

CHAPTER IV

ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN

TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES and

JUDE THE OBSCURE

ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN *TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES* (1891)

As Hardy grew in stature as a novelist, the forces in the Victorian era started to effect on the consciousness of Thomas Hardy. Hardy began to write the environment of his contemporary period. He proved himself as the spokesman who was presenting the conflicts raging throughout Victorian England. In this same period Hardy reached on his mature height as a novelist, and henceforth the dual forces at work in the Victorian literature began to reveal even more strongly in his work. He yielded, most probably with some resistance, to the mechanistic idea of man's place in the universe.

The novel, 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles (1891) is really the peak of Hardy's artistic representation of the duality in the natural world. The dual elements of the nature came together in this novel. Hardy seems to be the mature writer here, as he tried to comment on the dual role of the nature. At the end of this novel Hardy compels his reader to hang with the feeling of helplessness and hopelessness. The main character, Tess, is represented as the protagonists, on the contrary the Nature, has been represented as the antagonists, have fought a grim and deadly battle. The Nature is trying to teach human the struggle for survive. Hardy himself is conscious about this fact of the Nature. The reader draws the conclusion that Tess's struggle to maintain her graciousness against the deadly force of the Nature, is always the cycle of man's destiny and his fate, in which man comes out the

inevitable loser. Hardy pointed out the fact that this struggle between the Nature and human being is unavoidable. He has presented the real face of this Nature.

There are many instances in this novel, when Hardy rises to the heights of excellent pictorial representation. His hands became arrant to present inter-mingling emotions of the Nature and his characters. He had the mastery on presenting the Ecological Consciousness in his tragedy as well as in his love stories also. In fact the story would be incomplete and meaningless if it were not for the beautiful natural background Hardy gives to the love story. In the present novel his scenes of the Nature presented as the catalytic agent for the lovers in the mind's imagination. The other part of Nature's kindness is that Tess and Angel continue their love because of the Nature's tenderness and auspices. Here is one scene which provided a setting of Nature's kindness to the man, which helps beloved to owe each other-

Or perhaps the summer fog was more general, and the meadows lay like a white sea, out of which the scattered trees rose like dangerous rocks. Birds would soar through it into the upper radiance, and hang on the wing sunning themselves, or alight on the wet rails subdividing the mead, which now shone like glass rods. Minute diamonds of moisture from the mist hung, too, upon Tess's eyelashes and drops upon her hair, like seed pearls. When the day grew quite strong and commonplace these dried off her; moreover, Tess then lost her strange and ethereal beauty; her teeth, lips, and eyes scintillated in the sunbeams, and she was again the dazzling fair

dairymaid only, who had to hold her own against the other women of the world. (Hardy, Tess 141)

His description of the Nature, in this instance, is like a delicately wicker pattern of detail, where Nature seems to initiate the mood and atmosphere of the Romance and sentiments. But the Nature appears of Tess's love, this is only one instance in the whole novel. The reader remembers much more clearly the seduction scene, where Nature watches with an intent eye but does nothing to relieve the suffering of the young and innocent girl. Unconsciously Hardy gave the reference of the hidden, cruel basic instinct of human being which was so effective in the hominids period of human evolution. And this is completely natural desire of human evolution. The following event underlines Hardy's true sense of Ecological Consciousness-

Darkness and silence ruled everywhere around. Above them rose the primeval yews Oaks of the chase, in which were poised gentle roosting birds in their last nap; and about them stole the hopping rabbits and haves. But, might some say, where was Tess's guardian angel? Where was the providence of her simple faith? Perhaps, like that other God of whom the ironical Tisbury spoke, he was talking, or was pursuing, or he was in a journey, or he was sleeping and not be awaked. (Hardy, Tess 78)

Eco-Feminism

In this novel, particularly in such sadder scenes the protagonists, Tess is struggling constantly through the winter months with infinite patience. In

other words, she is now becoming too familiar with the Nature by struggling against it. By following the rules of the fight, in a different way she exposed her Ecological Consciousness. We see the work she has to perform in the presence of the Nature:

Amid this scene, Tess slaved in the morning frosts and in the afternoon rains. When it was not Swede-grubbing, it was Swede-timing, in which process they sliced off the earth and the fibers with a billhook before storing the roots for future use. At this occupation they could shelter themselves by a thatched hurdle if it rained: but if it was frosty even their thick leather gloves could not prevent the frozen masses they handled from biting their fingers. (Hardy, Tess 309)

In this scene, the reader see a young girl, tossed and overwhelmed by the environmental circumstances, sometimes assisting and sympathizing with Nature, but almost always the victim of an ordered, planned universe which has deemed she must die. The present novel is impressed from the idea that Man's course is determined, not by his actions on earth, but by a greater, unknown force. The following dialogue between Tess and her brother reveals this fact.

"Did you say the stars were worlds, Tess?"

"Yes".

"All like ours?"

"I don't know; but I think so. They sometimes seem to be like the apples on our stubborn tree. Most of them splendid and sound-a few blighted."

"Which do we live on a blighted one or a splendid one?"

“a blighted one.” (Hardy, Tess 28)

Tess was apparently wrong though, most of the worlds blighted ones, at least in Hardy's novels they appear so. The world of Tess is not different from the world of Eustacia Vye or of Marty South; only Tess is considerable the most unfortunate and helpless heroines of Thomas Hardy. The depiction of this sadistic world remains continued till the death of her last remaining horse which sets the course of the tragic story; for Tess feels guilty and goes to her seducer's farm only to help the others. The death of her baby, Sorrow, is perhaps the saddest scene of the novel, with Tess kneeling and praying for the baptismal cleanliness of her baby. But the will of the Nature is implacable, and so it spurns the yielding Tess until her death on the gallows. The present situation comments on the fact that, the woman is true representative of the Nature, who was the power of tolerance. She has a kind of ability to tolerate the sorrow and she can select only good and proper even in the drastic situation. Thus ends the life of a young woman whose acceptance of her lost chances is stoical, and who allows, without complaint, the injustice in the world to take its course;

“Justice” was done, and the president of the immortals, in Aeschylean phrase, had ended his sport with Tess. And the D'Urberville knights and dames slept on in their tombs unknowing. The two speechless gazers bent themselves down to the earth, as if in prayer, and remained thus a long time. (Hardy, Tess 432)

Hardy primarily shows his philosophical nature in this novel in comparison to his rest novels. In short Tess is his one of the philosophical characters, whom he must have become embroiled in the career of his novels. Tess becomes culmination of Hardy's ideas concerning man's disheartening and pitiful existence on the earth; she represents man pitted against her environment, an ecology whose sole purpose is bent on subduing and then degrading. Against the frenzy of the elements, Tess has no more power than an ant attacking a machine gun. Her struggles are brave, but futile. She appears mocked, as if the world has designed for her an ill conceived existence.

In the present novel Hardy applies the contrast between nature and culture to gender constructions. While Tess prefers to walk through the Nature, being with the direct contact with the environment, her male companions prefer to use the modern railway. Thus, Tess becomes a true representative of the Ecological Consciousness in this novel, as she wishes to be with the ecology. It shows that nature and culture are gendered, with male culture dominating female nature. As suggested by Eco-feminism, power relations become a vital part of the study of Hardy's novels.

The study of Ecological Consciousness has many directions and references for the complete perception. The term, 'Consciousness' concerned with the natural, rustic areas of the country. The rustic people who are concerning with the true sense and inner affection towards the Nature. Hardy's insistence to save the Nature has been clearly reflected in

his powerful description of the rural area. He has depicted his rustic characters mostly as innocent, well hearted and highly affected by the Nature. They have a true consciousness of ecology, they not only love the Nature but also they respect the Nature. At the same time in England there was a drastic change in the society. The new Poor Law enacted in the same year which was another major impact on Victorian literature. The need of change inevitably had an impact on the literature of the period; for the writers felt the rising tide of criticism, and acknowledged this criticism with their pens. Listed among the writers who commented on the need for certain reform measures are Thomas Carlyle, John Ruskin, Charles Dickens, John Stuart Mills, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and George Eliot, these writers who found it necessary to make their own social protest and to find their own way to prick the conscience of the English nation later in the century. Thomas Hardy took his place among these protestors, for he lamented the plight of the poor and their gradual corruption in one of his best novels, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*;

Cottagers who were not directly employed on the land were looked upon with disfavor, and the banishment of some starved the trade of others who were not thus obliged to follow. These families, who had formed the backbone of the village life in the past, who were the depositories of the village traditions, had to seek refuge in the large centers. (Hardy, Tess 381)

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries many new inventions were making their impact on the English nation. The invention of the Spinning jerry (1784), The Steam Engine (1765), other scientific inventions as well as the building of Railroads helped make England a land dominated by stem power. The machine was able to produce in greater numbers; thus came the reliance in England on machine power, instead of man power. England, in effort, became a mechanized England, with the smoke from the great steam inventions rising and settling across the English countryside. In short the modern science tried to overpower the Ecological Consciousness of the man. The development of the city life imposed on the rustic life of England.

