THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

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4.1 Introduction

In the twentieth century, *The Return of the Native* became one of Hardy's most popular novels. It is one of the important novels of Thomas Hardy. It deals with Capitalistic elements and of coping with other characters in relation with money and various agricultural businesses. Money and Capitalism work together in the society. In the preface of the novel, Thomas Hardy described the story which had happened between 1840 and 1850. At that time, Europe was in the vogue of industrial revolution. In England, charter movement occurred three times. England underwent in a sweeping transformation from a dull agrarian society to an intensely industrial one, and productivity got enough development. So in human society, the relation of production also underwent into profound transformation. Since the industrial revolution, European Capitalism had been developing monopoly in many businesses that had been developing forward at an unprecedented speed and produced huge wealth. Though, the title of novel exposes rural background it is not eluded from the impact of Capitalism on the people and agricultural businesses.

4.2 The Projection of Capitalism in The Return of the Native

The novel, *The Return of the Native* delineates the theme of capitalism. The rural part of England also not excluded in the vogue of industrial revolution. It started in the beginning of 18th century. The Industrial revolution created the numerous factories, mills, mines and workshops. England was still an almost entirely agricultural country. The English countryside was a part of everyone’s existence. The industrial revolution created problems such as dirt, squalor, ugliness, and crime, poverty, richness, factories and new towns. Labourers were being unfairly treated without money, women workers were also ill-treated and underpaid, while children were often overworked in abominable conditions. Technological progress, education, and an increasing capital stock transformed England into the workshop of the world.

*The Return of the Native* set in rural part of England where the people live in silent atmosphere. They are away from all types of industrial ills which are available in towns. Such description reminds us Shakespeare’s “As You like It.”
In 19th century, the industrial revolution shifted in rural part of England. The industrial revolution, as the transformation came to be called, caused a sustained rise in real income per person in England. For the first time, the English merchants were able to acquire wealth and power, the likes of which had previously only been available to the noble. Therefore, the negative side of this situation was that England produced a new class of poor people-one that were even poorer than their predecessors. Those made only a few people get the real benefit. The industrial revolution was a disaster for the working classes, occupying the larger rate of the population, whose situation became worse gradually. More than that, in this very historic time, capitalism was turning into imperialism, which caused more serious and sharp social conflict. Social disharmony and class contradiction were becoming more and more sharpened. John Holloway reads The Return of the Native and writes:

“…..throughout the book, the stress falls on the revitalizing power of rural life, and on how its vitality is intrinsically greater than that of modernity. Eustacia and Wildeve, and at first Clym too…. the successes of those who have lost the soundness, the inner strength, the power to choose and to achieve wisely which belongs to men whose life is in harmony with their word.”

In The Return of the Native, Hardy described the rural and urban conflict as one of the legitimate readings of his sound enough. But it is not the only theme, nor is the theme of principal importance in anyone of Hardy novels. Admittedly, Hardy belonged to the soil of Wessex, and he naturally chose the details invasion of the country mode of life, therefore, could not escape his observation. The renegades flee from the isolated of the rural order as Holloway makes out, but also in a wider significance. It is in this sense that Wildeve is essentially a separated character due to the Capitalistic disparity and the lady killing career nature.

Holloway continues to contrast the character of Venn with Eustacia, Wildeve and Clym:

“By contrast, Venn the Reddleman suffers reverses, but they do not impair his integrity; his vitality runs submerged, but it runs with the tide of life … the whole rural ambience can ultimately assert a greater vitality than the city life from which Clym has come.”
The above lines describe the sufferings of poor people such as reddleman. They have very close relation with agrarian society and industrial revolution. Reddleman used to work hard in an agricultural part. He travels the country for marking sheeps. His business is exposed that he has stained red from head to foot. Eustacia, a merry-making woman wishes to enjoy without working. Clym and Wildeve differ on capitalistic point of view. Clym is anti-capitalist while Wildeve is capitalist one. Clym want to use his money for making literate to the native. Wildeve, as a Capitalist uses money and power severely to destroy the life of other. Due to the Capitalistic nature he becomes lover of Eustacia and demolishes the life of Thomasin.

