

CONSEQUENCES OF PRIVATE PRACTICES OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN HARDY'S *TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES* AND *JUDE THE OBSCURE**

“Thomas Hardy'nin *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* ve *Jude the Obscure* adlı Romanlarında Yaşanan Sosyal Değişikliklerin Sonuçları”

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Özet

Bu çalışma, İngiliz romancılarından Thomas Hardy'nin *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure* adlı romanlarını ele alırken, hızlı kentleşmenin yaşandığı 19. yüzyılın sonundaki kaçınılmaz sosyal değişikliklerin sebep olduğu sosyal problemleri irdelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Değerlendirme öncelikle köyden kente göç eden bireyler hakkında yapılacaktır. *Tess* ve *Jude* adlı iki ünlü eseri bu bağlamda ele alırken, bu çalışma, *Tess of d'Urbervilles* ve *Jude Fawley* adlı karakterlerin hayatta başarısızlıklarının sebebini birçok eleştirmenlere zıt olabilecek bir yaklaşımla ortaya koymaktadır. Birçok eleştirmen için ana karakterlerin başarısızlık sebebi temelde kadere dayandırılırken, burada 1890'lı yıllarda köyden kente göçün hızlanmasıyla meydana gelen değişikliğin sebep olduğu sosyal değişimler vurgulanmaktadır. Thomas Hardy'nin romanlarını incelerken, bu makale, insanı sosyal çevrenin kurbanı haline getiren sosyal kararlılık üzerinde yoğunlaşmaktadır., Emile Durkheim, böyle bir değişimi insanda yabancılaşma, yalnızlık, endişelenme, karışıklığa eğilim, duygusuzlaşma, ve anlamsız hissetme gibi zihinsel ve duygusal durumlara sürüklenme olarak tanımlanan “anomik” durum olarak adlandırır. Dolayısıyla, asıl amaç sosyal, tarihsel, ve edebi inceleme yoluyla sosyal huzursuzluğa sebep olan etmenler üzerinde durmaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Thomas Hardy, *Tess of d'Urbervilles*, *Jude the Obscure*, sosyal durumlar

Abstract

This article aims at discovering the unavoidable outcomes of the social transformation in the process of rapid urbanization in English social life in respect to Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure* at the end of the nineteenth century¹. The evaluation will be predominantly about the private practices of social change in respect to the transformation from the rural to urban life. While analyzing these two masterpieces in this context, this article will conduct a contrary approach to what most critics argue about the causes of the failure of Tess of d'Urbervilles in *Tess* and Jude Fawley in *Jude*. Whereas the issue of fate plays the key role for the failure of these characters for most critics, in this study, the detriments of their downfall revolve around the social consequences of the transformation from rural to urban life in the 1890s. The general tendency for the analysis of Hardy's novels in this study is via the evaluation in terms of social determinism which drives men into being the victims of social circumstances. Such a variation end up the emergence of different mental and emotional states of alienation, isolation, anxiety, confusion, insensitiveness, and meaninglessness which can also be correlated with the concept of “anomie” of the sociologist Emile Durkheim. Hence, throughout a social, historical and literary analysis, the focus will be to find out the main reasons for the social unrest.

Key Words: Thomas Hardy, *Tess of d'Urbervilles*, *Jude the Obscure*, social circumstances.

1. INTRODUCTION

This article points out the reasons for the tragic consequences of the main characters, Tess of d'Urbervilles and Jude Fawley, on account of the social circumstances in *Tess* and *Jude*. As becoming subject to the mental issues of alienation, isolation, and meaninglessness in life, these main characters suffer from the unavoidable consequences of the rapid process of urbanization and modernization in English social life. The nineteenth century French sociologist Emile Durkheim described such mental states under “anomie” which stresses the significance of the lack of regulation and the defect of norms that lead individuals into tragic outcomes. This article will conduct a literary analysis of *Tess* and *Jude* on account of applying to sociological explanations to explain the main reasons of the tragic endings of Tess

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¹ Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'ubervilles* is hereafter abbreviated as *Tess* throughout this article. Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* is hereafter abbreviated as *Jude* throughout this article.

and Jude. As a result of their private practices of social change in their lives, there are precisely several parallels between these two masterpieces owing to the swift transformation in social and economic aspects. As an overall analysis, the major source of the tragedy can be evaluated under the subjects of an opposing environment fighting against the mental, emotional, and moral values of individuals as well as the human institutions involving industry, property, war for gain, education, ethics, taboos, conventions, and religious sanctions as will be indicated through Hardy's these two target novels. Hence, there are some parallels between these two novels on account of the emphasis on the disastrous consequences of outer social and economic forces.

2. HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF *TESS* AND *JUDE* DERIVING CHARACTERS INTO EXPERIENCING INEVITABLE MISERABLE CONSEQUENCES

Thomas Hardy in *Tess* (1891) and *Jude* (1896) intends to explore the consequences of private practices of social change in respect to the transformation from rural to urban life. Hardy's characters mainly fall into the trap of social forces which are in conflict with mental, emotional and moral values and they also become subject to the states of uncertainty and complexity deriving from the social problems of unemployment, poverty, and insufficient sanitary and accommodation as will be assessed through Hardy's *Tess* and *Jude*. These two substantial novels can be associated to the sociologist Emile Durkheim's concept of anomie which was mainly explained as the state of social unrest ending up alienation, isolation, meaninglessness, anxiety, and normlessness in the 1890s. As Kathy Henry indicates, according to Durkheim, anomie can be defined as the breakdown of social norms that are no more influential on the activities and behaviors of individuals in society. However, individuals are unable to find their place in society without these rules to help guide them. Changing social and economic conditions as well as adaptation to life leads individuals to "dissatisfaction, conflict, and deviance" that Durkheim observed them as a reason for disruption leading them to suicide or other tragic consequences as will be depicted both in *Tess* and *Jude* (Henry 2009: online). Similar to Durkheim, Hardy expresses how individuals get affected from social unrest derived from the private practices of mobility from country life to urban life.

Playing also the role of a social historian, Hardy emphasizes that social changes are influential on public health and the marginalization of urban residents. In *Jude* and *Tess*, Hardy captures the epoch just before the Industrial Revolution which transformed the English countryside and depicts the inevitable consequences of rapidly changing society in the imaginary world of Wessex, which represents the real social and economic disruption in English society at that time. Hardy's two substantial masterpieces emphasize that social changes result in the confusion of norms and the impersonalization of social bonds in which people are no longer tied to one another. *Jude* and *Tess* represent the self in isolation in their practices of social change in which the isolated individuals dwell and become marginalized within a society or group (Burstein 1987: 19). Although both novels manifest the significance of fate as the thematic basis for failure in life, the predominant issue appears to be the alienation, isolation, and estrangement of characters in the destructed and impersonalized social bonds. This highlights that all Hardy's lovers become the victims of social circumstances in the gradual erosion of rural life and its conventions by the subversive and disruptive circumstances of modern urbanized civilization (Watts 1992: 61).

With the development of industrial society, as Merryn and Raymond Williams emphasize, individuals such as Tess experience the private practice of complexities, confusions, and contradictions. Williams especially point out the "increased mobility and the new sources of wealth of capitalist society" which offer order and rank in Tess's social world (1993: 24). However, order and rank as represented by Alec d'Urbervilles, destroy the social norms, values, and ideals and creates insensitiveness, confusion, and anxiety in society. As George Wotton remarks, the appearance of social order and rank symbolizes the emergence of new material conditions in Wessex where social changes cause social unrest.

Since a new materialist culture emerges in Wessex at the time of progress in social and economic English history, then, *Tess* symbolizes the social change of the agricultural community in its moment of ruin and signifies a decline in social respectability and honesty as can be illustrated through Alec's behavior when Tess loses her virginity (Wotton 1993: 39). In this case, contrary to most critics such as Graham Handley, Lance S. John Butler, and Dale Kramer, Tess is not the victim of fate, but that of social

circumstances deriving from materialist culture². Handley emphasizes the significance of fate for Tess's failure in life as: "In looking so often to the past she unbalances herself in the present. She is fearful of speaking out and perhaps bringing a worse fate upon herself. She is, so to speak, her own fate." (Handley 1991: 101). According to Handley, this indicates that Tess becomes responsible for her own fate due to encountering Alec in life. Handley seems to define Tess as an unlucky person for being subject to the chance of encountering a person like Alec and calls this a "fate" factor. However, being contrary to Handley, Tess's so-called unluckiness comes out when her mother enforces her to find opportunities to gain money outside. Tess loses her virginity because of the social circumstances one of which is her own mother who forced her to look for the outer world.

As a girl of simple and natural pure life, Tess is easily trapped by destructed moral values and customs. The reason for Tess's failure with a tragic consequence of being hung at the end of the novel can also be defined under Emile Durkheim's anomic state. Finding life meaningless, she becomes a victim of social circumstances. Although this seems to be an individual tragic consequence, it is, in fact, a social fact which is external for being the product of social structure. Throughout *Tess* and *Jude*, Hardy implies that abstract human entities such as beliefs, values, rules, and customs also change as a result of the changes in social life. Hence, the notation of change highlights a transformation from nonmaterial to material culture or from spirituality to secularism in modern society and reflects a reality of private practice of social change in the 1890s in England. As Dale Kramer also remarks, "Hardy wrote the novel during what turned out to be nearly the last years of a massive but complex shift in the nation's economic forces, whose effects accorded it the name 'the Great Depression.'" (1991: 13). Hence, *Tess* mainly signifies the power of the economic and social sources which destroy norms, values, and customs. Alec's practice of social change toward materialism or his possession of order and rank highlights that agricultural lifestyle is near to end in Tess's world of the 1890s. Williams also approve that as a result of a decline in agricultural life style, individuals moved into cities and industrial towns, the colonies, and the New World where the individuals experience the difficulty of adaptation. (1993: 26). Hardy puts such a change in *Tess* as:

Cottagers who were not directly employed on the land were looked upon with disfavour, and the banishment of some starved the trade of others, who were thus obliged to follow. These families, who had formed the backbone of the village life in the past who were the depositaries of the village traditions, had to seek refuge in the large centres; the process, humorously designated by statisticians as "the tendency of the rural population towards the large towns," being really the tendency of water to flow uphill when forced by machinery (Hardy 1985: 435-436).

As Hardy also implies, as a result of the rapid technological changes, people in Wessex moved from their rustic life to the urban centres for job opportunities and better living circumstances. This emphasizes that individuals had to estrange them from their rustic lives to acquire new means of social and economic improvement in urban centres. Hence, better services, better lifestyles, better salaries, and opportunities are the push factors for most individuals to leave their rural background formed small family farms. Individuals' standard of living is beyond basic sustenance in farmlife due to being dependent on unpredictable environmental conditions such as drought, flood, and other agricultural problems.

3. TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES' QUEST FOR NEW OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH DEPARTURE FROM RURAL LIFE

Hardy copes with the integration of a love story in its natural environment in *Tess* and *Jude*. In *Tess*, "Hardy succeeds in integrating the personal emotions of an obscure girl with an intense study of nature and an overall view of the cosmos and the meaning of man's existence" (Butler 1990: 96). This indicates that *Tess* is mainly about late nineteenth century morality and naturalist canon which describes man as a victim of social circumstances.

Because of the change in rural economy, Tess, a partly educated rural girl, is in a search for leaving off her country work and country life to save the Durbeyfields from displacement and poverty.

² Dale Kramer in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* also explains that fate plays the key role for Tess's tragic consequence of being seduced by Alec. However, Dale also indicates that there seems to be other economic and social circumstances that drew her into this outcome when the historical and social background is analyzed.

George Wotton indicates that the issues of displacement and economic repression have been influential on the relationships the inhabitants of Wessex possess (1993: 33). Tess leaves off her country life to become the mistress of Alec d'Urbervilles, a local landowner who is separate from the rural life around him and who later takes advantage first of her innocence and then of her wish to protect her family against social changes such as poverty, malnutrition, and displacement. However, as Lance John Butler expresses, "left without angelic grace and protection, Tess stoically suffers hardship and loneliness, hoping against the belief that she will be forgiven or that she will die" (1990: 102). Tess's miserable mental state implies how she got affected from the consequences of her social surrounding full of hardships and problems especially dreadful individuals such as Alec d'Urbervilles.

4. PURE TESS'S CONTRADICTION WITH THE CHAOTIC SOCIAL FACTORS

As *Tess's* subtitle, "A Pure Woman" implies, being a child of pure nature Tess is always in conflict with the chaotic social forces surrounding her. This would be the main reason why she utters "I don't feel quite easy" to express her social unrest, i.e., her anomic state (Hardy 1985: 271). Her estrangement, isolation, alienation, and sense of meaninglessness in life become clearer in her own expressions when Alec seduces her:

Now, punish me!" she said, turning up her eyes to him with the hopeless defiance of the sparrow's gaze before its captor twists its neck. "Whip me, crush me; you need not mind those people under the rick! I shall not cry out. Once victim, always victim—that's the law!" (Hardy 1985: 411).

Despite the tendency to explain this quotation in respect to the influence of fate on Tess's personality, in the context of this article, the main reason becomes the social cases of poverty, unemployment, and estrangement. This implies that Tess turns out to be a tragic heroine of circumstances of the time despite her insistence on preserving her moral virtues. Hence, as C. Sengupta explains, the tragedy of Tess comes out as a result of outside forces that cause her to become a victim of social circumstances and social pressures in the late nineteenth century (1994: 129). To illustrate the economic and social detriments, Tess becomes the victim of Alec d'Urbervilles especially when her father dies and leaves them into economic distress.

Tess copes with the ethical rules of social life and represents how individuals feel loneliness, desperation, complexity, and meaninglessness (Claridge 1993: 66). The cruel civilization in which Tess lives destroys most individuals because of being full of hunters such as Alec d'Urbervilles. Terence Wright emphasizes that humanity and strength of individuals get destructed gradually in society as portrayed through Alec and cause the emergence of the lack of meaning in life (1987: 21). In addition, Hardy explains the madness and depraved cruelty of civilization and states that individuals suffer from some others such as Alec, who "made it their purpose to destroy life –." (Hardy 1978: 352). Hence, Tess becomes a victim of social changes and the cruel people in Wessex. The influence of these outside forces is emphasized in *Tess* as "'Justice' was done and the President of the Immortals in eschylean phrase had ended his sport with Tess³ (Hardy 1985: 489). God's sport has finished on the mortals since the real means of sport for downfall in life has turned out to be the social circumstances of Wessex. This statement can be assessed as an ironic explanation to imply the injustice of the tragedy of heroine's death which came out because of being the victim of circumstances.

There is a scene in *Tess* where the unsophisticated country girl experiences a big social change, the arrival of railway. Hardy emphasizes how alien is the locomotive's mechanical voice to Tess's pure animate appearance and personality (Schweik 1998: 41). "Then there was the hissing of a train which drew up almost silently upon the wet rails, and the milk was rapidly swung by can into the truck. The light of the engine flashed for a second upon Tess's figure, motionless under the great holly tree." (Hardy 1985: 251). Tess gets isolated and alienated because of being confused against a technological development, i.e. she questions the meaning of her existence in such a changing country life and assesses the meaning of life as a whole. Hence, Tess also evaluates the necessity of social change which, nonetheless, results in mental and emotional unrest as a characteristic of early modern period (Schweik

³ The President of the Immortals can be interpreted as God who is depicted as directing the lives of the mortals. This indicates that as a naturalist writer, Hardy's interpretation of God's justice is a harsh one.

1998: 42). There is another character in *Tess*, Angel, who gets confused because of experiencing the modern world. Hardy indicates his anxious and confused feelings:

Early association with country solitudes had bred in him an unconquerable, and almost unreasonable, aversion to modern town life, and shut him out from such success as he might have aspired to by following a mundane calling in the impracticability of the spiritual one. But something had to be done; he had wasted many valuable years; and having an acquaintance who was starting on a thriving life as a Colonial farmer, it occurred to Angel that this might be a lead in the right direction. Farming, either in the Colonies, America, or at home—farming, at any rate, after becoming well qualified for the business by a careful apprenticeship—that was a vocation which would probably afford an independence without the sacrifice of what he valued even more than a competency—intellectual liberty (Hardy 1985: 172)

Angel's private practice of urban life ends up being in a dilemma to assess the significance of rural life and preserve it at any time or else their strife for the adaptation to a new lifestyle would cause some tragic consequences. A. Alvarez expounds that Tess's tragedy is also the tragedy of the old, 'pure' Wessex, i. e., the tragedy of social changes. Both Tess and Wessex are corrupted and betrayed by the modernizing world in many aspects. Tess is destroyed by Alec's betrayal and Angel's narrow cold enlightenment. On the other hand, the countryside and its customs are destructed by the railways, its indifference, its new rich families having order and rank with their new mansions, its gradual industrialization and mechanization of the old methods of agriculture. Throughout the novel, Hardy indicates that both Tess and Wessex fall and are in a state of betrayal. In *Tess*, Hardy also mourns the loss of countryside, its customs and superstitions (1985: 13-14). In this case, Tess and Wessex both experience depression because of the emergence of modernism. The naturalness, independence, and freshness in Wessex are transformed into the state of modernism which causes dependence, mechanization, and confusion.

5. THE MODERN TRAGEDY OF THE PEASANT BOY JUDE FAWLEY IN *JUDE*

Similar to *Tess*, the story of Hardy's *Jude* can be summarized within a conventional critical account since there is the tragedy of a peasant boy who moves from a settled and timeless rural community of Marygreen to a pursuit of enlightenment of Christminster where he fails to acquire his ideals because of his excessive sexual appetites. As in *Tess*, in *Jude*, there is an attack on the human institutions such as family and marriage life, religious sanctions, taboos, and conventions which the Victorians and all establishments of all eras have held dear. This emphasizes that Hardy's *Jude* is a novel combining the main concepts of the modernist world such as disillusionment and disappointment because of the loss of "faith, love, family, education, compassion and companionship" (Spencer 1993: 36). Jude's tragedy in *Jude* is a tragedy of being frustrated as a result of "unfulfilled aims" which are both "public and private, educational and sexual." (Gregor 1987: 55). Jude Fawley, a lower-class young man, is in search for becoming a scholar at the university in Christminster because of being inspired by the ambitions of the town schoolmaster, Richard Phillotson. After experiencing an unhappy marriage with a young woman, Arabella, Jude gets divorced and meets his cousin Sue Bridehead who also leaves her husband due to being dissatisfied. Leading a friendly love relationship in the same house, Jude and Sue own two children, and serve as parents to Jude's little boy from Arabella. Yet, this little boy hangs both the two children and himself in a room where Sue finds them tragically and assesses this tragic event as God's punishment because of leading an illegal marriage with Jude. Eventually, Sue returns her old husband, Richard Phillotson, as a result of her regret and Jude returns his old wife, Arabella and dies soon after.

By means of *Jude*, Tess signifies a journey that requires a return to the old moral and social values rather than accepting the rapidly changing social values of material modern culture. As the main story implies in *Jude*, there is an emphasis on the mental and emotional problems deriving from the consequences of the modern lifestyle. Although his own passion leads Jude to attain intellect and emotion, even Jude feels social unrest due to his mobility to the urban world:

Deprived of the objects of both intellect and emotion, he could not proceed to his work. Whenever he felt reconciled to his fate as a student, there came to disturb his calm his hopeless relations with Sue. That the one affined soul he had ever met was lost to him

through his marriage returned upon him with cruel persistency, till, unable to bear it longer, he again rushed for distraction to the real Christminster life. He now sought it out in an obscure and low-ceiled tavern up a court which was well known to certain worthies of the place, and in brighter times would have interested him simply by its quaintness. Here he sat more or less all the day, convinced that he was at bottom a vicious character, of whom it was hopeless to expect anything (Hardy 1994: 143).

This is an indication for the emergence of an unexpected state of anxiety, isolation, and alienation in the new urban surrounding. Both Jude and Sue are in a state of disillusionment, disappointment and hopelessness for not finding what they dreamed of having in their marriage lives and this is the main reason why they desire to change their spouse. This indicates that they fall into Emile Durkheim's "anomic" state due to considering life as meaningless to share with their previous spouse.

In *Jude*, Thomas Hardy again copes with the consequences of the emergence of modernism on characters and focuses on the thematic basis of marriage, class, modernization of thought and society which basically end up destruction because of the private practices of social and environmental circumstances.⁴ As Terry Eagleton also emphasizes, Hardy explores the complex structure of society by focusing on the contrasts of real living circumstances and ideals. Both *Tess* and *Jude* offer a private experience of social change that embodies disruptive social forces of "economic depression, increased social mobility and growing industrialization" (Eagleton 1987: 62). Hardy draws attention to the existence of contrasts that end up failure in most cases as portrayed in *Tess* and *Jude*:

The book is all contrasts—or was meant to be in its original conception. Alas, what a miserable accomplishment it is, when I compare it with what I meant to make it!—e.g. Sue and her heathen gods set against Jude's reading the Greek Testament; Christminster academical, Christminster in the slums; Jude the saint, Jude the sinner, Sue the pagan, Sue the saint; marriage, no marriage; etc. (Sengupta 1994: 145)

Similar to *Tess*, *Jude* also portrays the existence of contrasts in the modern era especially that of spirituality and materialism, reality and illusion and marriage and no marriage (Spencer 1993: 41; Sengupta 1994: 145). The contrast between reality and illusion is revealed clearly as Jude explains his own unfulfilled aims he has in his ideal life and the real social circumstances existent in social life:

Every man has some little power in some one direction . . . I felt I could do one thing if I had the opportunity. I could accumulate ideas, and impart them to others. I wonder if the founders had such as I in their minds—a fellow good for nothing else but that particular thing? (Hardy 1994: 478).

Like *Tess*, *Jude* is an attack on some social changes such as marriage, rural life, the family, education, and religion which the Victorians and establishment of all periods have held worthy. In *Jude*, marriage is the substantial social change that Hardy analyzes as "a cruel institution when it becomes a cage that traps people who should really part" (Spenser 1993: 30-31). Thus, both *Tess* and *Jude* are an attack on the intolerance and inhumanity of the modernist world. It is clear from the novel that there is no cultural space for the tragedy of Jude and Sue, i. e., the tabooed love relationship of cousins in a Victorian society in which social changes occur (Spenser 1993: 35).

In *Jude*, Sue in her impulsive nature carries the depraved seeds of her own destruction. This self-destructing impact asserts itself when Sue wants to punish herself because of loving Jude and causing an illegal love to emerge. While standing by the necessity of the emergence of modernity, Hardy emphasizes the significance of preserving the moral values in society. Through the love story of Sue and Jude, Hardy also intends to attack on social codes and customs and highlights the concept of new woman of the modern era of progress and modernity by depicting a love that is passionate without being sexual (Adelman 1992: 7).

Thus, Hardy's *Jude* has several major themes that signify the significance of the morality issue in the modern world. Although Jude seems to be following his ethical and moral values and feels the responsibility for his own attitudes and behaviors, his surrounding community contradicts with him because of being formed of material values. Like Jude, Sue in the novel is also against the Victorian

⁴ Hardy's attack on society's sexual codes and customs indicate his interest in the emergence of emancipating "new woman" in *Jude* and *Tess* in the 1890s.

values due to acting on her impulses to be the “new woman” of the new period in which women require the freedom of choice.

6. SOCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES INDICTED AS THE ONLY FACTOR FOR TRAGIC OUTCOMES IN *JUDE*

Being on the side of modernity, Hardy blames society for the tragic consequences of Sue and Jude. Although Hardy particularly focuses on the idea that individuals are destructed by fate, he undermines “social and sexual repression” as the real detriment of tragic outcomes. Hence, as Peter Widdowson indicates, Hardy opposes old conventions and the old rural mind to reveal the destructive impact of modern period (1998: 34). Modern life’s influence on Jude can also be assessed at the moment of his death throughout his own words:

I hear that soon there is going to be a better chance for such helpless students as I was. There are schemes afoot for making the University less exclusive, and extending its influence. I don't know much about it. And it is too late, too late for me! Ah—and for how many worthier ones before me! (Hardy 1994: 478-79)