At a time when England had become a mechanized country, Hardy expressed of a mechanistic universe with his Ecological Consciousness. In the expression of the Nature also he has discovered the same tendency towards the mechanism, which carries on its endless course, regardless of the plight of man on the earth. Nature remained undisturbed and safe; and nothing altered its daily procedure. In the novel, Tess of the D'Urbervilles, Hardy comments on the indifferent, unalterable quality of the universe. The seduction of the Tess doesn't affect the activities of the Nature. When she has to take a job involving grueling, menial labor, Nature appears to conspire against her.

It was so high a situation, this field, that the rain had no occupation to fall, but raced along horizontally upon the yelling wind, sticking into them like glass splinters till they were wet through. (Hardy, Tess 308)

But if the Industrial Revolution came to play a large parts on the literature of the period, the advent of the, 'New Science' had even greater influence. It was hailed as a step toward even greater progress in George Henry Lewes's History of Philosophy

Philosophy had been circular, and this fact is thrown into stronger relief by contrast with the linear progress of science. Instead of perpetually finding itself, after years of gigantic endeavor, returned to the precise point from which it started, Science finds itself year by year, and almost day by day, advancing step by step, each accumulation of power adding to the momentum of its progress...and the thoughts of men are widened by the process of the suns. (Lewes xi)

In short, the New Science came in on a note of enthusiasm, a note that was gradually to change with the publication of certain works of Victorian period. Hardy's Ecological Consciousness was not confined for sketching the lives of his characters; he had also focused on the other social issues. He has depicted the agricultural life in a different manner. He tries to establish his theory of the potential values of the potential life, and to celebrate the naturalness of men and women engaged in the skills and necessities of agriculture. The displacement of agriculture which took place in the wake of industrialization became another important issue of comments in Tess of the D'Urbervilles and Under the Greenwood Tree. In the Nineteenth century almost half of England's people moved to town. Hardy comments in the novel, ' process, humorously designated by statistician as the tendency of

the rural population towards the large towns, being really the tendency of the rural population towards the large towns, being really the tendency of water to flow uphill when forced by machinery'. The agricultural way of life had become a precarious way of life, and the small farmers were slowly being forced out of their homes. The exodus of the laborers to the town came as a response to the lure of flourishing industry, higher wages, and the diversions and attractions of the towns.

Hardy had developed a sense of unity between the earth, nature and the human characters. He had formulated his all characters related and impressed with the Nature. He tried to express his Ecological Consciousness by sketching the close relationship of human being with the environment. In the novel, **Tess of the D'Urbervilles**, the intimacy between the Nature and the man is impressively sketched:

Part of the achievement in Tess is due undoubtedly to the always effective and superb evocation of the natural background. This is special triumph of Hardy's and one which had hitherto scarcely been attempted. Such a description as that of the dawn at Talbothays may perhaps best be compared with the description of London in Oliver Twist. In neither case is the word 'descriptive' with its cold suggestion of an objective backcloth adequate...The atmosphere evoked in such description is not an embellishment to the book, but an integral part of it...In Tess we find the superb revelation of the relation of man to nature, the haunting evocation of Wessex landscape, not as backcloth, but as the living, challenging material of human existence. (Kettle 50)

Another impressive achievement of Thomas Hardy was his symbolic utilization of landscape, birds, and animals to express his Ecological Consciousness. Throughout his novels he recorded the ways of birds and animals with knowledge and understanding. He made the actions of insects and tiny animals important to the development of the story when he had the movements of the spider and the toad point out to Gabriel that a storm is approaching. This keen observation of many natural things is the proof of Thomas Hardy's Ecological Consciousness. Hardy showed his love and understanding of cows which are unfolded in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. And not only about the animals was Hardy, also conscious about the environment and surroundings. He mingled the description of place and season to human emotions. Nowhere in Hardy's work there is an artistic unity between the scenery and the characters; the landscape adapts itself to and identifies itself with the personages in the novel. The emotion of Tess in every important phase of her life is reflected in the physical world that surrounds her. The merging of the feeling with the Nature is seen as she goes to the home of Alec D'Urberville with flowering hopes in the season of high summer. There she is decked out with, *roses at her breast; and roses in her hat; roses and strawberries in her basket to the brim.* (Hardy, *Tess I*, 52) She returns to her home after her betrayal by Alec in the early winter. In her plight, 'her sole idea...[seems] to be shun mankind.' She takes solitary walks amid the lonely hills and dales near her home.

Her flexuous and stealthy figure...[becomes] an integral part of the scene...the midnight airs and gusts, moaning amongst the tightly wrapped buds and barks of the winter twigs...[are] formulae of bitter reproach, (Hardy, Tess 596)

The initial tragedy of the life of Tess, her seduction by Alec, takes place in the somber and dark woodland of Cranborne Chase. Alec is bringing Tess home at midnight through the dark forest. Finding himself confused as to directions, Alec leaves Tess for a few moments to try to find his way out of the wood. When Alec gropes his way back to the spot where he has left her, the chase ‘wrapped in thick darkness...and the moon... Quoite gone down.’ Under the primeval yews and oaks “*the obscurity...[is] so great that he...[can] see absolutely nothing but a pale nebulousness at his feet...Everything else...[is] blackness* (Hardy, Tess I. 93) The darkness and gloom that will follow Tess until her death begins in the gloom of Cranborne Chase.

The love-relationship between Clare and Tess, the creation, expansion, and maturing of their love, takes place of Talbothays Dairy in the fertile from Valley. “It is on a thyme-scented, bird hatching morning in May.” When Tess leaves home the second time to earn her living as a diary-maid, Talbothays lies in “*the valley of the Great-Dairies, the valley in which milk and butter grew to rankness....the verdant plain so well watered by the river var or froom.*” (Hardy, Tess 60) Here could be seen the herds of cattle,

red and white, trooping towards the dairy burns through the water-meads growing rank and lush.

Amid the oozing fatness and the warm ferments of the varval, at a season when the rush of juices could almost be heard below the hiss of fertilization, it was impossible that the most fanciful love should not grow passionate. (Hardy, Tess I.198)

Tess and Clare, working and talking together; are irresistibly drawn to each other. Their love flowers in the most sensuous surroundings. The region is a “green through of sappiness and humidity,” of “fat alluvial soil,” where “*the languid perfume of the summer fruits, the mists, the hay, the flowers, formed therein a vast pool of Adour which...seemed to make the animals, the very bees and butterflies, drowsy.*” (Hardy, Tess I 225)

It is the from valley, which lies within sight and sound of the crystal streams, where meads grow lush and the air is fragrant with the scent of many flowers. That is the setting of Tess’s passionate love for Clare. Nature matches the state of hearts at Talbothays Dairy.

Hardy has established Ecological Consciousness by depicting the role of Tess, he used various phases of her life connected with the environment. The coldest part of the winter sees her laboring at the roughest kind of work in the Swede-fields on that “starve acre” farm. The setting is in direct contrast to the lushness and fertility of the valley. The object misery of Tess is duplicated in her surroundings. Flintcomb-ash lies on a high, rocky, wind-swept upland, where almost no trees grow. No green of vegetation can be

seen; the fields are in color a desolate drab, and between the earth and the sky the only shades are grey and brown. Tess's suffering is almost too much for her to bear when the intense cold comes. "There had not been such a winter for years". Everything and bush and tree is covered with frost. With the snow comes a cold so intense that it chilled the eyeballs..., made their brows ache, and penetrated to their skeletons." The mood of horror is intensified by the arrival of the "strange birds from behind the North pole" at Flintcomb-Ash. The wretchedness of Tess's condition is mirrored in the eyes of-

Gaunt spectral creatures with tragical eyes-eyes which had witnessed scenes of cataclysmal horror in inaccessible polar regions of a magnitude such as no human being had ever conceived, in curdling temperatures that no man could endure; which had beheld the crash of icebergs and the slide of snow-hills by the shooting light of the Aurora; been half blinded by the world of colossal storms and terraqueous distortions and retained the expression of feature that such scenes had engendered. (Hardy, Tess II 129)

The hopelessness, the defeat, the utter dejection of the abandoned wife is everywhere apparent in the landscape-

The dramatic motivation provided by natural earth is central to every aspect of the book. It controls the style: page by page Tess has a wrought density of texture that is fairly unique in Hardy; symbolic depth is communicated by the physical surface of things with unhampered transparency...The starved uplands of Flintcomb Ash, with their ironic

mimicry of the organs of generation, “myriads of loose white flints in bulbous, cusped, and phallic shapes”, and the dun consuming ruin of the swede fields....mockery of impotence, the exile. (Hardy, Tess 203)

In this novel Hardy superbly related man to nature, used the Wessex landscape not as a backcloth, but as living material of human existence. One more instance in **The Tess of the D’Urbervilles** is when nature seems to mourn with Tess at the death of the family horse, Prince. As Tess becomes as distraught as Tess, *The atmosphere turned pale, the birds shook themselves in the hedges, arose, and twitlered; the lance showed all its white features, and Tess showed hers, still whiter. (Hardy, Tess I, 37)*

In Tess of the D’Urbervilles there is a constant interweaving of human emotion with description of nature but in the novel he didn’t try to intermingling it so passionately. This passion to show natural elements in the novel reflects Hardy’s Ecological Consciousness. She comes upon the birds in wooded thickey where she has lain down to rest and she discovers that they have all been wounded in some manner or other by hunters. She finds them lying about under the trees-

Their rich plumage dabbled with blood; once were dead, some feebly twitching a wing, some contorted, some stretched out...All of them writhing in agony, except the fortune one whose tortures had ended during the night by the inability of nature to bear more. (Hardy, Tess III, 116)

The birds are used as a symbol of Tess, who also must innocently suffer and die. Tess’s suffering, like that of the birds, is ended by death.

