



† *Designated as an Exemplary Final Project for 2014-15*

**An Education of Feelings: Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the
d'Urbervilles*, and the Art of Fiction**

Bing Zhu

Faculty Advisor: Toril Moi

Program in Literature

April 2015

This project was submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Graduate Liberal Studies in the Graduate School of Duke University.

Copyright by

Bing Zhu

2015

Abstract

In my thesis I set out to discover and interpret Thomas Hardy's views on the art of fiction. I focus specifically on three literary essays written by Hardy during the late 1880s and the early 1890s and corroborate my conceptual analysis of these essays by researching their historical context, which further illuminates my understanding of the essays' significance. The historical context includes the widespread censorship of fiction from vigilant Victorian publishers and circulating libraries, and the fashionable discussion of French realist novels. Finally I use *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* to demonstrate how the novel embodies Hardy's artistic vision. I hope such discussion of the novel will enhance the reader's appreciation of it according to Hardy's understanding of the benefits of fiction reading. I show that the fastidious Victorian preoccupation with morality and propriety blinded the critics to Hardy's ability of rendering with force and sincerity human emotional delights and sufferings. Unlike the French realist authors, who were devoted to the objective explanation of human behavior, Hardy believed that the unique persuasive power of fiction resides in its appeal to the reader's intuitive conviction. However, there is a fundamental difference between sentimental novels and Hardy's conception of great fiction. The latter's claim of superiority lies in the author's sincere and personal engagement with the concrete and tangible details of real life.

Table of Contents

Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements	v
Introduction	1
Chapter One: Compromise and Candor in English Fiction	9
<i>Tess</i> 's Difficult Publication and Dismemberment.....	10
From Architecture to Fiction Writing.....	13
Writing with Constraints	17
Chapter Two: Realism and the Science of Fiction	20
Contending Voices in <i>Tess</i> 's Critical Reception	20
The Invasion of French Realism in Britain	25
The Battle over French Realism in the British Literary World	27
Hardy's Critical View of the Concept of Realism in Literature.....	30
Chapter Three: Sympathy and the Profitable Reading of Fiction	37
Reading Fiction as a Way to Dream and Imagine	37
Reading Fiction as a Way to Acquire Practical and Intellectual Instruction.....	41
Reading Fiction as a Humanizing Education	44
Chapter Four: Artificiality and the Art of Fiction	52
The Sense of Reality in Telling Details.....	52
The Sense of Reality in the Complex Characterization.....	55
The Sense of Reality in the Depth of Consciousness	57
The Sense of Art in the Novelistic Form	60
Conclusion	63
Works Cited	65

Acknowledgements

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Duke Graduate Liberal Studies, which has made my two-year study not only an enlargement of intellectual capacity but also a broadening of perspective on the art of living.

I wish to thank specifically Dr. Donna Zapf, Director of Graduate Liberal Studies at Duke University, who, at the very beginning of my final project, was extremely generous with her time in hearing my still embryonic ideas and provided me with sound advice that got me on track of this exciting endeavor.

I wish also to give my sincere thanks to Dr. Kent Wicker, Assistant Director of Graduate Liberal Studies at Duke University. Dr. Wicker's initiation course "The Self in the World" brought me into the spirit of liberal studies. The supportive and sharing camaraderie of his Final Project Seminars gave invaluable solace to this often lonely journey.

Above all, I am grateful for the guidance of my supervisor, Dr. Toril Moi, James B. Duke Professor of Literature and Romance Studies, and Professor of English, Philosophy, and Theatre Studies at Duke University. I have benefited from her loving attention to my difficulties during researching and writing my thesis, from her constructive criticism of my work, and from her admirable intellectual vigor. She couldn't be a better supervisor.

Introduction

When *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*¹ was published in book form in 1891, the British literary world broke into a spasm of excitement. Almost immediately, intellectuals and critics aligned themselves into opposing camps of extolment and excoriation. At around the time of the conception, composition, and publication of *Tess*, Hardy also wrote three essays on literary matters—"The Profitable Reading of Fiction" (1888), "Candor in English Fiction" (1890), and "The Science of Fiction" (1891).² Of the three essays, the first was initially published in the New York magazine *Forum*, while the other two were contributions to the *New Review*'s literary symposiums. The first goal of my thesis is to demonstrate that these three essays provide the clues to the understanding of the controversy over *Tess* during its initial publication. I will argue that this critical controversy was in fact one concrete manifestation of the broader debate about the proper function of fiction that had been going on in Britain since some time in the 1880s.³ Should fiction portray the unflattering aspects of human life such as adultery, prostitution, fraud, theft, murder, or social injustice? When these conditions did feature in a fictional work, was it the novelist's responsibility to provide an explicit uplifting moral lesson rather than adopt a pessimistic—though probably more truthful—attitude to his subject-matter?

The second goal of my thesis is to examine Hardy's stance in the debate and to analyze comprehensively his views on the possible benefits of fiction reading and the fundamental qualities of a great novel. The connection between writing a good novel on

¹ Hereafter referred to as *Tess* for easy citation.

² Hereafter referred to as "PRF," "CEF," and "SF" respectively for easy citation.

³ For a comprehensive examination of this periodicity, see the "Introduction" of Peter Keating's *The Haunted Study*, pp.1–5.

the novelist's part and deriving good from the novel on the reader's part might seem intuitively apparent, but the fact that a novel such as *Tess* could simultaneously be exalted as the harbinger of a new epoch of British fiction and castigated as a sign of social degeneration reminds us that the reader needs to establish a stronger sympathetic bond of understanding with the novelist. Hardy believes that the truly "appreciative" and "perspicacious" reader will always try to "see what his author is aiming at, and by affording full scope to his own insight, catch the vision which the writer has in his eye, and is endeavoring to project upon the paper" ("PRF" 116–7). That is to say the reader should judge the novelist on the latter's own terms. This is why I find it particularly instructive to study how Hardy frames his own artistic vision as a novelist.

Finally, the third goal of my thesis is to catch Hardy's vision at work in the reading of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, to see in the novel the concretization of the thoughts in the three essays. Here, I find it necessary to justify my choice of texts. The Hardy who published *Tess* at this time was already an established and much celebrated literary personality, whose professional writing career had lasted for more than two decades. It is reasonable to say that the critical views conveyed through these theoretical writings represented Hardy's mature judgment and considerations. Therefore, my reading of the novel may be informed by a consideration of these essays. Moreover, the fact that the publication of these three articles coincided temporally with the creation of *Tess* makes it particularly likely that Hardy's opinions embodied in these essays might have been influenced by his experiences of writing and publishing the novel. Eventually, the successful fulfillment of my three goals will convey to the reader that Hardy believed that fiction perform many functions. It can indulge our fascination with wonder and the

uncommon, thus striving first of all to tell a good story; it can inform and instruct us in various practical ways as we go about living; but what gives a novel a claim of lasting significance is its ability to teach us how to feel so that we can establish a more sympathetic bond with our fellow human beings.

In the first chapter of my thesis, I look at Hardy's experience with the general condition of the British literary market in the later part of the nineteenth century. I will focus specifically on the difficulties Hardy encountered during the publishing of his works and the compromises he had to make throughout his writing career so that the reader may gauge the conflict between Hardy's aspiration as an artist and the literary reality. In this chapter I draw upon the two-volume biography of Hardy—*The Early Life of Thomas Hardy, 1840–1891*, and *The Later Years of Thomas Hardy, 1892–1928*.⁴ This biography was published shortly after Hardy's death, ostensibly under the authorship of his second wife Florence Emily Hardy; although it is now believed to be largely written by Hardy himself.⁵ I have also consulted some major textual studies about Hardy's novels, including Richard Little Purdy's *Thomas Hardy: A Bibliographical Study* (1954), Simon Gatrell's *Hardy the Creator: A Textual Biography* (1988), and Tim Dolin's brief "A History of the Text" (1998). I will use evidence from these studies, together with Hardy's claims in "Candor in English Fiction" to demonstrate the extent of restriction under which novelists in late-Victorian Britain carried out their creative work. Their constraints included financial concerns, the taste and expectations of the reading public,

⁴ Hereafter referred to as *EL* and *LY* respectively for easy citation.

⁵ Hardy's own participation in the composition of his biography is pointed out by Richard Little Purdy in his *Thomas Hardy: A Bibliographical Study*, pp. 262–73. The original two-volume biography was edited by Michael Millgate and issued as *The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy by Thomas Hardy* (1985) to reconstruct the text as Hardy himself wrote it without F. E. Hardy's editing. As the difference between the two texts does not bear on the points I will make in this thesis, I have stuck to the original version of the biography.

the limitations of the media of publication, and the censorship from publishers and circulating libraries. Ultimately, the first chapter will provide the social context for situating the criticism of *Tess* and for situating the critical debate at large.

In the second chapter, I will focus on the criticism of *Tess*. A rich anthology of *Tess*'s contemporary criticism can be obtained from works such as *Thomas Hardy: The Critical Heritage* (1970) edited by R. G. Cox, *Thomas Hardy and His Readers: A Selection of Contemporary Reviews* (1968) edited by Laurence Lerner and John Holmstrom, T. R. Wright's *Hardy and His Readers* (2003), and H. E. Gerber and W. E. Davis's *Thomas Hardy: An Annotated Bibliography of Writings about Him* (1973). I will show that the critical reception of *Tess* revolved around the central issue of *Tess*'s affiliation with the French realist novels, which had started to be introduced to the British literary market with increasing speed. In discussing French realism, Hardy pointed out that the British literary critics tended to identify "realism" with "copyism" and "pruriency" and argued that objective explanations of human behavior should not be the main concern of great novelists.

The third chapter engages directly with the mental benefits of fiction reading as Hardy saw it. Here I will connect the essential qualities that allow the novelist to perceive an aspect of truth about human life and how they afford the reader a humanizing education. In this chapter, I will not only draw upon Hardy's own writings but also enlist similar views from other highly established novelists writing around Hardy's time. Ultimately, I hope that this chapter will forcefully establish that according to Hardy the proper function of fiction is to awaken the reader's sense of the richness and beauty of human emotional life. Fiction reading is a process of not only discovering and knowing

oneself but also discovering and knowing other people. It helps to break down the barriers between individual lives by emphasizing their commonalities. And what distinguishes great novels from sensational and sentimental novels is the former's ability to portray life with sincerity.

Pursuing the issue of the novelist's literary sincerity first broached in the previous chapter, the last chapter traces the novelistic techniques employed by Hardy in *Tess* that helps to create the strong sense of authenticity in the novel. These artistic techniques include the attention to telling details, the complexity of characterization, and the depth and intimacy of psychological portrayal. Moreover, I also touch upon the aesthetics of novelistic form and shape, which, in Hardy's view, provides a different kind of pleasure to well-trained minds. I will show that Hardy was interested in two distinct forms of artistic concerns in fiction: the novelist's sympathetic appreciation of the drama of humanity and his sensitivity to the novel's formal rhythm and balance. I will demonstrate that Hardy had no qualms about giving priority to the former.

