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(The) philosophy of Thomas Hardy as revealed in his novels ..

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Boston University
BOSTON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THOMAS HARDY
AS REVEALED IN HIS NOVELS

Submitted by

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(A.B., Harvard, 1900)

In partial fulfilment of requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts

1931
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THE PHILOSOPHY OF THOMAS HARDY
AS REVEALED IN HIS NOVELS

I
CHANGING FORCES IN THE AGE IN WHICH HARDY LIVED

1. Romanticism ushered in as the eighteenth century closes

To understand fully the backgrounds of Thomas Hardy's philosophy it is necessary to review the influences and tendencies that marked the thought of his age. The close of the eighteenth century had ushered in an era of romanticism and revolt against scientific ideals, culminating in the French Revolution. In France, Rousseau; in England, Coleridge and Wordsworth had championed this revolt. Kant had opposed mechanistic science and had reincarnated the romantic ideal of "faith". The middle-class proponents of the French Revolution were opposed by the conservatives, whose philosophy "was developed to justify the position of the privileged classes under the old régime, the Court, the Church, and the great body of landowners." 1

2. Conservatism as exemplified by de Maistre's philosophy

The viewpoint of these conservatives is perhaps most clearly seen in the philosophy of Joseph de Maistre. He was profoundly affected by the French Revolution.

"He simply could not understand it, was so utterly irrational, so powerful, so fascinating. Nothing could

1 From Making of the Modern Mind, by John H. Randall, Jr.
prevail against it, yet its leaders were rascals, foolish, mad. It must be the hand of God, the God of the cruel and ruthless universe, the God of things as they are! Generalizing from the Revolution, d-Maistre saw all human history as the operation of great forces quite beyond all human control, playing with men as with puppets."

3. Effect of Mechanism and Scientific Knowledge in the nineteenth century

The nineteenth century, in its philosophy, was affected by the tremendous growth of mechanism and the broadening scope of scientific knowledge.

"Following the methods and the principles of scientific investigation, the modern philosopher can arrive at nothing in the universe aside from man that appears to have human interests and human aspirations at heart. In all the reaches of our telescopes and our microscopes there is nowhere discoverable the slightest trace of anything like man, any Friend behind phenomena, any God who cares, any principle that guarantees man success in his struggles and endeavors. So far as the eye of science can see, man is alone in a universe in which his very appearance is a kind of cosmic accident."  

1 From Making of the Modern Mind, by John H. Randall, Jr.

2 ibid.
Religion had no encouragement from science to continue in its adherence to the belief in a definitely located Heaven, a God majestically enthroned, and a Father dispensing gifts to His children. "If a man continues to believe today in what his forbears trusted, it is by faith, and by faith alone, that he can justify himself." The realization of this cold fact drove many men to despair.

4. Philosophic reactions: Schopenhauer

The pessimism that eventuated from this disaffection is reflected in the philosophy of the early nineteenth century. "Seldom had the problem of evil been flung so vividly into the face of philosophy and religion. Was this almost universal calamity (the French Revolution) the vengeance of a just God on the Age of Reason and unbelief? Was it a call to the penitent intellect to bend before the ancient virtues of faith, hope, and charity? So Schlegel thought, and Novalis, and Chateaubriand, and De Musset, and Southey, and Wordsworth; and they turned back to the old faith like wasted prodigals happy to be home again."

But not so did Schopenhauer react. To him Nature is a dumb, irrational force which has formed both the world and its inhabitants. This force he called "Will". Here are a few of

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1 From Making of the Modern Mind, by J.H. Randall, Jr.
2 From The Story of Philosophy, by Will Durant
his reflections:

"All Will springs from need, that is, from lack, that is from suffering. Fulfilment puts an end to this; but for every wish that is fulfilled there are at least ten that are denied. . . . Therefore, so long as our minds are filled with Will, so long as we are the prey of desires with their unceasing hopes and fears, so long are we subjects of Will, we shall never find lasting happiness nor peace."

The action of Will is unceasing but absolutely futile. Moreover, since pain is at the basis of its action, life affords no satisfaction and death is to be welcomed. He advises that we devote ourselves to art and charity, that we may the better forget our troubles and help our fellow-sufferers do likewise. This is his gospel of pessimism.

Harsh as this philosophy is, it is well to remember that we owe to Schopenhauer no small debt for arousing men's minds to the actuality of life, its needs, its sufferings. Hitherto the optimism bred of romanticism had looked with indifference upon human sufferings. "It was well that Schopenhauer should force philosophy to face the raw reality of evil, and should point the nose of thought to the human tasks of alleviation. It has been harder, since his day, for philosophy to live in the unreal atmosphere of a logic-chopping metaphysics; thinkers begin to realize that thought without action is a disease."

1 From Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung, by Schopenhauer
2 From The Story of Philosophy, by Will Durant
II
PERSONAL BACKGROUNDS

1. Hardy's interest in the anthropomorphic

When Thomas Hardy was a baby he was one day found asleep in his crib, with a snake coiled upon his breast. I can but feel that there is prophetic significance in this weird happening. A progressive school educator would have seen in it the birth of a Freudian complex. Dorset, the child's birthplace, is a lonely and silent spot; the environing heath casts its sombre gloom over the land.

"It was a place perfectly accordant with man's nature—neither ghastly, hateful, nor ugly; neither commonplace, unmeaning, nor tame; but, like man, slighted and enduring; and withal singularly colossal and mysterious in its swarthy monotony."

As a child, Hardy was deeply impressed by the cruelty of Nature as well as by her beauty. Herein is "a contradiction that remained with him throughout life. Like Clem Yeobright, he must have peopled the heaths with their ancient inhabitants."

This interest in the anthropomorphic lasted through life. In his notes are frequent references to abnormal bits of gossip he picked up.

"The doctor insisted on keeping the dead baby on the mantel in a jar... A wizard kept toads' legs in a bag; some would twitch... Saw a woman beheaded...

1 From The Early Life of Thomas Hardy, by Florence E. Hardy
2 From The Return of the Native, Chapter 1
3 From Hardy, the Poet and Novelist, by Samuel C. Chew
at the Fair . . . Place where man murdered. Horse said to cry out like child when put there . . . Carpenter made coffin too short. Someone said must have made for himself. Thereupon he fell dead . . . Found skeleton when digging cellar for Max Gate . . . During funeral cows looked mournfully over wall and at end clattered their horns."