In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Hardy has moved his presentation from the mythological presentation of Nature to the realistic description of the nature. This time the weather doesn't influence events and plots. It reflects the near elimination of myth as happenings are described as natural phenomena and in more scientific language. This realistic description of the nature recognizes in examples of weather imagery from *Tess*, which seem to lack a mythological component. The wind in the following example is personified as a sighing soul but without any accompanying mythological scene. Wessex has fantastic atmosphere as the '*occasional have of the wind became the sigh of some immense and soul, conterminous with the universe in space and with history in time.*' (Hardy, *Tess* 1978)

Other examples of weather imagery as natural phenomena in *Tess* are: "*It was a fine September evening a faint luminous fog, which had hung in the hollows all the evening, became general and enveloped them*" (Hardy, *Tess*, 106); "*a faint luminous fog, which had hung in the hollows all the evening, became general and enveloped them*" (Hardy, *Tess* 114), "*Here under her few square yards of thatch; she watched winds, and snows, and rains, gorgeous sunsets and successive moons at their full*", (Hardy, *Tess* 134) "*On a thyme scented, bird-hatching morning in May...she left her home for a second time,*" "*the new air was clear, bracing, ethereal*" (Hardy, *Tess* 157) "*Her hopes mingled with the sunshine in an ideal phosphere which surrounded her as she bounded along against the soft south wind.*" (Hardy, *Tess* 157) Some atmospheric like an "ideal phosphere" remain but

they are enhancers of natural settings, not mythological scenes. However in this novel the weather appears most frequently to enhance the appearance of the cast of characters-

The hot weather of July had crept upon them unawares, and the atmosphere of the flat vale hung heavy as an opiate over the dairy folk, the cows and the trees. Hot steaming rains fall (Hardy, Tess 199)

“July passed over their heads, and in its wake seemed an effort on the part of Nature to match the state of hearts at Talbothays Dairy.” (Hardy, Tess 207)

Thomas Hardy began to express his Ecological Consciousness in this novel with the names of his characters. Such as Tess’s last name suggests the tension of the Nature’s exploitation by culture and History. The name of her family had “stolen” her upper class name, d’Urberville. Both the names contain the syllable “urb” which still more important contains the letters “UR” which suggest the meaning original, primitive or earliest and is associated in literature with the original as in the example of the UR-Hamlet.

Hence the metaphor of the Chase and Blood runs the length of this story, trying man to his primitive nature and to the cycle of Nature, the natural world of animals, and the elements. The cyclical nature of evolution connects itself to weather imagery in the cycles of the elements in the seasons. This connection of natural cycles of nature is seen in Garson’s Hardy’s Fables of Integrity-

The cycle of Nature is presented as analogous to her own experience; as her fatal love for Angel develops, the sequence of Tess's emotion is echoed and exacerbated, by the waxing summer heat, so that the unfolding season itself seems to announce her fall. (Garson, 29)

Hardy's Consciousness of Ecology has been clearly expressed in his explanation of 'weather cycle of the Nature'. He employed this to increase the actual hardship of farm-labor. The weather the laborers must endure adds to the harshness of the existence as seen in these lines from Tess of the D'Urbervilles-

In the afternoon the rain came on again, and Marian said that they need not work anymore. But if they would not be paid, so they worked on. It was so high situation, this field, that the rain had no occasion to fall, but raced along horizontally upon the yelling wind, sticking into them like glass splinters till they were wet through. Tess had not known till what was really meant by that. But to stand working slowly in a field, and feel the creep of rain water, first in legs and shoulders, then on hips and head, then at back, front, and sides, and yet to work on till the leaden light diminishes and marks that the sun is down, demands a distinct modicum of stoicism, even of valour. (Hardy, Tess, 361)

The rain and wind gives way to the harsher elements of frost and snow. Here Hardy presents the icy weather as a horrifying experience to live through as seen in the tragical eyes of the birds from the North Pole. Weather reflects the continuing "loped cycles" of evolution in the novel. The harsh weather of Flintcomb-Ash is at another point in this cycle from

Talbothays's which goes with its fertility. The book is divided into phases in its orbit. After passing through many phases of running, hiding, running, the cycle for Tess ends at Stonehenge, which is itself a symbol of peace and eternity. The position of the stones at Stonehenge underscores this circular element as the stones themselves had been placed by ancient man in a rough cyclical formation.

This moves us to the concept of angles of perception which interest the subject from different positions as if on a sphere. Tess is seen differently by various characters in the novel. Hardy maintains and communicates to the reader the clearest vision keeping Tess always "beautiful Tess". In terms of weather imagery, Alec and Angel are often seeing Tess through the mist or fog of their own ideology and perception of a woman.

As George Wotton described in "Towards a Materialist Criticism in Tess of the d'Urbervilles: Thomas Hardy" points out at Talbothays Sundays are really Sun's day, "When flesh went forth to coquet with flesh while hypocritically affecting business with spiritual things." (Ibid 364) Also the sun at Stonehenge is connected to the hypocrisy in both paganism and Christianity. When Tess awakes to meet her fate, it is a sun-day in another sense, than the Christian-honored, modern rest day of the week. It is perhaps the dawn of an absolutely clear day, a day of reckoning with fate, cause and effect on a straight course to intersect the peace circle of retribution. "*The dawn shown full on the front of the man westward....It was the head of a man approaching them from the hollow beyond the sun-Stone*" (Hardy, Tess

486). He seems to be walking in a straight line. Even the breezes at Stonehenge are directorial. Again at Tess's hanging the weather is clear. There are no more clouds or mists to obscure things. There is a breeze at her hanging which is blowing the black flag straight out. Breezes also clear away clouds and fog.

In "Psychic Evolution: Darwinism and Initiation in Tess of the d'Urbervilles", Gosse says, "But once we have seen what Hardy intends us to focus on, we can sympathize with Tess's struggle to advance on the scale of psychic evolution and we can appreciate the insight Hardy showed in connecting the psychical and the physical, in rendering the struggles of mind through evolutionary and ritualistic images."

When Angel refers to Tess as Artemis and Demeter he is making references to moon Goddesses. Max Muller who is identified with sun-worship, says in his book comparative mythology-

The whole of nature was divided into two realms- the one dark, cold, wintry, and deathlike, the other bright, warm vernal, and full of life. The treasure of the earth...The nebulous powers of winter and darkness had carried away like robbers. The vernal sun wins it back, and like Demeter, rich in the possession of her restored daughter, the earth becomes rich again with all the treasures of spring. (Muller, 138-139)

Artemis is associated with sun-worship as Apollo is the sun; Artemis, his sister, is the moon. Also Artemis was the lady of Wild Things, protectors of the hunt. This metaphor runs throughout the novel as well as the sun-

worship which plays an important part in a final scene in the novel. Nature as a subject has been treated by different poets, novelists and dramatists. Everyone analyzes this subject according to his own mind. Shelley got the lesson of optimism from nature. He says-

“If Winter comes can Spring be far behind”,

Keats talks about mellowing season, flowers, new trees and beauty of nature. Wordsworth’s treatment of nature made him a prophet and he calls nature a ‘mother’ or a ‘friend’. Hardy was deeply interested in nature. He has a sensitive temperament about the Nature. An average intelligent observer notes small things and forgets the drawback of nature. Hardy, what he talks about the nature, results from the direct impressions of nature which he receives after observing it very deeply and carefully. Hardy’s concept is more realistic and Romantic. Nature plays an important role in Hardy’s novels and especially in “Tess” nature serves as a living character and not for the background of the novel. Nature is not friendlier, almost all in his novels, rather cruel and crashing. Hardy confines himself only to the dark aspects of nature. It is mainly because of his temperament that he doesn’t turn to other aspects. He has got the lesson of pessimism from nature. In his opinion-

“Happiness is but an occasional episode in a general drama of pain.”

He seems to believe that all is not right with the world. He studies nature in its all aspects: ordinary, grand, sad and happy. Nature does not

have all the time a holy plan. In this novel, we find different shades of nature as we see it a holy, guileful, relentless and even romantic sometimes.

In, "Tess", Hardy calls nature a villain character. Tess would have definitely escaped from the painful act if nature if nature had not covered the place with darkness and coldness. Nature has nothing good to offer to Tess but only destruction and suffering. Hardy paints the bitter picture of life. He regards human beings as puppets in the hands of nature. All the misery and sorrows that we see in the world are there because of some external power, called fate or nature. Tess did her best to avoid the sufferings and went for some positive work but it was the nature that left her alone with no destination. She was caught up by cruel clutches of nature that comes into the shape of Alec. Tess becomes a victim in the Alec's lustful and wanton nature.

In the seduction scene, we see the major influence of nature. Nature welcomes its friend in the appointed place that is covered with romantic atmosphere. Darkness and quietness are prevailed everywhere. Seduction is a sort of intoxication. No one is willfully seduced. As Tess falls a victim to seduction, anyone would have been seduced. Hardy discloses the rude aspects of life. He says where the guardian angels were when Tess was being raped. Nature is just like a director and she handles her victim without knowing their will.