During my research I consulted a number of earlier studies. The earliest systematic study of Hardy's practices of the art of fiction, as far as I can find, is Joseph Warren Beach's excellent 1922 monograph *The Technique of Thomas Hardy*. By "techniques" Beach means "the structural art of the novel: the method of assembling and ordering these elements of subject matter, social criticism, and the like" (v-vi). However, Beach's formalist approach is compromised by his concession that "questions of technique are so intimately bound up with questions of philosophy and subject matter that they cannot be considered altogether in isolation" (vii). Therefore, we see in Beach's work analysis of not only technical concepts such as "relapse," "movie," and

“chronicles,” but also topics such as “setting,” “ingenuity,” “irony,” and “drama,” which are highly contingent on the specific nature of the novels’ content. Eventually, the last two chapters of Beach’s book deal exclusively with philosophical discussion of pity and truth, thus demonstrating that the hallmark of greatness of Hardy’s works is essentially his insight into the human heart. However, Beach’s work gives little attention to Hardy’s three essays, thus neglecting what Hardy had to say about his own art.

A comparable work to Beach’s both in subject and in scale is Penelope Vigar’s 1974 book *The Novels of Thomas Hardy: Illusion and Reality*, in which Vigar focuses on one aspect of Hardy’s novelistic techniques, namely, how Hardy utilizes visual and pictorial representation to strengthen the emotional significance of his novels. For example, in her examination of *The Woodlanders*, Vigar focuses on the “light and shade, brightness and dimness, night and day, and all the shades of mistiness and partial light in between” to demonstrate the ways in which these elements “give dramatic substance to an essentially simple story” (26). J. B. Bullen’s *The Expressive Eye: Fiction and Perception in the work of Thomas Hardy* (1986) and David James’s “Hearing Hardy: Soundscapes and the Profitable Reader” (2010) are quite similar to Vigar’s work. The former looks at how Hardy borrows from the visual arts methods of depiction, and the latter shifts the focus of analysis from pictorialism to the novels’ appeal to the sense of hearing. These works have informed my analysis of Hardy’s artistic techniques; though mine is less a formalist interest than a concern to demonstrate how these techniques contribute to the novel’s overall sense of authenticity.

Other scholarly works that I have found especially illuminating at various points of my research include “Hardy and the Naturalists: Their Use of Physiology” (1951) and

“Hardy’s View of Realism: A Key to the Rustic Characters” (1958). Both articles provide insightful understanding of the relationship between Hardy’s works and the novels of French Realists. Works such as Harold Orel’s “Hardy’s Valedictory: Final Thoughts of a Master Craftsman” (1980), Matthew Potolsky’s “Hardy, Shaftesbury, and Aesthetic Education” (2006), and Galia Benziman’s “Thrust Beneath the Carpet: Hardy and the Failure of Writing” (2013) focus on Hardy’s difficult relationship with his Victorian readers in order to point out Hardy’s awareness of the failure of communication and the complexity of interpersonal relationship. These studies provide me with further information about the historical context of *Tess*’s controversy, and they indirectly reflect the concerns of Hardy’s thinking about the function of fiction.

Lastly, my interests find the strongest affinities with Laurence Jones’s two articles “Thomas Hardy’s Idiosyncratic Mode of Regard” and “Imitation and Expression in Thomas Hardy’s Theory of Fiction”, both published 1975. The two articles are interested in aspects of Hardy’s works that establish their unique literary personality and distinguish them from the works of Hardy’s contemporary writers. Jones acknowledges, as I do, the essential role played by the novelist’s sympathetic emotional involvement in the process of the novelist’s creative work. However, Jones does not elaborate on how the novelist’s sympathetic understanding contributes to the emotional appeal of the novel; instead, he goes on to create a rather gratuitous dichotomy between the subjective and the objective elements of Hardy’s works and continues to work out a reconciliation of the two. Though both Vigar and Jones have considered Hardy’s three essays in their works, their discussions of the significance of these essays are limited by the specific concerns of their individual works, which I have pointed out. Ultimately, by incorporating the studies from

textual scholarship, research of historical context, and close conceptual analysis, my thesis aims to provide a balanced and informative perspective, through which readers shall see that the conservative Victorian attitudes to fiction conflicted with Hardy's artistic vision and hampered his expression. Though often misunderstood and grouped with the French realist authors by his contemporary critics, Hardy saw his novels as essentially providing his readers with an education of feelings.

Chapter One: Compromise and Candor in English Fiction

“Even imagination is the slave of stolid circumstance; and the unending flow of inventiveness which finds expression in the literature of Fiction is no exception to the general law,” so Hardy bemoans in “Candor in English Fiction” (125). This chapter explores this “stolid circumstance” that conflicted with Hardy’s artistic imagination and restricted its expression. It serves to provide the historical context to the controversy over the publication of *Tess*. The narrow outlook and conservative attitude to fiction in the Victorian period shown in this chapter will contrast sharply with the later discussion about Hardy’s own view on the function of fiction.

Tess of the d’Urbervilles was first published in volume form, as a standard three-decker novel, in Britain in November 1891. Its publication brought Hardy unprecedented attention from both the general public and the professional critical and literary circles. Hardy’s contemporary novelist Mrs. Humphry Ward, the niece of the famed cultural critic Matthew Arnold, recalls in her *A Writer’s Recollections* that “*Tess* marked the conversion of the larger public, who then began to read all the earlier books, in that curiously changed mood which sets in when a writer is no longer on trial, but has, so to speak, ‘made good’” (262). Mrs. Ward’s recollection, however, might need considerable qualification. In a purely commercial sense, *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* was a huge success. The first edition, published by the newly established publishing company Osgood, McIlvaine and Co., was issued in the usual 1000 copies. By the end of March 1892; three additional impressions, each comprising 500 copies, had been released. September of the same year witnessed the publication of the one-volume “Fifth Edition,” whose sales pitched 17,000 copies in total through five impressions at the end of the year (Purdy 73–

7). In contrast, Hardy's first published novel, *Desperate Remedies*, issued in 500 copies in the same three-volume form and at the same standard price of a guinea and a half, was already sold in reduced price three months later after its publication in March 1871 (Purdy 5). Even the highly acclaimed *Far from the Madding Crowd*, believed by some critics upon its anonymous publication to be written by George Eliot herself, could only boast of a further impression of 500 copies in addition to its initial 1000 copies (Wright 19). However, behind the triumphant selling feat was a publication whose process was as tortuous as its reception was controversial.

Tess's Difficult Publication and Dismemberment

Before the novel's publication in volume form, *Tess* was serialized in a British weekly illustrated newspaper *The Graphic*, albeit with much modification and truncation. Most noticeably, in the serialization, a bogus-marriage devised by Alec between Tess and himself before a fake registrar replaced the dubious rape-seduction scene in the Chase (Gatrell 95). Also removed from the original story was the entire chapter that relates the birth, baptism, and death of Tess's illegitimate child Sorrow (Dolin liv). Among the various revisions and modifications of the manuscript of *Tess*, *The Early Life* records a particularly representative one made upon the demand of *The Graphic*'s editor. The editor's objection had been about a scene in the story when Angel Clare carries Tess and another three dairymaids across a flooded country lane, one by one in his arms. Instead, he suggested that "it would be more decorous and suitable for the pages of a periodical intended for family reading if the damsels were wheeled across the lane in a wheelbarrow" (F. E. Hardy 315). The change was accordingly made.

In fact, before settling with *The Graphic* about the serial publication of *Tess*, Hardy had approached and in turn been rejected by three periodical publishers, who unanimously objected to the “inappropriate” scenes in the original manuscript. Based on Hardy’s correspondence, we know that the conception of the novel had started by February 1889 (Dolin lxvi), and on September the 9th of the same year, Hardy sent a portion of the manuscript to the publisher Tillotson and Son, with whom Hardy had entered a contract for a serial story as early as March 1887. Upon reading the story, the editors at Tillotson’s “were distinctly taken aback” and immediately asked that “the story should be recast and certain scenes and incidents deleted entirely” (Purdy 72). However, Hardy refused to accept Tillotson’s suggestions, and the contract was dissolved. Then in October, What was written of the novel was dispatched to the editor of *Murray’s Magazine*, who declined and returned it in the middle of November. Soon after, Hardy sent the manuscript on to the editor of *Macmillan’s Magazine* and received on the 25th of November a long letter that explained the editor’s reply that “it would be unwise for me to publish it in my magazine” (qtd. in Dolin xlix).

A close look at the replies of rejection from the editors of the two magazines reveals the concerns and assumptions they had foremost in their mind that rendered them particular cautious as to what materials they put in their magazines. The editor of *Murray’s Magazine* Edward Arnold made no pretense to deny the credible social reality represented in the novel, admitting that “these tragedies are being played out everyday in our midst”; nevertheless he believed that “the less publicity they have the better” (qtd. in Wright 173). Therefore, due to the “frequent and detailed reference to immoral situations,” the novel was not suitable for his magazine (qtd. in Dolin xlvi). The same

“immoral situations” also occasioned the disapproval of *Macmillan*’s editor Mowbray Morris, who found Tess’s rape-seduction obnoxious, and objected to Angel Clare’s inability to go beyond a “purely sensuous admiration for [Tess’s] person.” As far as he could see the explicitness of Tess’s capacity for stirring and gratifying these earthly feelings was “pressed rather more frequently and elaborately than strikes me as altogether convenient, at any rate for my magazine” (qtd. in Dolin xlviiii-xlix). Here we see clearly a narrow moralistic evaluation of fiction at work, which suppressed what society regarded as undesirable and required an explicit and morally uplifting message from fiction.

Editorial intervention of this sort was a common practice during most of Hardy’s writing career. Besides the aforementioned editors, who were adamant in their view on what counted as proper family reading, Hardy had ample occasions to be frustrated by serial editors’ conscientious devotion to the delicate minds of their young clientele. C. J. Longman, editor of *Longman’s Magazine*, rejected Hardy’s short story “the Withered Arm” due to its unrelieved poignancy from beginning to end, reminding him that the “majority of magazine readers are girls.” (qtd. in Wright 15) In order to publish *A Group of Noble Dames*, a collection of stories, as serials in *The Graphic*, Hardy had to make such revisions as to make some of the stories unintelligible. These regretful steps were taken because the editors of the periodicals believed that “the more delicate imaginations of young girls” should not be scraped by some of the novel’s subject matters, “over which conventionality is accustomed (wisely or unwisely) to draw a veil” (qtd. in Wright 175).