In reviewing the biography written by Hardy's wife, Virginia Woolf has pointed out that the use of this abnormal material has greatly enhanced the author's art:

"...The obstinate conviction that made him, for all his efforts, an outsider, that faculty for putting the telescope to his eye and seeing strange, grim pictures - if he went to a First Aid lecture he saw children in the street behind a skeleton, if he went to a French play he saw a cemetery behind the players' heads - all this fecundity and pressure of the imagination brought at last not a compromise but a solution. 'The simply natural (quoting Hardy) is interesting no longer. The much decried, mad, late-Turner rendering is now necessary to create my interest. The exact truth as to material fact ceases to be of importance in art. I want to see the deeper reality underlying the scenic, the expression of what are sometimes called abstract imaginings.' "

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1 From *The Early Life of Thomas Hardy*, By Florence E. Hardy, pages 147, 148, 153, 205, 212, 266

2. Hardy's studies: the classics, architecture, philosophy

When Hardy was a child his mother induced him to study the classics. Before he was ten he had read Dryden's Virgil, and soon after this he was familiar with Latin and French. He became deeply interested in Greek tragedy.

Hedgecock said that Hardy's "destiny was settled by Sophocles and the architect's office." This he explained by showing that Hardy took the drama and not the epic for his model. In Hedgecock's opinion "Hardy has produced the greatest dramatic novels in the language." We are primarily concerned with Hardy's philosophy, but inasmuch as this is intimately interwoven with his art, as will later be shown, we can see the force of this opinion.

Hardy studied architecture at Dorchester (the Casterbridge of the novels) in the years 1856-1860. "His manhood began with artistic training, and with the training in the art which is the type of severity of form - ecclesiastical architecture."

But the greatest influence in his later work came from Hardy's study of philosophy. The effect of Sophocles appears in the form of his writing: "the grasp of the principle of Total Effect and the ability to universalize the application of a contracted series of events." He said that in writing the

1 From An Hour with Thomas Hardy, By H.F. Lefèvre (Living Age, Vol. 325, page 93)
2 From The London Times: The English Novel and Thomas Hardy (Living Age, Vol. 270, page 650)
3 From Thomas Hardy: A Critical Study, by Lascelles Abercrombie
4 From Thomas Hardy, by Samuel C. Chew
novel *The Well Beloved* he used a plan that he had conceived when a young man, interested in the Platonic idea. One of his notes, written when he was writing *Tess*, shows an attempted parallelism with the case of Clytaemnestra and Iphegenia. As will be shown later, Hardy studied and was influenced by the philosophy of Comte, Hegel, Schopenhauer, and Hauptmann.

III

HARDY'S PHILOSOPHY

1. *Is art or philosophy paramount with Hardy?*

From the welter of criticism of Hardy's work and from such of his notes as are available I find it very difficult to evaluate his philosophy. Whether the building of his works on the structure of Greek and German philosophy is part and parcel of what might be called architectural artistry, or whether he is purely a philosophical propagandist, is a question too enigmatic to reach an easy solution; and the most eminent critics seem to split on this issue. It is to be regretted that his persistent refusal to sanction the writing of his biography and the inconclusiveness of the biography recently produced by Mrs. Hardy leave us still with no answer having finality. As Mr. Edgett of The Boston Transcript said, in reviewing the second volume of

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1 From *The Later Years of Thomas Hardy*, by Florence E. Hardy
2 ibid.
Mrs. Hardy's writing, "Such biographical memorabilia as these are important and well worth publishing, but it is to be hoped that some day we may have from an expert hand a complete narrative and critical account of the great novelist-poet's life and work." 1

2. The testimony of Hardy's notes and correspondence

Fragmentary notes throw some light on the question just propounded. In the preface to a new edition of his works, Hardy said he had no philosophy and that his ideas are to be taken as "mere impressions of the moment". 2

In one of his notes he says:

"After reading various philosophical systems, and being struck with their contradictions and futilities, I have come to this: Let every man make a philosophy for himself out of his own experience. He will be able to escape using terms and phraseology from earlier philosophers, but let him avoid adopting their theories if he values his own mental life. Let him remember the fate of Coleridge, and save years of labour by working out his own views as given him by his surroundings." 3

Yet he distinctly owned his indebtedness to the other philosophers, for in 1911 he wrote to Dr. Helen Garwood: "My philosophy is a development from Schopenhauer through later philosophers." 4

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1 From All the Later Years of Thomas Hardy, by Edwin Edgett, in the Boston Transcript, May 17, 1930
2 From The Later Years of Thomas Hardy, by Florence E. Hardy
3 Quoted in The Pessimism of Thomas Hardy, by P.T. Forsyth, in Living Age, Vol. 275, page 458
4 Quoted in Christianity and Naturalism, by Robert Shafer
We have seen something of Schopenhauer's doctrine of the Will. In a letter to Edward Wright, under date of June 2, 1907, Hardy explains how he adapted this theory to his own philosophy:

"I have used in my verse, and to some extent in my prose, a philosophy which I have denoted as being a generalized form of what the thinking world has generally come to adopt. That the Unconscious Will of the Universe is growing aware of itself I believe I may claim as my own idea solely - at which I arrived by reflecting that what has already taken place in a fraction of the whole (that is, so much of the world as has become conscious) is likely to take place in the mass; and there being no Will outside the mass - that is, the Universe - the whole Will becomes conscious thereby; and ultimately, it is to be hoped, sympathetic.

"This theory, too, seems to me to settle the question of Free-Will vs. Necessity. The will of man is, according to it, neither wholly free nor wholly unfree. When swayed by the Universal Will (which he mostly must be as a subservient part of it) he is not individually free; but whenever it happens that all the rest of the Great Will is in equilibrium, the minute portion called one person's will is free, just as the performer's fingers are free to go on playing the pianoforte of themselves when he talks or thinks of something else and the head does not rule them."  

1 From The Later Years of Thomas Hardy, by Florence E. Hardy
Writing to the magazine "Academy and Literature", he criticizes Schopenhauer and other philosophers:

"The original difficulty recognized by thinkers like Schopenhauer, Hartmann, Haeckel, etc. and by most of the persons called pessimists, remains unsurmounted. Pain has been, and pain is; and no injustice can be atoned for by her future generosity, so long as we consider Nature to be, or to stand for, unlimited power. The exoneration of an omnipotent mother by her retrospective justice becomes an absurdity when we ask what made the foregone injustice necessary to her Omnipotence?

"So you cannot save her good name except by assuming one of two things: that she is blind and not a judge of her actions, or that she is an automaton, and unable to control them."