Hardy rejects the idea of Wordsworth who says that birth of a child is a beautiful scheme of nature, but ironically Hardy says that what kind of

beautiful scheme is that a poor family has been awarded through a lot of children, which became the cause of Tess's sufferings. Because of a lot of family members, she faces so many sufferings. A critic says, 'The elementary; grand and sad aspects of nature are the land which appears to him most is that which is freest from human beings.'

In Tolbathays, nature seems very friendly. The Angel-Tess affair wouldn't have been so beautiful, but for its being among nature. The atmosphere of Tolbathays is very pleasant. Angel proposes Tess in that romantic atmosphere. Sometimes the nature seems to share in reality. It is her reflection of human moods, feelings and passions which are the percipient human mind observes in nature.

In fact Hardy thinks that the Nature is struggling against mankind in which physical confront is nothing as compared to the mental anguish. Nature has the malaise treatment with human beings. She takes the cares to Tess's sufferings in its bosom and places it one by one. It was a preplanned work. All the elements of Nature, life, fate, chance and the incidents to hand to hand on Tess's tragedy.

It looks that God is looking us just to feel pleasure. We have no guardian angels, no backing force on our difficulties. Hardy did not see anywhere 'nature's holy plan on the earth. So he seems unique who always sees the dark side of the picture and negates the bright one. Actually, Hardy born on the lap of Nature and the dark effects he extracts from nature, he

always all it in his novel, 'Tess of the d'Urbervilles', which darkens the life of all characters. Nature is just like ever awaking phenomenon of man's life.

Hardy's boldly modern treatment of patriarchal society and its conventions as unnecessarily detrimental to human life and nature, though subtle to the point of ambiguity at times, is consistent and driven by his obvious concern for the plight of nature and the lives of those individual humans who fall victim to patriarchy's mistreatment. The author's concern for the natural world is made apparent by his naturalist writing style and his highly-involved contributions to various animal rights groups. At the same time, Hardy addresses the social status of women via his ground-breaking characterizations of strong women engaged in direct conflict with a male-dominated society not yet able to accept their presence. The difficulties these women experience in their endeavors to overcome patriarchal oppression actually create much of the conflict and action that drive the plots of Hardy's tragic novels. Within patriarchal society's stratification of humans, discriminatory practices go far beyond simply valuing males more highly than females as similar intolerance is shown toward those from non-dominant racial, religious, or socioeconomic backgrounds. In light of the time during which it was written, the social criticism present in Hardy's novels represents an astoundingly accurate and complete portrayal of the many bigoted acts of patriarchal society. Consequently, these novels also serve the vital purpose of facilitating eco-feminist literary criticism that may

be supported textually without any significant adjustments being made to the author's intended context for his novels.

Ralph Pite offers an eco-feministic approach to the reading of **Tess of the d'Urbervilles**. This reading sets within the social ecology, dealing with the rural glorification of the environment or a celebration of modernity. Pite looks at Tess as stereotypically constructed, '*performed by the novel's male protagonists, both Alec and Angel.*' (Pite 141)

Hardy's major tragic novels all reveal an extraordinary level of accord between the subject matter and prevailing attitudes of his fiction and a way of eco-feminist theory. Eco-feminism relates the oppression of women to the destruction of nature by identifying patriarchal society as the root of both problems and considering women as an integral part of the natural world from which mankind so frequently seeks to differentiate it.

Women and nature are often injured concurrently by patriarchal dominance in Hardy's fiction. These shared, negative incidents are so common in his fiction that women and Nature becomes essentially indivisible in terms of the unjust events they experience and the damage they both sustain. Hardy's writing consistently illustrates the interconnectedness of women and nature, but among the clearest and most powerful of numerous examples are Hardy's characterizations and his narration of the main characters' life experiences in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. In the Oxford Readers Companion to Hardy, editor Norman Page notes-

For Hardy the relationship between humanity and nature is always close, at least for the characters who are presented sympathetically. It is only morally suspect outsiders like Sergeant Troy and Alec d'Urberville who seem indifferent to the natural world and untouched by it. (Page 200)

Indeed, Hardy portrays nature as sympathetic to Tess's plight, and the result is that nature and women become linked in the reader's mind. At the same time, Hardy's female characters are assigned no less importance than their male counterparts, and his version of the natural world is depicted as an actual character rather than a mere backdrop. By writing about the natural world as he does, Hardy gives nature's status the same boost to equality with dominant male culture he has granted women through his treatment of female characters. Hardy's modern treatment of patriarchal society and its conventions as unnecessarily detrimental to human life and nature, though subtle to the point of ambiguity at times, is consistent and driven by his obvious concern for the plight of nature and the lives of those individual humans who fall victim to patriarchy's mistreatment. Hardy addresses the social status of women via his ground breaking characterizations of strong women engaged in direct conflict with a male dominated society not yet able to accept their presence. The difficulties these women experienced in their endeavors to overcome patriarchal oppression actually create much of the conflict and action that drive the plots of Hardy's tragic novels. Within patriarchal society's stratification of human's discriminatory practices go far beyond simply valuing males more highly than females as similar

intolerance is shown towards those from non-dominant racial, religious or socio-economic backgrounds.

The conclusion of *Tess* uses ancient stones if not created by man at least placed and erected by him. Huge rocks, they might be calculated to threaten or destroy the characters of the novel; instead, they become a resting place where Tess lies calmly and awaits her fate. Similarly the weather is characterized by a gentle wind which is merely directional, pointing the way to the Great Monuments.

Hardy has chosen a scientific association for this final scene with Stonehenge, evoking Druidical ceremony and astronomical observation where things come into balance for Tess because she has thought her way through her own problems and those of "Angel and her sister as well. In a setting rich with possible Aruidic science and science and a non-threatening breeze directing her to this place, indeed "a very Temple of the Wings," Tess achieves clarity, purity and balance on her own because Angel's unresolved sense of Christian guilt will not permit him to fully understand or forgive her-

Angel's great sin thus becomes archetypal. In refusing to accept Tess's 'experience', in continuing to see her imagined newness irretrievably stained by The seduction he denies the capacity of Nature to be infinitely old and experienced and yet forever new and virginal. (Johnson 277)

Tess awaits the officers who will take her to her execution as a murderess. This ending had been written twenty years earlier with so much

unresolved from the ancient past and about Tess's own connections with the dubious character and doubtful honor of her D'Urbervilles ancestors, the novelist might have used this earlier vehicle of portentous weather images to suggest doom and gloom. Instead, the officers appear around Tess in glistening early morning light, approaching quietly almost respectfully and with the dawn shining "full on the front of the man westwards". As the ancient scientific Druids had planned if Hardy had wished to make further dark implications about Tess, his ever-present tools of nature and especially weather were available. "Invisible hand" and "restless Pleiades" and "Obliterate snows would seem out of place in this late 19th century rational atmosphere.

Eighteenth-century Enlightenment, nineteenth-century Christianity limited by Victorian social values and late nineteenth-century Darwinian theory have joined in Hardy's thinking for a resolution which enables Tess to retain her perception of herself as 'pure' and at the same time to accept society's official solution to her social transgressions.

Science, then has brought to Tess a considerable measure of clarity and order and peace in a formerly chaotic human dilemma and has accomplished it through the consciousness and mind of Thomas Hardy's mature heroine, once the untutored child-of-nature, Tess. The storms of her life have calmed to gentle breezes.

ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN *JUDE THE OBSCURE* (1895)

It is true that *Jude the Obscure* is also the novel which falls within the later period of Hardy's writing. But it is not a novel which depicts man trapped by the cruel Nature, in fact the novel becomes the good example of Hardy's Ecological Consciousness. In the novel there is the struggle between the man and the Nature, but now this struggle is for equality and control. It is through *Jude* that Hardy wants to become the forerunner of the naturalistic movement; for *Jude* is chained, through biological determinism, to his meaningless existence, he is forced to live each day in the existence of the nature. Generally, in the novels of Hardy there is the depiction of struggle between man and the Nature, but at everytime Hardy did see beauty of the nature ; but in a different way, he was cognizant of nature's other distinctive qualities, her indifference and even cruelty-

This is a vision of the cosmic "mother" very different from Swinburne's and Meredith's, "Fair Mother Earth". In Hardy's bitter awareness of the predicament of life there are no "divine contraries" but a web of chance and circumstances holding the sentient being in its coil. (Roppen 304)

Hardy simply viewed nature as a realist and a scientist. This was his intellectual response. He did response to the nature, emotionally as frequently as any of the nature-worshipping Romantics. Hardy is not

completely against the Nature, he was himself a child of the nature, having grown up near the heath and the woodlands. His heritage as a peasant and countryman endowed him with a unique power of picturing the landscape. “*Wordsworth had no deeper passion for the silent hills than the Hardy for Woodlands, valleys and wide heaths of Wessex*”. (Dawson, *The Makers* 218) This emotional awareness of nature controlled and colored all his writing.