Given the rigid regulation of magazine publishing and Hardy’s increasing irritation at having to mutilate and bowdlerize his works, we might indeed wonder why

Hardy had not altogether given up magazine serialization and focused only on the volume publication since in the volume form, as we are told, Hardy was finally able to “piece the trunk and limbs of the novel together, and print it complete, as originally written” (T. Hardy, “Explanatory Note” 3). In fact, *The Early Life* tells us that the sheer drudgery of modifying *Tess* made Hardy resolve to “get away from the supply of family fiction to magazines as soon as he conveniently could do so.” At the moment, however, “there were reasons why he could not afford to do this” (F. E. Hardy 291). We are not informed of what those reasons were, but given the conditions of the literary market at the time, it is not unreasonable to suggest that Hardy’s mind was very much harried by financial concerns.

From Architecture to Fiction Writing

The first two published novels of Hardy’s—*Desperate Remedies* and *Under the Greenwood Tree*—were all issued directly in volume-form at the time when he was working in London as an assistant-architect. However, the first novel that Hardy had ever written was never published, one that was entitled *The Poor Man and the Lady*. It was composed in 1867 when he returned from London to Dorchester after a five-year architectural occupation in the metropolis. What compelled him to leave his relatively settled professional life in London was his deteriorating health. As early as May 1862 Hardy had moved to London and started working for a London architect, Arthur Blomfield, as a Gothic draughtsman, mainly responsible for restoring and designing churches and rectory-houses. Yet once settled down with Blomfield, Hardy started to feel that architectural drawing, which involved no actual design and originality, was

“monotonous and mechanical” (F. E. Hardy, *EL* 61). Professing more than once to have no inclination towards “the business of social advancement, caring for life as an emotion rather than life as a science of climbing” (F. E. Hardy, *EL* 70), Hardy found himself early on in his career as an architect naturally drawn to literary pursuits, which he had been compelled to abandon in 1861 shortly before coming to London. Thus starting at the end of 1863, Hardy recommenced his reading and self-education, “with a growing tendency towards poetry” (F. E. Hardy, *EL* 61). Hardy’s self-exertion was carried to such an extent that every evening from six to twelve, he would shut himself up in his London lodging rooms, “reading incessantly” despite having already been confined indoors during a day’s work (F. E. Hardy, *EL* 70). This, compounded with the deleterious air of the city and Hardy’s own delicate physical constitution, led to the end of the first phase of his London life.

Life back in the country soon invigorated Hardy both physically and mentally, and the critical issue at hand became clearly a choice between literature, which Hardy called “his natural instinct,” and architecture, which “all practical wisdom dictates” (F. E. Hardy, *EL* 79). Before this time, Hardy had tried his hand at poetry and even made the effort of sending some of his poems to magazines; though, none was accepted. The discouraging response of the magazine editors might have induced in Hardy a sense of self-doubt about the merit of his verse, but more significantly it made Hardy realize most acutely the ascent of the appeal of fiction as a literary form over that of poetry. The reality of such realization was further confirmed and consolidated by Hardy’s later experiences as a literary personality. In 1888 when asked by the editor of the New York magazine *Forum* to elaborate on the mental profits of reading fiction, Hardy applauded

the timeliness of such consideration, pointing to the fact that “in these days the demand for novels has risen so high, in proportion to that for other kind of literature, as to attract the attention of all persons interested in education” (“PRF” 110). On another occasion, Hardy remarked, half-mockingly, that if the dramatic masterpieces of the old ages had had to be published then, they would have had to assume the novelistic form, “which, experts tell us, they would have taken in modern conditions” (“CEF” 130).

The domination of the novel over other forms of literature in the literary scene was noticed by writers and critics early on during the Victorian age. In 1849, the *Perspective Review* noted prophetically that “the novel is now what the drama was in the reign of Elizabeth and James I” (qtd. in Tillotson 37). The same perspicacious journal was quick to add one year later that the novel was “the vital offspring of modern wants and tendencies” (Tillotson 495). Two decades later, the saturation of fiction throughout the ordinary Victorian life was noted by Trollope, who famously declared that “we have become a novel-reading people, from the Prime Minister down to the last-appointed scullery maid... all our other reading put together hardly amounts to what we read in novels” (Trollope 108). Edmund Gosse, further convinced by the amplitude of evidence in 1892, called the Victorian age “peculiarly the age of the triumph of fiction” (qtd. in White 91). Thus, given the practicality of taking up prose-writing as the means to make a living in the literary trade, we find Hardy at the early days of his return to Dorchester asking himself “definitely how to achieve some tangible result from his desultory yet strenuous labors at literature during the previous four years” (F. E. Hardy, *EL* 74). The “tangible result” was to be achieved “under the stress of necessity” (F. E. Hardy, *EL* 75), which means that Hardy needed to concentrate on fiction, a literary form he had never

taken much interest in. Indeed, Hardy was so indifferent to the conventions and practices of fiction writing and so keen on indulging his poetic urges that he initially subtitled the novel *The Poor Man and the Lady* as “A Story with No Plot—Containing Some Original Verses” (F. E. Hardy, *EL* 75).

The novel, however, was never published, despite that Hardy had abridged the unwieldy original full title to simply *The Poor Man and the Lady: by the Poor Man*. Hardy, nevertheless, did gain sufficient encouragement and good counsel from the two publishers to whom he had sent the manuscript, and he soon started writing another novel—*Desperate Remedies*. At some point around April 1870, the manuscript of the novel was sent to the publisher Tinsley Brothers, who agreed to publish the novel only on condition that an advance of £75 be paid by Hardy himself as a guarantee of loss. The amount, the young and aspiring Hardy accordingly paid, having at the time a total of £123 as his entire savings. Partly due to the harsh reviews of some periodicals that found fault with the novel on moral grounds, *Desperate Remedies* did not sell well. A year after its publication, Hardy received from Tinsley a check for £60 as all that was due to him after the publishing costs and receipts were balanced. So, in the end, Hardy’s first literary venture landed him in a loss of altogether £15.

In the meantime, Hardy went back to London and became engaged to help a well-known London architect with designing schools for the London School Board. The demand for building more schools was created indirectly by the 1867 Reform Act, which inspired a series of Education Acts that greatly emphasized the importance of educating the newly franchised mass public. Suddenly Hardy found his architectural career promising a brighter future than ever. With the Tinsley balance sheet much in his mind as

a contrast to the success of his architectural work, Hardy had decided to give up writing altogether¹ before meeting by accident the publisher Tinsley himself, who asked if Hardy had been working on some other work and requested to be shown the manuscript. The chance encounter led to Hardy handing in a story completed shortly after *Desperate Remedies*, which he had thrown in an old box together with his earlier poems as if intending to bury both literally and symbolically his literary ambitions. This story, *Under the Greenwood Tree* was bought by Tinsley, copyright and all, for only £30, with an extra £10 paid to Hardy some time later as half the amount obtained from Tauchnitz for the continental copyright.

Writing with Constraints

Under the Greenwood Tree was kindly received, and the good notices won by the novel prompted Tinsley to offer Hardy an opportunity to write a twelve-month serial story for his *Tinsley's Magazine*. It was then that Hardy started to seriously consider making a living entirely by his pen, having realized that a twelve-month serial could be done in six-months and that Tinsley was willing to pay him double the amount he was likely to make in architecture in the same span of time. Since then, each of Hardy's later novels was published first in serialization before being issued in volume form. This was undoubtedly a strategic move for any novice writer who wished to become established in the literary circle. This was so not only because serial publishing helped the author to reach a larger audience but also because it brought the author enough financial security, which would allow him more artistic freedom when it came to publishing his works in

¹ *The Early Life* records a chance meeting between Hardy and his friend Horace Moule, a Cambridge Scholar, at around this time, during which Hardy declared to the latter that he had "thrown up authorship at last and for all" (115).

volume form. For innovative and adventurous novelists such as Hardy, the regularity of income from the magazine publishing greatly compensated the risks and injustices suffered from the banishing of their books from circulation in libraries, a fate suffered by Hardy's last novel *Jude the Obscure*.²

Yet Hardy fully realized the different natures between a serial story and an organic and integrated work of fiction. Writing to the *Cornhill* editor Leslie Stephen, who had asked him to write a serial for the *Cornhill* magazine shortly after Tinsley's offer of serialization, Hardy acknowledged the extent of compromise he was willing to make for more practical ends: "The truth is that I am willing, and indeed anxious, to give up any points which may be desirable in a story when as a whole, for the sake of others which shall please those who read it in numbers. Perhaps I may have higher aims some day, and be a great stickler for the proper artistic balance of the completed work, but for the present circumstances lead me to wish merely to be considered a good hand at a serial" (F. E. Hardy, *EL* 131) Among the various specific requirements pertaining to serial writing, one was the ability to sustain the interest of each installment by incorporating "some striking incident" (Hedgcock 224), thus destroying what Henry James calls the "living" "organic" fictional form ("The Art of Fiction" 58).

The idea of pandering to the taste of mass market and surrendering true artistic instincts was offensive enough to some more fastidious writers such as George Gissing, Henry James and James Joyce that they either dismissed the significance of the serialized form of their fictions or actively sought out ways to turn the limitations of serialization to

² According to the *Later Years*, *Jude the Obscure* so offended the Bishop of Wakefield that he persuaded a MP to instigate a motion for banishing the novel for Library circulation, with the result of "the quiet withdrawal of the book from the library, and an assurance that any other books by the same author would be carefully examined before they were allowed to be circulated" (48).

their own artistic advantage. Coustillas and Partridge, for example, point out that Gissing held the opinion that “serial publication, whether complete or not, had no great weight with serious readers, who invariably judged a novel from its edition in book form” (7). Referring to the constraints of serial publication, Henry James claims in the “Preface” of *The Ambassadors* that the initial serialization of the novel had forced him to make up his mind “regularly to exploit and enjoy these often rather rude jolts—having found, as I believed an admirable way to it” (12). For James Joyce, according to Patrick Parrinder, there is a distinct stylistic break between the early serialized *Ulysses* and the later volume form (164). But for Hardy, as was indeed for a lot of his contemporary novelists, the compromise in style would have seemed rather a mild mishap compared with the egregious restriction on content. Even though nobody, according to *The Early Life*, ever complained of impropriety within the modified and mutilated serial form of *Tess*, except “one gentleman with a family of daughters,” who took exception to the scene in which a blood stain permeates and spreads across the ceiling (291), the novel in its complete and restored book form suffered from various kinds of censorious pressure, exciting an eruption of contending critical receptions. An analysis of this criticism provides a uniquely effective angle from which we shall be able to perceive Hardy’s vision of the art of fiction.

Chapter Two: Realism and the Science of Fiction

In this chapter, I engage directly with the contemporary critical reception of *Tess*. At first glance, these criticisms strike one as a cacophony of confusion, all revolved around the rather ambiguous concept of truthfulness. I will sort out this tangle and focus specifically on the strand of criticism that connects *Tess* with French realism. I then analyze French realist-naturalist authors'—specifically Zola's and Flaubert's—scientific spirit and their emphasis on objective delineation. I show that though Hardy admired the innovative spirit of these authors, and he himself sometimes employed the typical naturalist themes such as the determining forces of heredity and environment in a character's life, Hardy nevertheless believed that realism in the sense of striving for perfect verisimilitude to reality should not be the primary concern of the great novel.

