate of the hero. In the sense of traditional tragedies which can be identified with a mighty dominion ruling the mankind, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* does not harmonize with it in any way. In "Hardy's *Mayor*: The Antitraditional Basis of Tragedy", Lawrence J. Starzyk confirms that it does not agree with the traditional notion of tragedy in association to fate. The

critic claims that *The Mayor of Casterbridge* owns a basis for a traditional tragedy but it is an image and a product of the modern world (593).

Therefore, the resemblance between Henchard and Oedipus' tragedy is exclusive to the rivalry between Henchard and Farfrae, and Oedipus and Creon. Oedipus's fate is inevitable to him and his sufferings are related to his present. Draper argues that Oedipus's fate is totally dependent on gods, therefore, his destiny is already decided and he cannot elope it, "Oedipus cannot escape his fate... his tragedy is predetermined by the will of the gods. Henchard's tragedy, however, is more evidently the product of his character" (57) but Henchard's sufferings are the outcomes from his behaviour in the past that is affecting his present. Selling Susan is the major reason for his ambition to start over in Casterbridge. Henchard decides to transcend the social scale to prove that he can compensate for his mistakes by being a better and a decent man, he thrives as a corn merchant and gains a respectable reputation as a mayor of the town. However, Henchard's conscious is devoted to make things right with Susan after she arrives in Casterbridge. Henchard's desire to make amends with his wife drags him into a state of loss between the past and the present. Julian Wolfreys suggests that "The persistence of the past in the narrative of *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, that unsettling or uncanny recurrence of the past [...] produces also in the disturbed subject the structural sense of uncanny displacement and doubling" (301). Henchard is displaced² between his past and present, and therefore he decides to ruin his relationship with Lucetta by fixing his disgrace of the past, he confesses "[B]y doing right with Susan I wrong another innocent woman" (Hardy 97).

² According to Sigmund Freud, the concept of displacement or the "uncanny" originates from "The German word '*unheimlich*' is obviously the opposite of '*heimlich*' ['homely'], '*heimisch*' ['native'] - the opposite of what is familiar; and we are tempted to conclude that what is 'uncanny' is frightening precisely because it is *not* known and familiar" (*Freud-Complete Works* 3676).

Therefore, there is a relationship between the past and the present of Henchard's tragedy. Evidently, Henchard has the freedom to make his decisions but his decisions are affected and made according to his past deeds. Although, Oedipus also has the freedom of choice, it is based on the choices he has to make in the present. Duane D. Edwards examines the contrasts between Henchard's tragedy and the Greek *Oedipus* in "*The Mayor of Casterbridge as an Aeschylean Tragedy*", he argues that Henchard's tragedy is much similar to Agamemnon's in association to the relationship of the past and present, he highlights that Oedipus's suffering has no relation whatsoever to his past but from a decision he makes in his present situation, "Such a relationship between past and present [in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*] is, of course, a contrast to the causal relationship between deeds and suffering found in Sophocles" (609).

The Mayor of Casterbridge as a tragedy, as mentioned above, resembles *Oedipus Rex* in some aspects. But, it corresponds with Aeschylus's *Agamemnon* in relation to the character's ambition. Much like Henchard, Agamemnon decides to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia to Artemis to direct the wind in his favour. Henchard unconsciously sacrifices his wife and marriage by choice to obtain a better chance for his future. The fates of both Henchard and Agamemnon's are decided by making their decisions willingly. Henchard's participation in the auction to sell Susan is not an outcome of a moment's decision, but he has thought of it before. Susan declares that this idea has been suggested by Henchard before, "Michael, you have talked this nonsense in public places before. A joke is a joke, but you may make it once too often" (Hardy 16).

In the third chapter of the novel, Henchard's immoral act is bygone. He makes the decision to cease the search for his family. He chooses to inhabit Casterbridge and begin redeeming his past life and prosper in the future. Henchard stops trying to find Susan and Elizabeth-Jane because he is aware that he can gain a better future for himself without the burden of family, he thinks that his marriage chains his abilities and holds him down from pursuing his future, "I'd challenge England to beat me in the fodder business; and if I were a free man again I'd be worth a thousand pound before I'd done o't" (Hardy 15). The resurrection of Henchard's trespass in the past causes his sufferings. In fact, he does not suffer when Susan shows up as much as he suffers when his past is revealed to the town. Therefore, his misery is based on the townspeople's reaction when they learn about his deed and his attempts to repair his misconduct in order no one can discover it. Edwards affirms that Henchard's suffering is not the fact of the discovery of his disgraceful deed, but the treatment of the people of the deed as if it is happening in the present and judging him according to their social and moral laws (Edwards 611).

Agamemnon is punished for his deeds by god. The Greek world is based on the judgments and divine punishment, which means it is a moral world that does not leave a bad deed unpunished. However, Henchard's world is immoral and the punishment is delivered by the society and laws. Hardy declares, "[T]he Cause of Things, has been defined in scores of places, and is that of a great many ordinary thinkers: that the said Cause is neither moral nor immoral, but unmoral: 'loveless and hateless'" (F. E. Hardy 409). Hence, by "unmoral" world, Hardy stresses that people are merciless and indifferent to each-others' sufferings. Edwards compares the laws of punishment in Hardy and Aeschylus's worlds, "Aeschylus's world is populated by

people whose misdeeds will without fail be punished by the gods, Hardy's Mayor lives in an "unmoral" world and will probably be punished by his fellowmen if his wrong deeds are discovered" (Edwards 611). Henchard truly has been punished by his society after they learn about his disgrace. His fall is definite after the woman's declaration of Susan's sale in the court amongst his fellow townspeople, they received the news as if it happened in the same day, "But the act having lain and buried ever since, the interspace of years was unperceived; and the black spot of his youth wore the aspect of a recent crime" (Hardy 257).

Thus, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* as a tragedy resembles *Agamemnon* in several aspects. Henchard and Agamemnon are both ambitious to obtain a prosperous future. Their ambition has caused them to sacrifice family, and their misdeeds have been decided freely, they both can decide differently to avoid their tragedy, but they choose their ambitions over the moral convictions of their worlds. However, it is true that Henchard's rivalry with Farfrae matches Sophocles's rivals Oedipus and Creon, which can be described as the conflict between the old and the new. But, Aeschylus's *Agamemnon* has a parallel line in relation to the tragic hero's motive and his actions in his present, "*The Mayor of Casterbridge* is, then, tragedy; specifically, it is Aeschylean tragedy. As a result, what Henchard did in the past is more important than what he does in the present [...] In each work the emphasis is on the choice that the hero can make in the present" (Edwards 614).

Henchard's young self defies the moral code by escaping his commitment to his family, he breaks the sanctity of marriage because he believes it has taken his freedom away. He achieves greatness social-wise in Casterbridge, he transforms from a hay-trusser into a respectful mayor of Casterbridge. As the plot unfolds, Henchard

discovers new dilemmas and obstacles that may put his name and reputation in jeopardy. However, he tries to maintain his situation but he fails eventually. Henchard's error of judgments occur in his present. For instance, his jealous attitude towards Farfrae, and his determination of taking revenge from him by exposing Lucetta's love letters, but his weakness does not allow him to do so. Henchard's pride, jealousy, rashness and ambition are his main vices and are fatal to him, he constantly commits mistakes because of his frailties. These vices make him the great tragic hero of the novel.

Furthermore, Aristotle confirms that "peripeteia" and "anagnorisis" are the most essential elements in the plot. He acknowledges that these two elements are of emotional nature (Aristotle 27). Thus, Henchard's tragedy includes both of these elements. Henchard's form of recognition is by a process of reasoning, he no longer urges to revenge himself and expose Lucetta's letters because he realizes that he cannot harm Farfrae and Lucetta as well. Henchard recognizes his tragic mistakes and attempts to repair them, he realizes that his habit of drinking has caused him to lose his family and knows that his rashness has cost him to lose his fortune, "His mood was no longer that of rebellious, ironical, reckless misadventurer [...] for Elizabeth-Jane would soon be but as stranger, and worse. Susan, Farfrae, Lucetta, Elizabeth- all had gone from him, one after one, either by his fault or by his misfortune" (Hardy 347). Henchard realizes that his jealous attitude towards Farfrae has led him to lose his daughter, Lucetta and Farfrae himself, and that he has got no one left by his side because of his deeds. Aristotle states that the combination of "peripeteia" or "reversal of intention" and "recognition" produce a complex plot and therefore a complex type of tragedy (Aristotle 65). Hence, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is a complex tragedy,

because it contains both. Henchard's peripeteia, as mentioned before, takes place in the court when his past is revealed to everyone in the town. This event designates the "unravelling" of the plot in the novel. Aristotle divides the construction of tragedy into two parts; the first is the "complication" and the second is the "unravelling" or "*denouement*" (65). The complication starts from the first chapter, as Henchard starts his journey from Weydon-Priors to the town of Casterbridge. When his past uncovers, the part of the "unravelling" begins, that is to say, his downfall, catastrophe and his death.

The essential objective of tragedy is to trigger the audience and the reader's emotions to sympathize with the character's dilemmas and Henchard's stoic death reflects sympathy as a victim of character. It is evident that the plot is the cause of Henchard's sufferings, and not only one incident of the past. His constant error of judgments affect his actions. His fate is sealed when he makes his decisions willingly, and his actions determine his fate. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Henchard's tragedy; his forlorn life and isolated death are results of his character, not God. That is the intention of Thomas Hardy when he subtitled the novel "A Story of a Man of Character", the conflict of the character versus the deeds determines its fate.

CHAPTER THREE

TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES

Tess of the D'Urbervilles was published in a serial issue in 1891 and in a book form of three volumes in 1892 in the British newspaper, the *Graphic*. Thomas Hardy named the novel after the heroine's name Tess. It is subtitled "A Pure Woman" referring to her tragedy of virtue. The novel defies the moral and cultural validity of the English society and religion in the late nineteenth century. It also challenges domesticity and virtuous requirements of women and their survival under the circumstances and poverty of the lower class. The novel also debates the importance of education for obtaining a chance for better opportunities in life and a better understanding of the world. In the introductory essay of the Oxford edition of *Thomas Hardy Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Penny Boumelha states "Tess of the D'Urbervilles has held in the imagination of generations of readers a deserved place in the great series of novels of sexual tragedy that nineteenth-century Europe produced [...] it is related to the moral debates and fictional developments of its time of writing" (1).

As a young girl, Tess Durbeyfield lives in a village called Marlott in the Vale Blackmoor of Wessex. She is the eldest sister to six other siblings, namely Abraham, Eliza-Louisa, Hope, Modesty and another two boys. Tess and her father, John Durbeyfield are the bread-winners of the family. The first chapter starts with John carrying an empty egg-basket, and he meets a man who calls him "sir" and informs him that he is a descendant of a noble and respectful family name called D'Urbervilles. As a man of an improvised family, John brags about his new family name and starts ordering people to call him by d'Urbervilles, "Sir John d'Urbervilles-that's who I am [...] 'Tis recorded in history all about me" (Hardy 7). John and his wife Joan

Durbeyfield are overwhelmed to discover their swell origin, they learn that a lady and her son by the name of D'Urbervilles who live in Trantridge. In the meantime, Tess is introduced as a beautiful and inexperienced nineteen- year old girl, people in her village are fascinated by her fine figure as a country girl, "Tess Durbeyfield at this time of her life was a mere vessel of emotion untinged by experience [...] to almost everybody she was a fine and picturesque country girl, and no more" (13). Tess's mother asks her to pursue the rich D'Urberville family to create a chance for her to marry the gentleman son, Alec. At first, Tess is disappointed with her parents, using her in order to gain expenses from their relatives. Tess feels that Alec may laugh at her because of her parents' pride in their family's name. The narrator expresses Tess's viewpoint of her parents' and declares that Tess thinks that "the gentlemanly suitor" will find mock her parents' poverty and ambitions (33). Tess's loss in thoughts has caused her to lose consciousness of herself and therefore she loses control of her wagon which results in Prince's death. Her father's horse dies and for that Tess feels remorse and guilt. This is the first incident that makes Tess feel guilty and helpless and she blames herself for Prince's death, "'Tis all my doing- all mine! [...] What will mother and father live on now? [...] we can't go on with our load-Prince is killed! [...] Why I danced and laughed only yesterday!" (34). No one has blamed her for the poor horse's death, but she certainly blames herself because she has occupied herself with finding joy during the May-Day dance in the previous night.

The social law dictates Tess and her other siblings to obey their parents' orders, no matter how harmful they might be. It is believed to be a part of nature to follow the path and the judgement of the elderly through different necessities of life. The six children should not have no expectations as long as their parents provide them life

expenses and it is all part of the nature of society, “If the heads of the Durbeyfield household chose to sail into difficulty, disaster, starvation, disease, degradation, death, thither were these half-dozen little captives under hatches compelled to sail with them [... It is] ‘Nature’s holy plan” (Hardy 23).

Thomas Hardy’s relationship with “nature” has been a part of his arguments in his novels. He believes that the conduct of nature brings calamities to humanity and this nature is shaped by mankind, “Nature’s apparent conduct, as Nietzsche would have taught, can only bring disaster to humanity” (F. E. Hardy 315). Therefore, the nature of the social laws is shaped by the people themselves; they force themselves and each other to abide by those laws which bring disasters to the weakest of them. Tess, as a young girl who tries to prove to her parents that she can pay for her mistake, is weak among the circle of her family. Out of guilt, Tess is obliged to comply with her parents’ wish in meeting the new relatives in Trantridge not knowing that her kin will situate her in miserable circumstances in the near future, “Tess’s pride made the part of poor relation one of particular distaste to her, ‘I’d rather try to get work” (Hardy 38). Tess leaves her family to help them earn their living, she starts working for the blind lady of D’Urbervilles to help her take care of her birds. Tess’s expectations for her future are rather different than her current endeavours, and her parents have sacrificed her well-being to provide them comfort after Prince’s death, “She had hoped to be a teacher at the school, but the fates seemed to decide otherwise” (52). Tess meets Alexander D’Urberville, who is charming at first. Alec tries to seduce her multiple times and insists on getting close to her. Tess’s rejection to Alec’s desires only triggers his insistence to have her for his own until one day Tess’s virtue is taken by Alec’s lust. Alec rapes Tess in her sound sleep. The narrator of *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*

questions the power of divinity; of how an innocent young woman like Tess suffers such a cruel fate. And that she may not deserve this injustice. Hardy criticizes the indifferent laws of nature and God towards women in his own time through the disaster of Tess by referring to the fact that women are definitely judged by their virtue and chastity, otherwise, they are a disgrace to society and bring shame to their families, “Why it was that upon this beautiful feminine tissue, sensitive as gossamer, and practically blank as snow as yet, there should have been traced such a coarse pattern as it was doomed to receive; [...] many thousand years of analytical philosophy have failed to explain our sense of order” (Hardy 86). Hardy acknowledges the fact that the social order makes no sense when it comes to certain requirements for the criteria of women’s virtue. The author argues through his narrative that it is a part of nature which is created by humanity, hence, this injustice cannot be changed because it has been occurring since the beginning of humanity that is shaped by mankind, “But though to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children may be a morality good enough for divinities, it is scorned by average human nature; and it therefore does not mend the matter” (86). In one of his letters, Thomas Hardy expresses his view of the injustice of nature by stating that the judgment and injustice of mother-nature is inevitable and it is sealed by a higher controller who pleasures from the pain of others, therefore the past does not change the future when it comes to suffering. Hardy declares that pain will not change unless nature sets new moral rules. He claims that nature cannot make amends for its past injustices. Hardy further explains that mother nature is mighty powerful because of its mercilessness and injustice. Thus, nature’s iniquity is convenient to its omnipotence (F. E. Hardy 315). Therefore, injustice is necessary for nature to exhibit its might and power through the pain of mankind. Hardy terminates

the first phase of the novel with Tess losing her virginity and virtue and entitles the second phase "Maiden No More". Tess is no longer the innocent virtuous woman as she is in the first phase "The Maiden". The narrator relates this unfortunate dilemma of Tess to the social gap that separates Tess of Marlott from Tess of Trantridge, "An immeasurable social chasm was to divide our heroine's personality thereafter from that previous self of hers who stepped from her mother's door to try her fortune at Trantridge poultry-farm" (Hardy 87).

After the rape, Tess travels back to Marlott. She gives birth to a baby boy and names him "Sorrow". Sorrow dies from an illness and Tess buries him in the churchyard. However, Tess's guilt for Sorrow's death leaves her restless, because he is not baptized because of his illegitimacy. Furthermore, Tess decides to move on far away from Marlott because she has learned from her experience and learned that society is merciless to her. Tess tries to forget her past by finding a job as a dairymaid, "Almost at a leap Tess thus changed from simple girl to complex woman [...] there should be no more d'Urberville air-castles in the dreams and deeds of her new life" (118-119). Tess will let the past be erased by time, and that time heals her wounds. She wants to be independent and starts a new leaf of her life, "She felt that she would do well to be useful again-to taste anew sweet independence at any price. The past was past; whatever it had been it was no more at hand. Whatever its consequences, time would close over them" (Hardy 109). At Talbothays Dairy, Tess meets Angel-Clare, they fall in love. Angel is a son of a vicar who is learning to be a farmer. He represents the modern generation of the Victorian society who rebels against the old traditions. Angel hates the idea of ranks and distinctions of the modern life and does not like the old conventions as well, "The material distinctions of rank and wealth he increasingly

despised [...] He grew away from old associations and saw something new in life and humanity” (140-142). Angel’s character and view of life tempt Tess into a new beginning with him. After an attempt of asking her to marry him, Tess agrees to his proposal for marriage. Tess’s past and shame haunt her and she cannot deny them, so she decides to write a letter of confession and slips it under his door. Angel does not see the letter because it is placed under the carpet, which is a mere chance. After the ceremony, Tess confesses to Angel about her relation with Alec and her illegitimate son. Angel cannot forgive her for her deed believing that Tess is a guilty woman disguised in the shape of an innocent one, “You were one person; now you are another. My God- how can forgiveness meet such a grotesque-predestination as that!” (Hardy 274). Therefore, Angel leaves Tess behind and travels to Brazil searching for a better place to live in as husband and wife without having to tolerate the gossip and judgment of the English society in their lives. Since Tess is a victim of nature, whenever she wants to start anew, she finds herself in an unpleasant situation. Her love for Angel is pure and innocent, yet nature does not allow her the joy of love and a new beginning, “Yet such is the vulpine slyness of Dame Nature, that, till now, Tess had been hoodwinked by her love for Clare into forgetting it might result in vitalizations that would inflict upon others what she had bewailed as a misfortune to herself” (Hardy 292). Tess agrees to go back to Marlott, and then starts working in hard conditions in Flintcomb-Ash farm. She is reunited with Alec, who is a minister and a preacher, and she tells him about Sorrow. Tess learns that her father has passed away due to a sudden illness, so her family’s cottage is evicted and therefore, they are homeless. Alec offers his aid to Tess and her family. Alec tells Tess that Angel will not come back for her and she should live with him. Tess agrees to live with Alec. In the meantime, Angel

Clare returns and finds out that Tess is living in Sandbourne. Angel apologizes for mistreating and leaving her, “I did not think rightly of you- I did not see you as you were!” (448). Then he asks her to forgive, but Tess tells him it is too late and that he should leave. Angel’s visit inflames Tess, she confronts Alec and stabs him with a knife. Tess runs after Angel and they reunite. However, they spend a week of happiness until the police arrest Tess for murdering Alec in Stonehenge. Tess makes Angel promise her to marry her sister Lisa Lu after she is dead. The tragedy of Tess closes with the scenery of Tess’s execution, witnessed by Angel and Liza-Lu from a distance.

The tragic life of Tess is an outcome of society and nature. *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* is subtitled “A Pure Woman” indicating the journey of innocence and inexperience of Tess amidst the morality of her society. Thomas Hardy chooses a female character to be the heroine of this novel to highlight the different challenges for a woman in his society. He also shows the difficulties of improvised families and their attempts to obtain a better life through rank and ancestors. John and Joan Durbeyfield sacrifice Tess’s will of choice by sending her to claim kin without educating her the prime ideals of life. Tess’s tragedy comes from a series of events and her sense of duty for those events. For instance, she blames and punishes herself for the death of Prince and claims the responsibility to pay for it, and she vows herself not to marry a man after the death of Sorrow because she believes that he has died as an outcome of her sins. Hence, Thomas Hardy states that tragedy is a result of several unfortunate events that bring the inevitable tragic life and death of the individual (F. E. Hardy 176). Therefore, Hardy’s concept of tragedy is a reflection of Aristotle’s concept centuries ago, “Tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action that is serious and

complete” (Aristotle 23). Thus, the action comes from the plot itself. The tragic events are determined by the actions of the character. However, Tess’s circumstances and the nature of her society force her to commit her actions. The serious incidents in Tess’s life define her tragedy after she vows not marrying a soul, she finds herself falling in love with Angel Clare. Tess’s journey to find happiness is always blocked by obstacles which are the products of nature, the nature of society and its moral codes.

Tess, as a tragic heroine, punishes herself in order to restore the moral laws of her society. Therefore, the character has to have a moral purpose which is the motive for her actions and punishment. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle acknowledges that the character’s choices determine the morality of the individual (29). Tess is aware that her relationship with Alec and her illegitimate son are against the moral laws of her society. However, Tess’s awareness is too late to avoid the judgement of her community, and learning from her experience is not enough for the mercy of society, “Not seldom that long wandering unfits us for further travel, and of what use is our experience to us then? Tess Durbeyfield’s experience was of this incapacitating kind. At last she had learned what to do; but who would now accept her doing?” (Hardy 117).

At first, Tess is victimized by her parent’s pride and their ignorance towards her education. Tess’s lack of education leaves her helpless in dealing with certain situations in her life. Her lack of experience causes her unwise behaviour with Alec. Tess expresses her disappointment of her parents’ upbringing and blames them for not teaching her the social values and the nature of men, “Why didn’t you tell me there was a danger in men-folk? Why didn’t you warn me? Ladies know what to fend hands against, because they read novels that tell them of these tricks; but I never had the

chance o' learning in that way and you did not help me!" (Hardy 99). Joan Durbeyfield neglects the idea of teaching Tess how to deal with men's wit and seduction in order to force her daughter into marrying Alec, "I thought if I spoke of his fond feelings and what they might lead to, you would be hontish wi' him and lose your chance" (99). In the "The Maiden", Thomas Hardy points out the differences between Tess and her mother to implicate that the traditions and thoughts of the old generation are inconvenient to the new modern life, "Between the mother, with her fast-perishing lumber of superstitions [...] and the daughter with her trained National teachings and Standard knowledge under and infinitely Revised Code, there was a gap of two hundred years as ordinarily understood" (22). Tess is taught what is only necessary by her parents and especially by her mother. In addition to John's pride, Joan's greed is a factor for Tess's inexperience. Joan's ill advice for Tess of not telling Angel of Sorrow and Alec is to maintain Tess's innocent picture that she can move on with her marriage to a gentleman. In fact, Joan does not care about her daughter's reputation as much as she cares about finding a chance of marriage for Tess. It does not matter who the suitor may be as long as Tess can charm him with her pretty face, "[S]he ought to make her way with 'en if she plays her trump card aright. And if he don't marry her afore he will after" (57). Even her father doubts the credibility of Tess's marriage to Angel. Tess is shocked by the fact that her father doubts her, "How unexpected the attacks of destiny! And if her father doubted her a little, would not neighbours and acquaintance doubt her much?" (308). It is true that Tess follows her parents' orders, but it is only out of guilt and consciousness. Tess's tragedy is a tragedy of social influences and character. Her actions are always afflicted by her guilt for her sins and shame. Her society dictates her not to follow her will of choice, but to follow her consciousness.

Tess Durbeyfield does not have the freedom of will. She is controlled and shaped by her surroundings, by her parents and poor circumstances and by her unfortunate relationship with Alec. It is one of Tess's hamartia, that she punishes herself constantly and deprives herself of happiness because of the moralities of her society. Her firm sense of claiming responsibility for her actions is also one of her flaws as a tragic heroine. Tess is trapped between her guilt and happiness. Tess, as mentioned before, does not take her mother's advice and decides to spill her past life to Angel as he tells her of his relationship with an elderly woman. She tells him that her sin is the same as his, she suffers and her guilt does not let her live happily, "Her affection for him was now the breath and life of Tess's being; it enveloped her as a photosphere, irradiated her into forgetfulness of her past sorrows, keeping back the gloomy spectres that would persist in their attempts to touch her- doubt, fear, moodiness, care, shame" (Hardy 234). Tess submits to her guilt and believes that her duty is to be faithful and honest with her husband. Tess's confession to Angel about Alec and Sorrow is her reversal of fortune moment and the turning point of the novel. After this event, Angel abandons her to deal with her situation by herself. Tess is obliged to survive among the rules of her society. According to Aristotle, "Peripeteia" or "Reversal of Intention is a change by which the action veers round its opposite" (41). Thus, Tess's decision to tell Angel about her past changes her life utterly, from the passionate, happy life with Angel to a lonesome suffering one without him. Therefore, the "Unravelling" of the tragedy begins with Tess's confession and ends with her death. Evidently, her sin is no worse than Angel's, but the fact that the nature of society tends to forgive men and forsake women. Thomas Hardy stresses the distinctive treatment and judgment between men and women in his society through the

voice of the narrator of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, "A field-man is a personality a field; a field-woman is a portion of the field; she has somehow lost her own margin, imbibed the essence of her surroundings, and assimilated herself with it" (106). Hardy's narrator is implicating that women are a portion of society, but men are the society. They control what is accepted and what is required. Women have to adapt to their surroundings and circumstances that are shaped by a man-based society. Women have to abide by the morals and conventions of the English society. In *Women and Sexuality in the Novels of Thomas Hardy*, Rosemarie Morgan affirms that Hardy represents the nineteenth century picture of women's suffering through Tess's sufferings as a woman because of her consciousness and that she is driven to atone her sin because the moral code obliges her to do so, Tess succumbs to the laws of nature and society because she has no freedom to defy them. Morgan explains the picture of the woman as the angel of the house in the society of the nineteenth-century and claims that her traits must be of a passive, obeying and of caring nature. Women in that time do not have the freedom of will and most of their actions are outcomes of the oppressive laws (60). Tess is considerably weak and passive because this is the expectation of her society. Her attractiveness and beauty lead her to be seduced and tricked by Alec D'Urberville. Alec beguiles Tess and takes advantage of her defenseless situation in the Chase. Furthermore, Tess is submissive to Angel's feelings and she begs him to forgive her, "I will obey you like your wretched slave, even if it is to lie down and die" (Hardy 276).

In addition to her docility and passiveness, pride and independence are the main qualities of Tess as a tragic character. Aristotle proclaims that the qualities are determined by the character (Aristotle 27). Tess's inexperience creates her submissive

quality and leads her to Alec's den unprotected. Thereafter, her pride and desire to be independent away from Marlott and her past force her to start over in Talbothays Dairy. However, she cannot escape her fate because of her haunted consciousness. Tess's qualities build her character and her character is responsible for her actions. As Leon Waldoff states that Tess's tragic fate is shaped by her character, and her character is shaped by her society and past. Therefore Tess is the centre of the tragedy. (Waldoff 136). Hence, Tess's character shapes her fate, and her character has been shaped by her circumstances from childhood to maturity. Her contradictory qualities qualify her to be the tragic heroine of the novel.

Tess has a passionate quality. She is lost between the thought of living her present in joy with Angel and the guilt of her sins of the past. Her passion for Angel is strong and she wants to live with him an honest life. Hence, there is a slight resemblance between Tess and the character of Hippolytus in Euripides's Greek tragedy *Hippolytus* (428 B.C), they both share the passionate quality of their character. Passion is a part of Tess's character and she cannot escape it. Therefore, she must learn from her experiences and detaches her passions from her actions. As Hippolytus is accused of raping Phaedra and because of it, he is punished by his elders and society and cannot defend himself from this false accusation. However, Tess is raped by Alec, but she is the one who is punished and judged for it because of the injustice of her society. Duane Edwards acknowledges the resemblance of the two characters,

In both *Tess* and *Hippolytus* the two central characters find themselves, in the present, the victims of their own and one another's passions. Since these passions are a part of the characters, they cannot eschew them; instead, they must adjust to them by giving them their due weight

and emphasis, by relating them to ideology, ideas, and ideals. What matters both in Hardy's novel and Euripides' play is how successfully the characters learn, in the present, to reconcile their ideas and their passions (614).

Tess learns to deal with her passion after Angel abandons her. She realizes that she does not deserve this judgment of his. Tess goes through sufferings because of her husband though he has committed the same sin with another woman. It is her society that saves Angel and focuses on her sins. Tess realizes that all of her life is wasted because of the vanity, injustice and punishment of her society. This realization is called "Recognition" in terms of tragedy. It is the tragic hero/heroine's discovery of the cause of his/her suffering. According to Aristotle, the "recognition" by definition is "a change from ignorance to knowledge" (41). "Recognition" or "anagnorisis" has five forms, those forms are mentioned in the historical background chapter. One of the forms of recognition is by a sign. Tess's recognition occurs when she witnesses two birds suffering and she puts them out of their misery. Tess believes that Nature is cruel to those helpless and harmless creatures, but she is not suffering physically as these birds are and she realizes that her sufferings are predicated by the laws of society and she must acclimate to her circumstances, "She was ashamed of herself for her gloom of the night, based on nothing more tangible than a sense of condemnation under arbitrary law of society which has no foundation in Nature" (Hardy 332).

The form of recognition occurs after the reversal of intention in the fifth phase of the novel "The Woman Pays". In his *Poetics*, Aristotle implicates that the combination of recognition and reversal of intention produces a feeling of fear and pity which is the aim of the tragic purpose. However, Aristotle believes that the best form

of “recognition” is the one accompanied with a “reversal of intention” (41). The coincidence of the two produces a complex plot, therefore a complex tragedy. Thus, *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* is a complex tragedy which is the first of the four types of tragedies.

The tragedy of Tess has another tragic element, namely accident. The element of accident contributes to the action of the hero but not entirely. It affects the process of making the decision. In Tess’s case, she plans to tell Angel every detail of her past in a letter, but to her disappointment, the letter is placed under the doormat. When Tess learns about the misplaced letter, she develops a state of anxiety and guilt. As a result of her guilt, she is anxious to confess rapidly. Therefore, she rushes to speak her mind to Angel. If he has found the letter the night before the wedding, he can merely decide not to marry Tess. Thus, they can separate easily without the chains of the holy matrimony. Nevertheless, Angel does not find the letter and that is how Tess feels it is her duty to tell him. As A. C. Bradley acknowledges the function of accident as an element of the tragedy is to clarify that accidents are out of the character’s control. It is a subordinate element and not dominant, it does not fully affect the deed of the character, but it is a part of the tragic fact of the human life (15). It is evident that the misplaced letter does not prevent Tess’s confession from happening, but it motivates her to speak the truth about her past. She feels that it is her duty to be honest with her husband and that is when she realizes that Angel does not forgive her and will not stay with her as he is supposed to do. Tess’s sufferings and tragedy originate from her consciousness and guilt of making things right according to her surroundings of society and her husband. Dale Kramer stresses the importance of experience in *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*, he affirms that Thomas Hardy puts emphasis on the experience of the

character. Kramer affirms that the tragic effect in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is based on Tess's struggle of her consciousness instead of her struggle with the moral order of her society (114). Hence, Tess's tragedy is located from her consciousness rather than her circumstances with her society and people. She is imprisoned by the moral standards in her conscious and the desire to correct her mistakes according to those standards. Tess knows the fact that she is victimized by the laws of society and she is aware of the laws because she has experienced several disappointments in her life, "Once victim, always victim- that's the law" (Hardy 393). She yields to her fate willingly after Alec's aid to her family. She knows that her life will not be happy, and she will spend her days out of wedlock with Alec d'Urberville. The sufferings of Tess are presented from her own perspective. It is true that people of Marlott and her parents judge her when she comes back from Trantridge and spends her days with Sorrow, but no one forces her to leave and punish herself. Tess always punishes herself for the unfortunate events in her life. She punishes herself for the death of Prince. She also punishes herself not to marry after her sin with Alec. Tess may not have the freedom of choice as Michael Henchard does in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, but her decisions come out of guilt and duty according to the morals of her society. Kramer further confirms that the tragedy of Tess is an outcome of her sense of duty. Her evaluation of her situations and actions determines her tragic mistake. Moreover, it is a tragedy of consciousness (114).

Therefore, tragedy arises from the individual's consciousness, and Tess's tragic mistakes lead her to her own destruction without realizing that it is her consciousness that forces her to make her decisions that are affected by the moral standards. She assesses her deeds of the past and subjugates herself to reform them in

the present, and she falls as an outcome of her attempts to penalize herself. Although Tess's sufferings are affected by external forces of her society, they are entirely measured by her perceptions of the moral conducts, "[O]utside forces can frustrate one's consciousness, they cannot be trusted as an index to measure either the superiority or inferiority of the moral quality of the consciousness that is being frustrated" (Kramer 115). Thus, the tragedy of consciousness of Tess is a combination of the rejection of her society and Angel by her past. She is pressured by the guilt of her past and the judgment of her present.

Tess's consciousness and guilt are shaped by her community. Her inexperience and lack of knowledge situate her in the arms of Alec. She does not deny the fact that her sin with Alec is frowned upon by society, nor does she deny the fact that her chastity is required by the moral laws. She blames her parents for not teaching her to deal with such circumstances. Her experiences develop her guilt and sense of duty unconsciously. Tess decides to isolate herself from her surroundings as a reaction to the judgment that she receives from her community, "Hardy's interest in consciousness, stresses the isolation of the individual, his separation from the consciousness of the people around him, his lack of importance to his peers and environment" (Kramer 117). Hence, Tess's attitude towards a lonesome life determines her decisions and actions. She is utterly alone in several stages of her life, and no one understands the forces of her situation. Angel leaves her helpless and insecure. As a result of her isolation, she develops a mental state that convinces her that she does not deserve a happy life with Angel, therefore, she dedicates the rest of her life to help her family through poverty, even if it means living with Alec out of her desire. The narrator expresses Tess's forlorn state after Angel leaves her. Mentally,

she does not have any interest to continue to live without the presence of her beloved, “Mentally she remained in utter stagnation, a condition which the mechanical occupation rather fostered than checked. Her consciousness was at that other dairy, at that other season, in the presence of the tender lover who had confronted her there - he who, the moment she had grasped him to keep for her own, had disappeared like a shape in a vision” (Hardy 325). Tess is aware that happiness does not last and she accepts the final punishment for murdering Alec, as long as she finally has made amends with Angel. Eventually, Tess submits to her fate between Angel’s arms in Stonehenge, “This happiness could not have lasted. It was too much. I have had enough; and now I shall not live for you to despise me!” (469).

Thomas Hardy emphasizes the idea of fate in *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*. Tess accepts herself as a murderess of Prince and as an adulteress with Alec. Hardy implies that a pure soul like Tess’s can be seduced and corrupted by her circumstances and mankind due to her lack of education and inexperience in life. Tess’s tragic fate is predetermined and inevitable when she is raped by Alec and left behind by Angel. Hardy admits that “The best tragedy- highest tragedy in short- is that of the WORTHY encompassed by the INEVITABLE” (F. E. Hardy 251). Tess’s fate is conditioned by the social moralities and her own views and judgments. Tess’s own judgment of herself is based on what she has lived and experienced from her childhood to maturity of relationships, education, religion, social conventions, and so on. Lucille Herbert confirms that Tess relies on the moral values of her society because of her inexperience and that she absorbs those values unconsciously (92). Thus, Thomas Hardy subtitles the novel “A Pure Woman” to refer to Tess as a simple country girl whose purity is unimportant to the nature of mankind.

Moreover, Tess's punishment for her deeds as an individual of her society is inevitable, therefore, justice will be served. In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, justice exemplifies the indifferent nature of the human race and the moral laws. However, in the last paragraph of the novel, Thomas Hardy implies that justice stands for the divine power, "Justice' was done, and the President of Immortals, in Aeschylean phrase, had ended his sport with Tess" (Hardy 472). In the execution scene of Tess, Hardy extends a black flag to imply that Tess's fate is not just due to her sufferings throughout her life. This ending shows Thomas Hardy's pessimistic attitude and his tragic vision towards life. However, the life of Tess Durbeyfield has to be sacrificed so that her tragedy becomes a lesson and that life goes on for other generations.

CHAPTER FOUR

JUDE THE OBSCURE

Thomas Hardy's last novel is *Jude the Obscure* which was published as *The Simpletons* in a serial version in the American magazine *Harper's Monthly Magazine* in 1894, and later in a book form in 1895 as *Jude the Obscure*. This novel aroused controversy in its time because of Hardy's critique of the institution of marriage, sexual relationships, the presentation of church and the admission system in universities for being exclusive for the upper class of the English society. In *Jude the Obscure*, Thomas Hardy demonstrates lack of opportunities for the individuals. Once again, he criticizes the priorities of social laws that kill the dreams of a working-class individual. He presents Jude Fawley in the image of an ambitious person who seeks the path to gain academic education and fails due to different circumstances such as marriage, poverty and the vanity of society. Jude is outwitted by Arabella's art of seduction and struggles to satisfy Sue's ideology. His circumstances are factors for his tragic life. In the introductory section of the Oxford edition, Patricia Ingham acknowledges the relation between *Jude the Obscure* and its present time. The critic highlights the main factors that are present in the novel, firstly, the struggle for the middle-class to get a fine education in the universities of England. Secondly, women are obliged to follow the rules of a patriarchal majority of the society (xi).

Jude the Obscure is classified as a bildungsroman novel. Jude Fawley's journey starts from his childhood as an eleven-year-old boy in a small village called Marygreen. He lives with his aunt Dursilla after the death of his father. Jude wishes to be a scholar in a city called Christminster to follow the footsteps of his schoolmaster, Philliston. Jude thinks highly of Christminster and hopes that he can be a member of

its university someday, “It is a city of light [...] The tree of knowledge grows there” (Hardy 31). He tries to teach himself by learning Latin and Greek and Biblical script to support him when he pursues his education in the future. Years go by and Jude still lives in Marygreen and works as a stonemason to help his dream come true. At the age of nineteen, when Jude meets Arabella Donn, he puts the plans of his education in Christminster on hold. The instant moment when he sees a charming woman, Arabella, he forgets his struggle to achieve his goal and prefers to be in a relationship instead. “He walked as if he felt himself to be another man from Jude of yesterday. What were his books to him? [...] he was just living for the first time: not wasting life. It was better to love a woman than to be a graduate, or a parson; ay, or a pope!” (52). Jude thinks that Arabella is within his reach, unlike Christminster which is also within his reach physically but mentally he fears failure as an intellectual and settles for the easier option with Arabella because he is aware of the difficulty to achieve his dream. Arabella Donn is a vulgar woman who only cares about earthy pleasures and finding a person who can take care of her, “I’ve got him to care for me: yes! But I want him more than care for me; I want him to have me-to marry me!” (53). Arabella tries to trick Jude into marriage by pretending to be with child, and she succeeds. Jude sells his books to afford to marry her. Soon enough the marriage fails and Arabella leaves with her family to Australia.

Jude’s aunt warns him about marriage when she learns about Arabella’s lie. She informs him that his family has a bad history with marriages, “The Fawleys were not made for wedlock: it never seemed to sit well upon us.” (Hardy 71). Three years later, Jude finally seizes Arabella’s absence and decides to travel to Christminster. He also learns from his aunt that his cousin Sue Brighthead lives there, and he should not

approach her. However, Jude only observes Sue from a distance before they meet. He decides not to be close to her in order not to jeopardize falling in love with his cousin, because he is still married and his family's history with marriage as well, "[M]arriage with a blood relation would not duplicate the adverse conditions, and a tragic sadness might be intensified to a tragic horror" (90). Later on, Jude meets Sue and works as a stonemason. Furthermore, he is shocked by the fact that Phillston has failed to be a scholar. Jude realizes that achieving his dream in Christminster is nearly impossible to work on. He witnesses the sum of unfulfilled dreams struggling to fit in Christminster, "These struggling men and women before him were the reality of Christminster" (116). Jude introduces Sue to Phillston and they develop a friendship, Sue starts working for Phillston in his school. Jude travels back to Marygreen due to his disappointment. However, Jude and Sue spend some time together in Melchester. And after Sue goes back to Shaston, she writes a letter for Jude to let him know that he may love her, but after she learns of a rumour of having an illicit relationship with Jude, she writes another letter for him saying "You mustn't love me. You are to like me-that's all!" (148). Jude agrees to it because he is already married and he must not fall in love with his cousin. He later learns that Sue is to be married to Phillston and agrees to walk her down the aisle.

Soon enough, Jude returns to Marygreen to see his dying aunt and asks Sue to accompany him. She tells him that she regrets rushing into marrying Phillston. She confesses that marriage seems like a deal to please other people and that there is nothing holy about it because it gives privilege to men and undervalues women "If a marriage ceremony is a religious thing, it is possibly wrong; but if it is only a sordid contract, based on material conveniences in householding, rating, and taxing, and the

inheritance of land and money by children, making it necessary that the male parent should be known” (Hardy 200). When Sue travels back to Shaston, she tells Philloston that she desires to live with Jude and he lets her leave, and that has threatened of losing his job as a schoolmaster. However, Sue and Jude decide to move to Aldbrickhman so no one can identify them in that town. Jude and Sue are both confined in their marriages, and that is not a good start for a better relationship. The moral laws disagree with their action of living together without being married to each other. Still, she does not believe in marriage as a holy act and that some women get married to gain social advantages and nothing more, therefore, she has married Philloston to protect her reputation in her society. But Jude sees marriage from a different perspective. Jude believes that marriage is necessary to prove the commitment between them and the passion for each other and that Sue should be more passionate to understand it. Jude tells Sue that people get married because they have “ordinary passions”, he states that people are aware that the happiness and pleasure of a marriage will not last but they will go through it because it is a natural force (246).

A few months later, Jude and Sue both divorce from their partners. Sue finally agrees to marry Jude. In the meantime, Arabella shows up and informs Jude that she has given birth to a child in Australia and he is the father. His son is called “Little Father Time”. Jude and Sue agree to adopt the child because Arabella is no longer interested in taking care of him. Jude and Sue do not get married as long as they live with each other. They find it difficult to live in Aldbrickham because of their illegitimate relationship. Jude and Sue return to Christminster with Little Father Time and the other two children. The family face negative treatments from the people of the town. Little Father Time has a premature personality. He believes that it is him and his

siblings are to blame for their parents' indigent status, "Then if children make so much trouble, why do people have 'em? [...] But we don't ask to be born?" (Hardy 313). Furthermore, Sue informs Little Father Time of her pregnancy, he flips out and decides to take responsibility to correct his parents' mistake. He hangs his siblings and then himself leaving a note that says "Done because we are too menny" (316).

Sue collapses after this incident and believes it is God's will and punishment for leaving her rightful husband and living in sin with Jude, "I see marriage differently now. My babies have been taken from me to show me this! Arabella's child killing mine was a judgment-the right slaying the wrong" (Hardy 329). Sue changes her mind from a skeptical to a faithful woman to redeem her mistakes with Jude. Sue's behaviour causes Jude to change his beliefs as well, he loses his faith in God, "You make me hate Christianity, or mysticism, or Sacerdotalism, or whatever it may be called, if it's that which has caused this deterioration in you. [...] I am glad I had nothing to do with Divinity -damn glad- if it's going to ruin you this way!" (329). Jude does not understand how Sue has objected to marrying him because of her ideology and now she wants to remarry Philloston so she can have a chance of repentance. However, she believes that she is forced into her situation because of her jealousy of Arabella, "I slipped into my false position through jealousy and agitation" (331). Sue returns to Philloston and he agrees to marry her again. Jude decides to remarry Arabella when he is drunk to protect her honour.

Later on, in Christminster during the Remembrance Week festival, Jude speaks out his last words, saying "*The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master. Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in*

soul?” (Hardy 379). Eventually, during this ceremony, Jude dies lonely in his thoughts and his misery is his only companion.

Jude believes that the laws of society have deprived him of fulfilling his wishes, he is the victim of the dictations of social conventions. Jude yields and accepts his miserable fate eventually. Thomas Hardy remarks the unfairness of the system to individuals like Jude. He shows the frowning rules of marriage that victimize the individual in order to abide by the so-called “civil laws”. In the postscript for the Wessex edition of *Jude the Obscure*, Thomas Hardy believes if a marriage turns into an unbearable one for both the wife and husband, it must be terminated. Otherwise it will become a basis for a “fable tragedy” and that all the Aristotelian tragic elements can be consisted and established within that marriage (xxx). Therefore, when a marriage grows to be unhealthy for either the wife or husband, it should be abolished. If not, it can be an example of any tragedy with its construction and elements. Thomas Hardy collects various concerns from his previous tragic novels and creates the tragedy of Jude in *Jude the Obscure*. Jude’s tragic life is not a major outcome of the social mores but it is also a combination of frailties and the will of fate.

From Aristotle’s point of view, character “determines men’s qualities” (Aristotle 27). Jude Fawley is the tragic hero of the novel. His character possesses the qualities of a tragic character. From his childhood, Jude educates himself in order to fulfil his yearning dream to be a scholar in Christminster. Therefore, Jude is ambitious as a young man; he is eager to achieve his dream and unaware of the social obstacles he may face in the future. Jude is also weak when it comes to the opposite sex, he forgets about his goal when he first meets Arabella, and he is forced to sell his books in order to afford getting married. Although Arabella has tricked him into it, he knows

that she is not worth marrying, “He knew too well, too well, in the secret centre of his brain that Arabella was not worth a great deal [...] All his reading had only come to this, that he would have to sell his books to buy saucepans” (Hardy 59-60). Jude’s passion is obvious when he agrees to Sue’s terms in order to be with her. He submits to her wishes and respects her enough not to force her into anything she dislikes. He cannot harm any living creature and this only harms him. The narrator highlights this quality of Jude as a weakness in the second chapter of the novel, “This weakness of character, as it may be called, suggested that he was the sort of man who was born to ache a good deal before the fall of the curtain upon his unnecessary life” (24). This quality indicates his passive and yet passionate nature towards others.

His ambitious and passionate nature, or qualities, do not qualify Jude as weak but as a great tragic character. Jude is definitely eager to obtain happiness intellectually and emotionally and those qualities oblige him to stay passive. Albeit, he fails because of his lack of reaction to his situation. The narrator predicts Jude’s tragic life ahead in the second chapter as well, saying that Jude chooses to avoid the fact that nature can be merciless to its creatures and that Jude does not want to be a part of it, and this may cause a lot of sufferings in his future

Growing up brought responsibilities, he found. Events did not rhyme quite

as he had thought. Nature’s logic was too horrid for him to care for.

That mercy towards one set of creatures was cruelty towards another sickened his sense of harmony [...] If he could only prevent himself growing up! He did not want to be a man (25).

Jude does not want to grow up because he does not have the ability to face the cruelty of nature. Jude's sufferings are mainly produced by this passionate nature. Therefore, these sufferings determine his tragic life. Thomas Hardy acknowledges that the tragic sense of the hero's life arises from his "prejudices" and that horrific and tragic consequences generate from such passions that the individual cannot prevent from happening (F. E. Hardy 120). So, Jude's tragedy manifests from his passionate and passive nature which is his tragic flaw.

The ambitious quality of Jude fades with time due to his disappointments of Christminster as a place of "light" and knowledge. Jude has witnessed the failure of Phillotson because of the unfair system. However, Jude strives to get admitted to the University of Christminster, but he is born with a disadvantage, his class. At the beginning of the sixth part, Jude realizes that his dream is vain. It is only a matter of rank and position that prevented him from being one of the scholars of Christminster, "However it was my poverty and not my will that consented to be beaten. It takes two or three generations to do what I tried to do in one" (307). Furthermore, Jude's "anagnorisis" manifests by a "process of reasoning". Jude recognizes his flaws and disadvantages of his life that have caused his sufferings. Jude believes that he has to be a selfish "pig" to achieve his dreams and that the nature of his society does not reward his affectionate personality. Jude is aware that his passions and ambitions are his vices, "[M]y impulses -affections- vices perhaps they should be called- were too strong not to hamper a man without advantages; who should be as cold-blooded as a fish and as selfish as a pig to have really good chance of being one of his country's worthies" (307). As mentioned above, the form of "recognition" in *Jude the Obscure* happens by a "process of reasoning". "Recognition" or "peripeteia" is an element of

tragedy. Aristotle defines this process as a “natural reflexion” in his *Poetics*. Jude grasps the fact that he is victimized by the form of his society. He admits that the chance of him being a student is weak because of his low position in the social scale “I was perhaps, after all, a paltry victim to the spirit of mental and social restlessness, that makes so many unhappy in these days! [...] I perceive there is something wrong somewhere in our social formula” (307).

However, his sufferings are not exclusive to the biased nature of his society, but his weakness also contributes to his tragic sense of life. Jude’s tragic life can be defined as a social and idealistic tragedy due to his idealistic nature. Although he is judged because of his social rank, he has the freedom of will when it comes to other decisions in his life. For example, he has the choice to avoid marrying Arabella when his aunt warns him about the failed marriages in the Fawleys family line. Therefore, he chooses to fulfil his duty to Arabella and abide by the institution of marriage. Firstly, He gets married to Arabella out of duty to take care of his unborn child, not knowing that Arabella tricks him into it. Secondly, Arabella asks him to marry her to protect her honour and his caring and passionate nature does not allow him to annul this marriage.

As the tragic hero of *Jude the Obscure*, Jude’s ambitious quality pushes him to pursue his dream after he splits from Arabella. When Jude travels to Christminster, he faces multiple challenges to fulfil it: the fact that he is not well-educated and is not qualified enough to be a legit scholar, he cannot afford getting into the University of Christminster and he may not get in because he is a member of the working class as a stonemason. He also sacrifices his happiness to satisfy Sue’s views against the contract of marriage. Sue’s point of view of human nature influences his judgments. Jude’s

downfall, which is also the “Reversal of Intention” of his tragedy, occurs when he loses his son and other children in a hotel room in Christminster. Jude changes his attitude towards faith and human nature after this incident. The narrator expresses Jude’s agony in few lines after he loses his family in the sixth part of the novel. The narrator states that Jude’s perspective in faith and religion has changed, and Sue’s sudden change has troubled his mind as well. The way he sees the world and life has changed as well (Hardy 324). Sue’s reaction to the incident has also influenced Jude to change his attitude. She is no longer the rebellious figure in his eyes. She has changed her own ideals and this alteration has made Jude doubt his ideals as well, “You used to say that human nature was noble and long-suffering, not vile and corrupt, and at last I thought you spoke truly. And now you seem to take such a much lower view!” (324). Therefore, according to Aristotle’s construction, *Jude the Obscure* is a complex tragedy as long as the “reversal of intention” is accompanied by a form of “recognition”.

Moreover, the element of “accident” or “chance” is another influential factor in Jude’s “reversal of intention” and “anagnorisis”. It does not fully contribute to Jude’s actions but it is a predominant factor. Jude’s discovery for the death of his children is an accident. Out of a sudden, his life as a father changes. However, he believes that Little Father Time’s suicide is an outcome of his premature nature to prevent a catastrophic future for his parents, “It was in his nature to do it. [Young boys] seem to see all its terrors before they are old enough to have staying power to resist them” (Hardy 317). Both Little Father Time and Jude refuse to grow up in the modern world. However, Little Father Time has a pessimistic view of life and does not want to go on as a burden. Unlike Jude who does not have the courage to face the unfair

truths of life. But Little Father Time's death is a wake-up call for Jude to face the fact that his dreams will stay unfulfilled until his dying day. Therefore, Jude submits to his misery and accepts his lack of chances in life. On his deathbed, Jude wishes to have died when he is a newborn baby so he could have avoided all the sufferings throughout his life, "*Why died I not from the womb? Why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly... For now should I have lain still and been quiet. I should have slept: then had I been at rest!*" (379).

The tragic life of Jude does not create a great hero. His death is not as stoic as the tragic heroes of the classical tragedies or Hardy's other tragic novels. In the preface section of *The Origin of Hardy's Tragic Vision*, Rıza Öztürk claims that Jude's death is without a meaning and this death has erased the tragic heroic nature for most of the tragic heroes. And that this vain death represents the vanity of the modern world (x). Therefore, Hardy portrays the complex conflict between the society and its individual, and the painful struggles this individual has to face to survive the modern Victorian society. Jude suffers throughout the novel because of his limited free will when it comes to his education and because of his flaw that is tragic when it comes to his choice of relationships and marriages. As Thomas Hardy states "Tragedy may be created by an opposing environment either of things inherent in the universe, or of human institutions" (F. E. Hardy 274) and in the case of Jude's tragic life, he suffers partly from the institution of marriage and education in his modern society. He is situated and lost in between his will of happiness and his passionate nature that forces him to follow Sue's wishes and to do things right for Arabella. Much like Tess in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Jude has a sense of duty to repair what he has caused

(impregnating Arabella) by marrying Arabella to redeem himself from the judgment of his moral-seeking society.

Jude the Obscure is Thomas Hardy's last tragic novel that depicts the sufferings mankind through its protagonist Jude Fawley. Jude as a tragic hero suffers from inner and external conflicts in his life: his sense of duty and the social system. However, in some aspects, Sue can be a tragic heroine as well because of her defiance against the institution of marriage, and thereafter she yields to her fate and returns willingly to Phillotson as his wife. Sue is an intellectual and ambitious woman. She also lives through several struggles in her life. Sue experiences "peripeteia" and "anagnorisis" after the death of her children, she strongly believes that their death is a way of God asking her to repent for living in sin with Jude. Her lack of faith changes after the incident, "They were sin-begotten. They were sacrificed to teach me how to live! -their death was the first stage of my purification. That's why they have not died in vain!" (Hardy 341). Nevertheless, according to Bradley's point of view, the tragic protagonist must die by the end of the denouement, tragedy is "a story of exceptional calamity leading to the death of a man in high estate" (11). Sue accepts her fate and she makes a decision but she uses her children's death and chooses to live. Although Jude is not in a high position such as Macbeth or Hamlet, he is still an exceptional character. He is passionate and ambitious and those traits are defined as his error of judgment or "hamartia". Moreover, much like Shakespeare's great tragedies, Thomas Hardy entitles his tragic novels by the name of the tragic hero.

Jude Fawley loses his faith in God after his recognition that he is a victim of his current generation. The fact that his lack of chances makes Jude disbelieve in God. In his younger age, Jude is used to praying to God to travel for Christminster (Hardy

27) but after a lifetime of disappointments, Jude expresses his lack of faith in God in his last words “*Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it*” (379). Jude accepts his fate, but he refuses to believe that such a benevolent God exists while mankind is suffering due to their circumstances. Dale Kramer likens Jude to Oedipus, they are both hesitant to lead a life by their own will and choices, they both highly regard the society they live in and fear its judgment. Kramer states that Jude like Oedipus has defied the social orders and that fate whatever it may be will not offer mercy. Jude has continued his life by his own fundaments and has neglected the principles of his society. This defiance has led him to his sufferings (Kramer 163).

It is true that Jude does not accept the nature of his society since his immature age, but he does not grow out of it. Jude constantly sees himself as a victim and does not try to change how he feels about himself. Thus, he never reconciles with the conventions of his society and refuses to accept its natural laws. Hence, this deprives him of a glimpse of temporary happiness and causes him constant sufferings.

Hardy presents a young man who is driven by his ambitions to be a part of his agriculture society. As a member of the working class, Jude tries to ascend the social scale but fails due to its vanity and morality. By presenting a character like Jude, Hardy implies that his pessimism and tragic sense is a part of the conventional modern Victorian life. Therefore, *Jude the Obscure* is a tragedy of the ambitious and idealistic individual of the Victorian society.

CONCLUSION

Thomas Hardy adopts the classical concept of tragedy and reflects his own tragic vision in the form of novel. He examines the lives of his protagonists in terms of human sufferings and studies the multiple causes of their tragic lives. Hardy uses the construction of the notion of tragedy in the previous centuries such as Aristotle's point of view in the classical ages and Shakespeare's in the Elizabethan age. The construction of tragedy in Thomas Hardy's novel traces the tragic heroine/hero's life in particular from a young age to adulthood. Moreover, the focus is centred on the suffering of the protagonist. This emphasis is to produce a cathartic effect on the readers which can be identified with fear and pity since the aim of tragedy is to evoke the cathartic feelings.

In previous chapters of this thesis, Thomas Hardy uses various elements of tragedy. For example, the protagonists experience a change of fortune which is defined as the "reversal of intention" by Aristotle. At a certain point of the novel, the readers witness the downfall of the protagonists due to their error of judgment known as "hamartia". This frailty in the character of the protagonist can be shaped by their surroundings such as society and gender distinctions. For instance, in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Michael Henchard's pride, jealousy and rapid decisions are his "hamartia" that lead him to his tragic mistakes and downfall. His rash decisions cause his catastrophe and isolated death. The major influence for Henchard's ill behaviour is his character. Therefore, his sufferings and tragic life are production of his judgment, as Thomas Hardy subtitles his tragedy "A story of a man of character" referring to Henchard's main flaw of character. On the other hand, in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Tess Durbeyfield is a woman and has fewer options to deal with her sufferings. Tess

has less freedom of choice than Henchard has. Henchard is able to make his decisions willingly and freely but his proud character influences his decisions, but Tess's freedom is limited due to gender distinctions in her society. Women are placed under the scope of the moral codes of their society, and they are valued according to their chastity and innocence. Tess's main flaw is her sense of duty to please the people in her life. She feels guilty and shameful because of her past with Alec and believes it is her duty to tell Angel so that he can forgive her. Hence, Tess is punished for her sin while Angel is free for the same sin he committed in his past. The misjudgment of her society occurs because of her gender. Moreover, Tess's flaws that lead her to her tragic mistakes are also caused by her lack of experience and education. Tess does not receive the suitable amount of education that can prepare her for her future endeavours and she blames her parents for that. Thomas Hardy highlights the importance of education and the sufferings that are caused when it is lacked. Jude Fawley in *Jude the Obscure* struggles to obtain his education. He tries to educate himself to gain advantage when he travels to Christminster but unfortunately, his social rank does not allow him to do so.

The tragic lives of those protagonists differ from one another according to their society. It is indeed the same society of the late nineteenth century that Thomas Hardy focuses on in his Wessex but there are some differences. As mentioned above, Henchard has free will more than Tess because of gender distinction. Jude has less free will than Henchard because of their class distinction. Jude is from a working class and that is the main reason for him to be rejected in Christminster. Whilst Henchard is a simple hay-trusser at the beginning of his journey, he sacrifices the search for his family to build himself. Henchard builds himself in Casterbridge as a respectable hay

merchant and the mayor of the town, he gains a fine reputation and a high position before his change of fortune. Henchard's change of fortune or "reversal of intention" occurs by the factor of accident. The element of accident or "chance" is important in Shakespeare's tragedies and Thomas Hardy uses it to imply that accidents are part of life, but they do not fully affect the heroine/hero's decision. The element of accident can be a slight contributor of the tragic mistake but the main decision is made by the tragic hero himself. It is a mere chance for Tess's letter to be misplaced under the doormat. This accident causes a state of anxiety in Tess's behaviour and she scolds herself to do the right thing and confess to Angel. Jude's "reversal of intention" occurs after the death of his children accidentally in terms of the concept of "tragedy". All of these tragic heroes experience a form of recognition or "peripeteia" eventually. They realize that their sufferings are outcomes of their flaws and those flaws are shaped by their surroundings. Tess realizes that her life is vain because of the moral values that she should abide by in order not to create an image of a sinful woman in her society. On the other hand, Jude realizes that he is a victim of the limitations or exclusivity of his society in terms of class.

In terms of tragedy of the classical and medieval ages, the tragic heroine/hero dies after her/his catastrophe. Henchard decides to punish himself by alienating himself from his daughter and dies stoically alone in the country-side. Tess dies differently. Her death is presented as the heroic classical death. Tess's life is taken as a punishment and a sacrifice to her society. The meaning of "tragedy" is derived or originated from the goat-sacrifice ritual in the first centuries by the Romans and Greeks. However, Jude Fawley's death is not as heroic or stoic as Tess's death due to his passive character and behaviour in the novel. Jude submits to his miserable fate

during his life. He does not defy the social laws or the moral codes as Henchard and Tess do in their lives. However, Jude's fate and life are still tragic and he is still a victim of his generation.

In the classical ages, the Roman and Greek dramatists link the divine justice to the fate of the tragic hero. However, the Elizabethans link it to the human flaws of the character. Thomas Hardy collects both concepts in his tragic novels. In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Hardy enunciates that Tess is under the clemency of God and refers to God as the "President of Immortals". Hardy indicates that every individual shall be subjected to the poetic justice. Yet, Michael Henchard's fate and tragic life are only the outcomes of his character. God does not have a part in his sufferings. On the other hand, Jude loses his faith because he does not see any slight mercy from his creator. Hardy demonstrates the idea that the scales of justice cannot always be evenly weighed to the individuals in the modern age.

In the three novels studied in this thesis, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*, Thomas Hardy posits the concept of the Aeschylean, Euripidean and Sophoclean tragedy. He applies Aristotle's construction of the tragic in his novels. He reflects the human sufferings through the lives of Henchard, Tess and Jude that are outcomes of various factors in accordance with their environment. Thomas Hardy's tragic vision in his novels is a mirror of the complexities of the modern life. Through the tragic lives of his protagonists, he depicts the loss of faith and the importance of the moral codes for the society. Hardy addresses the indifferent nature of humanity and that "nature" itself is merciless to the sufferings of mankind due to the moral requirements of the modern Victorian society in his tragic novels and heroes.

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