The story of the novel *Jude the Obscure* is also unique and closely related with the Nature. It is a best example of Hardy’s Ecological Consciousness. This is the story of Jude Fawley who has dreams of making it Big in the Big City. He's going to shake the dust of his village off his feet and move to the (fictional) city of Christminster to go to college and become a great minister. The intension of Jude is to leave the rustic area and to join with urban one is an instance of people’s changing attitude from rustic to Urban. Along the way, though, he suddenly finds himself in a good old Boy meets Girl story—a surprising event for a kid who initially wants to be a priest. The plot of *Jude the Obscure* by Thomas Hardy sounds like a modern chick flick when summarized it this way—like something straight out of *Love Actually* but with fewer Christmas carols.

As proof of the novel's outlaw status early on, *Jude the Obscure* got heavily censored during its 1895 pre-book run as a serial in a magazine (which is like the Victorian version of HBO's multi-episode miniseries). The

magazine version was a lot tamer than the final novel edition, with the two lovers at the center of the book living in houses next door rather than sharing a place.

Though in this novel Hardy makes less significant use of his Wessex landscape, as well as its customs, superstitions, humor, and human types, than he does in other novels, it is of some importance. Almost all the characters are deeply rooted in and responsive to place, as shown, for example, in Jude's sense of all that has happened on the ridge-track near the Brown House outside Marygreen. Here Jude's affection towards the Nature reflects Hardy's Ecological Consciousness Characters like Drusilla Fawley or Mrs. Edlin are very much a product of the area, the aunt with her references to family history, the widow with her comments about marriage. But Hardy's desire to work out his theme seems to override most of this local reference and give justice to his Consciousness to the Nature.

Such shortcomings are to be found in this novel, but in Hardy's defense it should be said that he can develop a scene skillfully, he does use contrasting scenes with good effect in forwarding the plot, and he is capable of foreshadowing events in the novel with competence. It may be that his weaknesses in narrative technique come in part from the demands of serial publication; it may also be that he had less interest in this aspect of fiction than he did in others.

In the novel Hardy uses a great many quotations from his reading: at the head of each part, in the narrative, and in the conversations and thoughts of the characters. Many of these are from either the Bible or Shakespeare, but they range over the whole of English literature as well. His practice here is typical of what he did in other novels. The sources of most of the quotations are given or are obvious; the others are identified in the appendices to the book by Carl Weber listed in the bibliography.

It is necessary, first of all, to distinguish between Hardy's attitude to Jude's Romanticism and Jude's Romanticism itself. As always, Hardy was divided between his realisation that Romanticism could not exist in a universe which was so strongly Darwinian, and his indignant protest that Jude's vision ought to be true. In other words, Hardy the humanist is sympathetic towards Jude's futile fate, but Hardy the realist is aware that Jude's inability to adapt to the requirements of Darwinism means that he will not survive long in this world. In *Jude*, then, Hardy combines the realistic strand (that Jude will not succeed) with the Romantic strand (that Jude ought to succeed). The result is a novel which largely fits a tragic mode, not only because of its plot, but also because of Hardy's obvious pity for Jude's suffering. This sympathy is perhaps more acute than it might have otherwise been, because in creating Jude as a stonemason and church restorer aspiring to academia, Hardy is paralleling his own life and profession: he began as an architect with an interest in church restoration, and aspired to be a writer.

Hardy creates Jude as a Romantic idealist. But both objects of Jude's idealisation (Christminster, which stands for Oxford, and his cousin and lover, Sue Bridehead) disappoint him in their failure to live up to his unrealistic expectations. So the novel could be read as a negative Bildungsroman, in which Jude learns that his Romanticism is quite mistaken and that he is better off dead than trying to live in a world so opposed to his ideals. Hardy's patterning of allusions reinforces this descent from idealism to confounded reality: in the early stages of his life, Wordsworthian allusions surround the Romantic Jude; but the later stages of his life, in which he is beginning to see how futile his Romantic hopes were, are accompanied with references to Job (the Old Testament figure who was afflicted despite his innocence).

Hardy's aesthetic and vision expressed in Jude take much from Wordsworth and Shelley, although in this article I will consider only the influence of Shelley. Hardy's use of Shelley is most obvious in the character of Sue, who is based on the ethereal woman of Shelley's poems such as **Epipsychidion**. Sue's views of marriage are also borrowed, almost directly, from Shelley's views. But in the character of Jude, Romantic characteristics are also abundant. Jude has a strong imagination, and he idealises rather than sees his loves as they are. Another characteristic is Jude's desire to transcend this bleak, real world and live on in an ideal realm. Romantic poets sought such transcendence in their poems. For example, in **Tintern Abbey**

Wordsworth accomplishes transcendence by achieving a union with God and nature, experiencing in nature-

...a sense sublime

Of something far more deeply interfused...

A motion and a spirit, that impels

All thinking things, all objects of all thought,

And rolls through all things. (ll 96-103)

So Wordsworth (and Coleridge) found the ideal in the landscape (i.e. the real). Second generation Romantics strove equally hard for transcendence (an obvious example being Keats' attempt in "Ode to a Nightingale"), but they were unable to find the ideal in this world, and nor could they transcend to an ideal realm, because to transcend this world meant death. To the second generation, then, the ideal was utterly unachievable. Jude is like Shelley, one of the second generation of Romantics, because Jude does not transcend this real world; and like Shelley and Keats, who find it difficult to accept the real world the way it is, neither can Jude. Jude attempts to merge the real with the ideal. But his attempts at discovering the ideal necessarily fail: real and ideal cannot co-exist in the way Jude hopes.

So Hardy presents Romanticism as an unachievable ideal in this modern society. He constructs an imaginative ideal, but does so in order to show that it is not feasible in Jude's (or in Hardy's) society. In the face of a

changing, and therefore an unfamiliar world, Hardy needed Romanticism as a touchstone, as a key to a formerly golden age. But in *Jude*, with its bleakness and desolation, Hardy shows the growing gap between Romanticism and reality.

In *Jude*, Hardy unequivocally shows that Jude's Romanticism is destructive because it distorts his vision of reality, ensuring that he acts neither rationally nor practically. But Jude gains Hardy's sympathy for his resilience in the face of continual disappointment, and for his enthusiasm to keep trying to recapture his ideals. In his useful article entitled 'Compromised Romanticism in *Jude the Obscure*,' Michael Hassett argues that Jude's Romantic quest is ultimately unachievable because Jude and Sue *'repeatedly create imaginative substitutes for reality, but their Romanticism is compromised in practical application.'* (Hassett 432) Hardy's patterning of allusions, beginning with an abundance of Wordsworthian parallels and ending with references to Job, shows the pattern of Jude's decline, until, with the final flourish of Job quotations (while Jude is on his death bed), he gains some awareness of the follies of his early idealism. As with Hardy's previous idealising characters, Jude is modelled on the Shelleyan idealist and the most strongly Shelleyan aspects of Jude's character (which I will now discuss) are as follows: the strength of Jude's imagination; his idealism; and his (partially) Shelleyan relationship with Sue.

The strength of Jude's imagination is Romantic: but what is un-Romantic about his imagination is that it is unfounded in reality. The Romantics, particularly the first generation, generally sought the reality of an experience, and based their poetry on common life, while 'throw[ing] over [such incidents] a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual way' (my emphasis. The passage is from Wordsworth's 'Preface' to his Lyrical Ballads). Their quest was idealizing, but only because they discovered in reality its Platonic archetype, something a pre-Darwinian, broadly the centric world view allowed.

Jude's character is Romantic rather than Darwinian, which is why he cannot survive in this age. He is sensitive to nature, in a way out of place in this Darwinian society-

He had never brought home a nest of young birds without lying awake in misery half the night after, and often reinstating them and the nest in their original place the next morning. He could scarcely bear to see trees cut down or lopped, from a fancy that it hurt them; and late pruning, when the sap was up, and the tree bled profusely, had been a positive grief to him in his infancy. (Hardy, Jude ii 11)

And Hardy prophesies in these very early pages that Jude's life will not be happy: '*he was the sort of man who was born to ache a good deal before the fall of the curtain upon his unnecessary life.* (ii 11) This bleak prophecy is

accurate: because Darwinism has become the dominant force in Jude's society, only the strong will survive-and Jude is not one of the strong.

As I have argued, Hardy undercuts Jude's utterly naive belief that his Romantic ideals will succeed several times in the novel. Yet Jude cannot, or will not, learn, despite receiving moments of insight, which he chooses to ignore. The first illuminating moment comes after Dr Vilbert forgets to bring Jude the Greek and Latin grammars he wants. But Jude does not abandon his hopes of learning; rather, he sends to Mr. Phillotson for his grammars. But Latin and Greek are not as he had expected, and the narrator exclaims-

This was Latin and Greek, then, was it; this grand delusion! The charm he had supposed in store for him was really a labour like that of Israel in Egypt. (Hardy, Jude 26)

Hardy claims that someone walking past might have been able to restore Jude's spirits, but (anticipating the twentieth-century modernism of the likes of Samuel Beckett) *nobody did come, because nobody does; and under the crushing recognition of his gigantic error Jude continued to wish himself out of the world. (iv 27).*

Despite the setback, Jude gets on with Latin and Greek. But he is soon interested in another pursuit: the courtship of Arabella. At their first meeting, he is granted a moment of illumination as to Arabella's character, when she throws the pig's pizzle-

It had been no vestal who chose that missile for opening her attack on him. He saw this with his intellectual eye, just for a short fleeting while, as by the light of a falling lamp one might momentarily see an inscription on a wall before being enshrouded in darkness. And then this passing discriminative power was withdrawn. (Hardy, Jude vi 39)

So Jude's ability to see Arabella for what she is is over in a moment, and she becomes shrouded, once again, in his idealized visions. The disparity between the imagined and the real continues after Jude's arrival in Christminster, where he sees the imaginative glory fade into the 'defective real'. The second disappointment in Christminster is in his re-acquaintance with Phillotson: Phillotson's lack of success, '*destroyed at one stroke the halo which had surrounded the schoolmaster's figure in Jude's imagination ever since their parting.*'(iv 102) At times he wakes up from the dream world and gains real insights-

For a moment there fell on Jude a true illumination; that here in the stone yard was a centre of effort as worthy as that dignified by the name of scholarly study. ... But he lost it under stress of his old idea. (Hardy, Jude ii 85).