Contending Voices in the Critical Reception of *Tess*

Shortly after its publication in volume form, *Tess* was greeted by some reviewers with unstinted enthusiasm for the novel's truthful depiction of life. A reviewer of *Pall Mall Gazette* (31 December 1891), who claims that the novel is truly “the Women's Tragedy” (Cox 182), believes that Hardy's ability to interpret a woman's feelings in a most intimate and profound way can only be fully appreciated by his female readers. All the women portrayed in the novel are confidently judged to be “true to nature,” especially Tess, “whose verisimilitude in art and in human quality is maintained throughout with a subtlety and a warm and live and breathing naturalness which one feels to be the work of a tale-teller born and not made” (Cox 182). The *Pall Mall Gazette* reviewer's evaluation was readily confirmed by the reaction of some of Hardy's female readers. Among the

many letters from the readers received by Hardy, one was from a girl in the Hague, who opened up to Hardy about her own troubled life, acknowledging to Hardy that “you understand a woman” (qtd. in Wright 10). Another girl from New York City similarly admitted: “some of my experiences of life have been not unlike hers” (qtd. in Wright 10). And it was not just the truthfulness of the characterization of women that was lauded by some critics. *The Speaker* (26 December 1891) commends Hardy’s skills in painting the entire class of plain country folk “with the minuteness, the loving care, the sympathy, the instinctive rightness which characterizes genius” (Lerner and Holmstrom 59). To further elaborate on its claim, the review points to Hardy’s description of the joys and sorrows of the peasants as what makes his characters alive. The enthusiastic reviewer of *Westminster Review* (December 1892) is so impressed by Hardy’s portraiture of life as to call *Tess* “a monumental work” that “marks a distinct epoch in English fiction,” asserting that the novel from beginning to end “bears the hall-mark of Truth on every page of it” (Cox 247).

To portray life with an eye to being true to it was exactly how Hardy himself perceived his own work. In the last chapter of the version of *Tess* that was serialized in the Australian periodical *Sydney Mail*, we see a self-conscious authorial comment, which insists that “the humble delineator of human character and human contingencies... must primarily and above all things be sincere” (qtd. in Wright 171). Though the line was omitted in the *Graphic* serialization and the later book editions, Hardy was clearly firm in this belief, and made an effort to reinstate the belief by titling his novel “A Pure Woman *Faithfully Presented*” (italics my emphasis). In addition, Hardy specifically asserted in the *Explanatory Note* of the 1891 first book edition: “I will just add that the

story is sent out in all sincerity of purpose, as representing on the whole a true sequence of things” (3). And despite the criticism of *Tess*, Hardy stood to his ground. In an interview in August 1892, the interviewer again brought up the question of Hardy’s truthfulness to human nature. Confirming that he had indeed adhered to human nature, Hardy insisted: “I draw no inferences, I didn’t even feel them. I only try to give an artistic shape to standing facts” (Lerner and Holmstrom 96).

The novel itself is indeed made realistically vivid by the rich and credible depictions of country life and by the intimate psychological treatment. We sense the rough humor and warm broad-heartedness of the farming class when the half-annoyed and half-amused Dairyman Crick reprimanded one of his milkers for being rather slack about personal hygiene: “For Heaven’s sake, pop thy hands under the pump, Deb! Upon my soul, if the London folk only knowed of thee and thy slovenly ways, they’d swoller their milk and butter more mincing than they do a’ready; and that’s saying a good deal” (131). Here the ironic and exaggerated tone is captured and strengthened by the mimicry of the dairyman’s original diction and accent. With equal sensibility and more refined imagination, Hardy pries open Tess’s disturbed mind, encouraging the reader’s most heartfelt sympathy:

Her affection for him was now the breath and life of Tess’s being; it enveloped her as a photosphere, irradiated her into forgetfulness of her past sorrows, keeping back the gloomy specters that would persist in their attempts to touch her—doubt, fear, moodiness, care, shame. She knew that they were waiting like wolves just outside the circumscribing light, but she had long spells of power to keep them in hungry subjection there. (195)

As the narrator’s perception bends towards Tess’s own consciousness, the sense of distance between the inquisitive observer and the emotional agent becomes an illusory

nonexistence, eventually creating the fictional reality much extolled by the aforementioned readers and critics.

However, in the critical racket stirred up by *Tess*, we hear also the no less fervid voices from Hardy's detractors. Denying any touch of nature and fidelity to either of the characters of the novel, *Saturday Review* (16 January 1892) says of them that "all are stagey, and some are farcical" (Cox 188). The *Spectator* reviewer R. H. Hutton (23 January 1892), though admiring the momentary realism when Hardy delineates the rustic life on the dairy-farm, finds the story in general hard to swallow, "because in almost every page the mind rebels against the steady assumptions of the author, and shrinks from the untrue picture of a universe so blank and godless" (Cox 194). Perhaps what upset Hardy the most were the comments from two of his contemporary men of letters. Henry James dismisses *Tess* as "chock full of faults and falsity" (*A Life in Letters* 249). And Robert Louis Stevenson, in a letter to the former, declares that the novel is "one of the worst, weakest, least sane, most voulu books I have yet read... Not alive, not true, was my continual comment as I read; and at last—not even honest!" (*Selected Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson* 520–1) Accusations of unnaturalness and falsity such as those already listed continued to appear in the public discussion about the novel since its publication. *The Fortnightly Review* (1 July 1892) draws attention to the supposed ways in which Hardy mars "the evanescent reality of Tess herself" (Lerner and Holmstrom 87). Perhaps most powerfully set down was novelist Mrs. Oliphant's thumping claim: "But whatever Mr. Hardy says we repeat we do not believe him" (Cox 213).

It seems that the crux of this conflict of opinions resides in the credibility of Hardy's realistic delineation of life and the standards of truth against which his novels

can be measured and appraised. Given what I have shown in the previous chapter, it becomes apparent here that most of the critics who accused Hardy of falsity did so simply because Hardy's choice of subject matter defied the conventional sense of propriety. The exceptions were Henry James and R. L. Stevenson, who were annoyed with Hardy for the opposite reasons. They in fact felt that Hardy had given too much respect to the conservative and hypocritical Victorian literary taste and had made *Tess* too "moral" to be true. For those who claimed that they had spotted reality in Hardy, there was also a split. I have in the previous paragraph touched lightly upon those aspects of the novel that impressed the appreciative critics with their truthful depiction. And I will in the last chapter of my thesis fully examine how Hardy managed to create the strong sense of authenticity in *Tess*. For now, I want to draw attention to the criticism of those critics who held the view that Hardy's truth belonged to a particular category of literary mimesis—Realism, and it was this capitalized "Realism" that gravely offended the critics' aesthetic sense. What is more, those critics had no problem attributing Hardy's artistic adventurousness to the influence of the French. The *Gentleman's Magazine* (September 1892), for example, decides that *Tess* is "not a great novel" due to the undesirable lapses into "French Realism" (Gerber and Davis 58). The *Star* reviewer (23 December 1891), though giving credit to the idyllic charm of Hardy's style, also suggests that Hardy's work seems to be strongly influenced by the study of French authors: "Realism as a theory seems in danger of possessing him at times" (Cox 179). Among the culpable French authors, *Review of Reviews* (February 1892) identifies a specific one, warning that some aspects of *Tess* are "Zola-esque to a degree likely to alienate not a few well-meaning persons" (Lerner and Holmstrom 75).

The Invasion of French Realism in Britain

The confident and matter-of-fact condemnation of *Tess*'s connection with French Realism was the product of the historical moment when the British literary world and society at large were shocked by the invasion of a wave of translations of the so-called "French Realist" authors. Following the uneventful publication of the translation of Zola's *Au Bonheur des Dames* (*The Ladies' Paradise*) in 1883, the British reading public saw the debut of the English translation of *Nana* one year later, and then in the single year of 1885, the English publisher Henry Vizetelly published Zola's *Pot-Bouille* (*Piping Hot*), *La Curée* (*Rush for the Spoil*), *L'Assommoir*, *Germinal* and *Thérèse Raquin*. Then in 1886, besides five additional works of Zola's—*La Faute de L'abbé Mouret* (*Abbé Mouret's Transgression*), *La Fortune des Rougon* (*The Fortune of the Rougons*), *L'Oeuvre* (*His Masterpiece*), *Joie de Vivre* (*The Joy of Living*), and *Une Page d'Amour* (*A Love Episode*), there appeared Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and Edmund de Goncourt's *Les Frères Zemganno* (*The Zemganno Brothers*). The rapidity with which the French realist novels cropped up in the British literary market continued in the following three years, when in addition to another seven Zola's works, three works of Maupassant's, two of the Goncourts' were published (Frierson 533–5).

Along with these numerous novels came also the theoretical visions of the realist writers. Flaubert, for example, proposed a way of writing in which the novelist suppress the authorial presence in the narrative in order to create the illusion of perfect objectivity. Referring to the writing of *Madame Bovary*, Flaubert disclosed to a friend:

Now I am in an entirely different world, one where I am observing the most ordinary details with careful attention. I am gazing deep into the damp, moldy

places of the soul. ... I am writing in an entirely different method. I don't want my book to have one single emotion or one single opinion of its author. (qtd. in Mackenzie xvi)

Later, this objective narrative approach was reformulated to further reflect the author's wish for creating a fictional world of perfect authenticity: "Art being a second nature, the creator of that nature must proceed via analogous methods: let the reader sense in every detail, every element, a hidden, infinite impassibility" (quoted in Mackenzie xvi).

Later, this strong emphasis on objectivity was similarly embraced with enthusiasm by Zola, whose naturalistic tendencies in writing were theorized first in the preface to the second edition of *Thérèse Raquin* and were then enlarged in a preface to the first of the *Rougon-Macquart* novels—*The Fortune of the Rougons*. Yet Zola's most well-known and systematic theoretical treatment of the science of fiction is his 1880 essay "Le Roman Expérimental" ("The Experimental Novel"), in which he compares the task of the novelist to that of the scientist and surgeon: "we must operate with characters, passions, human and social data as the chemist and physicist work on living bodies" (172). While the chemist and the physicist are to work out the immediate causes of specific inanimate phenomena, the scientific novelist carries out experiments with the intellectual and passionate aspects of human life, with an intention to testify a hypothesis that will lead to a piece of truth about human nature. In order to achieve this goal, the novelist needs to be both observant and objective and have firm belief that "determinism dominates everything" (Zola 172). Therefore, for Zola, novel writing becomes a "scientific investigation," a process of "experimental reasoning, which combats one by one the hypothesis of the idealists, and which replaces purely imaginary novels by novels of observation and experiment" (172).