Another of his notes shows further critical attitude toward current philosophers:

"Have been thinking over the dictum of Hegel - that the real is the rational and the rational the real - that real pain is compatible with a formal pleasure - that the idea is all, etc., but it doesn't help much. These venerable philosophers seem to start wrong; they cannot get away from a prepossession that the world must somehow have been made to be a comfortable place for man."

1 From The Later Years of Thomas Hardy, by Florence E. Hardy
2 From The Early Life of Thomas Hardy, by Florence E. Hardy
Hardy was greatly influenced in the formulating of his theories, by the ideas held by Leslie Stephen, with whom he became intimate. Mrs. Hardy tells how her husband got a note to call one night on Stephen. Stephen told Hardy that he had wasted time on systems of religion and metaphysics, and that the new theory of vortex rings had a "staggering fascination for him."

At a later date, Stephen wrote, asking him to join the Rationalistic Press Association. Hardy replied:

"Though I am interested in the Society I feel it to be one which would naturally compose itself rather of writers on philosophy, science, and history, than of writers of imaginative works, whose effect depends largely on detachment. By belonging to a philosophical association imaginative writers place themselves in this difficulty, that they are misread as propagandists when they mean simply to be artistic and delineative."

A perfect storm of adverse criticism arose on the appearance of Tess, the occasion for it being the concluding lines in the book: "'Justice' was done, and the President of the Immortals (in Aeschylean phrase) had ended his sport with Tess."

Hardy was denounced as an atheist. Mrs. Hardy says he was much disturbed over what seemed to him a most unfair attitude toward him and said he had simply used a literal translation of Aeschylus. He wrote to one critic:

1 From The Early Life of Thomas Hardy, by Florence E. Hardy
2 From The Later Years of Thomas Hardy, by Florence E. Hardy
"I allegorized the forces opposed to the heroine as a personality (a method not unusual in imaginative prose or poetry), by use of a well-known trope, explained in that venerable work, Campbell's 'Philosophy of Rhetoric', as 'one in which life, perception, activity, design, passion, or any property of sentient beings, is attributed to things inanimate'. Under this species of criticism, if an author were to say, 'Aeolus maliciously tugged at her garments, and tore her hair in his wrath', the sapient critic would no doubt announce that author's evil creed to be that the wind is 'a powerful being endowed with the baser human passions,' etc., etc. However, I must put up with it, and say as Parrhasius of Ephesus said about his pictures: 'There is nothing that men will not find fault with.'"

In 1920 the newspapers reported Alfred Noyes as having said that Hardy's philosophy is one that told readers the Power behind the Universe is an imbecile jester. Hardy wrote Noyes asking for an explanation and Noyes replied that his full speech had not been given. Hardy rejoined by saying that there was a difference between the expression of fancy and the expression of belief (referring to his own "philosophy"). He said he had no belief in a malign Power. "The Cause of Things is neither

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1 From The Later Years of Thomas Hardy by Florence E. Hardy
moral nor immoral, but unmoral." Noyes replied that he would like to correct any errors he might have made. He said he had never "been able to conceive a Cause of Things that could be less in any respect than the things caused". Hardy answered: "The Scheme of Things is, indeed, incomprehensible; and there I suppose we must leave it - perhaps for the best. Knowledge must be terrible."

3. The attitude of the critics

It has been observed that the critics are divided on the question whether art or philosophy is dominant in Hardy's writing. Braybrooke says that Hardy starts with philosophy and frames his characters to fit. At the other extreme is Abercrombie, who makes form paramount and says Hardy does not become the life he deals with. The fatality that appears in his works is to Abercrombie only a tribute to their perfect unity. Chew admits the prominence of philosophy but says it is "the characters and not the author speaking . . . Arabella is the embodiment of Schopenhauer's view of women . . . "Father Time" is von Hauptmann." In between is Lionel Johnson, who finds perfect art in Hardy's writings, but who recognizes the "inartistic and obscure" philosophy that prevents a work like Tess from being a true tragedy.

1 From Thomas Hardy and His Philosophy, by Patrick Braybrooke
2 From Thomas Hardy, a Critical Study, by Lascelles Abercrombie
3 From Hardy the Poet and Novelist, by S.C. Chew
4 From The Art of Thomas Hardy, by Lionel P. Johnson
Granted that there is a persistent philosophy in Hardy's work, the interpretations of the critics are most conflicting. Hardy thought himself an evolutionary meliorist and resented being called a pessimist. Bates goes so far as to call him a "heroic optimist," who "shows human nature redeemed by love." Weygant says Hardy "does not see the world going to the dogs; his people are full of the zest of life." Follett views him as a pessimist who "in the 70's found humanity a sorry spectacle yet a lark, in the 80's found it a forlorn hope, and in the 90's a desperate failure . . . It is incomprehensible to find this a world in which men are destroyed through virtue." Baybrooke goes further and says: "His theology is futile. That God or the power behind the world should be merely a kind of force treating the world as a joke for its own crude sports cannot but lead to the most dangerous and detestable pessimism."

The critics further disagree in labeling this philosophy. Baybrooke calls his philosophy "a subtle and dangerous determinism which postulates a detestable type of deity." Chew says he reached a position that is not determinism. "The suffering of men plays little part in his writing; he looks at the worst as well as at the best." Cross calls him a naturalist, but "a naturalist poet, who clothes disagreeable narrative in most
pleasing language,"as distinguished from "an extremist, like Aristotle, who let style look out for itself."

4. Is there any "conclusion of the matter"?

It must be evident from what has already been said that Hardy himself is inconsistent in his own comments on his works. First he says he has no philosophy, merely "impressions of the moment"; then he attributes his philosophy to "a development from Schopenhauer through later philosophers." He calls the will of man "neither wholly free nor wholly unfree", yet it is hard to find this to be true of his characters. Comment on this, however, is reserved until we discuss his works in more detail. If he has merely "allegorized the forces opposed to the heroine"; if he maintains that there is "a difference between the expression of fancy and the expression of belief"; if he writes Alfred Noyes that he "has no belief in a Malign Power", it is one thing. But we cannot forget that he wrote the following:

"(Nature) is blind and not a judge of her actions, or she is an automaton and unable to control them."

"If law itself had consciousness, how the aspect of its creatures would terrify it, fill it with remorse."

"This planet does not supply the materials for happiness to higher existences."

"I have been looking for God fifty years, and I think that if he had existed I should have discovered him."

1 From Development of the English Novel, by Wilbur L. Cross
"Pessimism is playing the sure game. You cannot lose; you may gain. It is the only view of life in which you can never be disappointed."