Jude also awakens to his sense of limitations. He can cite 'the afternoon on which he awoke from his dream', and he recognizes that, 'These struggling men and women before him were the reality of Christminster, though they knew little of Christ or Minster'. But under the

duress of his desire to become a scholar, he makes no use of this illumination.

Throughout the novel Jude is continually transfixed by Christminster, and the pull of the city remains strong-

Sue says to Arabella, "Of course Christminster is a sort of fixed vision with him, which I suppose he'll never be cured of believing in. He still thinks it is a great centre of high and fearless thought, instead of what it is, a nest of commonplace schoolmasters whose characteristic is timid obsequiousness to tradition." (Hardy, *Jude* vii 329).

Jude's insight, though, is far too late to change anything, and he dies only a short time after coming to terms with the reality of Christminster.

Just as Shelley was an important influence on Jude's character, so has he influenced Sue. Sue is continually seen as a spiritual rather than a physical woman, and in this way she is strongly connected to the ethereal heroine of Shelley's **Epipsychidion**. In **Epipsychidion**, Emily is a spirit, a vision, a shadow, and something totally other than a bodily woman-ironically; it is Emily's ethereality which means that Shelley cannot unite with her on earth. Hardy is also at pains to emphasize Sue's insubstantiality. Jude remembers that her figure was light and slight; further on, 'Sue stood like a vision before him-her look bodeful and anxious as in a dream, her little mouth nervous, and her strained eyes speaking reproachful inquiry'. At

this time, Jude '*Look[ed] at his loved one as she appeared to him now, in his tender thought the sweetest and most disinterested comrade that he had ever had, living largely in vivid imaginings, so ethereal a creature that her spirit could be seen trembling through her limbs*' (Hardy, Jude ix 195). After their elopement (perhaps their attempt to transcend this mortal world), the Shelleyan allusions intensify. Jude addresses Sue: '*you spirit, you disembodied creature, you dear, sweet, tantalizing phantom-hardly flesh at all; so that when I put my arms round you I almost expect them to pass through you as through air!*' (Hardy, Jude IV v 256-57) At this point, after Jude has spoken in an overtly Shelleyan way, Sue asks Jude to quote from **Epipsychidion**. Because he does not know the lines she recites for him:

*'There was a Being whom my spirit oft
Met on its visioned wanderings far aloft ...
A seraph of Heaven, too gentle to be human,
Veiling beneath that radiant form of woman.'* (Hardy, Jude IV v 257)

On Sue's urging, Jude agrees that the description from **Epipsychidion** is exactly like her. At **Aldbrickham and Elsewhere** (Book Five) Shelleyan parallels continue. Jude tells Sue '*you...are such a phantasmal, bodiless creature ... who ... has so little animal passion in you*' (Hardy, Jude V i 272). Sue is so light she barely touches the ground, and Arabella, noticing this, describes her as a fairy. Hardy also makes it clear that Sue and Jude have deluded themselves, and are living in a dream world. After postponing their marriage in Aldbrickham, Sue and Jude seemed to live on in a dreamy

paradise. On the morning of their next attempt at marriage, Sue wants to deny their reality, asking Jude to kiss her ‘incorporeally’. The wedding is not accomplished, though, and Sue declares ‘let us go home without killing our dream!’

Of all the euphemisms for nature used in Jude, “nature’s logic” comes closest to blending randomness with the design of a higher power. Although the phrase takes on various meanings throughout the two novels, a good definition might be the discrepancy between the predicted and actual effect of an action. For example, Jude feeds the crows he is supposed to scare away because Phillotson tells him to be kind to animals. Rather than being rewarded for following this advice, he is scolded and loses his job. In a way, it nature’s logic is a human invention to explain an empirical tendency, similar to natural selection or gravity, which is used as a scapegoat for suffering. Can’t blame yourself, your neighbor, or God? Then blame nature’s logic. The phrase first appears in an early section of Jude during which the eponymous hero is brooding over the discord and disorder of life: *“Events did not rhyme quite as he had thought. Nature's logic was too horrid for him to care for. That mercy towards one set of creatures was cruelty towards another sickened his sense of harmony.”* (Hardy, Jude 17) Even at eleven, probably too young an age to be thinking of such serious matters, Jude senses the imbalance between mercy and cruelty toward otherwise equal living beings. Nature’s logic, he discovers, is dissonant with concepts

of mutual peace; it demands that one creature die so that another may live. This echoes natural selection, but Hardy is not thinking about survival in terms of reproduction: he sees it in the ability to be independent and prosperous. Sue later reinterprets nature's logic, giving it more fatalistic resonance, by exclaiming, "*O why should Nature's law be mutual butchery!*" (Hardy, *Jude* 243) Nature's logic has progressed from "mercy towards one set of creatures was cruelty towards another" at the beginning of the novel to "mutual butchery," becoming increasingly savage as the novel progresses to coincide with the increasing hardships against which Jude and Sue struggle. It is impossible to discuss Hardy's interest in natural law without mentioning his well-documented familiarity with the writings of Charles Darwin. Levine confirms scholarly certitude in Darwin's influence on Hardy, stating that "*virtually all commentators cite Hardy's notation in his autobiography that he was 'among the earliest acclaimers of The Origin of the Species.'*" (Levine 36) Hardy was very much engrossed in his radical, scientific milieu and drew from it liberally in the creation of his characters and plots. One of the most salient examples of Darwin's influence on Hardy's writing is in the emphasis placed on genealogy in the novels. It is not an exaggeration to say that Tess and Jude are, to borrow the language of Darwin's famous voyage, long-beak finches living in an environment conducive to short-beak finches. That is to say, they have inherited traits that are unsuitable for survival in their respective homes. Jude might be a sympathetic and moral character, but if you want to prosper in 19th-century

Wessex, it is better to be Arabella. Hardy's invocation of Darwin and heredity implies is that Tess and Jude were essentially doomed before their novels even began. The task Hardy sets forth for he is the dramatization of the laws of nature. As Gillian Beer notes, it is difficult to transform an abstract such as natural selection into easily comprehensible terms. As a result, "*One of the persistent impulses in interpreting evolutionary theory has been to domesticate it, to colonise it with human meaning, to bring man back to the center of its intent.*" (Beer 7) Hardy may be bringing natural selection to bear on humans, but he also reassimilates humans back into the animal kingdom, showing how human and animals are governed by the same laws of nature. Equating nature with law or logic occurs frequently in both Tess and Jude, particularly in association with suffering. "They writhed feverishly," the narrator tells us about Tess's fellow milkmaid's arresting passion for Angel, "*under the oppressiveness of an emotion thrust on them by cruel Nature's law-an emotion which they had neither expected nor desired.*" (Hardy, Tess 115) In this case, nature's logic takes the form of romantic longing, yet it is unwanted and uncontrollable. In this sense nature's logic is a desire, but it can also be a visual pattern, as in the case of Jude anxiety about the unnatural appearance of his pig's blood: "*The white snow stained with the blood of his fellow-mortal wore an illogical look to him as a lover of justice, not to say Christian.*" (Hardy, Jude 55) There is no one medium of experiencing nature's logic; it encompasses anything that disagrees with preconceived axioms. Even though it is by definition natural,

there is still something unpalatable about it. This is a problem more with the assumptions of humans than the ontology of nature. Life consistently fails to meet the characters' expectations.

“Fellow-mortal”: Animal Sympathy and Empathy For someone with such a supposedly cruel conception of nature, Hardy maintained a strong affinity for its creatures through his life. “From the start,” Claire Tomalin records, *“he felt a sense of kinship with animals, and pity for their sufferings. When his father threw a stone at a fieldfare in the garden, killing it, the child picked it up, and to the end of his life remembered the lightness of the half-starved frozen bird in his hand.”* (Tomalin 18) Animal carcasses are typically objects of revulsion, but young Hardy directly handles it, creating a tactile connection that mimics his emotional connection to the felled fowl. For his father, the bird was a target; for Hardy, it represented quite vividly the transience of life. The Hardy we see here, unique in his deep sensitivity to the natural world, is identical to the persona of the lone animal sympathizer, feeling “pity for their suffering,” which permeates his work. Hardy’s preternatural compassion for animals was a distinguishing attribute, and one which his characters, who are already social contrarians, share, separating them from the rest of the Wessex community. Animals serve not only as beings deserving of compassion but also function as ethical litmus tests. By measuring the psychological and emotional distance between animals and humans, Hardy orients readers to the relative “goodness” of a

character. Moreover, it is in the suffering of animals that Jude and Tess glean their first intimations of nature's logic, recognizing in the animals the same natural mechanisms controlling themselves.