Hardy presents Clym with his work in Paris in idleness and an affront to his notion of what if fitting for a man of education. And it is not difficult to see that coming home to extend the awareness of ‘the Egdon eremites’ in the way of the world is fitting in a way that his work in Paris can never be. The rustics have a firmer grasp of social realities than their teacher. Clym Yeobright is the inhabitant in ‘The Return of the Native’. He is an idealistic individual who is incapable of compromise. At an early age, Clym had been sent to Budmouth and from where he had gone to Paris.

In Paris he had been placed in trade and he had raised the position of a diamond-merchant. He succeeded in Capitalist society and turned into socialist one. His experience with the people in Paris made a strong aversion in him against the worldly pursuits and strong materialistic tendencies of people. He feels that he has to use his services for the people in Egdon Heath.

In Paris, he becomes successful diamond merchant. He returns to Egdon Heath, to start a school. Clement is a man of about thirty who gives up a business career in Paris and return to his native Egdon Heath to become a schoolmaster for the poor and ignorant people. Clym is the native to which title refers. He describes the status of his native people with the help of following words:

“Here at least were intelligible facts regarding landscape –far –reaching proofs productive of genuine satisfaction. The untamable ...modern cut and colures has more or less an anomalous look. We seem to want the oldest and simplest human clothing where the clothing of the earth is so primitive.”

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The above lines express the resistance of modernism and praise of traditional values. The natives consider development is the enemy of people. They accept old and simple way of living. This reveals that the part is remained untouched from the impact of Capitalism and industrialism. The extract explores the clash between modernism and primitivism.

The opening chapter of the book third is very important in understanding the character of Clym. It bears the significant title, ‘My Mind to me a Kingdom is’, which is the first line of a poem by Sir Edward Dyer. Hardy’s bitter irony in citing this line cannot escape the reader. It alludes to Clym’s insistence on educating the heathmen. Hardy describes Clym in following extract:

“In Clym Yeobright’s face could be dimly seen the typical countenance of the future. Should there be a produce such faces. … civilization, must ultimately was so thoroughly into the constitution of the advanced races that its facial expression will become accepted as a new artistic departure. People already feel that a man who lives without disturbing a curve of feature, or setting a mark of mental concern anywhere upon himself, is too far removed from modern perceptiveness to be a modern type.”

Hardy described Clym as a modern type, who ‘become acquainted’ in Paris with ethical systems at the time. He has a profound sense of disharmony between his beliefs and the ‘flashy’ and ‘effeminate’ business by which his living led him to abandon Paris and his position and return to Egdon Heath. So he finds his work in Paris is the most preoccupied with a social consciousness. He returns home in order to generate the knowledge among the natives. He was totally contradictory in approach of earning additional money. Clym explains his decision to remain in Egdon and not return to Paris by saying:

“My business was the idlest, vainest, most effeminate business that ever a man could be put to. That decided me: I would give it up and try to follow some rational occupation among the people I knew best, and to who I could be of most use. I have come home… I shall keep a school…”

’But, for my part, I think he had better mind his business”
Hardy describes that Clym considered the business is a kind of earning money and lives but he has many other things to do. He hates the business of diamond in Paris. He starts hating because his mindset is not capitalist. Though he lived in developed region of Paris, he works for natives, poor people who are illiterate. He wishes to work for them. His approach toward business is not capitalist and wishes to work for poor people.

Clym’s decision to stay back at Egdon is firm and even his mother’s strong disapproval is unable to change his decision. His mother had a Capitalist nature and lived in realistic world. She thought that business can create wealth and bring fame. According to her, money comes after business and fame comes when you have wealth. For his mother, the job in Paris was a most coveted one and her son had a respectable job there. His mother was a thoroughly practical minded woman who knows that if Clym remains in Paris, he will have an excellent future. She wants Clym should stay in Paris because there he has a respectable job. She had high ambitions regarding the future of her son. She urges him not to give up his job. This clash symbolically represents the conflict between capitalism and anti-capitalist.