As for the attitude of the critics, it must be realized that their judgment is merely their individual interpretation of his writing and that no finality can be reached as long as there is the possibility that Hardy’s "philosophy" is what he has denominated "fancy" rather than "belief". My own conclusion, therefore, must come through an interpretation of his works rather than through an essay to evaluate his personal views.

5. A possible explanation of his "philosophy".

It will be remembered that I pointed out, at the outset, that the nineteenth century philosophy was essentially mechanistic and that religion was left in a chaotic state when science was thought to have dethroned God and disillusioned men in their primitive theological beliefs. Hardy fell under the spell of this mechanistic philosophy, although the influence of Schopenhauer and his gospel of pessimism did not reach England until after Hardy was well launched on his writing career. "Arnold was groping and perplexed, anxious to retain emotionally the ideas and hopes that they repudiate intellectually. Harriet Martineau and George Eliot, instead of being swept off their feet by the rushing tide, proposed to substitute for the lost cause of orthodoxy the religion of humanity."

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1 From Hardy’s notes in Mrs. Hardy’s two biographies
2 From Hardy the Poet and Novelist, by S.C. Chew
Hardy, however, whose outlook was more completely shadowed, found no such refuge. He once admitted that his own nature was "vocal at tragedy rather than comedy". Chew has thus pictured his viewpoint:

"From the known microcosm (man or human nature as an epitome of the great world) of the poet's individuality he looks out upon the macrocosm (the universe), the Great Unknown. He finds no hint of orderliness in the universe; no sign of direction is apparent, no evidence of plan. Thus there begins the contrast, expressed so often in his works, between the unweaving Cause and the individual human consciousness that has somehow been evolved in certain of the creatures of that Cause. Very impressive is his cry for a first Cause, even malign, in place of the purposelessness of 'crass Casualty'."

Hardy's study of ecclesiastical architecture had emphasized this demand for orderliness and the peculiarly sombre aspect of his nature tended to make him receptive to naturalistic philosophy. "The naturalistic point of view has always had a strong attraction for men of secular, sensuous temperament." The theory of evolution, which was at just this time in incipient bloom, showed nature as ruthless and devoid of feeling. All these influences fed the fire within Hardy's mind.

Then, too, Hardy looked about him and saw the primitive people with whom his life had been associated, discarding their faith in

1 From Hardy the Poet and Novelist, by S.C. Chew
2 From Christianity and Naturalism, by Robert Shafer
revealed religion and reverting to paganism. "The Wessex poor believed in fatalism. The village tragedies owe half their tragedy to this impassive patience of men filled with strong passions."

In the actual life of the people Hardy seemed to find ample evidence of the validity of those philosophical views he had formed from reading and contemplation. What more natural thing than that he should utilize all this material in his novels? No wonder Meredith found in Hardy's first works "a twilight view of life".

On the appearance of Somerset Maugham's work Cakes and Ale the rumor was floated that the author was presenting a veiled picture of Hardy's marital life. It had been previously hinted that the occasion for Hardy's pessimistic philosophy was his great unhappiness in his early married life. Henry Van Dyke had mentioned it in his comments on Hardy but said "this was not wholly adequate to explain the sombre tone of his novels." Rebecca West has convincingly refuted this rumor in a recent magazine article. She says:

"Mr. and Mrs. Hardy are utterly unlike Mr. and Mrs. Driffield, though some idiot rumor is running around. To imagine Thomas Hardy ever having been a Bohemian who shot the moon, leaving landlord and butcher and baker unpaid in the company of a melting wanton of a wife, would be rather more difficult than to imagine Mrs. Edith Wharton as having spent her golden youth in the chorus of the Folies Bergères. He was, in point of fact, an intensely, even smugly, respectable little man. He came half from the yeoman class and

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1 From The Art of Thomas Hardy, by Lionel Johnson
2 From The Man behind the Book, by Henry Van Dyke
half from the laboring class; and was very eager to be above criticism and range himself firmly with the yeoman class . . His first wife was a thought too far this side of wantonness. She was reputed to have said, 'Try to remember, Thomas Hardy, that you married a lady.' Better far had it been for her, since she had not been vouchsafed the vision of that which should have kept her humble, had she been put in her place by a recollection of having said 'Yes' once when she should not."

IV

THE PHILOSOPHY IN HIS NOVELS

The steady development of a naturalistic element in Hardy's novels and the pronounced determinism in his subsequent poetic work _The Dynasts_ afford ample evidence of the significant part philosophy plays in his writing. The backgrounds of this philosophy have already been fully presented. It remains to trace the steps in this treatment of life as the succeeding novels unfold a picture that becomes consistently more sombre and tragic.

1. Desperate Remedies: the struggle between will and destiny

I have pictured the influence on Hardy of mechanistic philosophy and have shown how as a young man he was given to morbid queryings about life. Realizing the depressing influence of this

1 From _Blessed are the pure in heart_, by Rebecca West, in the _Outlook_.

From _The Art of Thomas Hardy_, by Bronel Johnson
melancholy subjectivism, George Meredith, to whom Hardy's first work was submitted for criticism, advised the young man to quit introspection and try his hand at a novel of intrigue. Thus came to light the melodramatic novel Desperate Remedies, with its three mysteries which ingeniously eventuate in two tragic deaths and one happy marriage. The story is the picture of a struggle between will and destiny. Cytherea deserved happiness: she is loyal to her brother and to her lover. But the villain Manston is destined to win her away from both. Even her marriage day is shadowed by gloom. But one thing is to be noted: at the end villainy is punished and the true lovers united. There is justice in nature. Conscience, however, has no part in the tragedy. After all, Hardy is here writing pure melodrama, so why charge him with serious motives other than with violently breaking away from Victorian conventionality?

2. Under the Greenwood Tree: wholesome romanticism

As yet Hardy has not come under the influence of Schopenhauer and his pessimism. In this novel we have a pastoral romance. The simple, crude manners and quaint humor of the country folk are charmingly delineated, especially in the picture of the Mellstock choir as they serenade and of the dance at the trainter's party. There is little save the jealous advances of Mr. Shiner to keep the course of true love between Dick and Fanny from running smoothly.

3. A Pair of Blue Eyes: Human action fettered by cause and effect

There is, in this book, so much of the melodramatic and romantic that on first reading it I was led to wonder whether as yet Hardy
had become serious in his philosophical attitude. Such situations as
that on the cliff when Stephen's boat arrives just at the tragic
moment that Knight and Elfride fall over the edge of the cliff, and
Elfride saves Knight by a rope made of her torn dress; or when El-
fride points out to Knight that they are sitting on the very tomb
of one she has previously loved; or when Knight and Stephen are
taken by surprise at seeing the funeral procession of Elfride, are
pure melodrama. We find in the work, however, a very definite ele-
ment of fate. At the outset Elfride, as she reads a book, "began to
suspect of the issue, and dreaded it - as an inexorable fate with
regard to the imaginary beings therein concerned - as she dreaded
a wasp's sting in regard to herself." Throughout the book, Elfride's
attitude is weak: in her deception in the elopement with Stephen,
in her easy yielding to Henry Knight and repeated lying to him
about her earlier love affair, and in her playing into the hands
of Lord Luxellian. She is her own enemy, yet she is shown to be the
victim of circumstances and her will is hampered by fatalistic
bogeys, as when the crazy Mrs. Jethway hovers over her with dire
warnings.

Here, too, nature for the first time is shown as hostile.
"To those hardy, weather-beaten individuals who pass the greater
part of their days and nights out-of-doors, Nature seems to have
moods - predilections for certain deeds at certain times. . .
In her unfriendly moments there seems a cruel fun in her tricks -
a feline playfulness begotten by an anticipated pleasure in swol-
lowing the victim."

1 From A Pair of Blue Eyes
4. Far from the Madding Crowd: Fate in control

Bathsheba Everdene is absolutely unable to act independently and press ahead to the goal before her. Gifted with an abundance of will power and a managerial instinct, as is shown in the efficiency with which she handles the inherited estate, she is a mere puppet in the hands of Balderwood and York. She vacillates and loses. In the end, however, she marries the meek, simple-minded, loyal Gabriel, and all ends well, with villainy punished.

Hardy's attitude toward Providence, which is to feature prominently as time goes on, is shown in what he says about Troy: "To turn about would have been hard enough under the greatest Providential encouragement; but to find that Providence, far from helping him into a new course, or showing any wish that he might adopt one, actually jeered his first trembling and critical attempt in that kind, was more than nature could bear."

5. The Return of the Native: the despotism of Will of Force

With this novel comes the very definite formulation of Hardy's thesis: that the human will is powerless against the Will of Force. Schopenhauer's influence is now evident, although the acidity of his pessimism has not as yet come to the fore. In the case of Diggory Venn and Thomasin Yeobright there is complete frustration; there is nothing to evidence assertiveness on their part. Venn seems to me like one of the Russian peasants in Reymont's The Peasants, an expression of absolute futility. I doubt not, however, that the picture is true to a certain type of Dorset reddlemen. But in Eustacia

1 From Far from the Madding Crowd
Vye and Wildeve is no lack of the will-to-do; and in Clym Yeobright, the "Native", the background of travel and all the aspirations that education fosters, there is every reason to expect vigorous self-assertion. Undoubtedly Hardy senses this vigorous native will and regards their actions as a zest for existence. But over against all this he superimposes a naturalistic Will of Force, inherent in the very soil of Egdon Heath, and then crushes them under this ruthless Juggernaut. Superbly tragic is the picture of the influence of the heath. You cannot help feeling its sombre sway. "Egdon Heath was her (Eustacia's) Hades... Her appearance accorded well with this rebelliousness... An environment which would have made a contented woman a poet, a suffering woman a devotee, a pious woman a psalmist, even a giddy woman thoughtful, made a rebellious woman saturnine... The gloomy corner into which accident as much as indiscretion had brought this woman might have led even a moderate partisan to feel that she had cogent reasons for asking the Supreme Power by what right a being of such exquisite finish had been placed in circumstances calculated to make of her charms a curse rather than a blessing."

But not content with having merely this sombre influence of nature affect Eustacia, Hardy adds the grim force of Fate. "Eustacia laid the fault upon the shoulders of some indistinct, colossal Prince of the World, who had framed her situation and ruled her lot."

Finally, to add still more to the gravity of the forces set

1 From The Return of the Native
2 Ibid.
against Eustacia, Hardy has her cry out against Heaven itself: "O the cruelty of putting me into this ill-conceived world! I was capable of much; but I have been injured and blighted and crushed by things beyond my control! O, how hard it is of Heaven to devise such tortures for me, who have done no harm to Heaven at all!"

Clym joins in this passionate diatribe against God: "If there is any justice in God let Him kill me now. He has nearly blinded me, but that is not enough. If He would only strike me with more pain I would believe in Him forever!"

A perfect piece of realistic art, indeed! But why inject on almost every page the doctrine of despair? It would almost seem as if "Hardy takes savage delight in suggesting that we are pawns, unable to obey rational instincts, swayed by treacherous emotions."

6. A Laodicean: positivism

Here is a story expressing Hardy's cynical attitude toward the religion of his day. In Revelations 3: 14-16 are these words:

"And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. So because thou art lukewarm, I will spew thee out of my mouth."

In Hardy's notes is one written at the time this novel appeared:

"If Comte had introduced Christ among the worthies in his calendar it would have made Positivism tolerable to thousands who, from position, family connection, or early education, now decry what in their heart of hearts they

1 From The Return of the Native
2 ibid.
3 From Thomas Hardy and his Philosophy, by Braybrooke
hold to contain the germs of a true system. It would have enabled them to modulate gently into the new religion by deceiving themselves with the sophistry that they still continued one-quarter Christians, or one-twentieth, as the case might be: This as a matter of policy, without which no religion succeeds in making way.

The novel is not a part of the sequence in which is being developed Hardy's major thesis, but as a study in positivism it is most interesting. Paula Power is a study in Laodiceanism. First she exhibits it in her refusal to conform to the strictures of her father's religion, and she balks at baptism. Then she displays the same indifference in her attitude toward her lovers, remaining unconcerned when they are in the throes of disappointment.

7. Two on a Tower: occult fatalism

The foreshadowings of malign fatalism in The Return of the Native become an integral factor in this work. Hardy's conception is unique; he purposed "to set the emotional history of two infinitesimal lives against the stupendous background of the stellar universe, and to impart to readers the sentiment that of these two contrasting magnitudes the smaller might be the greater to them as men."

While this alignment of stellar and human forces emphasizes occult fatalism, it should be noted that the human element is magnified, a perspective that is reversed in Hardy's later work.