Sympathy towards animals is inextricable from Hardy's concepts of ethical beliefs. As Cohn demonstrates, the assumption that animals were ethically equivalent to non-living objects was called into question during Victorian times by evolutionary thought: "*The changing status of agency in Hardy's work reflects nineteenth-century uncertainty about whether animals' consanguinity with humans, and, more broadly, the biological instability of the human species, should shape ethical thought.*" (Cohn 495) Human control over animals is only shown to be uncertain in the minds of Jude and Tess, who see animals less as inferiors than as "fellow-mortal[s]". Animals are placed in diminutive, vulnerable positions, usually injured by human hunters, where mankind's unsympathetic treatment of other living beings becomes apparent. They appear at formative moments in the novels; understanding their purpose, and more importantly the purpose of their suffering, elucidates Hardy's judgments of his characters' morality. Tess and Jude's sympathy shrinks the distance between humans and animals, showing that they are both subject to the same laws of nature. Darwin played a direct role in creating Hardy's deep concern with eliminating the boundaries between animals and humans: Few people seem to perceive fully as yet that the most far-reaching consequence of the establishment of the common

origin of all species, is ethical; that it logically involved a readjustment of altruistic morals by enlarging as a necessity of rightness the application of what has been called "The Golden Rule" beyond the area of mere mankind to that of the whole animal kingdom. Possibly Darwin himself did not wholly perceive it, though he alluded to it. His aim here is to elevate animals to the plateau of human morality, not to animalize, and therefore barbarize, humanity, but to temper human hubris. By redistributing empathy equally throughout the animal kingdom, Hardy hoped that people would just as soon hurt a wild bird as their neighbor. Reading Darwin bolstered in Hardy the anti anthropocentric philosophy that existed within him since his childhood. Although the ill-treated of animals is used to explore the ethical dimensions of nature, it also develops into a social code, one which Jude and Tess are compelled to disobey. "In order to suggest that human intervention can and should prevent the suffering of animals," Cohn writes, "*Hardy comes to favor a more traditional aesthetics of sympathy over the narrative style associated earlier in his career with effacing human agency and individuality.*" (Cohn 499) Hardy sets his characters by themselves standing above animals, such as with Jude and the hungry crows or Tess vainly attempting to stop up Prince's profuse bleeding. By doing this, he not only maximizes sympathy, but establishes wounded animals as dependent on human intervention, and conveys the Sisyphean task of caring for them in a society in which they are marginalized. Sympathy towards animals is almost always expressed as anomalous behavior. It is not necessarily that the rest of

the world reviles animals; they are too preoccupied or indifferent, much like the God of “Hap,” to intervene in animal suffering. In novels concerned with a rejected would-be scholar and fallen women, the image of the outcast comes already weighted. There is a sense that indifference to animals is part of a healthy, productive lifestyle; those who do experience compassion are social outliers. By associating Jude and Tess so closely with animals, Hardy harmonizes their sentiments with nature rather than civilization, such that they appear out of place among mankind. Jude is forced from community to community on an interminable search for a permanent home, first in the Mary green where his fervent reading is viewed with apprehension by the humble villagers and then to Christminster where he is an outcast for not reading enough. Tess too experiences deracination as she flees from social judgment and pursues financial security. Their animalism represents a problem of belonging when, wherever they go, they are treated as sub-human. The moment in Jude that best expresses the conflict between the ethics of animal killing and the necessities of rural life is the pig slaughtering scene at the end of Part First. When the butcher is late one night, Jude is placed in the unfamiliar and uncomfortable position of executioner where he must choose between listening to his conscience or his utilitarian wife. What is at stake is not the death of the animal, its fate has already been decided; rather, the issue under question is killing the pig in the most painless and therefore ethically admissible way possible. Jude is reluctant to bleed the animal slowly, exacerbating its pain but sparing the muscle from being saturated

with blood, because he does not identify the pig as property but as a “fellow mortal”. Arabella, however, views the pig only as a commodity to which she owes no ethical consideration. Comically, she seems most upset when Jude kicks over the bucket of the animal’s blood: ‘*Now I can’t make any blackpot. There’s a waste, all through you.*’ (Hardy, *Jude* 54) Her only emotional reaction is frustration at Jude’s mercy and the spoiling salable goods. The ethical accoutrements of Prince’s death, however, are a bit more tangled. Prince, after all, is not killed for food, but by Tess’s (understandable) negligence. The absurdity of the early-morning journey itself is shown from the perspective of a nonhuman: “The poor creature looked wonderingly round at the night, at the lantern, at their two figures, as if he could not believe that at that hour, when every living thing was intended to be in shelter and at rest, he was called upon to go out and labor”. This line gives a sense of the unnaturalness of human business practices, when compared to the normal operations of the animal kingdom; there is even a judgment that Tess is doing something wrong by not being asleep, as biology dictates. Hardy does not only reposition Tess and Jude in a sympathetic relation with animals, he places the whole of humanity on an equal level with animals. One way he accomplishes this is by demonstrating the innate animal tendencies in humans, displaying the animalistic, uncontrollable passions of the characters. This appears most clearly with sexuality, which is the ubiquitous cause of conflict in his novels. Arabella Donn, the seductress, and Alec d’Urbervilles, the feckless playboy, are the

incarnations of the sexual drive. They operate by half-alluring, half-entrapping their victims, and it is only after they have stung that we realize the full extent of the damage. Arabella is associated with animality and sexuality the moment we encounter her, as she launches *the characteristic part of a barrow-pig*” at Jude, striking him abruptly in the face (Hardy, Jude 33). The pig genitalia itself is evocative of uninhibited libido, but the very dismemberment of the body part gives it further Freudian overtones. Jude has already been associated with pigs earlier in the book, when he “went out, and, feeling more than ever his existence to be an undermanned one, he lay down upon his back on a heap of litter near the pig-sty,” showing him to be not above abiding with animals. In light of the pig slaughtering scene, pigs become coded as an expression of Arabella’s control over Jude, such that it is not only the pig’s castration, but, symbolically, his. Animals, as representing the natural world, provide a link between the human characters and nature, showing that people are part, rather than distinct from it. The novels, thus, are not only concerned with how nature treats humans, but how humans treat nature. The relationship between man and beast is a tenuous one; for the provincial Wessex denizens, animals are not “fellow-mortal[s],” as they appear to Jude, but commodities. Not only are they commodities, however, but, in the provincial setting of Wessex, they are often necessities of survival. As Arabella tells Jude, “Poor folks must live”. The loss of a horse’s life, as with Prince, is only an economic loss; a slow death, while excruciating for the pig, is necessary because it will improve the quality of

the meat. Therefore, animals offer an alternate view of nature not an antagonistic presence conspiring against man, but as a ripe harvest to be mercilessly devoured. Humankind is not outside the scope of nature but part of it, both controller and controlled. Interestingly, Hardy's conception of nature explicitly leaves out any animals that are harmful to humans. There is no scene with the threat of wolves or similar beasts. Rather, man himself is always the ferocious one, forcing his will upon his fellow man or fellow creature. In exerting control over nature, man domesticates and therefore changes it: "*...man's agency in the development of particular properties demanded in plants and animals is compared with the activity of nature in selection and preservation of the characteristics most useful to the individual of the race themselves. Man breeds plants and animals to serve man's ends.*" (Beer 28) In subordinating animals, man creates a sort of artificial nature's logic and, in relegating animals to the realm of "other," deprives himself of the ability to empathize with them. This is not necessarily the fault of society, but rather due to the inability of humans to empathize with lesser beings. Jude and Tess, however, are not able to separate animals into different spheres and therefore see at work in animal suffering the same enigmatic forces that cause their own suffering. Jude and Tess's sympathy for animals displays the traits that make their survival in the English countryside impossible sensitivity.