Jude’s anguish is revealed when Sue describes his state of mind.⁵ Here lies the feelings of disillusionment, desperation, meaninglessness, isolation, and alienation which make it easy to evaluate how Jude experiences sufferings and humiliation at the end of his life. Norman Page also indicates that Jude comes to self recognition to analyze the eventual realization of truth of the chaotic urban life that results in the end of his temporary blindness to achieve his ideals (1987: 76). Hardy highlights Jude’s changing consciousness as a result of private practice of social change in the material surroundings in Christminster:

In his deep concentration on these transactions of the future Jude's walk had slackened, and he was now standing quite still, looking at the ground as though the future were thrown thereon by a magic lantern. On a sudden something smacked him sharply in the ear, and he became aware that a soft cold substance had been flung at him, and had fallen at his feet. (1994: 41)

Such an emotional state of disillusionment and desperation also survives in Sue’s characterization.⁶ As Cedric Watts expounds, although Sue has a clear and apparently unproblematic characterization for being an “intelligent, lively, attractive, intellectually emancipated young woman,” she becomes shocked when leading an unhappy marriage that ends up the deaths of their children (Watts 1992: 75). After her penance of getting married to Jude under illegal circumstances, she returns self-sacrificially to her former husband. In such a case she can be accepted as a tragic victim whose vitality and independence is destroyed by a hostile and alien society (Watts 1992, 74-75). In this case, Sue does not directly suffer from marriage, but from her state of loneliness which derived from the hostile, alienated, isolated, and restless environment. The practice of such a private social change can be observed in Jude’s analysis of his own social standing in society:

I was, perhaps, after all, a paltry victim to the spirit of mental and social restlessness that makes so many unhappy in these days! . . . And what I appear, a sick and poor man, is not the worst of me. I am in a chaos of principles—groping in the dark—acting by instinct and not after example. (Hardy 1994: 389-390).

As Philip M. Weinstein also emphasizes, Jude lives in a world of mass chaotic principles which drive him into a state of restlessness and failure as portrayed in his ambition of getting educated away from his poor, miserable, and unhappy life (1990: 232). Hence, Jude’s private practice of social change ends up a failure due to the tension between the morally elusive facts of life and the external social circumstances. In this case, both Jude and Sue experience “perpetual tension with society” and feel the sense of insecurity because of the existence of restless social circumstances (Draper 1990: 248-249). As Michael Millgate indicates,

⁵ *Jude* deals with the rigid Victorian social codes and taboos that dominated women who wish to become independent in their way of life.

⁶ *Jude* is a novel of problematic relations in the rapidly changing society.

the characteristic restlessness of the novel operates as an image, a dramatic reflection, of “the modern vice of unrest.” Hardy apparently comprehends in this term not only the breakdown in traditional patterns of rural life and the greater ease of physical mobility brought about by those railways which play such an important part in *Jude*, but also the spiritual and intellectual disruption of the time. (1987: 15)

Such a social destruction implies how confused and anxious individuals become as a result of the consequences of modern life because of feeling social unrest. Especially when individuals are in lack of social adaptation to the new environment, then, any kind of tragic consequences seem to be inevitable as depicted through the major characters in Hardy’s *Tess* and *Jude*.

CONCLUSION

Finally, Hardy implies the significance of the purity of the rural way of living in the countryside via his tendency to expound how characters get confused in city life and how their spiritual and intellectual lives are destructed through their mobility into urban chaotic world. Moreover, both in *Tess* and *Jude*, Hardy evaluates the materialistic evolution as the reason for all the mental and emotional problems. Especially as a result of private practice of social change through mobility toward urban life style, Hardy emphasizes how this materialist formation destructed individuals’ way of living. In both of the novels, Hardy’s simple formula is to refer to the background of the primary characters and compare it with the degraded present life in the changing rural world. This highlights that the influence of past on present is influential on the mental and emotional states of individuals in these novels. As an overall, the pessimist view of the life of naturalist world dominates the atmosphere of both *Tess* and *Jude* when the consequences of the private practice of social change is taken into consideration. The innovations in science and technology in the rural world of *Tess* and *Jude* changed society to a great degree and had enormous harmful cultural implications resulting in various tragic consequences on the landscape of England.

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