The Battle over French Realism in the British Literary World

It is fair to say that the reception of these French novels was an exaggerated and extreme version of that of *Tess*, and the accompanying theoretical proposals pertaining to the new direction of fiction writing was greeted with a mixture of admiration and ridicule. Among the proponents of the French realist writers, George Moore was the earliest and most dedicated advocate of Zola and the realist cause. In fact, it was Moore who had helped Vizetelly to settle some of the business transactions with Zola during the publication of Zola's English translations. Moore, like Hardy and many other late-Victorian novelists, was also a victim of the stringent censorship of the circulating libraries, who had in the early 1880s refused to circulate his *A Modern Lover* and *A Mummer's Wife*.¹ These two early works of Moore's share strong naturalistic characteristics with the works of Zola, and in his memoir, Moore recorded his irrepressible feeling of excitement and awe when he first encountered Zola's grand conception of the naturalist novel:

The idea of a new art based upon science, in opposition to the art of the old world that was based on imagination, an art that should explain all things and embrace modern life in its entirety, in its endless ramifications, be, as it were, a new creed in a new civilization, filled me with wonder, and I stood dumb before the vastness of the conception, and the towering height of the ambition. (*Confessions of a Young Man* 95)

Moore's zest for this new creed of fiction was encouraged by its promise of literature's explanatory power and democratic spirit. Instead of slumbering untroubled in the nursery

¹ As a reaction to the circulating libraries' censorious injustice, Moore wrote and published in 1885 a polemical pamphlet *Literature at Nurse or Circulating Morals*, in which he compared his own work *A Mummer's Wife* with three of the Circulating Libraries' popular novels to demonstrate that the latter were often of a more morally questionable nature that was often accused of him by the prudish librarians, and in which he advocated the re-establishment of the sympathetic bond between the author and his readers without the condescending interference of the circulating libraries.

of approved and harmless subject matters, the novelist need now stamp his footsteps in the seedy quarters of society and cast his eyes on the dark shadows of human heart. This is necessary, Moore explains on another occasion, because just like a physician, the novelist also reveals diseases for treatment, only the method for the latter is “to probe and comment on humanity’s frailties” (*Literature at Nurse or Circulating Morals* 20). The peasantry, the working class, and the middle class are all legitimate targets for analysis, so that the literature of the nineteenth-century would truly reflect the “characteristic of its nervous, passionate life” (*Literature at Nurse or Circulating Morals* 22).

Some critics, however, saw signs of menace in the French realist writers’ works and theory. W. S. Lilly in an article on naturalism summarizes the essence of naturalistic writing as the wish to “banish sentiment, imagination, empiric doctrines and poetic idealism, and place a new estimate on facts in forming new conclusions” (qtd. in Fierson 534). The danger of this theoretical aspiration is, according to Lilly, that “the visible when it rests not upon the invisible becomes the bestial.” It is poor understanding on Lilly’s part to believe that the objectivity embraced by Zola and Flaubert means a denial of human sentiment, when it only indicates the novelist’s abstaining, plausibly or not, from subjective interpretation of or imposition on his characters’ emotional states. The vaguely soothing and positive-sounding terms of “empiric doctrines” and “poetic idealism” really are fanciful names for “tradition” and “conventional moral values,” which are “invisible” but provide the foundations for social stability, harmony, and progress. But Lilly’s alarm becomes understandable if he truly believes that the naturalist would ultimately explain away the basis for virtue and tradition, thus degrading men to the level of animals by ridding them of what are essentially human qualities.

Even for critics who were sympathetic with the ambitions behind the realist theories and acknowledged the merit of the realist novels, the contaminating nature of these works was too glaring to be ignored. Emily Crawford in the *Fortnightly Review* (January 1889) condescendingly allows that Zola “is not necessarily a vicious man,” but blames him for his indecent taste (qtd. in Frierson 538). The social diseases revealed in the realist novels and the implicit warnings are unlikely to be heeded by the inexperienced young readers who lack judgment and self-control. For the young, the salacious and crude content of the novels is nothing but “a source of purulent contagion” (qtd. in Frierson 538). Moreover, the creed of literary naturalism is prone to be distorted and abused by imitators who discard the objective and analytical balance and indulge themselves in “reeking foulness” (qtd. in Frierson 538).

The attitudes of the above two critics represented the two prevailing strands of exception taken towards the French realist novels. Some believed that the novels’ proclaimed objectivity and scientific assurance threatened to dissolve society into a predetermined mechanism, thus denying its social members active agency in self-betterment. Others were offended by the novels’ daring subject matters, regarding them as signs of the broader social phenomenon of the decadence and degeneracy of the French society. In his denunciatory verse “Locksley Hall Sixty Years After” (1886), The British Poet Laureate Tennyson expresses similar indignation, declaring that the French novels “Feed the budding rose of boyhood with the drainage of [the realist] sewer;/ Send the drain into the fountain, lest the stream should issue pure./ Set the maiden fancies wallowing in the troughs of Zolaism,—/ Forward, forward, ay, and backward, downward too into the abysm” (100).

Thus, by the time *Tess* was published in 1891, the British critics had become particularly alert and distrustful towards any novelist's self-justification of speaking the truth. For the more conservative critics, it was almost an involuntary reflex to associate novels dealing with unconventional topics with pessimistic determinism, foul and uncouth language, and moral and physical squalor. It is therefore unsurprising that Hardy was in fact attracting suspicion when he stated in the *Explanatory Note* of the first edition of *Tess*: "I would ask any too genteel reader who cannot endure to have it said what everybody thinks and feels, to remember a well-worn sentence of St. Jerome's: If an offence come out of the truth, better is it that the offence come than that the truth be concealed" (3). And the critics, who had become well-practiced during the controversy over the French realist novels, readily pounced upon Hardy's *Tess*.

Hardy's Critical View of the Concept of Realism in Literature

However, the effort of some critics who rushed to group Hardy's *Tess* together with the French realist novels becomes questionable in the light of Hardy's unequivocal criticism of the concept of literary "realism" and particularly of Zola's theory of naturalistic fiction. In "The Science of Fiction", Hardy argues that it is Zola's "obtuseness" that has prevented him from seeing that his own novels in fact undermine his theory of naturalistic fiction expounded in "The Experimental Novel"(135). "Realism" as a nametag used to denominate a specific category of novels is an "unfortunate" and "ambiguous" word (136). It is used most of the time in a reductive way with a derogatory tone. As far as Hardy can see, the critics have included in the term

“realism” two negative concepts—“copyism” and “pruriency,” thereby obscuring the real greatness of the novel under consideration (136).

Hardy’s understanding of the usage of “realism” by the critics fits in well with the criticism of “realism” thrown at his own writing. The critic must have the literary inferiority of “copyism” in mind who finds fault with Hardy’s description of the face of the terrified Tess when she realizes that her husband sees her troubled past as beyond forgiveness: “Terror was upon her white face as she saw it; her cheek was flaccid, and her mouth had the aspect of a round little hole” (T. Hardy, *Tess* 229). The objecting critic calls this description a manifestation of the doctrine of “realism” but finds it not only inessential but also distasteful. It draws unnecessary attention to itself and purchases “a literary veracity at the expense of a higher imaginative verisimilitude” (Lerner and Holmstrom 79). This critic utterly fails to appreciate the powerful impact Hardy’s stark language is likely to have on the reader, who might be able to perceive Tess’s distraught mental state equally efficiently, if not more so, by looking directly and closely at her distorted face, as by any other means; the more pertinent point, however, is the critic’s careless application of the term “realism” to indicate in effect an unadorned “copyist” depiction. As for the other evil of the supposed realist novels—pruriency, Hardy was fortunately spared the irritation of that stigma, and ironically some of his contemporary critics even made a special effort to emphasize Hardy’s relative cleanness with words in the treatment of his subject as the saving grace that distinguished him from other realist writers. It is important to note, however, that Hardy’s abstaining from direct depiction of the worst kind of physical and moral squalor in his works did not win him the goodwill from his critics. The reviewer of *The Independent* (25 February 1892), for example,

believes the moral danger of Hardy's work is more insidious: "Mr. Hardy is no Tolstoi, picturing lechery to the last particular, no Zola reveling in filth; he is reserved and clean in the treatment of his subject. ...Still it is possible, it is probable that his method is more dangerous to the moral fiber of young readers than the open French method. The French novelist treats virtue with a sneer; Mr. Hardy offers Tess as the model of a pure woman. In Mr. Hardy's belief we have arrived at a point in civilization where it is not necessary for a girl to lose purity before she becomes the mistress of a man she does not love and does not intend to marry" (Lerner and Holmstrom 81).

The clarification of the critic's slanting application of the term "realism" does not, however, make the term a desirable and useful designation for the writings of those novelists who explicitly avow their commitment to the portrayal of reality. Hardy believes that all authors will "in a measure concede something in the qualified counsel that the novel should keep as close to reality as it can" ("SF" 135), but such concession is likely to accommodate a broad range of interpretations. Dumas père and Mrs. Radcliffe would have likely accepted the concept of realism as Zola and Flaubert did. Nietzsche suggests a similar point when he says that "realism in art is an illusion... All the writers of all the ages were convinced that they were realistic" (Heller 158). Again, in his collection of essays *Pour un Nouveau Roman* (1963), Alain Robbe-Grillet confirms the same point, using almost the exact words of Nietzsche's: "All writers believe they are realists. None ever calls himself abstract, illusionistic, chimerical, fantastic, false... It is the real world which interests them, each one attempts as best as he can to create 'the real'" (qtd. in Brown 241).

If indeed all the writers strive to capture what they believe to be a true aspect of human life, then a possible cause for a writer to be accused of falsity is when the foundations of the writer's beliefs are overthrown and the old beliefs become superseded by a set of new ones. This change might easily take place with those scientific novelists, whose analytical writings are concerned with the causes of human behavior. This was the case with Zola, who intended to explore in his novels the determining effects of heredity and environment on the fate of individual human life. Zola's gradual growing out of favor with his earlier supporters was partly due to the increasing doubt about his spurious scientific pretensions. Thus, we see in an article in *Le Figaro*, five of Zola's contemporary French novelists mock at "the ridiculousness of that so-called Natural and Social History of a Family under the Second Empire, the tenuous nature of the thread of heredity, the childishness of the famous genealogical tree, and the profound ignorance of the Master in things medical and scientific" (Baguley 61).