Sue Bridehead is a strikingly modern heroine in many ways - she lives with men without marrying them; she has a rich intellectual life; she works alongside Jude. Hardy criticizes the social conventions that prevent her from fulfilling her potential as an intellectual and as a worker. However, he also reinforces some of those social conventions unintentionally; by portraying Sue as anxious and hysterical, Hardy perpetuates a common Victorian stereotype about women being especially emotional. Also, we are expected to accept Sue having lived with the Christminster undergraduate because they were not having sex; despite his professed liberalism, Hardy upholds traditional values by offering this piece of information and (apparently) expecting it to color our judgment of the character. *Jude the Obscure* (1895), Hardy's final novel, has proven to be his most controversial, and the novel least well-received at the time of publication. Hardy's honest, non-judgmental portrayal of female sexuality and his depiction of marriage as an almost invariably harmful institution capable of ruining many lives and creating misery that frequently results in terrible events, such as a child killing his or her siblings in an effort to bring relief to his unmarried, socially outcast parents, were among the aspects of the novel with which the Victorian public took issue. One of Hardy's most vehement denigrators, Margaret Oliphant was a well-known novelist and a highly respected literary commentator during the Victorian era, and her condemnation of *Jude the Obscure* was a scathing series of insults as she picked apart the novel for its straightforward treatment of sexuality and its unabashed representation of

human existence, both subjects she felt better left untouched by open discussion. Oliphant was so openly hostile toward Hardy and his work that today her criticism of *Jude the Obscure* has become her most widely-recognized piece of writing *She decried the novel's depiction of marriage as, shameful," reviled the creation of the openly sexual Arabella (a human pig), and characterized the whole enterprise as a product of, grossness, indecency, and horror.* (O'Nealy, 66-7) Indeed, Oliphant had nothing positive to say regarding Hardy's work, and her indignation provides an excellent historical reference for anyone wishing for a first-hand example of the Victorian era's customarily strict social norms prohibiting the open discussion of sexual matters, especially in a way that might seem sympathetic to the sexual, or even non-sexual, liberation of women from patriarchal dominance. Notably, Oliphant's firm stance on the side of allowing patriarchal dominance to continue subjugating women to men actually serves as an example of the negative effects of such dominance on the social attitudes of even women who have experienced oppression first-hand, also making patriarchy's stranglehold on society virtually unbreakable. Many Hardy biographers and literary critics blame the initial negative critical responses to the author's work for his decision to write poetry rather than fiction after the publication of *Jude the Obscure*: "*It has been the hostile reception accorded to his last novel Jude the Obscure (1896) that induced Hardy to abandon fiction...and to devote his full time to writing poetry.*" (Whitehead 3) For the same reasons so many of Hardy's

contemporaries criticized this novel so ruthlessly, it also affords a richer, more complex situation for analysis from an eco-feminist perspective than any of his earlier novels. The novel has received a great deal of attention from feminist perspectives because it highlights Hardy's *committed portrayal of the strength of female sexual desire and his determined onslaught on the unnecessary tyranny of Victorian conventions and morality.* (Thomas 114) Hardy uses individual characterization in his portrayal of women's struggles for sovereignty in the face of a society dominated by male power structures, and he manages to do so effectively and without over generalization or the use of any hindering stereotypes. The main female character, Sue Bridehead, embodies much of the novel's conflict as she struggles to determine who, if anyone, she wants to marry, while attempting to define her position and capabilities within patriarchal society. Sue's unwillingness either to marry Jude Fawley, a man with whom she has children, or to remain with her first husband appears to be the root of most of the problems she and her family experience; however, the real cause of her grief is patriarchal society's attempt to control her life by using her gender against her. Society tries to force her to choose only one man, marry him, and raise children in a traditional household. The pressure society is able to exert upon her is astounding and noticeably tyrannical: "*Hardy also recognized the almost inescapable coercive pressure to conform to the social idea, and Jude the Obscure is his most poignant critique of this pressure.*" (Hardy, Jude 104) Sue manages to resist "the insurmountable

difficulties that beset the pioneer spirit and the, comforting, “at time’s irresistible pull of tradition and the urge to conform,” and both she and her unusually modern family suffer greatly at the hands of patriarchal society and its dictated codes of conduct as a result of her nonconformist life choices. In fact, Sue’s powerful sense of her own sexual and personal sovereignty, as illustrated by her many non-traditional lifestyle choices, is disconcerting to much of patriarchal society, eventually managing to perturb even Fawley, a fellow social outcast and a man with relatively relaxed ties to tradition and patriarchal ideals. Those features of *Jude the Obscure* that support feminist perspectives are often most apparent to readers, but the novel also contains numerous instances of patriarchal society causing the destruction of nature. The majority of these episodes may be related to the oppression of women or other minorities in some way, making an eco-feminist reading of the text plausible and logical. Some easily discernible examples include Hardy’s depictions of overworked horses pulling a load of coal and Jude’s youthful unwillingness to chase birds away from food intended for human use near the beginning of the novel. The young Jude shows an early inclination toward conservation and a relatively equitable mindset that assumes birds have the same right to thrive on nature’s bounty that humans so often cite: “He sounded the clacker till his arm ached, and at length his heart grew sympathetic with the birds □*thwarted desires....He ceased his rattling, and they alighted anew.*” (Hardy, *Jude* 15) Jude goes on to address the birds directly:

You shall have some dinner—you shall. There is enough for us all. In a further showing of his regard for nature as humanity's equal, Jude "could scarcely bear to see trees cut down or lopped, from a fancy that it hurt them; and late pruning, when the sap was up and the tree bled profusely, had been a positive grief to him in infancy." (17)

Unfortunately for Jude, his consideration and sympathy for the plight of nature are not states of mind that patriarchal society approves, and his sensitivity is labeled a flaw: *"This weakness of character, as it may be called, suggested that he was the sort of man who was born to ache a good deal before the fall of the curtain upon his unnecessary life should signify that all was well with him again."* (Hardy, Jude 17) Surely the most tragic and shocking example of patriarchy's potential to cause great harm, the deaths of Jude and Sue's children, must be viewed as destruction of the natural world at its worst because the people affected are all integral parts of nature as living beings. Additionally, these innocents are essentially forced into complicity in their own demise by society's malice toward those who violate social norms through no choice of their own; the children have no control over the actions of their parents and are blameless in their births to their unwed parents. However, one must avoid placing any real blame upon Jude and Sue because the direct cause of this family's strife and eventual loss of life are the closed-minded, negative judgments forced upon the family by a male-dominated society incapable of accepting such a non-traditional family. The eldest child from Jude's first marriage, a boy referred

to as “Little Father Time” due to his appearance of old age both in body and spirit, surely would not have felt his own existence and that of his half-siblings so cumbersome as to necessitate ending all their lives if society had not created so many hurdles for the family through unfairly harsh judgment and corresponding mistreatment. The basic situation leading up to the shocking scene in which the reader learns of Little Father Time’s murder of his siblings, followed by his own suicide, is one of disheartening discrimination as the family searches in vain for rental housing in which they may all live under one roof as a family. Sue and Jude are not married, a condition that causes potential landlords to shun the family out of fear of society’s judgment against them for endorsing such supposed immorality. Sue is also visibly pregnant at the time of this quest for a place in society, making the family even less desirable as tenants. This section of the novel also contains a brilliant example of multiple ways in which marriage is detrimental to women. Sue does actually manage to secure lodging for herself and her children, but their reprieve is short lived as the group is forced into the street after only one day of shelter due to objections made against their tenancy by the husband of the woman who rented to them the day before. Sue gives in to the woman’s request for a rather odd reason, considering her personal dislike for the institution of marriage: “*Though she knew she was entitled to the lodging for a week, Sue did not wish to create a disturbance between the wife and husband, and she said she would leave as requested.*” (Hardy, Jude 340). In this instance, Sue defers to the married

woman to avoid causing conflict in the landlord's marriage, but the married woman only objects to the family's presence because of control exerted over her by her husband. Patriarchal dominance is two-fold in this event, exerting control over the unmarried Sue by the married landlady and allowing the landlady's husband to dominate her (the landlady's). Sue's submission to patriarchal dominance in this incident may foreshadow her inability to control the oppressive actions of a male-dominated society or prevent the tragic deaths of her children due to unfair social norms. However, these events do not entirely destroy Sue, and their eventual outcomes may be analytically useful in determining Hardy's motives in writing this work of tragic fiction as he did. Hardy's representation of such an extreme event as a child murder/suicide in response to the relatively common situation of patriarchal society dictating the forms in which a family may exist and be respected as such, coupled with the accompanying negative reception of and discriminatory action against any family that fails to fit social norms, is telling in itself. Hardy must have felt strongly that society's patriarchal dominance over female sexuality and family structure caused a great deal more harm than good for humans in order to have crafted such a sensational tale in response to the issue. Indeed, many critics include *Jude the Obscure* in a group of ground-breaking feminist novels written near the end of the nineteenth century that collectively "address issues of marriage reform, free love, and women's right to sexual consent within marriage" and "*ask the question that most liberal reformers of the earlier and midnineteenth century*

had very conspicuously not posed: Was marriage by its very nature violent to women?" (Surridge 189) The implications of this question for modern feminist theory are apparently vital. Biographical information and much of Hardy's personal writing support an analysis identifying the author's point of view as very critical of the institution of marriage and its negative effects upon the sovereignty of the individual, and this theme in Hardy's work extends to include sound disapproval of many aspects of the Victorian era's signature inflexible sense of morality regarding the position of women in society. *Jude the Obscure* is often cited as Hardy's most open protest against restrictive Victorian social norms relating to women's sexuality and marriage-

*The difference in *Jude*, Hardy's last polemical novel, is, fundamentally, one of emphasis. Sue's resistance to the notion that marriage should be the expressed goal of her sexuality is of central importance to the novel, and Hardy, now adopting a more openly heterodox stance than he had felt permissible in earlier works, stands openly and defiantly behind her...Sue's crushing defeat as the unhappy Mrs. Phillotson does not eclipse either her rebellious voice or her heartfelt principles: her ineluctable truths alone outlive her tergiversation.* (Morgan 110-1)

As apparent as Hardy's characterization of Sue makes his stance against marriage as a required social sanction authorizing human love, perhaps an even more comprehensive illustration of Hardy's take on the broader set of Victorian morality as a whole and its constraining effects

upon human relationships comes in his response to Oliphant's harsh criticism of *Jude the Obscure* as immoral and offensive. Hardy's response places his own position in the realm of modernism and renounces the opinions of his critic, opinions typical of social norms during the Victorian era, as outdated and overly restrictive: