

**Tribhuvan University**

**Tradition versus Modernity in Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge***

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**By**

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Letter of Recommendation

The Thesis entitled “Conflict between Tradition versus Modernity in Thomas Hardy’s *The Mayor of Casterbridge*” has been prepared under my supervision by Nirmala Kapri. I recommend. I recommend it for evaluation to the research committee.

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## Letter of Approval

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Nirmala Kapri

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## Tradition vs Modernity in Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

### Abstract

*This study deals with the issues of tradition and modernity which brings ongoing tension in Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886). Michael Henchard, a man of traditional force exhibits himself as a man of utter power and dominance over the people of his locality but he fails to continue his old conventional system in the hand of changing socio-political scenario. Mr. Donald Farfrae a versatile Scottish young man is familiar with modern tools and techniques outdoes his master, Michael Henchard in every respect and undoubtedly becomes successful to transform the rigid root of tradition of the town Casterbridge into flexible one. Henchard's old and outdated way of dealing with business and relation falls in risk after the arrival of Farfrae who is synonymous to the ideologies of modernism. Tension arises in the world of Casterbridge and life of some characters due to the two heroes contrasting way of dealing things. Along with these two main characters' persistent attitude and manner to promote their own system, this research work somehow tries to excavate historical context of the then English society, which was welcoming change despite many obstruction.*

**Keywords:** Tradition, Modernity, Tension, Transform, Business

This thesis is about the tussle between the resisting force of traditional society and the emerging spirit of updated modernism. The historical and the political context when the Novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886) set serves as the assisting material why conflict becomes one of the major themes of the novel. In the very beginning of the novel we come to know from the narrator that the family of Michael Henchard is in financial crisis. Because of his upset life he extremely drinks and sells his wife and daughter. The place where Henchard auctions his family is an annual

local fair that local people organize on their own to show up and sell their products which are related to agriculture. The opening scene and activities of the novel seem totally rustic and traditional. Later, Henchard prospers greatly and becomes a prominent businessman and the mayor of the town Casterbridge. His prosperity and power become curse for the common people as he does not want to modify his rigid traditional way of dealing with matter to reduce the problem faced by them. And soon he is combated by a very new system of an energetic man Donald Farfrae. Henchard, though impressed much with the scientific way of that young man does not want corroborate with the system rather he persistently fights against it. So this thesis analyzes the reason, effect and result of ongoing tension between tradition and modernity in detail.

Thomas Hardy, who was born in the year 1840 at Stinford of United Kingdom, is known as one of the most influential and prolific author of the English literary history. Especially he is best known for his outstanding novels which are set in the semi-fictionalized land of Wessex where he has spent his childhood. Along with a successful novelist he is also renowned for poetry and short story. Though his writing career spanned from the late Victorian to early modern period, he is best remembered as Victorian realist. He, through his literary creation raised the issue of social problem which are prevalent in contemporary Victorian society. During his career he was criticized by many Victorian moralists for the distinct issue he has raised in the changing scenario of the society which is plagued by dogmatic ideas of so called pious people. Including *The Mayor Of Casterbridge* he has written other noteworthy novels like *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *Jude the Obscure*, etcetera which are based on the society and people he has witnessed. His

literary career was heavily influenced by George Eliot and romanticist. At the later part of his life he switched his career from novelist to poet due some obstacle he has to face while publishing a novel and bitter review for his published novels, so he remained as a the poet till the date of his demise in 1929.

One of the most important eras of English literature and literary creation, the Victorian period is named after the famous English Monarch queen Victoria, which spanned from 1837 to 1901. Due to the influence of industrial revolution this period witnessed radical change in contemporary social order. Rapid development of science and technology along with means of transportation and communication had brought tremendous change in the living and thinking pattern of the people. Religion and strict religious ethics and morality were questioned by social activists and writers. In this era novelistic writing flourished to the large extent. Authors, like Charles Dikense, Thomas Hardy George Eliot, Emily Bronte Oscar Wild and others contributed a lot in the field of novel. These writers either in satirical or realistic manner portrayed the society they had lived. Though science and technology helped to flourish the power and wealth of nation large number common people were deprived to taste the sweet fruit of prosperity due to the hierarchy existed in the society. *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is one of the masterpiece novels to depict the bleak picture of socio-political and economic realities of contemporary English society, where Hardy raised the issue of poverty, female dependency, injustice and unchecked power, which factors left the society and its people in suffocation due to the hopelessness. Along with them there can be seen the mismatching of traditional and modern mindset.

One of the greatest novels to demonstrate the bleak picture of the Victorian English society, the novel, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is authored by a great realist,

Thomas Hardy in the year 1886. Hardy in this novel tries to depict social, political economic and cultural scenario of the then England. The subject matter of the novel basically revolves round the life of its central character Michael Henchard, a man from rural Wessex. At the beginning of the novel we see him as a jobless man in the company of his wife and daughter and immediately separates himself from them as they are auctioned to a sailor, Richard Newson. Henchard prospers in his isolation because of his strong determination and reaches to the policy making position of the town called Casterbridge. His prosperity continues until the arrival of an intelligent young man Farfrae in Casterbridge. Although, Farfrae is an assistant to Henchard he outdoes his master in every aspect of business. Henchard's immature qualification pushes him back. Along with his technological backwardness he is uncertain in his temperament. He seems lucky to have reunion with his long lost family but soon changes into a doomed man as he loses them in either way. By heart he is frank and honest but his short temper does not let him to express his loyalty towards his loved ones. Either by his own act or luck he changes into a defeated man and returns to his own original land to end up his life leaving a will paper intended to his step-daughter.

The novel starts when the three members of a family stop at a local fair of Wydon Prior to have some food. Namely they are Michael Henchard, his wife Susan and his daughter Elizabeth-Zane. In the fair they solve their hunger problem with *furnity*, a local dish, but Henchard gets drunkard as he takes large amount of *furnity* mixed with rum. Though, his wife discourages him not to drink much, he doesn't care rather, expresses his anger towards her. In his drunken anger he out loudly curses his wife, as she is hindrance for his progress and he would sell her if anybody provides him the sum of five guineas. A man named Newson, a sailor by profession declares

that he would buy. Susan, who has initially taken her husband's words jokingly, gets ready to go with an unknown man as he emphasizes his deal ignoring her request. She soothes herself by throwing her wedding ring at Henchard and leaves with her daughter on her lap and her hand on Sailors arm. On the next morning Henchard wakes up with the chirping sound of the birds to find alone. Dim memory of previous evening's events startles him when he found the money and his wife's ring on his pocket. Being full of regret and remorse he runs here and there to locate his wife and daughter but sees no signs of meeting them. From there he directly goes to the church kneels down to make a vow of not taking any strong drinks up to coming 21 years. After a month of clueless search he leaves that place and makes his way to the town of Casterbridge.

Michael' Henchard's fortune changes when he reaches Casterbridge mindful of determination and positive vigour. There he rises from an insignificant corn merchant to the dignified post of Mayor. When he was enjoying the days of his success, he meets with his long lost family bringing the sense of complete man on himself. With his family he gets the company of an energetic young friend called Farfare. Despite the fact that Susan and Elizabeth are his family, he could not take them directly to his mansion to maintain his reputation. So for short period he arranges their living at a safe place and plans to remarry his wife after some days of fake courtship. Eventhough, his happiness has no bound he falls in moral dilemma regarding his family and former girl friend, Lucetta, with whom he has promised to marry in the thought that his wife may have died. Finally, having discussion with his friend, he decides to justice to his poor painful wife by informing

Lucetta about the arrival of his wife and child and his inability to fulfill his promise with her.

He even sends some money with letter as some sorts of compensation.

According to his plan he and Susan finish the ritual of false marriage to begin their formal life. Now Henchard has a complete and happy family. Soon after the appointment of Farfare as a manager of Henchard's corn business, it thrives drastically. Farfare, while charging his duty works hard to keep the record systematically. So that Henchard and his business utterly depend upon him. Till that time everything was okay, but to the readers' surprise the thread mutual bond among family members and friends gets loose and they are parted from him either way. Henchard starts to hate Farfare in the fear of losing his name and fame.

Susan Henchard becomes ill soon after their reunion, which made their life happy deserted. After her demise bad days of other major characters begin to count. In one morning, after three weeks of Susan's death Henchard tries to convince Elizabeth he is her real father not Newson. For that he gives option to Elizabeth by leaving her alone to ponder upon the matter and he goes upstairs in search of the documents which might prove Elizabeth Jane as Henchard's biological daughter, to his astonishment he finds the document which confirms she is not his but sailor's daughter. He discovers that fact when he opens the letter by his wife where she discloses the reality of their kinship. So that was forbidden to read before the wedding day of Elizabeth. Finding the irony of his fate he struck dumb to himself and turns to be cold towards his step daughter.

Unexpected change in Henchard's Behaviour makes Elizabeth too much worried and sad. Day by day it becomes hard for Elizabeth to bear the ill treatment of

Henchard and she decides to shift into the house of her newly introduced fiend, Lucetta, to whom she had met on the graveyard of her mother. Lucetta comes there to get married with Henchard as she heard the news of Susan's death. After Henchard becomes clear about his and Elizabeth's relation he writes to Farfare that he can be in relation with her if he has interest on her still. After completion of repairing of High Place Hall the two friends commence their living there. Lucetta sends letter to Henchard to make a visit with her at her house, but he does not come at her first invitation. Suspecting on the fact that Elizabeth might be the cause Henchard's not coming, she tells Elizabeth to be out of house for some time. Again she sends letter to him mentioning His daughter is not at home so he can come. Instead of Henchard there comes Farfare initially to Elizabeth he meets with Lucetta and they fall in each others' love immediately after their short meeting. After that very meeting Lucetta begins to ignore Henchard and Farfare to Elizabeth. Knowing the relation between Farfare and Lucetta rivalry between Henchard and Farfare increases drastically. Their mental egos change into physical fight, and more than Farfare Henchard is determined to ruin His once dear friend and his business from every possible way. Lucetta ignoring the promise with Henchard Gets married with Farfare and in a meeting with Henchard she requests to return the letters that are written to him.

Henchard though angry enough with her marriage with Farfare could not deny her requests and returns the letters in the hand of Jop. This was a good chance for Jopp to take revenge with Farfare who had usurped his job and out loud the letter among many people, which is the sole cause of Lucetta's untimely death. Next day town's people arranged for public rally by portraying Henchard and Lucetta. Elizabeth who has developed good relation with Henchard again, begins to live with him after the

death of Lucetta. Richard Newson, Elizabeth's real father arrives in search of her and asks with Henchard. But he lies, by saying she has already died. For Henchard Elizabeth is the sole hope for living. His lie does not go longer and he hears the return of Newson and leaves that place rather than confront with him. After knowing Henchard's dark truth Elizabeth too despised him badly. She even does not let him to meet at her wedding with Farfare. Henchard ridden with guilt leaves that place with the determination of punishing himself and dies by leaving a death will. It was too late when Elizabeth and Farfare meet him in the state of non living being.

From the date of publication Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886) has received numerous critical appreciations from multiple perspectives by various critics and scholars. Among them my study will be focused on the dialectical aspect of the novel. That means conflict between the elements of tradition and modernity as this novel is set in the backdrop of transitional Victorian society. In the political history of England the Victorian era is noted for its distinct social and political transformations. Simultaneous entrance of the Victorian era and the industrial revolution brought dramatic change in socio-political, cultural, economic and religious arena of England. This age witnessed the introduction of means of transportation, communication, advanced medicine along with other scientific invention and advancement which directly affected the day to day lifestyle of people by making the life easier than before.

Along with technological advancement abolition of Corn Law was another milestone to make England a progressed nation. On the other hand, this period did have some dark side, that is all the people were not in the access of facilities available in their own land due to the hierarchical social system, some religious orthodox and

old conventional people became shocked by the miracle of technology, so these people to protect their predominance over their followers tried to present them more rigidly. Though, every person had interest and curiosity towards technology, some of them pretended and showed their disgrace towards science to conserve their hegemony by showing religious superiority. And some people, though, they were eager to be involved in technology they did not have easy access. Such social Scenario was represented to some extent by Hardy's *the Mayor of Casterbridge*.

Despite, their intimacy as close companion of each other, Michael Henchard and Donald Farfare are in contradictory role as we observe in their manner of dealing with the circumstances. Henchard as a man of old generation does not feel easy with new emerging system in the society. So, he tries to make the system failed by pulling the leg back of those who want to make the society prosperous by bringing some modification in system. Qin Liu in her scholarly article entitled "The Conflicts between Henchard and Farfare of Casterbridge" makes comment over the characteristically differences of these two protagonists of the novel as such:

Henchard and Farfare the two mayors of Casterbridge, have very different destiny due to their distinct characteristic. Henchard is a man from the old; he stands for the old and outdated force. It is evitable that Henchard, the old mayor, a representative from the old world will be replaced by Farfare, the new mayor who symbolizes the new force and the new world. (Qin Liu, 40)

Before the arrival of Farfare in Casterbridge Henchard was in the position of power and leadership. He was successful in his autonomy and had prosperous life though people are in hand to mouth problem due to the poor production of grains.

But, When Farfare arrives in the village representing new dynamic energy to

bring change in the society, Henchard's power and authority over the people began to decline day by day. Stubbornness of Henchard helps Farfare to prosper his personality and capabilities in noteworthy way by which he is well liked by common more than Henchard. His post and power is seized by Farfare as a result of unchanging selfish manner.

As a major character of the novel everything related to Michael Henchard has more significance. His very fluctuating temperament and social status pushed back and forth by the wave of time and situation due to his unfavourable circumstance and fate. More than his fate he has his own hand to make his life infernal. To illustrate this fact Robert Kiely in her article entitled "Vision and Viewpoint in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* " points out the flaws of Michael in such way " Thinking himself much worse than he actually is, Henchard is unwilling to be found out publicly and he is equally unwilling- or unable -to look with a clear eye at his faults."(Kiely, 191). In his conscious or unconscious states of mind he has made many errors in the differences phases of life but he has been failed to confess his crime though he is embittered by his own behavior.

Most of the characters in the novel become victim of his uncertain temper. He ponders upon his mistakes and realizes from within but do not become ready to confess publicly nevertheless, he does his best to right his wrong. That means he wants prove himself as an ideal person, that very greed for being idealist leads Henchard and his system towards extension. He loses his power to confront the people with new knowledge on science and technology. Dogmas of Henchard do not let him accept the reality and change easily.

Superficially, there seems the battle between two men from different

generation. This very generational gap is not only the cause of their conflict but we can see the vast gap in ages itself. Drastic change in traditional social order and system perplexed people. Fear of losing their position and dignity made the traditional people restless and reckless. Before industrialization, traditional mechanisms of the society were okay. Common people were utterly dependent upon feudal, like Henchard for a very little achievement. Henchard in the novel seems very reluctant to update himself according to the demand of time rather he wants to ruin those who try. But he could not block the way where, society is being flooded by upcoming of science and technology. Commenting upon Henchard's misbehaviour to his friend a critic JR Baker in his article "Thematic Ambiguity in *the Mayor of Casterbridge*" comments that, "Henchard resolves to crush the blooming grain business of young Farfare. His intention backfires however, and his own resources are taken from him. Farfare and Lucetta are happily married and, after Farfare's election as mayor, they settle into Henchard's old mansion"(Baker 14). Here, personal enmity of two heroes changes into public disappointment over one and respect to another. Henchard fights for the protection of his old system but Farfare struggles to establish new trend for the wellbeing of public and his own. Due to the support and credibility of people over an energetic man and their curiosity towards new system, Farfare takes the post and place of Henchard. Though, unwanted Henchard become a dumb audience of the events that are taking place in front of his eye that is end of his family life, love, power, property and leadership

Through his stubborn manner and attitude too Henchard, neither could preserve the past glorious history of his society nor his self dignity. In past, people were simple minded, necessities were limited due to less population and sufficiency of

space. But, gradual increase in population demanded more, that he cannot bear the burden making people happy by addressing their necessity. As he become a man from nowhere in the society which is embracing way of life by discarding older one. By exposing Henchard's pitiable condition Frederick R. Karl remarks that "The Roman amphitheatre at Castebridge Serves the purpose of a meeting ground and at the same time frames the puny dimensions of puppet- like man against a mighty historical past. Henchard, who has been heroic amidst the townspeople, is now diminished buy the immensity of the amphitheatre where he meets Susan and their immediate problems" (411). Once whole town's people used to regard him as a hero but at present he is leading the life of miserable creature .Whatever, hero becomes unfit in the hand of progressing society. There is no one behind him for his back support as people are overwhelmed by new technology which provided them an easy way to sustain their life.

Mr. Henchard was not on the age of retirement to be pushed wayside, but his unwillingness to update according to the demands of people and time makes him worthless man. He even continues his mischievous habits, which does not let him to breathe easily rather; he chooses to end up his life at a lonely place as a doomed man. Fluctuation in moral conduct overpowers the other weaknesses of Michael Henchard as he commits errors confesses for that and repeats his ill conduct. To point out his moral deviation Robert C.Schwik states:

In short, the temperament which would have no pity for weakness gradually re- emerges and by the conclusion of the first movement it is again the dominant feature of Henchard's character. The first sign of this progressive deterioration in Henchard- his grotesque attempt to punish Abble Whittle (xv)-

is immediately countered by a revelation of Henchard's previous charities to Whittle's mother and by the frankness he displays in his reconciliation with Farfare. But as the action continues Hardy develops situation which manifest more and more clearly the vehemence and injustice of Henchard's conduct. A first petty annoyance at his loss of popularity turns gradually into the more clearly misplaced and unjustly envious anger which prompts Henchard to dismiss Farfare and to regard him as an "enemy". (254)

With the aforementioned sentences here, the writer is intended to portray the protagonist as a morally unstable man. By heart Henchard is not too bad but circumstance around him makes his behaviour unsympathetic towards his fellow and relatives. The more story's plot develops, intensity of Henchard's moral ethics degrades as he does not care about the consequence of his quick anger. He loses every kin and kith who are dear to him, i.e. he loses his soul friend, loving and caring daughter, dear girlfriend and all the properties he had earned through hard work. Accusing the central character of the novel Michael Henchard as a man guided by desire then intellect Maria Garnic in her article titled *Failed Capitalist and Father* argues that "I perceive Henchard as an unsuccessful or to use a term Victorian, a fallen individual. He loses the respect of community and falls not because he is a tragic hero but because he is a sad individual who does not reason but desires" (2). As a husband and father Henchard does not seem responsible instead he seeks social upliftment at the cost of his emotional duty for his family. Because of his ill and selfish desire for progress and power, people around him suffer badly. His inability to lead his private and public life simultaneously pushes him towards alienation and humiliation. Adding his favour to Garnic, another expert Jeannette King frankly states that Hardys

protagonist are tragic heroes because they convince “through dialogue and action rather than thorough analysis (101). Here the critic comments upon the trend of novelist to present his mouthpiece, derived by their emotion rather than their wit.

To support my thesis with theoretical insight I have borrowed some theoretical ideas from Peter Wgner’s *Theoring Modernity Inescapability and Attainability in Social Theory* and Jurgean Hebermas’ *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* and *An Incomplete Project*. To say simply modernity is the quality or condition of being modern or modern way of thinking and doing. To add more, D. Lihenan defined modernity as a powerful set of cultural political, economic and spatial relationships that have fundamentally influence the nature of social life which includes an emphasis upon rationality and science over tradition. Moreover, Peter Wagner illustrates his ideas as “modernist philosophy holds that,with the advent of modernity only traditional foundation are called into question and truly modern ones can built in their place.” (9) Along with these ideas this thesis brings more detail and compatible insights from other modernist theoretical concept too.

As this novel, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is set in the backdrop of transitional English society, Hardy successfully mixes up the component of both Tradition and modernity. Despite the fact that there arises ongoing tension due the contrasting ideas and force Hardy is keen to rescue his land with new modern systems, tools and techniques at the cost of dogmatic Victorian priggishness. In the novel, the protagonist Michael Henchard suffers a lot due to his reliance upon traditional aspect of political, social economic system. He fails to maintain proper balance between his social life and personal life. In the greed of his career development he sacrifices his family and escapes from his responsibility. His incapabilities to deal the matter in

right time with right decision, as a critical reader I too want to tag him as a traditional man who is utterly unfit in modern competitive world. His reluctance to transform himself in the changing system of the society becomes the curse for inevitable down fall.

To analyze the novel with its traditional elements we have setting and principal character as a traditional force which does not let an individual and society to move forward to taste the fruit of modernity. To mark the existence of tradition in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* we can see the entry of Henchard's family on the road of traditional village of southern England with complete silence. As narrator states "What was really peculiar, however, in this couple's progress, and would have attracted the attention of any casual observer otherwise disposed to overlook them, was the perfect silence they preserve"(1). To observe them from outsider's point of view they seem to preserving their traditional role. To maintain hierarchical gap between husband and wife is one of the attributes of traditional society and to address the need of family is completely a man's duty. As we are informed by the narrator the landscape which Henchard's family surpasses is also old fashioned with the scene of dusty road attached with agriculture farmlands, small cottages of people living there and small scale agro-based business to sustained livelihood. In that scenario Henchard, the protagonist of the novel presents himself as a conventional man with the qualities of inflexibilities in his attitude and manner. After the sales of his wife and child in his drunken disgrace he vows to keep himself away from any strong liquor and he is very rigid in his determination. When the matter comes of business Michael Henchard demonstrates himself as helpless tool to rescue the degrading agricultural production under his management. It has been a tumultuous time for

Henchard as he is unable to run his business with new techniques and system since he was the man brought up with old traditional system. Desperate people hit him with numerous questions as they find that was the right time. But, as response “Henchard’s face had become still more stern at this interruptions, and he drank from his tumbler of water as is to calm himself or gain time. Instead of vouchsafing a direct reply, he stiffly observed (44)”. To improve the deteriorating condition of agriculture production and business he seeks an outsider rather than updating himself as per the need of time. After sometimes of his reserved attitude he bursts into helpless utterance “If anybody will tell me how to turn grown wheat into wholesome wheat I will take it back with pleasure but it can’t be done” ( 44). This shows his complete disqualification for his post. Another fact to keep Henchard back in his role is his reckless and impulsive way of dealing with his business. He totally depends upon his mind to keep the record of business detail. He even does not follow the scientific measurement to weight the grain, for that he used to lift the sack full of grain and guess its load. Another ridiculous fact to tag Henchard as a traditionalist is he believes in superstitious fortune teller as his business analyzing partner and tries to run his business according to his suggestion which brings his misfortune ultimately. The mode of production and distribution he follows demand creative analysis and transformation, but he is rigid in his irrational method.

The prominent factor that plays vital role to make Henchard and his system back warded one is his use of free time and way of entertaining his guest in the programme that he organized. When he remarries Susan and brings his once lost wife and daughter in his mansion he almost forgets his duty as a businessman and mayor for the cost of his once lost happiness. To be traditional means not to become

competent in one's own role or to behave as an unprofessional person. Here, Henchard seems incompetent to lead his social and familial life simultaneously i.e. he cannot maintain proper balance between business life and personal life. Later in the course of his degrading career Henchard tries to copy the idea of Mr. Farfrae- once his best friend- now a sworn enemy, not for the purpose of entertaining common people but with the purpose of ruining Farfrae's programme. Here too he fails because of his poor plan and management. He cannot win the heart of people with his traditional mindset where people are searching something new to refresh themselves from bored daily life. In one sense people are in suffocation to live under Henchard's governance. He has become burden and source of dissatisfaction of the people.

Henchard just wants to overcome Farfrae in every aspect not by free competition but by obstructing his way wherever he goes. With the objectives of improving agricultural production and corn business Farfrae introduces a scientific machine but Henchard makes fun and laughs at it. At different point of the novel Henchard loses what is dear to him because of his stubborn nature. He repents for his every mistake and even punishes his as a sinner. But Henchard never changes his inner ego of traditionalistic thought just to protect his pride. He wants to have controll over everything but his outdated style deceives him badly that he does not get way out. Henchard on the other hand, does not remain reserve in his post. Once when he was at the topmost position of the town called Casterbridge by disregarding his honour and pride reaches his workers quarter chases him naked from his bed. But when he was living the life of fallen man without any social status he tries to usurp the right of the then mayor by presenting himself in front royal guest. His confused and unsettle mentality to play his role in accordance with his achieved status from his

society ranks Henchard aimless vagabond. In the matter of expressing love towards his family, friend and lover Henchard behaves passionately and loses them out of his extreme nature. During the time of Michael Henchard modern means of communication had not been developed as we see bundle of love letters in his old mansion's safe which he uses as the tool to blackmail Lucetta.

Henchard is traditional by heart as we see him escaping away from the flourishing Casterbridge in the fear of his emotional blackmail to the other characters won't work anymore. He does not have courage to face the problem with his intellect. At concluding part of the novel Henchard retires from the land once he has control over and chooses a lonely death in alienated rural village where he has originated from. His unwillingness to remain in Casterbridge signifies his preference to keep himself ignorant and afar prospering modern society. To add the themes of tradition in the novel, along with Henchard other minor characters and the place where they used to play with others' emotions and feelings play equally important role. The ghostly traditional place, Mixen lane, where the women of dirty mind plan to blackmail Lucetta is described as:

The lane and its surrounding thicket of thatched cottages stretched out like a spit into the moist and misty lowland. Much that was sad much that was low, something that were baneful, could be seen in Mixen lane. Vice ran freely in and out certain of the doors of the neighbourhood; recklessness dwelt under the roof with the crooked chimney; shame in some bow window; theft in the thatched and mud walled- houses by the swallows. Even slaughter had not been altogether unknown here. (251)

This horary description of Mixen Lane represents the traditional mystic land where

no good things happen. Like place, the characters inhabit to this area are also dreadful and not clear in their role as they decide to punish Lucetta without the thought of its serious result. On the base of old tradition of irrational skimmy-ride Lucetta loses her life out of shock. Thought system of characters hinders them moving forward positively in a new way. They backbite about others as they have nothing to do in their extended free time.

More than other characters and incidents, thorough analysis of Michael Henchard's characters and manner is of great importance to bring the theme of tradition in the novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Henchard as a discordant haughty man fails to perform his role according to time and situation. In the world of novel Henchard is possibly the last man to resist the inevitable force of modernity. He bears many ups and downs in his lifetime due to the lack of proficiency in his skill. At the end of the novel he surrenders all his protected pride and struggle saving and imposing his old outdated tradition in the hand of man with new vibes.

Vibes of modernity enters into the world of Casterbridge after the arrival of a traveler named Mr. Farfrae. When the man enters into the town he is in the prime of his youth and on his way to the destination he surpasses the place where people were questioning upon their mayor and a leading business personality's incapability to restore the quality and quantity of degraded agricultural production. With high curiosity of scientific knowledge he sends a note in a small cheat to be delivered to the mayor.

The depressed mayor with the sense of relief follows him to the hotel where he has resided. There, Henchard becomes fascinated with the personality and knowledge of Mr. Farfrae. With in short time Farfrae explains the whole process of regaining

ruined crops but Henchard by seeing his sharp and clear problem solving way insists him to remain in Casterbridge and work as his business manager. Farfrae on the other hand opposes his offer and becomes determined in his decision to leave the place for the achievement of his expected goal. Henchard is sure that he does not have ability to bring change in the way of doing things and ultimately compels Farfrae by providing one third share of his business.

Farfrae as a man of modern capitalistic mindset calculates the profit and loss on his being in Casterbridge then decides to be there. On the news of Farfrae's remaining in his town Henchard becomes overjoyed with the prospective thought of his thriving business. Now Henchard entertains to be a passive audience in his own business under the management of Farfrae. Farfrae's capacity to adjust in any environment in a short time earns the support of common people which helps him to move forward in his career. With his inventive way of doing things Farfrae replaces all the old system that Henchard was following before he comes in Casterbridge. He does tireless hard labour to bring Henchard's old business in proper shape.

Henchard's oral way changes into book keeping and record file takes the place memorizing system in business dealings. As the man of skill and knowledge Farfrae separates himself with that traditional man Henchard and runs his own business. Considerably, he increases in investment and widens his business circle in very short time to establish himself as a successful businessman.

In the novel, Farfrae is represented as a man holding modern world view. His plan is to go to the New found land in search of opportunity but stops in Casterbridge with the possibility of developing his career. When he gets opportunity to serve in Henchard's business he uses his mind and time in great extent. Soon after his

appointment as a manager Henchard puts all the burden of his business on his shoulder and flees to settle his family matter. Though, new enough in his position Farfrae handles everything perfectly in master's absence. When Henchard finds Farfrae working late night in his office he is perplexed with absolutely new techniques and observes them with his curious eyes as:

he stood behind Farfrae's chair, watching his dexterity in clearing up numerical fogs which had been allowed to grow so thick in Henchard's books as almost to baffle even to the Scotchman's perspicacity. The corn-factor's mien was half admiring, and yet it was not without a dash of pity for the taste of anyone who could care to give his mind to such finnikin details. Henchard himself was mentally and physically unfit for grubbing subtleties from soiled paper; he had in a modern sense received the education of Achilles, and found penmanship a tantalizing art. (p.81)

Through this explanation we come to know the qualification of both Henchard and Farfrae. In one sense Henchard's weak points and Farfrae's strong points are exposed among the readers which demonstrate Farfrae as a self governing qualified man to address the need of society and people and Henchard as a helpless audience in the immense theatre of emerging modernity. In this Scenario Peter Wagner in his book *Theorizing Modernity Inescapability and Attainability in Social Theory* defines modernist and truly modern ones can build in their place (p. 9).” For a critical reader these lines signify more as Henchard might not have thought for his total exclusion and insecurity of his position in his own single shared company. From Farfrae's skill in business management it is sure that in the days to come he will replace Henchard and his traditional method.

He regards time as money, so he does not bring personal matter in business. Even though, he is in deep love with Elizabeth Jane he is much concerned in managing time and emotion. What he keeps in mind always is his business and personal interest rather than a passionate person overwhelmed by certain emotion to ruin one's prestige and business. Sometimes along with his personal interest he becomes successful to hit the mind of by providing something they are seeking for a long. Once, to enlarge his business and to make his presence more visible in the town he plans to organize an entertainment programme. He organizes the programme in such a way that every audience and participant enjoy fully. Though, Farfrae charges fee with the audiences to enter in his programme they are happy to pay. Because of the systematic arrangement his events earns fame and some money to invest in his business.

As a modern smart man Farfrae uses his mind in every possible from where he can have some sort of financial and social upliftment and he even becomes successful to govern the mind and heart of people with their utmost satisfaction. In such success of Donald Farfrae again Wagner's idea of modernity matches as he states "Modernism in social sciences was characterized as a thinking that takes the double modern signification of autonomy and mastery as an unquestionable standpoint of all reasoning. Thus, it thinks of human beings giving themselves their own laws and as being capable of mastering the world (p.10)." As a man of skill and knowledge Farfrae soon earns considerable affection and popularity among the people which supported and encouraged him to flourish in his field as a free autonomous man. In the hand of smart Farfrae, Henchard's position in his own business has become ceremonial one due to his bluntness in technology. Though, he is master of corn

business Farfrae is making every decision on his own without any discussion with him. That becomes the golden chance for Farfrae to have dominance over every matter of the town, Casterbridge.

Farfrae never wastes his time in unnecessary things, he is strict in his routine, but unlike Henchard he is liberal with his worker. He deploys his staff tactfully so that his business sustain in long run without any difficulties. He even establishes healthy relation with his employee that is why he is preferred by everyone in business. Under his management workers feel themselves protected as Farfrae is not the man of uncertain temper and if problem arises, he analyzes and seeks for the right solution. After all economic matter is always in his mind as we find his thinking how to widen his business. Once when he meets Lucetta unexpectedly confirms about her riches and shows his inclination towards her. In short time he revolutionizes the poor system of Henchard and brings change in the everyday life of people. This means in Wagner's words "economic modernity is said to begin with the market revolution and the Industrial Revolution (p.6)." After the entry of Farfrae in Casterbridge economic status of people begins to change drastically under his rational managerial technique.

To materialize the concept of modernity in the town of Casterbridge, Farfare introduces a seed- drill machine to bring revolution in agriculture. The machine is the first scientific gadget arrived in town which signifies inevitable extinction of old traditional system. Except Michael Henchard all the people of Casterbridge admire Farfare for his effort to bring such invention in their place. To connote Henchard's dissatisfaction with that scientfi machine Jurgean Habermas in his book *Modernity – An Incomplete Project* states his view as:

The "old conservatives" do not allow themselves to be contaminated by

cultural modernism. They observe the decline of substantive reason, the differentiation of science, morality and art, the modern world view and its merely procedural rationality, with sadness and recommend a withdrawal to a position anterior to modernity. ( P. 1746) Henchard , a man from old generation irrationally ridicule Farfrae's invention and tries to keep him far from such new tools and methods to boast up in his position. He does not have dare to confront Farfrae's system with logic. Actually, the seed –drill machine marks the point of departure from the traditional back warded society to advance modern system. Farfrae does much for the improvement of people's lifestyle and society's face. Advancement in the current situation is in the blood of Farfrae. Habermas in his book *The philosophical Discourse of Modernirty* discusses the ethos of moderniry as “ it is that system imperatives and life-world imperatives from new frictional surfaces that spark new conflicts which cannot be dealt with the existing compromise structure ( p.357)”. The sense that can be drawn from these lines is modernity views the world from completely new stand point and comes to conflict with old existing system. In the text, before Farfrae comes to the world of Casterbridge people did not have any option . Willy –nilly they had to follow Henchard and his old system but, when Farfrae comes they help him in the mission of bringing change and comfort in their livelihood and whole society. To combat with old existing norms and values of the society is essential for sustainable Change and progress.

As a free modern man he shifts his love from Elizabeth-Jane to Lucetta easily. This is the drawback of his modern temperament to be unfaithful towards his lover in the mere greed being capitalist. As a business man in his heart, he automatically calculates the benefit he will get from the kinship with Lucetta. He even does not

mourn for the long after the sudden demise of his dear wife because of his busy time in business. Immediately after that he begins courting with Elizabeth, his ex-girlfriend. On the other hand Lucetta shows the temperament a modern women by challengin her ex-lover. Lucetta chooses Mr.Farfrae as he is the man of charming personality. In her bonding with Henchard She has been suffered a lot with the fear of her future with such short tempered man. So, in the right time she catches the attention of Farfrae. She argues with Henchard when he reminds her of their past affair by saying she does not want to be the slave of her past relation or she is not the Lucetta of past. Another woman to challenge the old male dominated society is Mrs. Goodenough, a firmity woman. During her trial in the court she disregarding Michael's position as a jury member discloses his past action which brings his complete downfall.

Despite the fact that Thomas Hardy belongs to the traditional Victorian society during his career as a novelist he brings the glimpse of modern vibe mainly through the young and energetic man to show the imminence of advance modern system at cost of conventional society. As a foresighted writer he guessed the influence of industrial revolution that English had undergone in the mid of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Slowly and gradually people are attracted towards the easy going system of modernism. Here, in the novel Hardy brings Donald Farfrae as a mouthpiece of modernism. And he becomes successful in performing his role as a mayor and modern man by defeating the man and his systems that are deeply rooted in traditionl way of doing things.

As the novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is set in the transitional period of English political history, it is certain to assume that there is tension. The existing socio-political ideologies are difficult to be put out in a way a modernist thirsts. Most

parts of the novel occupy the struggle between two phases of social development i.e. traditional Victorian Society and Capitalist Modern society. Evolution of modernist culture at the cost of traditional one seems tumultuous as each of them views the world in opposite direction. For the purpose of showing tension in the novel, the writer has deployed two principal characters to represent the ethos of traditional and modern social system.

The problem and tension of the whole novel relies chiefly on Michael Henchard and Donald Farfrae as they are from different social upbringing. They deal every matter in completely different way though the platform of their working field is same. The people of Casterbridge are living the life of great disgrace as Michael Henchard who is leader to them is not capable to settle their problem. Within himself Henchard is in great tension for he is the center of hope to common people and his traditional Knowledge and system is not working . At the mid of people's cry and suffocation of Michael Henchard to address their problem Farfrae reaches to the town with his innovative knowledge and system. Business of Michael Henchard and life of people get prospered under the innovative working system of Farfrae. At the beginning of Farfrae's career as a successful business manager Henchard celebrates musingly. He never gets tired of appreciating his new friend and his smart style business dealing for he is completely tension free. But soon he realizes that Farfrae's new techniques is robbing him and his system as Farfrae outdoes him in every respect and earns fame among the people.

The real conflict between Henchard and farfrae begins, when Henchard realizes that his role in business is fading out abruptly because of the astuteness of Farfrae . He hears the people appreciating Farfrae in front of him without hesitation.

People openly dislike Henchard as they work under the management of Farfrae with the feeling of safety and happiness. It becomes intolerable for Henchard to digest the open criticism and fires Farfrae from his business. But Farfrae does not flee from the town in the rejection of Henchard rather he sets up his own business a bit far from Henchard's. Farfrae's remaining in Casterbridge denotes that the spirit of modernism will ultimately overcome the traditional orthodoxy. Michael Henchard does his best to resist or defeat his counterpart in business but every single attempt becomes fatal for him and he gets failed. In the novel Tussle between the resisting force of tradition and the inventive spirit of modernism do not get short cut ending rather it lingers throughout the novel in different form. With his insufficient knowledge Henchard tries to copy the business strategy of Farfrae but he disappears in the fog of his own mismanagement. For reference when Henchard knows the fact that Farfrae is going to organize an entertainment programme and he too plans the same. For the attraction of audiences he provides everything for free along with the facilities of eating and drinking. On the contrary, audiences who are going to Farfrae's programme have to pay entry fee and there is no any facilities of free food and drink. Despite this vast gap between the entertainment programme of Henchard and farfrae, the flow of people in Farfrae's is irresistible as they are curious to taste newness in the programme of multitalented modern man. On the other hand, Henchard's programmme ruins due to heavy rainfall. Tired and disgraced with heavy loss and ruin Henchard then goes towards Farfrae's . Though angry enough he is stunned by the well management of Farfrae's event. Rivalry and battle between these two characters become strong. Due to risk of belittling himself in the eyes of Farfrae he does not remain there for long time directly returns to his home. In the evening when Elizabeth

and Susan, his daughter and wife they find him thinking something in his solitude. He even forbids Elizabeth to meet and have any kind of connection with him so that he also can have distance Farfrae. Moreover, Henchard manages to have ideological and physical combat with Farfrae as he is not easily defeatable man.

Because of irrational pride on his power and position and his unwillingness to update himself according to the demand of time Henchard loses everything and chooses his lonely death at the end of the novel. But Farfrae as a modern educated man can easily read the psychology of the tormented country people and acts wisely according to their need and desire becomes successful in his objectives. After all, Henchard presents himself as an iron which is used up and thrown in open space unnoticed. And when he is found is eaten up by the thick rust of traditional attitude which is of no use in the world seeking newness in every moment.

This study demonstrates the clash between the ideologies of tradition and modernity by making its base on the real context of historical English society. The two characters Michael Henchard and Donald Farfrae come into the surface as representatives of two different ideologies and give their best to preserve and promote their own. Henchard as a man from old generation expresses his irritation to transform his old and outdated self according to the demand of time and circumstance. As a result he loses every battle with man who is overwhelmed to bring change in the society. When Farfrae starts his job as a manager of Henchard's corn business he finds everything in jumbled order. But without any disappointment he manages everything systematically and rescues Henchard's business from ruin. Even though, Henchard has fascination towards Farfrae's scientific techniques he put himself back from learning those things and put himself on the way of Farfrae to obstruct his

modernist mission. In larger context, this novel *The mayor of Casterbridge and implication of modernist approach* help to analyze the evolution process of society which always demands for something new in the existing one. Hardy preoccupied with the thought for change in Victorian political, social, moral and cultural system exposes his characters and their attitude in accordance.

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