Zola's ambition as a theorist might have drawn upon himself much misgiving, ridicule, and sometimes outright hostility; its scientific naivety becomes apparent by the side of Darwin's statement in *The Origin of Species* (1859), which acknowledges that "the laws governing inheritance are quite unknown; no one can say why the same peculiarity in different individuals of the same species, and in individuals of different species, is sometimes inherited and sometimes not" (13). Yet Hardy finds the naturalist novelists' tendency to make story-writing a scientific process understandable in an age that was witnessing the supremacy of science over other kinds of intellectual preoccupations, and summarizes the predominant mentality of the artists of this age as such:

With our widened knowledge of the universe and its forces, and man's position therein, narrative, to be artistically convincing, must adjust itself to the new alignment, as would also artistic works in form and color, if further spectacles in their sphere could be presented. Nothing but the illusion of truth can permanently please, and when the old illusions begin to be penetrated, a more natural magic has to be supplied. ("SF" 135)

No doubt the adjustment made by the artistic works in form and color included the techniques of the Impressionist painters, who greatly interested Hardy.² And in terms of the narrative adjustment, Hardy himself incorporated, consciously or not, the theme of heredity in his work. For example, in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, while the reader is made to see Tess with "a luxuriance of aspect, a fullness of growth, which made her appear more of a woman than she really was," the narrator also quickly adds that Tess has "inherited the feature from her mother without the quality it denoted" (42). There is, moreover, "that innate love of melody," which Tess likewise "inherited from her ballad-singing mother" (84). Tess is said to be "an almost typical woman, but for the slight incautiousness of character inherited from her race" (90). In each of these cases, the concept of heredity is evoked like an afterthought, added on as a tentative explanation for the origin of Tess's physical and temperamental traits. The resultant effect is at best the creation of "the illusion of truth." Heredity here only assumes the role of a plot device in the novelist's development of an individual character to suit the scientific spirit of the age but does not occupy the novelist's main concern.

In fact, through Tess, Hardy revolts against the notion that the main purpose of the novel should be to expose the frailties of humanity and objectively explain their

² For more about Hardy's interest in and active embrace of the techniques of the impressionist painters, see Ralph Pite's *Thomas Hardy: The Guarded Life*, pp. 292–5, and Penelope Vigar's *The Novels of Thomas Hardy: Illusion and Reality*, pp. 22–33. Alastair Smart in "Pictorial Imagery in the Novels of Thomas Hardy" also analyses the ways in which Hardy's contact with Impressionism influenced his use of visual images in his works.

causes. When Angel asks Tess if she wants to take up the study of history with him, Tess refuses, explaining:

What is the use of learning that I am one of a long row only—finding out that there is set down in some old book somebody just like me, and to know that I shall only act her part; making me sad, that's all. The best is not to remember that your nature and your past doings have been just like thousands' and thousands', and that your coming life and doings'll be like thousands' and thousands'. (126)

The science of heredity, like Tess's idea of history, threatens to subject individual lives to the grand plan of predictability, as does Zola's plan of the "Natural and Social History of a Family under the Second Empire". It is despairing because it denies the immediacy and excitement of subjectivity. However, Tess's worries are assuaged by her own unique life story, in which her individuality is realized through the novelist's attention to the personal significance of the events in Tess's life.

The scientific spirit, so avidly pursued by some artists, is in the end only a "fallacy" (T. Hardy, "SF" 135). The "science" of fiction, for any novelist, is nothing less than "the cyclopaedia of life" (T. Hardy, "SF" 134). It is the "fundamental matter" of fiction (T. Hardy, "SF" 134), and it is the raw materials on which artistic performance in narrative can be executed. The dedicated apostles of realism, in their passionate pursuit of truth and equally passionate reaction against hypocrisy and falsehood, have lost sight of what distinguishes the art of fiction writing. According to Hardy, from the "sheerest naturalist" to the "withered old gossip over her fire," once the exercise of telling a tale is started, no one can escape the practice of construction and artificiality ("SF" 134). He does not make a born artist who is endowed with the ability for keen observation of material particulars with a precision to an unlimited degree. A true novelist has a fine

sense of the power of discriminative choice, and this intuition is first and foremost informed by “a living heart” (T. Hardy, “SF” 138).

Chapter Three: Sympathy and the Profitable Reading of Fiction

Despite Hardy's distrust of the term "realism," he often does not hesitate to recruit the concept of "truth" to convey what he sees as the real significance of great novels. The true artist always performs his art "with an eye to being more truthful than truth" Hardy so claims ("SF" 134). "The best fiction," asserts Hardy again on another occasion, "like the highest artistic expression in other modes, is more true, so to put it, than history or nature can be" ("PRF" 117). As I have noted in the previous chapter, Hardy readily acknowledges the artificial aspect of fiction writing, what he calls "the need for the exercise of the Daedalian faculty for selection and cunning manipulation." ("SF" 134). Faced with this seemingly incongruent view about fiction, I will in this chapter examine the nature of Hardy's own claim to "truth." But before this question is approached, I first draw attention to Hardy's view on the manifold benefits fiction provides to its readers. This consideration is necessary if we are to understand Hardy's view on the art of fiction. The novelist's conviction about the function of his art determines how he carries it out. Through concrete evidence, I show that Hardy's understanding of the function of fiction often coincided with the expectations of his readers. Writing for those readers, Hardy therefore tailored his works especially to offer these reading benefits.

Reading Fiction as a Way to Dream and Imagine

In the first place, the reader may find in a novel what soothes and relaxes an overstrained mind from sustained and monotonous work. Fiction reading achieves this remedial effect by affording an imaginary "change of scene" and a shift of "the mental perspective" (T. Hardy, "PRF" 111). In this sense, novels become a means by which the

reader can carry out a mental gymnastics, analogous to a morning jog or an afternoon walk taken up by the sedentary city office-workers. But it is crucial that the change of mental perspective be complete, which always means the selection of a novel that enables the immersion into a world completely different from the one the reader realistically occupies. For example, city-dwellers may read tales about the country folk; the working class may choose to catch a glimpse of the glamour of high society and the aristocratic way of living. In any case, the goal is to allow the reader to dream and to move away from any intellectual or practical concern that is directly connected with his immediate preoccupations.

To an extent, the validity of this proposal of Hardy's is confirmed by Robert Louis Stevenson, who in an essay on romance claims that "the great creative writer shows us the realization and the apotheosis of the day-dreams of common men. His stories may be nourished with the realities of life, but their true mark is to satisfy the nameless longings of the reader, and to obey the ideal laws of the day-dream" (*Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson* 83). Stevenson found the realization of men's day-dreams in his adventure stories such as *Treasure Island* (1883) and *Kidnapped* (1886), both of which turned out to be hugely popular, thus nicely testifying his insight into readers' minds. *Treasure Island* sold altogether twelve thousand copies within the first three years after the publication of its volume form (Nowell-Smith 134). A more spectacular success greeted Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), which made a sale of thirty-one thousand copies within the first year of its publication (Cohen 84–7). The popularity and commercial success of adventure stories attracted many opportunistic storywriters. Max Pemberton, for example, frankly acknowledging his financial interests in writing, saw

Stevenson and Haggard as inspiration and exemplars. His *The Iron Pirate* (1893), modeling on this popular fictional type, was the first of a series of his successful adventure stories (Pemberton 94–121).

Perhaps it is fair to say that the fiction of Empire, while serving to implement the imperialist ideology, had a great portion of its attraction in the mysterious lands and exotic peoples it conscientiously portrays. The quick yet effective sketches of Anglo-Indian life in Kipling's *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888) introduce a world with completely different customs, beliefs and codes of behavior. Similar excitement of the foreign worlds can be found in A. E. W. Mason's Arabian adventures in *The Four Feathers* (1902), in the South American tropical heat of W. H. Hudson's *Green Mansions* (1904), and in the lush landscape of John Buchan's South Africa in *Prester John* (1910). Even at home, there grew an increasing fascination with the amusing and picturesque, if also whimsical and sentimental, rural regionalism, which decidedly features a domestic setting. While Kipling declared that he had "discovered England which we had never done before. . . . England is a wonderful land. It is the most marvelous of all foreign countries that I have ever been in" (qtd. in Carrington 438), it was Scotland that many readers in Britain looked to for a sense of nostalgic bitter-sweetness during the last decade of the nineteenth century.

The popularity of a group of novels about the idealized Scottish rural life during the last two decades of the nineteenth century nicely testified Hardy's belief in the novel's power to enthrall. These novels were collectively and aptly called the Kailyard School, Kailyard being a Scottish word that means "a small cabbage patch" usually attached to a cottage. The remote and half-lost community life of simple and peaceful

villages, the honest and hospitable country folk spoke strongly to a society that was being mechanized by industrialism and was saturated with cynicism by capitalist economy. In fact, Hardy's own works were frequently read by readers and critics as an elegiac tribute to the bygone English rural community. The English poet Richard Le Gallienne called Hardy England's "modern Theocritus (of course, a Theocritus in prose)," and Hardy's Wessex "Arcadia," but accused Hardy of staining the "beautiful simplicity" and the "healthy sweetness" of his "Sicilian Vales" with "a painful 'moral'" and an "obtrusive purpose" (Cox 179). The reviewer of *Pall Mall Gazette* (31 December 1891) praised Hardy for his "humor," his "keen sense of the slow movements of the bucolic intelligence" (Cox 181), and "the wonderful descriptions of Wessex scenery in the changes of seasons" (Cox 182).

In any case, Hardy believes that his own novels should indeed aim at maintaining the power to allow his readers to dream. A notebook entry in 1881 records Hardy thinking: "The real, if unavowed, purpose of fiction is to give pleasure by gratifying the love of the uncommon in human experience, mental or corporeal" (F. E. Hardy, *EL* 193). Twelve years later, we find Hardy revisiting the idea:

A story must be exceptional enough to justify its telling. We tale-tellers are all Ancient Mariners, and none of us is warranted in stopping Wedding Guests (in other words, the hurrying public) unless he has something more unusual to relate than the ordinary experience of every average man and woman. (F. E. Hardy, *LY* 15-6)

The awareness of this specific purpose of fiction must have influenced Hardy's perception of his own works, leading him to group several of his novels under the

category of “Romances and Fantasies.”¹ However, the misfortune for novels that overtly glorify their intoxicating charms is to cause criticism about their irrelevancy to reality and more scathingly about their demoralizing escapism. Thomas Greenwood, offering an example of such criticism in his historical study *Public Libraries*, records a public complaint made in 1891 about the stock of fiction in British public libraries, which were said to be full of “loafing office boys... devouring all the most trivial trash” (qtd. in Brantlinger 20).

