'...A JEWEL WORTH PRESERVING': THOMAS HARDY'S INDIAN CORRESPONDENTS[1] AND HIS RECEPTION IN COLONIAL INDIA

Oindrila Ghosh*

Abstract

In Thomas Hardy's works, such as the one often categorised as a minor novel, A Pair of Blue Eyes, and in one of his shortstories 'Destiny and the Blue Cloak', one is struck by references to India – as a vague, homogenised geographical unit. It leads one to wonder and eventually research into Hardy's possible connections with the actual country of vast geographical and sociological diversities. Reading the unpublished correspondences to Hardy at the Hardy Archives, at the Dorset County Museum, from his Global correspondents reaped positive results, and my essay here discusses letters from several Indian correspondents, who wrote to Hardy for various purposes – from seeking guidance in research, to seeking permissions to publish selections from his work in India, for reviews of their own work composed in the English language, those seeking autographs from him or professors sending intimation of their students publishing on Hardy. The contents of these letters from Hardy's Indian correspondents may sound ordinary in their import as mere requests from fans to a celebrated author, and may not immediately contribute meaningful extra-textual perspectives on his published works. However they do open up a vital portal for researchers in India who have tried to, and are still trying to, fathom the depth of Hardy's influence upon his Indian readers, and, thereby, also providing every Hardy critic and reader with the knowledge of their favourite author's truly global reach and impact.

Keywords: Hardy, archives, letters, Indian, correspondents

* Associate Professor and Head, Department of English, Diamond Harbour Women's University.

In a few of Thomas Hardy's works, such as, *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873)[2], often categorised in most critical discussions as a minor novel, one finds references to India – as a vague, homogenised geographical space. One of the characters, Henry Knight refers to India as a place, sufficiently vague, where his friend Stephen Smith has travelled to earn a fortune and an independent practice:

> . . . And that idle one low down upon the ground, that have almost rolled round to, is in India – over the head of a young friend of mine, who very possibly looks at the star in our zenith, as it hangs low upon his horizon, and thinks of it as marking where his true love dwells (149).

Similarly in a short story called "Destiny and the Blue Cloak"[3], Oswald Winwood, the young hero, is shown taking the Indian Civil Services examination, like several young British men of his time, hoping to earn a fortune in India. These literary references evoke an undefined, homogenized geographical space, almost a land of miracles, where Hardy's young heroes travel to transform their destinies for the better. These references made me contemplate: what were Hardy's actual connections, with and exposure to my country, with its actual wide geographical and sociological diversities? He certainly did make erratic entries in his, now-published, literary notebooks regarding events and issues related to India and Indians, including *Suttee*, overpopulation, and the discovery of stimuli in plants (Björk 1985, I131)

It has been long established that Hardy was not a widely travelled writer, except within Europe, or at least not one who enjoyed travelling and living outside his native Dorset. He had neither travelled to India, nor had he any illustrious correspondents from the Indian sub-continent, in which case they would then have been mentioned in the eight exhaustive volumes of his published letters[4]. Hardy's indirect linkages to India; evidence of movement to India of people closely connected to him; and the depiction of India in Hardy's fiction have been richly documented by Rena Jackson (*THJ* 121-143). Yet, the question still lingered on, if and how Hardy received Indian readers and their responses?

My initial curiosity gradually transmogrified into research during my visits to Dorchester in 2016 and 2019. At the Thomas Hardy Archives, at the Dorset County Museum, while reading the well-preserved and unpublished correspondences to Hardy (which have now been digitised by the University of Exeter under a Project headed by Professor Angelique Richardson), that some of my questions were finally answered. This essay discusses letters from a

few Indian correspondents, who wrote to Hardy for various purposes – for seeking guidance in research, for permissions to publish selections from his work in India, or those seeking reviews of their own work composed in the English language in colonial India, and of various other things. The letters reveal a diverse and mixed matrix of Hardy's popularity as a living British author in the colonial Indian context and demonstrate the immense respect that his work elicited from the newly Western-educated strata that his work elicited from the relatively newly Western-educated strata of Indian society. They testify to the fact that Hardy was a much-loved writer from the East to the West coast of Colonial India, and even beyond, in Burma, which till 1937 was part of British India. Shafqat Towheed in his insightful essay "Negotiating the List: Launching Macmillan's Colonial Library and Author Contracts", says:

> In many senses, Thomas Hardy presents perhaps the most uncomplicated itinerary in Macmillan's Colonial Library list. He was one of the first major novelists to be contacted by Macmillan about the new colonial edition even before the scheme had been formally launched (137)[5].

In fact this essay goes on to enumerate how the Macmillan Colonial Library editions actually made Hardy immensely popular in the British colonies, even many years after he left off writing novels:

> what is also evident is that despite his public withdrawal from the field of novel writing, Macmillan was confident that his work would continue to sell in the British and colonial markets for years to come. For Hardy, the Colonial Library opened up a new market (…) while at the same time entrenching his position as one of Macmillan's favoured authors (140).

The contents of these letters from his Indian correspondents may sound ordinary in their import as mere requests from fans to a celebrated author, and may not immediately contribute meaningful extra-textual perspectives on his published works, however they do open up a vital portal for researchers in the Indian Sub-continent who have tried, are still trying, to fathom the depth of Hardy's influence upon his Indian readers. Though research on the translations of Hardy's novels in the-then Indian Sub-Continent fixes the period of contact between the writer and his larger Indian readership (through vernacular translations) to as late as 1938,[6] the letters reveal a much earlier period of exposure to, and reverence for, Hardy's work, among Indian academia and readership, who was, then, a living-legend to them. The letters, thus, make many important points about the state of Indians as readers, researchers,

teachers of English Literature – which back in the early-twentieth century was restricted chiefly to British literature – and as Colonial subjects under the British Crown. We are also informed of the early writers and exponents of Indo-Anglian writing, choosing English as language of literary creation, even within the problematics of a being colonial subjects under the British rule.

The number of correspondents discovered now stands at eight. There were four correspondents from Bombay, one from Guntur, one from Calcutta, one from Rangoon (Yangon) and one who had taken up higher studies in London. I have written about some of these correspondents in greater detail elsewhere[7] and choose to discuss a few others for the first time in this essay.

A Lady, a Scholar and an Indian

The first letter of interest, which I choose to discuss, is from a Lady from South of India, who signs as Srimati Kanakalakshmi and introduces herself as a scholar who has written a Masters Thesis on the intervention of fate in Thomas Hardy's novels and poems. Her letter is quoted in full below:

47 Willifield Way,
Gordon's Green,
11 October 1922 London.

Dear Mr Hardy,

Please forgive me for writing to you in this way. I am an Indian lady student studying for an M.A, in the London University. I am writing a thesis on your works – mainly the idea of fate in your novels and drama. It is ready, and is to be submitted by the 1st week of November. Before that I have a very great desire to show my thesis to you and know your opinion about it. Hence I have taken this bold, . . . step of writing to you. But let me assure you, I have known you ever so long through your works, and hence you are no stranger to me. Can you see me sometime after the 22nd of this month, if I come to your place, and stay in Dorchester for 2 or 3 days, will it be possible for you to glance through my thesies? (100 pages of type) I shall feel so happy to see you and speak to you for some time; and it will be one of my most cherished memories in my life.

Will you write to me by next post, whether it will be possible for you to see me.

Thanking you very much.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
Srimati Kanakalakshmi

Apparently of little significance, and capable of being ignored or shelved as any other ordinary letter of request from any reader and researcher of Hardy's work, as a letter from *an Indian lady student studying for an M.A, in the London University* (my Italics) it merits closer scrutiny. An Indian and a lady who had dared to take a 'bold' step to write to a writer who was nevertheless "no stranger" to her as she felt "[having] known [him] ever so long through [his] works", her naïve request to a busy, reclusive and celebrated author to read through her masters dissertation and meet her in Dorchester sounds audacious, but a closer reading admits a juvenile excitement ("I shall feel so happy to see you and speak to you for some time; and it will be one of my most cherished memories in my life"), the same way that youngsters in the present day may feel for and react to their favourite movie stars! The vital points to be noted here are many – first, the letter is a reminder that the Indian woman traveller, who travelled across the sea to England, in different time periods of 20th century with different visions, for education or the war, entering study in Imperial cosmopolitan London universities, was a rare occurrence and hence Kanakalakshmi's letter to a British author of repute marks an important step in asserting herself as a serious reader and researcher of a British author, bypassing her subaltern identities as female and as colonial subject. No other letters from her addressed to Hardy, nor a reply to her from him or his secretary, were found and efforts to locate her Masters thesis have not borne fruit yet. But as is the case with any research which involves archival and field-based study, one may never say with certainty when a source might emerge! From a Postcolonial perspective, further forays into the history of her travel to and education in Imperial London would vitally contribute to the ongoing researches on the position and life of Indian women travelers and students in early twentieth century imperial London during the days of the *Raj*.

'Your Admirers here are Many': Hardy and His Indian Readers in the Early Decades of the 20th century

N.R. Harihara Iyer, who was the principal of a Municipality school in Guntur district, part of Madras Presidency in colonial India, wrote around seven[8] letters to Hardy between the years 1921-1925. Categorically different in tone and approach from Kanakalakshmi's naïve and amusing requests, Iyer's letters convey his attempts to wield publishing rights for selected poems and short stories of Hardy, for Indian students. It is also interesting to note that Hardy was sending patient replies to the letter writer and his queries and requests during the course of the correspondence. I would wish to highlight some points made in his letters, arguing that they reveal the state of Indians as readers and

admirers of British writers in colonial India.

The letter dated 12 July 1921, where Iyer is making a repetition of his appeal made in an earlier letter dated 25 April 1921, for acquiring the permission for publishing rights in India of an annotated collection of Hardy's poems suitable for Indian readers and for college students, makes two very interesting comments: "… your admirers here are many and, among educated Indians here, we talk often and often of your works. And we had agreeable discussion of you and your works and of the Nobel prize in relation to you on June 2 the date of your birth. It is our expectation that the Nobel prize will fall to you at least now."

I am,
Yours very truly,
N.R. Harahari Iyer

The writer's repeated emphasis on Hardy's 'admirers' among 'educated Indians', who, despite the lack of immediately available copies of books/ periodicals from Britain, keep themselves voraciously abreast of information about their venerated author. Secondly, the mention of the 'Nobel prize' is yet another significant issue, and one where Hardy's destiny at least for once was intertwined with an Indian writer of world-repute![9] Iyer's letter dated 8 March 1922 gives a few noteworthy insights with respect to Hardy's reception in colonial India:

174. NuraniPalghat,
Malabar Dt. Madras Presy.
South India.

Thomas Hardy. Esq.
Max Gate, Dorchester.

Dear Sir,

Since I wrote in December last I had to return to my native place and look for a new post elsewhere. I am writing to say that I am sending by bookpost 2 copies of my humble study of your 'The Return of the Native' which has been prescribed for B.A. study in the University of Mysore. I would be glad of your accepting them. I have added a copy for Mrs. Hardy who, I learn from the Daily Mail year Book, is a writer of children's stories: though I have not come across them in the bookshops. As I said in my previous letters the times are seeing the popularity of your works here and the prescription of this book shows it. I trust Mrs. Hardy would be pleased to accept the copy.

I remain,
Dear Sir,
Yours very truly,
N.R. Harihara Iyer.

The author reveals the relation of the Indian readership with Hardy – the man and the writer, at a time when he was still living and strongly impacting the literary world around him. Iyer, a teacher and scholar, seems to have succeeded in translating his love for Hardy's work into serious scholarship, as is evident from his publication of a guide-book[10] on *The Return of the Native*[11] which found a significant place as a University-recommended textbook in India. Also, he is, perhaps, not too far from the truth when he expresses the conviction: "the times are seeing the popularity of your books here and the prescription of [my] book shows it…" Iyer's requests, first to compile a selection of Hardy's poetry and later a selection of six tales from his Short Stories, are, however, politely refused by Hardy, as revealed from the discovery of a copy of the pencil-draft reply of his secretary to Iyer.

Iyer's final letter (which may only be indicative of further letters not preserved and not the end of the correspondence) of 8 January 1924, highlights the tenacity of a 'native' Indian reader to obtain the permission to publish the works of an illustrious British author, with the aim of popularising it amidst students and readers who, according to him, were unable to purchase the expensive editions.[12] He mentions an interesting argument in support of his requests: "Lord Morley was pleased to permit an Indian Teacher to issue a Volume of Selections from his prose for B.A. Studies. In my requests to you I quoted the case."

This is indicative of Iyer's consciousness of his position as an 'Indian' and as a 'teacher', whereby he feels the justification of the attempts to appeal to a British author's sense of justice and fair play which would recognise and comply with the needs of Indians as British subjects: "In India, there are students of English as keen in enthusiasm and admiration, as the Indian soldiers who fought for England and whose song 'The Song of the Soldiers'[13]is in your poems."

This analogy of Indian students of English with Indian soldiers, who fought for the British in the Great War clarifies the writer's view of the British as benefactors, which he probably shared with many other Indians of his times, who in a sense ought to be always concerned with the upliftment of the intellectual and social lot of Indians, in every way possible. The demands of N.R. Harihara Iyer are nevertheless gentle and always mixed with a sense of awe for Thomas Hardy as a writer and as a British.

'Confiden[t] that you will not fail to comply': *Epistolary Art or Emerging Colonial Dissent?*

Several correspondences from the then Bombay Presidency were found among the unpublished manuscripts of letters. In all cases they reveal the wide appeal of Hardy's work among students, scholars and teachers of English literature in colonial India. The first correspondence that I have written about at some length elsewhere[14] is one from M. M. Banaji. Banaji was an early exponent of Indo-Anglian writing of moderate repute, his book on Parsi life[15] added to the earliest writings in English by Western-educated Indians. A writer himself, he does not reflect the sense of subservience as Iyer, in his letters, but rather a marked confidence of writing, what he considers, to be an equal: His expectations of a prompt reply and opinion about his book from Hardy are indicative of his immense confidence in his role as an 'author' and, thus, equal to the British writer. There is little sense of subaltern inferiority as a colonial subject, who has attempted to write in the language of the coloniser, as a section of his first letter dated 24 August 1924, evinces: "Me thinks none is so well fitted to read an author's heart as an author and I hope you will be able to read mine and all its intricate workings same as I have done yours. If you find a wee bit of a jewel worth preserving I have no doubt, jeweler like you will do it; but if otherwise you may bestow it on any one you may please."

A perpetuation of this attitude can be found in his second letter of 31 October 1924, where Banaji's piqued ego, the recurrent intermingling of the personal and the political, which occurred in most interactions between the British and the Indian during the colonial rule, are revealed. Banaji — as an Indian subject loyal to the British Crown chooses to give a gentle piece of his mind to Hardy — whom he sees as a British representative in this instant:

> I believe you are of my age, if not older and will pardon a few frank words betwixt you, me and the wall. I believe you concede that we Parsis are a loyal tribe – loyal to the very backbone to our rulers. So far we have kept all idea of non-cooperation or civil disobedience at a safe distance but you will pardon me if I say that even we are now beginning to feel that our rulers and their race are too unnecessarily haughty, exclusive and reserved, and it is high time they relax and respond more heartily and unreservedly why me thought you would go out of your way and make time to meet my humble wishes even though the book be not tithe so good as those you have been able to lay before your readers…

No further letters 'From/ To' Banaji are found in the collection,

suggesting that probably Hardy had no answer for Banaji's impatience and *candid views on the British temperament*! This letter, however, broaches a few important issues relating to British imperial rule in India. What both Iyer's and Banaji's letters convey, is the average Indian's faith, even in the early decades of the 20th century, in the British sense of fair play and their interest in the upliftment of the Indian race! While reading these correspondences one must at all times, bear in mind the fact about India still being a colony of the British Empire, and hence also the fact, that these Indian connoisseurs of Hardy are also colonial subjects who have a bitter-sweet relationship with their British masters. Thus, the letters to a loved author are also open for foregrounding of imperialist politics. It is this aspect in Iyer's and Banaji's letters which, perhaps, raises them to a stature higher than of mere fan mails.

The next letter from Bombay, is at once a fan-mail and yet another peek at the reception and popularity of Hardy's work among Indians in colonial India. This letter from M.D. Darukhanavola, a former Fellow/Teacher of St. Xaviers' College Bombay, speaks of the admiration and popularity of Hardy among the youth in India, as he writes to Hardy about a young student who has chosen to write and publish an article on Hardy in the St. Xavier's College Magazine (the copy of which however was not found among Hardy's books, papers and letters in the Archives):

Bombay, 15th April, 1911
91, Bazar Gate St.Fort

Dear Sir,

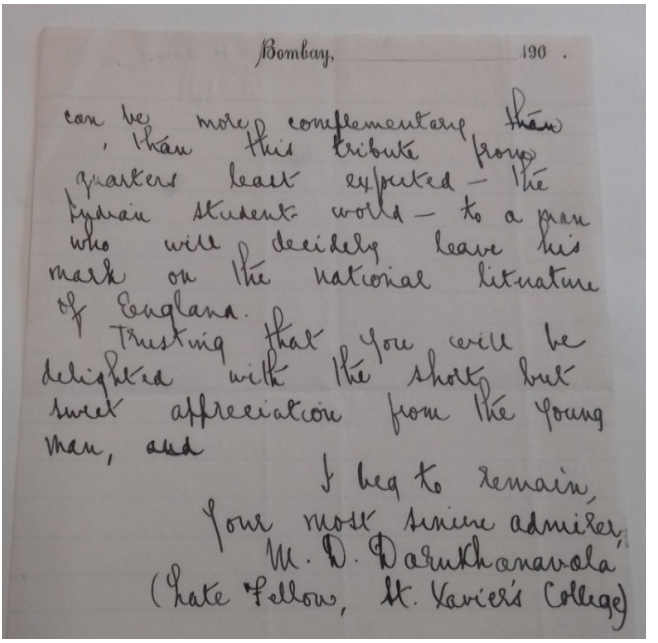
Although you have not the honour to know me personally, you will do a great favour to one of your sincere admirers if you will give a few moments of your time to this letter and its enclosure.

Under separate cover I beg to send you a copy of our College Magazine containing an article by a fellow student of mine on some prominent aspects of your novels. You will, I hope, appreciate this piece of criticism – all the more so as it is written by a youngman of 18 fresh from his college career. You will note I trust with satisfaction that your works find favour even among the student world and that they are studied as they ought to be with care and attention which they so fully deserve.

It will give you I presume great pleasure to find that even young students on this side of the English-knowing world like the writer of the appreciation in the magazine wish your works to see survive time and be among the shelves of the student's library. No, do not think anything can (can) be more compl(e)mentary than this tribute from quarters least expected – the Indian student world – to a man who will decidedly leave his mark on the National literature of England.

Trusting that you will be delighted with the short but sweet appreciation from the youngman, and

I beg to remain,
Your most sincere admirer,
M.D. Darukhanavola
(Late Fellow, St. Xavier's College)


Bombay, 190 .

can be more complementary than
, than this tribute from
quarters least expected — the
Indian student world — to a man
who will decidedly leave his
mark on the national literature
of England.

Trusting that you will be
delighted with the short but
sweet appreciation from the young
man, and

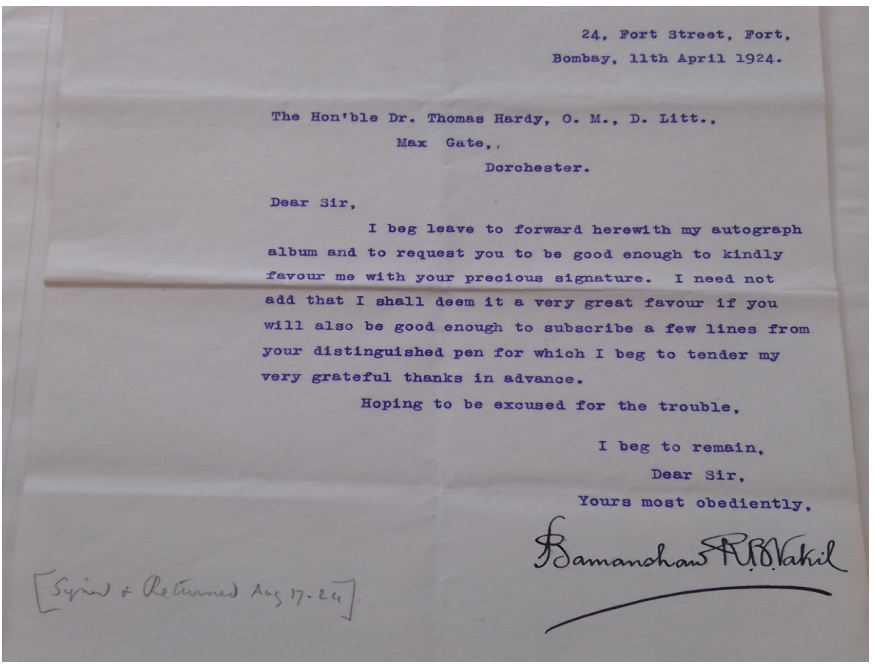
I beg to remain,
Your most sincere admirer,
M. D. Darukhanavola
(Late Fellow, St. Xavier's College)

Photographed by the author with permission from the Dorset County Museum and Dorset History Centre, 2019.

Like Iyer's, Darukhanavola's letter too reveals the significant impact Hardy's writing was making upon students and academics in India at a time when he was a living legend and still writing. No draft of a reply to this letter has survived, nor record in the published volumes of letters. The writer's hope and prophecy that Hardy "will decidedly leave his mark on the National literature of England" show not only sincere admiration that the "Indian student world" had for him, reflected also in the letter from Dinesh Ranjan Das from erstwhile Calcutta.[16] It is a pity that not many other Indian correspondents chose to communicate with Hardy on these issues regarding his works and their reception among Indian readers and academicians at such length, which would assist us in forming a clearer picture, rather than now depending on the stray views of one or two correspondents.

An interesting find during this research was Hardy's patience with,

and at times indulgence towards, his admirers and their requests. The third letter from Bombay, by one Ramanshaw RB Vakil, requesting an autograph with "a few lines from [his] distinguished pen" from his favourite author, has a pencil note, from his secretary, at the bottom left [signed and returned Aug. 17.24], which reveals how Hardy not only received but also responded to his colonial readers and their fanfare.



24, Fort Street, Fort,
Bombay, 11th April 1924.

The Hon'ble Dr. Thomas Hardy, O. M., D. Litt.,
Max Gate,,
Dorchester.

Dear Sir,

I beg leave to forward herewith my autograph album and to request you to be good enough to kindly favour me with your precious signature. I need not add that I shall deem it a very great favour if you will also be good enough to subscribe a few lines from your distinguished pen for which I beg to tender my very grateful thanks in advance.

Hoping to be excused for the trouble,

I beg to remain,
Dear Sir,
Yours most obediently,

Ramanshaw R.B. Vakil

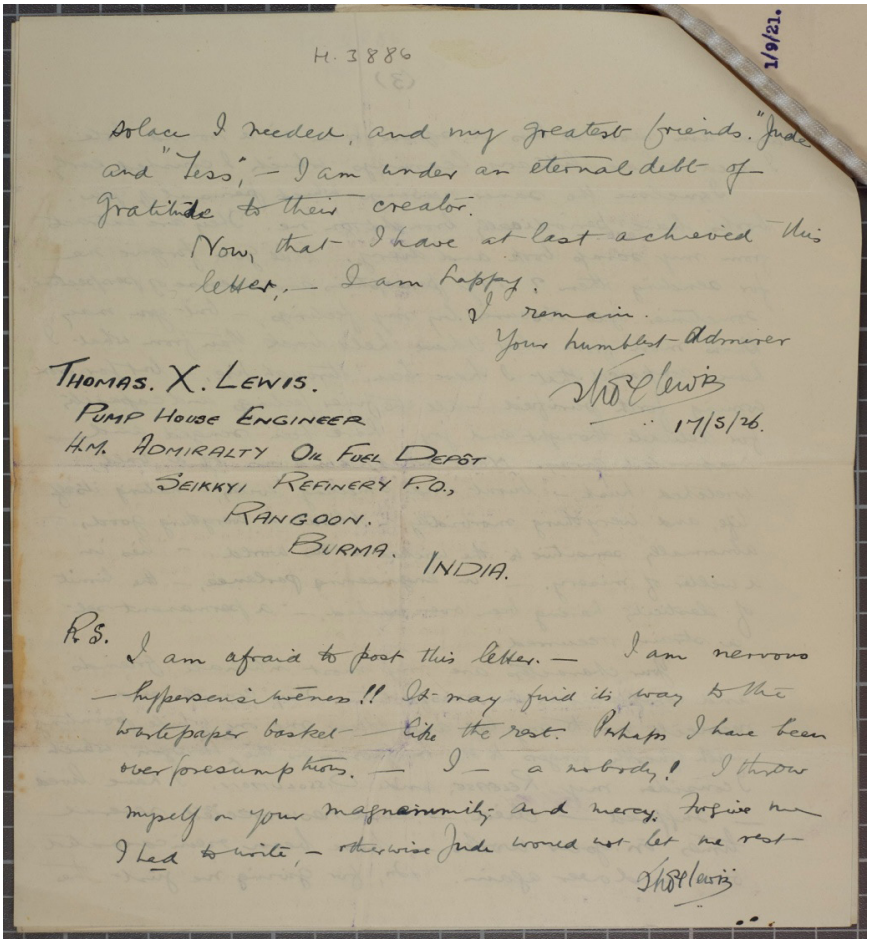
[Signed & Returned Aug 17.24]

Photographed by the author with permission from the Dorset County Museum and the Dorset History Centre, UK, 2019.

'I am not exactly…a whiteman': Letter from Rangoon, Burma

Although this letter is not from India proper (and was indeed shelved by me for long but for the intervention of the opinions of a leading Hardy scholar and critic), it certainly is important as a reminder of the extension of India[17] well-beyond its modern cartographical realities and also the wider extent of Hardy's readership in the subcontinent. This letter is from a Thomas X. Lewis, who describes himself as a 26-year-old Pump Engineer working in Rangoon (modern Yangon) and, "not exactly what is understood by a whiteman". This letter originates from outside India proper, though Mr Lewis adds 'India' as well as 'Burma' to his address, but it includes an extensive essay-cum-diary, which has considerable human interest, even if it does

not add very much to our knowledge of Hardy's reception in India.


H.3886

1/9/21.

Solace I needed, and my greatest friends. "Jude and "Tess", — I am under an eternal debt of gratitude to their creator.

Now, that I have at last achieved this letter, — I am happy.

I remain.

Your humblest Admirer

Thomas. X. Lewis.

17/5/26.

THOMAS. X. LEWIS.
PUMP HOUSE ENGINEER
H.M. ADMIRALTY OIL FUEL DEPOT
SEIKKYI REFINERY P.O.,
RANGOON.
BURMA. INDIA.

P.S. I am afraid to post this letter. — I am nervous — hypersensitiveness !! It may find its way to the waste paper basket — like the rest. Perhaps I have been over presumptious. — I — a nobody! I throw myself on your magnanimity and mercy. Forgive me I had to write, — otherwise Jude would not let me rest —

Thos Lewis

A page from Thomas X. Lewis' letter. Photographed by the author with permission from the Dorset County Museum and the Dorset History Centre, 2019.

An excerpt from the letter offers an interesting read, and once again reiterates the admiration Hardy received from Indian readers during his lifetime.

> Burma, Thomas X. Lewis, 17th May, 1926…
>
> Mr Hardy! I am not exactly what is understood as a white man. I have never been out of India. But in my little sphere, books have been of great solace to me. Please do not think me extravagant or insincere if I say that if every word and letter in your Immortal works "Jude, the Obscure," "Tess" and the REST were to be engraved *on solid sheets of pure gold* and the whole of your works compiled and embossed with all the

> *most precious jewels* in the world, then placed reverentially on a diamond studded altar in a *Taj Mahal*, for all posterity to behold and be lost in everlasting wonder, it would not yet be a fitting tribute to your immortal Godlike, — supernatural genius.
>
> One day, I hope to work my passage to England and behold with my own eyes so great a man. I wish also to take my degree in Engineering. I am only 26 and am more or less a square man in a round hole. I used to have literary leanings, which I crushed early. (My Italics)

The element of amusement and interest generated in this letter rests partly on the extravagant comparison the writer makes of Hardy's works with "*solid sheets of pure gold*" and "*most precious jewels*" to be placed in the *Taj Mahal* (the ultimate symbol of beauty and perfection of the East in the eyes of the West, at least in the days of the Raj)!

> These letters to Hardy from Indians, one may deduce, had been largely ignored and has served little purpose to any researcher of his works yet. Discovering them had an element of personal thrill, as an Indian reader of Thomas Hardy. The unpublished letters, as a whole from several nations not all investigated under this project, reveal how Hardy was at the centre of intellectual and literary discussions, globally, during his lifetime. Examining his unpublished correspondence also shows us how writers were seen in the 19th and early-20th centuries, and about the practice of letter writing cutting across class, gender, and geographical boundaries. It was helpful to be able to prove the gut-feeling, that the popularity of Hardy's works had been present in India, much earlier than it has hitherto been established or documented. There is room in this ongoing research for examining Hardy's own attitude to the Empire's 'subject races' – particularly as we have no evidence of any response from Hardy to the requests of several writers including Kanakalakshmi, who wrote a thesis on a British author. Furthermore, these letters and, more significantly, Hardy's response or lack of response to each, also open up possibilities for researching the norms of colonial discourse and behaviours. Several issues of colonial attitudes are more than likely to arise in subsequent researches on Hardy's Indian correspondents. All said, if not for any further gain, reading these letters might work to satisfy a reader about the truly global reach and fame of Hardy. These letters unequivocally reveal that unbeknown to himself, Hardy had in fact touched the minds of readers from different parts and cultures of the vast Indian subcontinent, although in his own works 'India' was imagined to be and referred to as a vague and homogenised country. The letter writers, in fact, mirror the actual, multilingual and multicultural India, nevertheless unified in deep admiration for him!

Notes

1. This essay is part of a larger project undertaken by the author to discover Thomas Hardy's Indian and Asian Correspondents, from the manuscripts of unpublished letters to Hardy from his global correspondents, at the Hardy Archives at the Dorset County Museum, UK. The author is grateful to the Charles Wallace India Trust, UK, which funded this research, to the Hardy Archives and the Thomas Hardy Society, UK, for providing necessary permissions and leads to progress with the project and to IIAS, Shimla, for the award of the Associateship, and its encouraging and wholesome environment, where a major section of this essay was compiled and presented and important feedback received from distinguished Fellows and Associates. Some of the material of this exhaustive essay overlaps with shorter pieces published elsewhere (mentioned below).
2. Thomas Hardy, *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. London: Macmillan, 1975 (New Wessex Edition).
3. 'Destiny and the Blue Cloak'.*The Collected Short Stories of Thomas Hardy* ed. Desmond Hawkins, London: Macmillan (The New Wessex Edition), 1988.
4. Thomas Hardy, *The Collected Letters of Thomas Hardy*. Edited by Richard Little Purdy and Michael Millgate. 7 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978-1988 and *The Collected Letters of Thomas Hardy*. Volume 8: Further Letters. Edited by Michael Millgate and Keith Wilson.
5. Towheed, Shafqat. 'Negotiating the List: Launching Macmillan's Colonial Library and Author Contracts'. John Spiersed. *The Culture of the Publisher's Series: Nationalisms and the National Canon*, Volume 2. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
6. See Paul, Neelanjana. 'Hardy in India: The Reception of his work in a Multi-Lingual Country' *The Hardy Review* Spring Volume 16 (1), 2014. pp. 20-28.
7. See Ghosh, Oindrila.'Discovering Thomas Hardy's Indian Correspondents' in *The Hardy Review*, ed. Rosemarie Morgan 16 (2), 2014.
8. I have seen the manuscripts of only four letters (typed or hand-written) by Mr Iyer at the Archive, but the final letter of 1925 mentions the inception of the correspondence chronologically, which makes it possible for one to fix the number of letters sent to Hardy at seven.
9. This mention takes one back to the year 1913 when Hardy was nominated by 97 members of the Royal Society of Literature, London, against one nomination for Rabindranath Tagore by Thomas Sturge Moore, and Tagore happened to win the prize for his *Gitanjali*: *Song Offerings*, translated by himself in English. Of course, there is no evidence available that either Tagore or Hardy ever interacted with each other, but there is however mention of Hardy's having owned and read a copy of *Gitanjali*.
10. Iyer, N.R. Harihara. *A Critical Study of The Return of the Native*. Madras, India, 1922.
11. The evidence of the copies of the books sent to Hardy and Florence Dugdale Hardy can be cross-verified from Michael Millgate's catalogue of books found in Hardy's library from his carefully compiled: 'Thomas Hardy's Library At Max Gate: Catalogue Of An Attempted Reconstruction' from http://hardy.library.utoronto.ca/hardycataz.pdf (web. 15th August, 2016).
12. The Macmillan Colonial Library had started publishing editions of Hardy's and other British Writers' novels at rupee one since 1886.

13. Hardy, Thomas. 'Men Who March Away'. *The Complete Poems of Thomas Hardy*. Ed. James Gibson. London: Macmillan: 2001.
14. Ghosh, Oindrila 'Discovering Thomas Hardy's Indian Correspondents' in *The Hardy Review*, ed. Rosemarie Morgan 16 (2), 2014
15. Banaji, M.M. *Sublime Though Blind: A Tale of Parsi Life: Men and Manners*. Bombay: published by the Author, 1923.
16. Das was one of the founding Editors of the Magazine *Kallol* – which served as the platform for the dissemination of the ideas of the *Kallol era*. It was an aesthetic and literary movement led by a group of Bengali poets and writers were trying to move away from the existing mould of literature practised in Bengal, to the inculcation and incorporation of modernist strands. Kallol movement and its magazine proved to be a very powerful influence in Bengal, shaping the course of literary trends of production in Post-Kallol era (read Oindrila Ghosh, "Thomas Hardy's Calcutta Connection: One Letter, Many Regrets". Ed. Karin Koehler, *Hardy Society Journal*, Summer Vol 16, no. 2, 2020, pp. 37-42).
17. Burma was a British colony, and was part of the British-governed India from 1824-1937. Burma was separated from the rest of the Indian Empire only in 1937.