His mother says:

“O Clym! Please don’t go setting down as my fault what is your obstinate wrongheadedness. It you wished to connect yourself with an unworthy person why did you come home here to do it? Why didn’t you do it in Paris?-it is more the fashion there.”

The above description shows the approach of Mrs. Yeobright toward business. She inertly deals with business which specifically attached with capitalism. She says to him don’t let your business. Capitalist structure gives importance to money and business than culture and well-being of society. The clash between Clym and Mrs. Yeobright on the basis of business gives picture of capitalism. Mrs. Yeobright strictly follows the capitalistic procedures and attitudes towards society and people. Clym seems as an anti-capitalist and represents Hardy’s mouthpiece. Hardy projected philosophy of capitalism through him. In response to his mother, Clym says that money is not everything in life. In a pragmatic, some are very willing to earn more and live in gorgeous way. Clym thinks that he hates that showy manner and wants to live in realistic one. Capitalism is pervading in the social elements
through their businesses such as teaching, working, relations and marriages too. Clym contents:

“I cannot help it,” said Clym, in a troubled tone. “Mother, I hate the flashy business. Talk about men who deserve the name, can any man deserving the name waste his time in that effeminate way, when he sees half the world going to ruin for want of. Somebody to buckle to and teach them how to breast the misery they are born to?”

Clym was principally an idealist and found himself misplaced in the flourishing diamond business in Paris. He went there for diamond business but later on he loses his interest in it. He thought to work for the natives and poor’s. The concept of rich and poor always lingered in the mind of Clym. So, in a pragmatic sense he wishes to work for natives.

Hardy observes:

“That waggery of fate which started Clive as a writing clerk, Gay as a linen-draper, Keats as a surgeon, and a thousand others in a thousand other odd ways, banished the wild and ascetic heath lad to a trade whose sole concern was with the especial symbols of self-indulgence and vain glory.”

Hardy describes that Clym did job for self indulgence not for amassing wealth. Clym was a successful diamond merchant but he wanted to become a ‘school-master to the poor and ignorant, to teach them what nobody else will’. He wants to teach them ‘knowledge of a sort which brings wisdom rather than affluence. He wants his class to learn how raise themselves above others ethically rather than materially. Clym could not see the importance of material prosperity as the first stage towards spiritual development. Clym wants to invest his money by giving education to the people. So he rightly invests money for country. Hardy describes untouched rural part from the impact of capitalism and modernism. He writes:

“In passing from the bucolic to the intellectual life the intermediate stages are usually two at least, frequently many more; and one of these
stages is almost sure to be worldly advance. We can hardly imagine bucolic placidity quickening to intellectual aims without imagining social aims as the transitional phase. Yeobright’s local peculiarity was that in striving at high thinking he still cleaved to plain living-nay, wild and meager living in many respects, and brotherliness with clowns.\(^{40}\)

Hardy exposed capitalism through the intentions and reality of Clym. Clym likes to work for the people of Egdon Heath. He was the native so he wishes to work for them. The people of Egdon are far from modernization. So they are quite unknown about modern social ethics and mannerism. However, there was a sharp contrast between his intentions and the reality:

“In consequence of this relatively advanced position, Yeobright might have been called unfortunate. The rural world was not ripe for him. A man should be only partially before his time…”\(^{11}\)

Clym is trapped between two experiences, his insistence to ‘keep a school’ and his fellow-countrymen’s negative response, and when he is made to feel the conflict among them due to capitalistic nature of other characters. The natives are also known about agriculture and its development. So they are aware of business. They think that the schooling of Clym for them is not useful. This proves that these natives are also looking schooling from capitalist perspective. This is the hidden capitalism spread among the people. Still Clym pursues his chosen course of action; Hardy describes Clym:

“Was Yeobright’s mind well-proportioned? No. A well-proportioned mind is …or crucified as a blasphemer… Its usual blessings are happiness and mediocrity… enabling its possessors to find their way to wealth….It never would allowed Yeobright to do such a ridiculous thing as throw up his business to benefit his fellow creatures.\(^{42}\)

Clym wishes to marry with Eustacia but Mrs.Yeobright does not possess a good opinion. She knows that Eustacia is not a good girl and a curse upon him. She thinks that Eustacia is a merry-maker and pleasure seeking girl and not useful in the business. Mrs.Yeobright looks at marriage from business point of view and it should be appropriately matched. This attitude towards marriage is capitalistic overtone of Mrs.Yeobright. Her opposition comes out from business and money-making
perspective. Her intentions are very clear towards Clym’s marriage. She thinks for the well being of her son. The marriage is depicted from and argued from capitalist point of view. Mrs. Yeobright expresses her views about Eustacia. Hardy writes:

“She is lazy and dissatisfied. But that is not all of it. Supporting her to be as good a woman … present?”

“Well, I know you had decided to attempt it before you saw her. But that would have ended in intentions. It was … objections to the diamond trade. Clym looked hard at his mother.”

Mrs. Yeobright, mother of Clym was a very class-conscious woman. She objects to the marriage of both. Her capitalist attitude is exposed through her thinking about Clym’s business, marriage with Eustacia and running school in Village. Her urge to Clym seems that she is rich and higher class lady. In the response to mother Clym cleared both the things. Clym says:

“She is excellently educated, and would make a good matron in a boarding-school. I candidly own … my intention of giving with my own mouth rudimentary education to the lowest class. I can do better. I can establish private school for farmers’ sons, and without stopping the school I can manage to pass examinations.”

The extract explores that Clym is not capitalist in approach but his mother is an adherent follower of capitalist system. She corrects his faults in business and gives support to increase it. Mrs. Yeobright refuses Clym’s marriage with on the basis of money. She assumes that Eustacia Vye- she is a raven haired young beauty. She doesn’t have sufficient money and running after a rich merchant, Clym.

Then Mrs. Yeobright decides to see Eustacia. Upon hearing Mrs. Yeobright’s decision to visit Eustacia, Christian finally admits to her that Wildeve had won the money and given Eustacia money as a gift. Eustacia vehemently denies that she has the money and is deeply insulted at the implication. Clym needs guarding against her and that she is committing adultery with Wildeve. This adultery is also
based on economic situation. Hardy discloses the connection between adultery and capitalism. This revealed through the relation of Eustacia and Wildeve.

Clym does not want to take his new profession for money-making, but for the service to his fellow countrymen. His plan is one for instilling high knowledge into empty minds without cramming them what has to be uncrammed again before true study begins. The description exposed simple but ongoing capitalism exists in the rural part of England. Then we have description that the people are doing various businesses. Everyone is closely attached with business more or less. These businesses and workings are part of capitalism.

Hardy writes:

“Every individual was so involved in furze by his method of carrying the faggots that he appeared like a bush on legs till he had thrown them down. The party had marched in trail, like a travelling flock of sheep; that is to say, the strongest first, the weak and young behind.”

Clym plans for setting up a school to educate the people of the Heath. But, instead of being broken down by it, he decided to continue on with his life as best he could in spite of this new obstacle. He was no shame in becoming a furze-cutter, the typical job of a heath man. Clym took his first step when he put on his old brown clothes and then chose the life of a furze cutter. He enjoyed the job very much. Clym so enjoyed his new job while working. This notes his approach towards work that work is work is worship. This made Eustacia angry and hopeless on moving to Paris. There is a quarrel between Clym and Eustacia on the basis of agrarian work and commerce based Capitalistic city, Paris. Eustacia use to live in fancy manner. Thomas Hardy described Eustacia that she is tamping it all down. So suppression makes us think that Eustacia may change at some point and unleash all of that emotion she’s currently reigning in. According to capitalistic point of view, Eustacia is interested in money and materialistic life. She wishes to use everything for her at any cost. Eustacia is described with following extract. Hardy contents:

“She had the passions and instincts which make a model goddess, that is, those which make not quite a model woman. Had it been possible for the earth and mankind to be entirely in her grasp for a while, she had handled the
distaff, the spindle, and the shears at her own free will, few in the world would have noticed the change of government.\textsuperscript{16}

This reminds the heroines such as Emma, Madam Bovary who are running after luxurious life. They are not caring of poor and sufferer. After the marriage with Clym, Eustacia becomes more regardless to poor and ready to live in Romantic and materialistic world. This explores the projection of capitalism through the character of Eustacia. This depict Clym’s marriage is a failure as both of them live a different world.

Clym is thoughtful, reflective, contented and an intellectual type of man. Eustacia is wavering, fickle-minded, superficial and passionate. Clym, after his life in Paris is now satisfied with his rural environment and the simple way of life. On the other hand, Eustacia longs for the fashion and pleasures of Parisian life. She likes to enjoy materialistic life. This shows her capitalistic attitude towards money and people. Hardy writes:

\textit{“The only way to look queenly without realms or hearts to queen it over is to look as if you had lost them; and Eustacia did that to a triumph. In the cottage she could suggest mansions she had never seen.”}\textsuperscript{17}

Capitalism plays vital role in city as well as rural part of England. It created dirt, clash, and homeless to people. In the society, Capitalism gives birth to humiliation. Many people are humiliated on the basis of inequality in economic and social position. Due to the presence of capitalism in society, the two groups are noticeable come across that are superior and inferior, rich and poor. There are various scenes of humiliation in the novel. Thomasin demonstrated as a humble, meek, and humiliated. Her humiliation isn’t really a sign of weakness. She is humiliated by Wildeve and Clym too. Wildeve doesn’t provide her money and security. She has to suffer more than Eustacia. Her oppression comes out from higher social class. She tries to fight for good but becomes victim of capitalist structure.

Thomasin had come to ask for some money from her aunt which she could not get from her husband, Wildeve. Mrs. Yeobright said that she had one hundred guineas which she wanted to divide equally between Thomasin and Clym. She wanted to hand over the money at that time only when Thomasin asked for her share
soon as she was in great need of money. The pathetic state of Thomasin is exposed in following extract. Hardy adds:

“*Yes, Aunt I would tell you if he were unkind.*” She added, blushing, and with hesitation, “*He- I don’t know if I ought to complain to you about this, but I am not quite sure what to do. I want some money, you know, Aunt-some to buy little things for myself-and he doesn’t give me any.*”

Thomas Hardy extrapolated the pathetic situation of Thomasin who is need in money. She doesn’t secure herself well. Hardy expresses the pathetic condition of women among the people if she doesn’t have money and husband. Her oppression and suppression may represent of the position of all women in the England. Her humiliation and suffering is expressed through following extract. Hardy writes:

“*Thomasin lowered her face to the apples again. “I am warning to other….” What a class to belong to! Do I really belong to them? ’Tis absurd! Yet why, aunt, does everybody keep on making me think that I do, by the way they behave towards me? Why don’t people judge me by my acts?*”

Clym also humiliated in the rural part where he was working. The people thought that he doing such things which are not useful to them. Then he becomes confused towards his intention. Such confusion stands for overpowering nature of Capitalism. His efforts wasted and humiliated more than any other. This comes out from the capitalistic and economic thinking of the people. His humiliation expressed in his own words as follows-

“*Well, as my views changed my course became very depressing. I found that I was trying to be like people who had hardly anything in common with me. I was endeavoring to put off one sort of life for another sort of life, which was not better than the life I had known before. It was simply different.*”

Clym suffered due to the projection of capitalism which was not overtly represented but it works powerfully. He is humiliated by the natives as they sharply different in thinking. Then we have humiliation of Venn, Reddleman, Mrs. Yeobright, local labourers and many others. Those humiliations occur from either overtly or inertly. There is a striking humiliation of Reddleman whose work is marking sheeps. He works very hard and paid less. This business is become outdated due to encroachment of industrialism in rural part. Capitalism disturbed the life of common
people, animal and the customs of Wessex. This business is devastated due to the capitalism and industrialism.

Hardy describes:

“The traveler with the cart was a reddie-man—a person whose vocation it was to supply farmers with Redding for their sheep. He was one of a class rapidly becoming extinct … occupied in the world of animals. He is a curious, interesting, and nearly perished link between obsolete forms of life and those which generally prevail.”

Thomas Hardy clearly exposed that the humiliation of reddleman who worked on low wages. Due to the projection of capitalism and industrialism agrarian sectors wiped out. Many businesses are demolished by the established capitalist structure.

At the end of the novel, Hardy describes the disparity of Clym. Clym had planned to start an educational project after his return from Paris. When his educational project, proves a failure, he is compelled to become a furze-cutter. This new jot diminished his social status. In 19th century England, new business holders such as Clym are discouraged and destroyed by the established capitalist society. They are totally wiped out in such vogue. He says:

“There is hope yet. There are forty years of work in me ye, and why should you despair? I am only at an awkward turning. I wish people wouldn’t be so ready to think that there is no progress without uniformity.”

Above lines convey that the new and young businessmen are suffering in rural part of England. This is happened in England during 19th century. The small businessman is crushed by the society.

The discussion proves that the capitalism worked through characters in the novel. The major as well as minor characters directly or indirectly deal with business, money, entrepreneurship and works. They are suffering due to the impact of capitalism. The characters for example Thomasin Yeobright, Mrs. Yeobright, Damon Wildeve and Eustacia, and Clym deal with money making. The minor characters such as Captain Vye, Grandfer Cantle, Christian Cantle, Susan Nunsuch, Humphrey, Timothy Fairway, Olly Dowden, Sam and Rachel help to provide capitalistic information.
The novel describes the sufferings due to capitalistic aspects inserted in the society. The new businessmen are suffered due to sharp social conflict and strong advancement of capitalist system.

At the end on the novel, Clym becomes a preacher that signifies the capitalist victory over humanism. The novel is full of capitalistic description. The dialogues, scenes and character expose vividly. Barney Frank says that “Capitalism works better from every perspective when the economic decision makers are forced to share power with those who will be affected by those decisions.”

4.3 Conclusion

The study examines the description of agrarian society and industrial encroachment in the rural part of England. The novel interprets capitalism with the business of diamond and the rural people. Clym seems an anti-capitalist while Mrs. Yeobright and the rural people stand for capitalist. Clym started teaching but become unsuccessful. He lost money and started working on the field. Furze cutting scene stands for the loss of money and working class people. This happened due to the anti-capitalist approach of Clym.

The study exposes the close connection between capitalism and humiliation and described with various examples. This occurred due to the advancement of capitalism and industrialism. In the novel, all the characters such as Thomasin Yeobright, Mrs. Yeobright, Damon Wildeve and Eustacia, and Clym are suffering from money, business, and deal with money making. The minor characters such as Captain Vye, Grandfer Cantle, Christian Cantle, Susan Nunsuch, Humphrey, Timothy Fairway, Olly Dowden, Sam and Rachel help to project capitalistic. The new businessmen who are working in the society are suffered due to the sharp social conflict between them.

To conclude, the study explores that capitalism is severely exist in the rural part of England. At the end of the novel, Clym becomes a preacher that shows the win of capitalist society over anti-capitalist. The study reveals that the possible growth of industrialism and economics need capitalism. If it would be well balanced then developments are at the hand.
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