1 From The Early Life of Thomas Hardy, by Florence E. Hardy
2 Quoted in The Novelists of Yesterday, by Follett

Some Modern Novelists
The old tower on Lady Viviette's estate, which Swithin St. Cleve uses for his almost sinister astronomical study, is a haunting element in the story. It brings together and in clashing juxtaposition three sets of forces. First there is the meeting of representatives of the titled and lowly social classes. Here is the fatalistic barrier of caste, ruining the careers of Lady Viviette and the Bishop, on the one hand, and of Swithin on the other hand. Again there is the clashing of the occult and the human, its fatalistic influence touching the lives of Swithin and Lady Viviette. Finally there is the clash between science and the Church, erecting barriers that help to ruin all three characters. In every instance Hardy has overdrawn the picture, especially in the case of the Bishop of Melchester.

I am of the opinion that Hardy's major issue with life is a religious one. This book and A Laodicean present caricatures of clerics, and in this story both the Established Church bishop and the Non-Conformist preacher are satirized. Mrs. Hardy claims that Mr. Hardy never really lost his faith in religion. When the Bishop of Wakefield angrily burned up a copy of Tess, she said: "If the Bishop could have known Hardy he would have found a man whose views of the vital facts of religion hardly differ from his."\(^1\) Hardy's own views, however, as expressed in his notes, would seem to suggest an attitude of disbelief in the "vital facts of religion."

\(^1\) From The Later Years of Thomas Hardy, by Florence E. Hardy
8. The Mayor of Casterbridge: introducing determinism

In view of the defense of Hardy's religion just quoted, it is interesting to note the view expressed by Joyce Kilmer in his introduction to The Mayor of Casterbridge:

"Hardy's God is the stern, avenging Deity of the Hebrews, the Deity worshipped by the sternest Puritans. It would be no misnomer to call Hardy's philosophy a Christian fatalism... There is an evangelical cast of Hardy's mind. He is so intent on announcing his discovery that mankind is fallible, unhappy, helpless, undesirable. The people of his stories are so virtueless that the reader can readily believe that Hardy is determined to show that they deserve no pity from the extraordinary Deity who is also the creature of Hardy's imagination."

I can see how Hardy may have found religious experience a stern Puritan Deity, but I fail to find any semblance of a Hebrew Puritan God in the deterministic Force that drives out of Henchard every yearning for the higher life. No, it is pure determinism that is the motivating force behind every scene in this book, save those few intervals of happiness that Donald Fairfrae and Elizabeth Jane enjoy. How quickly, though, the shadows fall! In the concluding words of the story, "happiness was but the occasional episode in a general drama of pain."

What have been tragedies in the earlier stories become epics in this and the succeeding novels. For this is the study of a

1 From the Introduction to The Mayor of Casterbridge, by Joyce Kilmer, in The Modern Library.
central character and resolves itself into a psychological analysis of the awful tempest within the soul of Henchard. Himself is his worst enemy. Naturally forceful, proud, and passionate his every effort is fated to work toward his own destruction. Beginning with the bargaining off of his wife and continuing through his being trickily outdone in business, having her whom he had supposed his daughter wrested from him, being publicly disgraced and losing all social standing through the gossip of a wily old furmity woman, and finally when he penitently comes to give a present to Elizabeth, being rebuffed, it is one defeat after another - he has dashed himself against the stone wall of Fate. "But the ingenious machinery contrived by the Gods for reducing human possibilities of amelioration to a minimum - which arranges that wisdom to do shall come pari passu with the departure of the zest for doing - stood in the way of all that. He had no wish to make an arena a second time of a world that had become a mere painted scene for him."

9. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*: a study in pessimism

We have now reached the point in the progress of Hardy's philosophy where the influence of Schopenhauer is regnant, and where the atmosphere of pessimism beclouds life. And we have reached a turning-point. Forsaking what has been called "objectivity", wherein human beings are sufficiently detached to express to a greater or less degree their own personality, Hardy now subjugates their will to a merciless, inhuman Super-Will, leaving to them the choice of

1 From *The Mayor of Casterbridge*
annihilation or resort to quietism. Further than this, the study becomes subjective and we now find pessimism so openly injected as to leave little doubt that it is the author himself speaking. Representations of the Church which hitherto had been satirical now become subtly cynical. The Rev. Mr. Clare's dogmatic theology is pitted against Angel's pagan philosophy, and in the picture of Alec D'Urberville as a reformed Dissenting preacher is a grossly cynical picture of evangelical religion that is not outdone in Elmer Gantry. Judged in the light of the times (and recognizing the conservatism of English people), the picture must be greatly exaggerated. This exaggeration, to be sure, may purposely have been intended to set off by contrast the unconventionality and purity of Tess herself. Yet Tess aimed to cling to conventional religion. "She thought of the child consigned to the nethermost corner of Hell, as its double doom for lack of baptism and lack of legitimacy." But every effort on her part to secure the consolation of organized religion was thwarted. Of this Hardy pessimistically says:

"If before going to the D'Urbervilles' she had rigorously moved under the guidance of sundry gnomic texts and phrases known to her and to the world in general, no doubt she would never have been imposed upon ... She might have ironically said to God with Saint Augustine, 'Thou hast counselled a better course than Thou hast permitted!"

1 From Tess of the D'Urbervilles
2 Ibid,
Tess's only consolation comes through a "Pantheistic utterance in a Monotheistic falsetto", in her resort to the pagan worship of her remote ancestors. Here certainly is atheistic determinism in dogmatic garb. But when Alec "reforms" and tries to argue her out of the pagan philosophy she has acquired from Clare, she says: "I believe in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount, and so did my dear husband." Here would seem to be evidence that Hardy's philosophy was not wholly divorced from Christianity, since where other than in this pronouncement of Christ is the essence of Christian philosophy better expressed?

Nothing in this work has more deeply stirred me to indignant protest than to have this girl deprived of the consolation she seeks in a sincere devotion to her primitive Christian faith. Nothing is more convincing proof of the author's having his own pessimistic determinism imposed upon the situation. It doesn't seem possible that the Church had sunk to such a low ebb that the door was slammed in the face of an innocent girl seeking consolation. Maggie Tulliver, to be sure, found its members intolerant, but in the good old Dr. Kern she found the only solace the world would give. Tess is even deprived burial for her child. But was not Lloyd George started on his public career by the public notice gained when he broke down the gates of a church burial-place and forced the authorities to find room for a peasant's body? "It is incomprehensible," as one critic has said, "to find the world one in which men are destroyed through their virtues rather than through their weaknesses."

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1 From Novelists of Yesterday, by Follett

Some Modern Novelists
Artistically the book is superbly conceived, all the misfortunes emanating from Parson Tringham's working upon John Durbeyfield's weak mind so that he was obsessed with the idea that he was a descendant of the D'Urbervilles'. Tess is encouraged to accept overtures from Alec D'Urberville, but the stakes are set against her innocence. Her baby is denied Christian burial. The self-seeking, hypocritical Angel Clare, Hardy's mouthpiece of the pagan philosophy, wins Tess's innocent affection but deserts her and brings upon her the most humiliating disgrace. Her only hope lies in yielding to Alec. Angel returns too late; Tess shoots Alec and looks to Angel for the happiness she craves. But this one hope is blasted, because, as Hardy told Henry Van Dyke, "there was no other way to end the book. I did not kill her. It was fated."

In treating of Hardy's philosophy I have referred to the closing words of Tess and Hardy's reply to his critics. A note in his diary, dated July, 1889, at the time Tess appeared, gives definite evidence that he had Greek tragedy in mind when he wrote this work:

"When a married woman who has a lover kills her husband, she does not really wish to kill the husband; she wishes to kill the situation. Of course in Clytœmnestra's case it was not exactly so, since there was the added grievance of Iphegenia, which half-justified her."

Here is to be found one of the fundamental weaknesses and inconsistencies in Hardy's philosophy. As Dr. Van Dyke says:

1 From The Man behind the Book, by Henry Van Dyke
2 From The Early Life of Thomas Hardy, by Florence E. Hardy
"In the Oresteia, Nemesis is the instrument of an eternal righteousness. Who killed Tess? Not God. Man killed her."

Overton further testifies to this inconsistency in Hardy.

He says:

"Is Hardy's spirit, which, like Euripides', was one of moral revolt, wholly like Euripides'? No. When Hardy has no hope, Euripides at times 'hath deep in his hope a belief in some Understanding'. He remembers all the glory that his gods have raised up in man - the courage, the love, the sacrifice, the submission. These were deeds that the rational faculty had no share in; they were irrational, beautiful, and they made men like gods. Where Hardy has surrendered unconditionally to the logical apparatus in his brain, Euripides was able to keep Reason in its place as a coordinator and critic."

Why, then, does Hardy misinterpret the Greek philosophers? Had not the theories of Schopenhauer become so deeply rooted in him as to bias his judgment and prevent his seeing the other side of any philosophy?

It is impossible, even when absorbed in the study of Hardy's philosophy, to forget his art. Were art supremely his motive, what

1 From The Man behind the Book, by Henry Van Dyke
2 From The Philosophy of Fiction, by Grant Overton
Lionel Johnson has said would be most significant:

"Had Hardy denied himself all commentary and left the story to carry its own moral into our hearts, I doubt whether we should all have received quite the same moral; to prevent any such 'perverse' resistance to his intended moral, Mr. Hardy has not denied himself the luxury or perhaps the superfluity of comments at once inartistic and obscure."

A further philosophical phase in *Tess* is the influence of heredity. Hardy had accepted the current testimony of science which accredited to heredity much of our conscious behavior. Had Hardy written at the present time one questions whether the greatly diminished emphasis on this factor would not have altered his attitude.

"But Hardy keeps ever in our view the inherited impulses of Tess; by hints he turns our minds toward the knightly D'Urbervilles, men of violence and of blood, lawless, passionate, rude. Whether she throws her glove in Alec's face, or stabs him with a knife, we are led to look upon her as an inheritor of ancestral passions; society demands her punishment, in reparation and in self-defense; but since she was at the mercy of her inherited nature, she claims our pity and our pardon. Certainly no one can read the story and be unmoved."

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1 From *The Art of Thomas Hardy*, by Lionel Johnson
2 ibid.
10. Jude the Obscure: The Will-Not-to-Exist

Now we come to the climax of Hardy's philosophy. Whereas in Tess pessimism has been dominant, here is one dire step beyond, the introduction of the Will-Not-to-Exist. Many a reader has refused to take this step with Hardy and has turned away in disgust. As a work of art it is a masterly climax in the progressively dramatic series we have been following. But in the name of humanity one cries out against such a merciless picture as that of the murder by "Little Father Time" of the three other children, followed by suicide. And how unreasonable to put into the mind of a mere child such dire philosophy as the Will-Not-to-Exist!

With the introduction of this unhuman philosophy the zest for life has gone and the truly tragic element has died out. "It is in the conflict of will with will that Tragedy finds a voice: men battling with the winds and waves or with passions and desires."  

Granted that there is no will for the battle, nothing but hopelessness is left, for God does not provide for those who make no exertion. But it is pure folly to say that the effort is useless since the cards are stacked against us. To say this implies the existence of a motivated influence, which in turn implies a conscious personality, - call it God, or, as Schopenhauer names it, Will - pitted against us. Eddington, the eminent scientist, concludes that "it is the very essence of the unseen world that the conception of personality should dominate it."  

Is it reasonable that the Will should create us

1 From The Art of Thomas Hardy, by Lionel Johnson  
2 From Science and the Unseen World, by A.S. Eddington
merely for the satisfaction of destroying us? We may not fathom the purpose motivating this great Force, but we do know that in at least half the cases where man's will is set determinately toward overcoming life's obstacles a victory is scored. Hardy certainly is in error in failing to see the possibility of any victory.

One cannot read far in Tess or Jude without sensing Hardy's profound sense of human sympathy. Poor Jude, with all his aspirations for study and right living, is duped by Arabella, time and again. Here is the very essence of tragedy, and we are moved to pity. But when the author, instead of resting content to let the situations work out as they would in more than half of the instances in real life, must tell us that a well-intentioned being might as well cease any efforts to overcome the obstacles in his way, since this is simply impossible, he is preaching a doctrine that most sane men repudiate. In the novel Hardy says of Jude: "He was the sort of man who was born to ache a good deal before the fall of the curtain upon his unnecessary life should signify that all was well with him again." In one of his diary notes Hardy says:

"The 'grimy' features of the story go to show the contrast between the ideal life a man wished to lead and the squalid real life he was fated to live. The throwing of the pizzle, at the supreme moment of his young dream, is to sharply initiate this contrast."

Suppose Jude does come of tainted stock; grant he is a "poor, damned, incautious, duped, unfortunate fool", as the story would

1 From The Later Life of Thomas Hardy, by Florence E. Hardy
picture him. A man who can entertain such a noble and inspiring ambition and hold before him so high an ideal as was his dream of Christminster is not so exalted by a malignant Force that he may be knocked down as a mere puppet.

Hardy says of Sue Bridehead: "Vague imaginings had haunted Sue . . . that at the framing of the terrestrial conditions there seemed never to have been contemplated such a development of emotional perceptiveness among the creatures subject to those conditions as that reached by thinking and educated humanity. . .

" 'We must conform!' she said mournfully. 'All the ancient wrath of the Power above us has been vented upon His poor creatures, and we must submit . . . It is no use fighting against God!' "

I find it hard to fathom Hardy's philosophy as far as means to evidence it in Sue's religious philosophy. Here she denounces God, while elsewhere she recognizes only pagan deities. Is the Will and the Force in nature and God one and the same? Is it God whom Hardy is invariably accusing? If so his philosophy is but blasphemy in the eyes of one who entertains any reverence for God.

John Macy has offered an interesting suggestion to explain why Hardy may have taken this grim attitude toward life:

"Perhaps Hardy's proneness to dwell on the skeletal grin of life is due to his exceeding sensitiveness to beauty. He cannot abide the ugliness that is in the world."

It would seem as if this very aesthetic sense would lead Hardy to see also in the world the element of perfect proportion,
beauty balancing ugliness, evil balancing good. But in a work like Jude the scales never balance. In life they do!

But it is when the curtain falls on Jude's life that the grand climax is reached. Job was enjoined to "curse God and die", but as one critic has said, "Jude is not even allowed to curse God and die with a shred of human dignity. Arabella, most heartless of Hardy's women, conceals the fact of his death for hours that she may finish a tawdry frolic with tawdry companions." His last words, uttered when he is alone with his God, are the revolting expressions of Hebrew paganism: "Let the day perish when I was born!"

If that is what many critics believe it to be, merely the words of Jude, it serves as a most dramatic climax in an almost perfect piece of artistry. But if it is Hardy speaking, it is the expression of a philosophy of life that today is repudiated by almost every scientist. It should be remembered that it was to science that Hardy looked for a large share of his determinism.

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1 Novelist of Yesterday, by Follett
Some Modern Novelists
SUMMARY

The close of the eighteenth century had ushered in the era of romanticism and revolt against scientific ideals, culminating in the French Revolution. Conservative philosophy saw in the Revolution the operation of forces beyond all human control. In the nineteenth century came mechanistic philosophy, which "found nothing in the universe aside from man that appears to have human interests and human aspirations at heart." Revealed religion found no encouragement in this philosophy. Schopenhauer's reaction was felt. He saw in his gospel of pessimism the human will the prey of desires that can never be fulfilled.

In this age appeared Hardy, bringing a mind that fed on the anthropomorphic, that was sympathetically impressed by the cruelty of Nature, that was nurtured in the study of Greek tragedy, and that through profound interest in ecclesiastical architecture demanded severity of form. He became absorbed in the philosophy of Comte, Schopenhauer, and Hauptmann, and drank in their theories of positivism, determinism, and pessimism.

Whether in his writings philosophy or art is paramount cannot be determined, since in such sources as are available there is no finality of expression. His persistent refusal to sanction the writing of his biography and the inconsistencies to be found in such of his notes as are accessible to the public prevent any definite judgment. In these notes he at one time says he has no
philosophy and that his ideas are to be taken as "mere impressions of the moment"; elsewhere he says his philosophy is "a development from Schopenhauer through later philosophers". At one time he says "the will of man is neither wholly free nor wholly unfree"; at another he speaks of the omnipotence of Nature.

The critics are divided on the question whether philosophy or art is paramount in his writings. While Braybrooke and others hold that determinism and pessimism are the foundation on which he erects his structure, others like Abercrombie say that the element of fatality is only a tribute to the perfect unity of structure in the writings. The critics further disagree in labeling Hardy's philosophy. They are divided on calling it determinism. Cross calls him a naturalist, but a "naturalist poet". No finality, then, can be reached as long as there is a possibility that Hardy's "philosophy" is what he denominated "fancy" rather than "belief".

When we turn to his writings we find ample evidence of a philosophy that evolves progressively from wholesome romanticism to a dire pessimism. Under the Greenwood Tree is a pastoral romance with the course of true love running smoothly. In A Pair of Blue Eyes Elfride is hampered by fatalistic bogeys, but it is a question whether the treatment is not consciously melodramatic. With Far from the Madding Crowd Fate is in control and Providence unsympathetic.

At this juncture the influence of Schopenhauer is to be noted, and from that time on there is a steady development of the despotism of the Will of Force. A Laodicean is not a factor in this sequence but is an experiment in the positivism of Comte, aimed
at the conventionalities of religion. Pure determinism is the motivating force behind every scene in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. "Happiness was but the occasional episode in a general drama of pain."

Up to this point the novels might be called pure tragedies, with the action all-important. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess*, and *Jude* we find what might be called epics, with the study of a central character and a psychological analysis of the tempest within the soul of the individual. Each character is its own enemy, warring against passion beyond its control and destined to defeat. Henchard battles with pride, Tess with passion, and Jude with ambition. Tess's will is subjugated to a merciless Super-Will, leaving to her the choice between annihilation and resort to quietism. Pessimism and cynicism are shown in the pictures of the Church. Rebuffed in her appeal to the Church, Tess can find consolation only in a resort to pagan worship. Hardy evidently had Greek tragedy in mind in creating this novel, but he fails to realize that this ancient drama, in its philosophy, is far removed from the pessimism of Schopenhauer and appeals to reason and hope.

Another philosophical phase in *Tess* is the influence of heredity, which Hardy employs to account for much of Tess's behavior. Even more attention is given to this in the character of Jude. Science in Hardy's day gave much credence to this theory.

The climax of Hardy's philosophy is reached in *Jude the Obscure*. Going a step beyond the use of pessimism, Hardy introduces the dire element of Will-Not-to-Exist. Jude's battles are in vain and he cries out: "Let the day perish when I was born!" This same feeling of futility of life is expressed by Sue Bridehead
and by the morbid "Little Father Time".

One critic, John Macy, has propounded the theory that Hardy's grim attitude toward life was due to "his exceeding sensitiveness to beauty" and his abhorrence of ugliness. If so, we have some reason for believing that art may have been more important as a factor than I for one have been led to believe through this survey of his works.

Consideration of the five other novels has been omitted advisedly, since they contain no material directly alluding to philosophy. It is interesting to note the quiescent note in his last novel The Well Beloved. The stress and storm after the writing of Jude seems to have faded into thin air. Here is a romantic idealization of beauty decidedly unlike the works just preceding it.
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