Reading Fiction as a Way to Acquire Practical and Intellectual Instruction

Despite the increasing popularity of fiction among various reading materials available to the British public, it was not unusual in the late nineteenth century to hear the novel being dismissed as the trivial sort. In his comprehensive work *Literacy and Popular Culture*, David Vincent shows that with the newly acquired literacy thanks to the Education Act, “the earnest worker” tended to devote his precious spare time to the study of “serious” thinkers and political writers such as Carlyle, Ruskin, J. S. Mill, and Henry George (261–2). Even when fiction reading was encouraged, it was only limited to the reading of the established classic ones, which were either historical or contained explicit criticism of prominent contemporary social issues. According to the secretary of the Backworth Classic Novel-Reading Union, a reading club active during the 1890s in one of the many mining villages of Northumberland England, the authors whose works were chosen as the “great classics of fiction” included Dickens, Thackeray, Scott, Charles Kingsley, Edward Bulwer-Lytton, and George Eliot (Moulton 18, 21). In 1906, when the

¹ Hardy divided his novels and stories into three categories: “Novels of Character and Environment,” “Romances and Fantasies,” and “Novels of Ingenuity.” See Hardy’s explanation in “General Preface to the Novels and Poems” (1912), pp. 44–5.

first considerable number of Labor MPs were elected, the *Review of Reviews* conducted a survey, asking the MPs to name the authors and books that had the greatest influence on them. Among the authors provided by the MPs, the first six most frequently referred to were Ruskin, Dickens, Carlyle, Henry George, Scott, and J. S. Mill. Hardy's name did not appear in the twenty-one authors ever mentioned (Rose 41–2).

Hardy clearly understood the considerations of those “earnest” readers, who hoped to gain from reading novels practical information and intellectual instruction, and he believed that many novels do provide solid materials of wisdom and thought comparable to those in finely-argued essays and well-researched disquisitions. The satisfaction of this motive, according to Hardy, cannot be found in the “essential constituents of a novel”—the plot and characters, but instead in “the accidents and appendages” of narrative (“PRF” 112). These include “excursions into various philosophies,” “didactic reflections,” “trifles of useful knowledges, statistics, queer historic fact,” “specimens of manners of good and bad society,” and “quotations from ancient and other authors” (“PRF” 112–3)

Examples of some if not all of these narrative features abound in Hardy's own works. In *Tess*, for example, while showing the kind of hard farm labor and domestic chores Tess needs to shoulder at a fairly early age, the narrator moves further to suggest that occasionally Tess feels “Malthusian vexation with her mother for thoughtlessly giving her so many little sisters and brothers, when it was such a trouble to nurse those that had already come” (37). Here the allusion is made to Thomas Robert Malthus's much-debated *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (1789). It is also not infrequent that the narrator in *Tess* jumps in to give some didactic reflections, the most

representative yet controversial of which occurs when Angel goes back to his father's parish alone after Tess's confession. His parents, unaware of their daughter-in-law's bitter past life, have decided to read from the Bible "The Words of King Lemuel", which praises women's purity, as a tribute to Angel's new wife. However, Angel is agonized by the irony implicit in the reading in the light of his recent misfortune. At this moment, the narrator intervenes, commenting:

No prophet had told [Angel], and he was not prophet enough to tell himself, that essentially this young wife of his was as deserving of the praise of King Lemuel as any other woman endowed with the same dislike of evil, her moral value having to be reckoned not by achievement but by tendency. Moreover, the figure near at hand suffers on such occasion, because it shows up its sorriness without shade; while vague figures afar off are honored, in that their distance makes artistic virtues of their stains. In considering what Tess was not, he overlooked what she was, and forgot that the defective can be more than the entire. (265)

Here is the presence of a strong authorial voice from Hardy, who, with an understanding heart absent in his character, does not scruple to suspend the flow of his story in order to reflect on the moral significance of his character's condition. But it is a sign of Hardy's greatness as an artist and sensibility as a man that his authorial intervention blends naturally in the story's general atmosphere of plangency. Instead of diminishing the realistic quality of his story, it increases the story's touch of humanity, which Hardy sees as the priority of fiction writing.

Moreover, being a voracious reader and diligent note-taker,² Hardy frequently drew upon the miscellaneous materials from his notebooks in the composition of his novels, and he was not afraid of incorporating some fragments of queer and obscure information in his writing. For instance, when he leaves Tess shortly after their marriage,

² For an up-to-date informative and brief introduction about Hardy's note-taking practices and widely-ranging notebooks, see William Greenslade's "Critical Introduction" in *Thomas Hardy's "Facts" Notebook: A Critical Edition*.

the heavy-hearted Angel starts to see the picture of life with a changed perspective: “humanity stood before him no longer in the pensive sweetness of Italian art, but in the staring and ghastly attitudes of a Wiertz Museum, and with the leer of a study by Van Beers” (T. Hardy, *Tess* 259). Bullen points out that during one of his several continental journeys, Hardy visited the Wiertz Museum in Brussels in 1876, and at around the time of the initial conception of *Tess* in 1887, Hardy saw an exhibition of Van Beers’s paintings in London (Bullen 24–5), but Hardy could hardly have expected his middle-class readers to pick up the artistic allusions immediately.

Though Hardy sees no harm in the occasional indulgence on the author’s part in the display of wit and knowledge, and regards the reader’s efforts at gathering intellectual profits as praiseworthy, he nevertheless judges these to be the “by-motives” of fiction reading (“PRF” 113). Novels whose merits reside mainly in the breadth and complexity of the side-knowledge are “the product of cleverness rather than of intuition,” and their authors have forsaken the real undertaking and “the ruling interest of the genuine investigator” of literature, which is to give “a picture of life in action” (“PRF” 113–4). As to these nonessential ingredients of fiction, they can easily be obtained from “elsewhere in more convenient parcels” (“PRF” 114).

Reading Fiction as a Humanizing Education

Now we have come to the fundamental difference in Hardy’s understanding between delineative arts—specifically but not exclusively fiction—and discursive writings, such as philosophy and the moral essay. The latter, being essentially views about life, appeal to human “logical reasoning” and are accordingly susceptible to

sophistry, while the former, dealing with the natural representation of life, appeal to the “intuitive conviction” of ordinary individual readers (“PRF” 114). In this sense, fiction is in nature a democratic art, since anyone with ordinary intelligence and adequate life experience is able to judge the veracity of the novelist’s portrayal of reality. The genius of the novelist therefore manifests itself in his ability to help his readers to “see further into life,” or at least, in his ability to “throw a stronger irradiation over subjects already within [the reader’s] ken than he has been able to do unaided” (T. Hardy, “PRF” 115). This view of Hardy’s about the role the novelist plays in imparting truth is probably most pithily expressed by Alexander Pope in his *An Essay on Criticism* (1711):

True wit is Nature to advantage drest,
What oft was Thought, but ne’er so well Exprest,
Something, whose Truth convinc’d at Sight we find,
That gives us back the Image of our Mind.

The implications and ramifications of such a view are manifold. In the first place, as an extension to the explicit democratic spirit, it is natural to infer from the suggestion of the existence of “intuitive conviction” that the world and its essentials eagerly pursued and presented by the novelist are entities unmistakably comprehensible and sharable among individual human beings. Hardy indeed fully believes this is the case, and deems it a compelling retort to the view that novels whose subject-matters revolve around more refined societies are higher in quality than those dealing with much humbler walks of life:

All persons who have thoroughly compared class with class—and the wider their experience the more pronounced their opinion—are convinced that education has as yet but little broken or modified the waves of human impulse on which deeds and words depend. So that in the portraiture of scenes in any way emotional or dramatic—the highest province of fiction—the peer and the peasant stand on much the same level. (“PRF” 124)

In fact, instead of being of an inferior literary quality, novels depicting the life of the village people are more vigorous than those about either the mechanical existence of city-dwelling workers or the upper classes, whose vitality and inner turmoil are likely to be obscured by the homogenizing social manners and restraining conventionality. The villagers, Hardy declares, have “so much more dramatic interest in their lives,” and their “passions are franker” (qtd. in Wright 35).

Therefore we see that “intuitive conviction” is the unrelenting “waves of human impulse,” by the side of which the logical reason seems wanly ineffectual. Eventually, Hardy believes that “by emotions men are acted upon, and act upon others” (T. Hardy, “PRF” 115). This faith in that universal and enduring part of human nature, which the novelist prides himself on revealing and impacting is shared with equal firmness and relish by Joseph Conrad, who announces that “the artist appeals to that part of our being which is not dependent on wisdom” (14). Conrad’s understanding of the nature of that part of us is too magnificent to omit quoting:

[The artist] speaks to our capacity for delight and wonder, to the sense of mystery surrounding our lives; to our sense of pity, and beauty, and pain; to the latent feeling of fellowship with all creation—and to the subtle but invincible conviction of solidarity that knits together the loneliness of innumerable hearts, to the solidarity in dreams, in joy, in sorrow, in aspirations, in illusions, in hope, in fear, which binds men to each other, which binds together all humanity—the dead to the living and the living to the unborn. (14)

Conrad’s words, separated by the two semi-colons, encapsulate the three ambitions and promises of fiction in an escalating scale. Their scope increases in breadth as we move from the self-absorbed feelings of pleasure and curiosity to the introspective sense of pity and pain, which takes place only when we recognize our own position in the vast and

intimidating universe, and finally to the embracing cognizance of the full and palpable existence of others.

Here we begin to see the answer to a question likely to have been raised in the mind of an earnest inquirer when he first encountered Hardy's proposal of fiction's effective appeal to our "intuitive conviction." He might, with the undulled eagerness of a conscientious student, have wondered: what good does fiction do if it only seeks to truthfully represent life and awaits its judgment by the common intelligence of its readers? The question is asked with apparent straightforwardness, taking as it does for granted that a truthful representation of life is no daunting task. Yet we may put the point of realistic depiction aside for a moment and consider what kind of good indeed fiction does. The answer is already implicitly suggested by Conrad's comprehensive insight about the nature of our emotional life, and Hardy further elucidates what kind of vision the novelist should aim at projecting upon his imaginative creation by pointing to the essential quality that makes the novelist worth his art. The novelist, according to Hardy, needs to be endowed with that "mental tactility that comes from a sympathetic appreciativeness of life in all its manifestations" ("SF" 137). It is in this faculty of sympathy that the truth of humanity is revealed. And the reader, catching this vision of the novelist, thereby receives "the humanizing education" ("PRF" 120).

The notion of men's sympathetic capacity is an old and familiar one. Adam Smith begins his *The Theory of Moral Sentiment* (1759) with the chapter on sympathy: "How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it, except the pleasure of seeing it" (3). While Adam

Smith in the mid eighteenth-century could confidently claim that the principle of sympathy was evident in human nature, Conrad, writing at the end of the nineteenth century, was less confident about the power sympathetic feelings had over his readers, claiming only that the novelist's appeal was made to the reader's "less obvious capacities: to that part of our nature which, because of the warlike conditions of existence, is necessarily kept out of sight within the more resisting and hard qualities—like the vulnerable body within a steel armor" (13). Hardy also refers to the reader's likely "blindness" ("PRF" 119) and "neglect" to the "vital qualities" ("SF" 137) that tend to be elusive in ordinary situations. Therefore, the imaginative art of fiction provides the apparatus for exercising our sympathetic identification with our fellow-human beings, which in turn generates a sense of life's significance that does not rely on dogmatic religious creeds or stilted social conventions.

George Eliot, writing with a kindred spirit, sees such exercise as the function of all forms of art, and regards it as a truly beneficial engagement:

The greatest benefit we owe to the artist, whether painter, poet, or novelist, is the extension of our sympathies. Appeals founded on generalizations and statistics require a sympathy ready-made, a moral sentiment already in activity; but a picture of human life such as a great artist can give, surprises even the trivial and the selfish into that attention to what is apart from themselves, which maybe called the raw material of moral sentiment. . . . Art is the nearest thing to life; it is a mode of amplifying experience and extending our contact with our fellow men beyond the bounds of our personal lot. (123–4).

By extending our sympathies, art provides the basis of a moral education. It is neither repressively dogmatic nor narrowly egotistic and utilitarian. In fact, in the artist's presentation of a vast and varied reality outside the self, British philosopher Iris Murdoch finds the promise of a new moral system, which is concerned with tolerance and with "really apprehending that other people exist" (284). Within this system exist the concepts

of “freedom” and “virtue”: “freedom is knowing and understanding and respecting things quite other than ourselves. Virtue is in this sense to be construed as knowledge, and connects us so with reality” (Murdoch 284). Murdoch, being a novelist herself, has experienced most acutely the difficulties of creating a realistic character other than the shadow of herself. “It is impossible,” Murdoch contemplates, “not to see one’s failure here as a sort of spiritual failure” (283–4).

In fiction, not only do we find rich and veritable depictions of the peculiarities and eccentricities of individual human beings, we also see examples of characters who themselves go through an education of discovery and mental enlargement. In *War and Peace*, for example, after the narrow escape from death, Pierre starts to see life in a different light. Before, he saw people around him as confusing and threatening, but now they become the source of his enjoyment:

This legitimate peculiarity of each individual which used to excite and irritate Pierre now became a basis of the sympathy he felt for, and the interest he took in, other people. The difference, and sometimes complete contradiction, between men’s opinions and their lives, and between one man and another, pleased him and drew from him an amused and gentle smile. (1184)

Similarly in *Tess*, the gentleman farmer Angel, who initially has imagined the farming class to be a uniform group of pathetic dullards, soon begins to appreciate the uniqueness of each individual. The farm laborers, we are told, turn out to be “beings of many minds, beings infinite in difference; some happy, many serene, a few depressed, one here and there bright even to genius, some stupid, others wanton, others austere; some mutely Miltonic, some potentially Cromwellian” (118).

To be able to appreciate the human diversity as is confronted by Angel requires more of subjective participation than objective observation and reasoning. As Brigid

Lowe in her lucid and original book *Victorian Fiction and the Insights of Sympathy* puts it, “sympathy does not imply approval, however often it may lead to it; what it does imply is real, personal, and human engagement—intellectual give and take” (11). But any request on the novelist’s part for the reader’s emotional investment raises the suspicion of sentimentalism and tends to evoke the accusation of tear-mongering. Some of Hardy’s contemporary critics indicated the danger of misconception sustained by Hardy’s novels. For instance, Edmund Gosse suggested that Hardy’s female readers were likely to be compared to those girls who “let down their back-hair to have a long cry over Edna Lyall or Miss Florence Warden” (Cox 169), both of whom were popular Victorian novelists, experts of sensational and melodramatic techniques, and famed for the emotional intensity of their works. In an essay on Hardy’s novels, W. P. Trent extrapolated a possible reaction to Hardy’s works from more fastidious readers: “What is the good of such stories when they only make one weep?” (Cox 233)

At the end of the nineteenth century, the severity of slight and mockery given by the more advanced early modernist writers to popular novels of sensation and sentiment was no less intense than the outcry of repugnance and condemnation given by the morally conservative critics and readers to “realist” novels.³ As Q. D. Leavis puts it in her discussion about the late nineteenth century sensational bestsellers, these popular novels were characterized by “bad writing, false sentiment, sheer silliness, and a preposterous narrative” (62). In other words, what they lacked above all was literary sincerity and the frankness to treat matters, in Hardy’s words, “which everybody is thinking but nobody is saying” (“CEF” 133). To judge the sincerity of a novelist is a delicate process that

³ For a discussion of the reception of sensational best-sellers both by the public and by the intellectuals and the early modernist writers and their predecessors, see Peter Keating’s *The Haunted Study*, pp. 439–45.

involves a close attention to every aspect of the novel, but in a more general plane, it is possible to identify a few typical characteristics of literary insincerity, in contrast to which we shall see with more clarity what makes Hardy's appeal to the reader's "intuitive conviction" a superior one.

In the discussion of literary insincerity and the ills of sentimentalism, I find F. R. Leavis's critical view in his essay "Reality and Sincerity" particularly insightful. Leavis indicates that writers treating themes with strong emotional valences are liable to surrendering to the temptation of sentimentalism. Writings of this sort are essentially "a sentimental debauch, an emotional wallowing," and the proposed subject is "only the show of an excuse for the indulgences, which is, with a kind of innocent shamelessness, sought for its own sake" (F. R. Leavis 248). In other words, these writings often create simplistic or false situations to provide occasions for the display of emotions. The result is a self-congratulatory declamation, its insincerity manifesting itself in the covert enjoyment of the professed sorrowfulness and plangency. Since the novelistic situation is not the sentimental novelist's true concern, it is never felt and imagined with honest sympathies. Therefore, the writing lacks the author's precious personal touch, and loses its strength and personality in "the clichés of phrases and attitude, and the vagueness and unrealities of situation"(F. R. Leavis 248) . With these remarks in mind, I will in the next chapter trace Hardy's artistic ingenuity both in the substance and the aesthetics of the novel *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, and demonstrate the strength of the work's sincerity, which makes its appeal to the reader's sympathetic understanding especially effective.

Chapter Four: Artificiality and the Art of Fiction

In his “Preface to *The Plays of William Shakespeare*” (1765), Samuel Johnson notes that “Imitations produce pain or pleasure, not because they are mistaken for realities, but because they bring realities to mind” (367). Hardy’s view on artistic imitation agrees with that of Johnson. For Hardy, imitations that can most forcefully bring the reader’s attention to realities are not indiscriminate transcriptions of ordinary situations so as to create perfect verisimilitude of real life. What would be the literary effect if novels reproduce scenes in life verbatim is predicted by the fictitious novelist Harold Biffen of Gissing’s *New Scrub Street*: “The result will be something unutterably tedious. Precisely. That is the stamp of the ignobly decent life. If it were anything but tedious it would be untrue” (74). However, Hardy’s reflections on art bring him to the conclusion that “art is a disproportioning—(i.e. distorting, throwing out of proportion)—of realities, to show more clearly the features that matter in those realities, which, if merely copied or reported inventorially, might possibly be observed, but would more probably be overlooked” (F. E. Hardy, *EL* 299). This chapter identifies the ways in which Hardy disproportion realities in *Tess*. I will work out, as it were, the mechanism of the novel. However, my purpose by looking at the artificiality of the novel is not to argue that fiction is divorced from life due to the novelist’s subjective interference, but to show how the “art” of fiction in fact conveys a sense of life’s authenticity.

The Sense of Reality in Telling Details

Hardy’s conception of art’s disproportioning nature inclines him particularly to an attentiveness to suggestive details and a flexibility of point of view in the narrative. In the

following depiction of the procession of young village girls on their way to the venue of the May-Day dance, we see the narrator's dynamic play of the narrative focus:

The young girls formed, indeed, the majority of the band, and their heads of luxuriant hair reflected in the sunshine every tone of gold, and black, and brown. Some had beautiful eyes, others a beautiful nose, others a beautiful mouth and figure; few, if any, had all. A difficulty of arranging their lips in this crude exposure to public scrutiny, an inability to balance their heads, and to dissociate self-consciousness from their features, was apparent in them, and showed that they were genuine country girls, unaccustomed to many eyes. (T. Hardy, *Tess* 14)

The narrator, assuming the perspective of an on-looker, first takes in the spectacle of the procession as a whole; then, his attention zooms in, flitting about the various features of the girls' appearance—tones of hair, eyes, noses, mouths, and figures. Finally, the narrative settles on the movements of the girls' lips and heads, shifting the stillness of the previous impression to moments of dynamic action. With this shift of the rhythm of the description comes also the shift of point of view: as if writing from the thoughts of the young girls, the narrator reveals their feelings of awkwardness and unease by actually making the reader feel and see the behavioral manifestations of these mental states. It need take the keenest of eyes and the most sensitive of hearts to perceive these minute and seemingly trivial movements, and Hardy allows us to see not only them but also the incorporeal picture of rustic shyness and womanly self-consciousness.

The above example passage is characteristic of Hardy's masterful use of details—"to see in half and quarter views the whole picture, to catch from a few bars the whole tune" ("SF" 137).¹ Moreover, besides the general flow of the music of humanity, Hardy

¹ Significantly, Henry James in "The Art of Fiction" holds a similar view regarding the novelist ability to have an imaginative perception of details: "[a true novelist is] blessed with the faculty which when you give it an inch takes an ell, and which for the artist is a much greater source of strength than any accident of residence or of place in the social scale. The power to guess the unseen from the seen, to trace the implication of things, to judge the whole piece by the pattern, the condition of feeling life, in general, so completely that you are well on your way to knowing any particular corner of it" (56-7).

has an uncanny ear for its under currents of contradiction and irony. This aptitude of Hardy's is at its most powerful in his treatment of death. For example, after the death of her infant child, Tess decides that she will try her best to give the little soul a dignified Christian burial. However, in the description of the burial, despite the mournful air of the dark night and the melancholy gloom of the churchyard, the narrator cannot help but note that the child's body is carried "in a small deal box, under an ancient woman's shawl," that "a shilling and a pint of beer" is paid to the sexton as the cost of the burial, and that on the jar in which Tess puts a bunch of flowers at the foot of the grave, it mockingly writes "Keelwell's Marmalade" (97). The apparent triviality and irrelevance of these details seem to constantly compromise the pathos of the scene, interfering with the overall atmosphere of intense sorrowfulness. Yet these details in fact complicate the event of death by acknowledging the inevitable elements that are part and parcel of the realities of life. They therefore give a new dimension to our conception of death, which after all exists side by side with the indifference and contingencies of human needs as frivolous as a pint of beer and a jar of marmalade.

Hardy's noticing, however, is not limited to sight only but arouses the engagement of all our senses. Conrad once said that all art "appeals primarily to the senses, and the artistic aim when expressing itself in written words must also make its appeal through the senses, if its high desire is to reach the secret spring of responsive emotions. It must strenuously aspire to the plasticity of sculpture, to the color of painting, and to the magic suggestiveness of music" (14). Hardy would have fully agreed. Thus, we are made to see and feel what it is like when a snowstorm comes to the desolate highland of Flintcomb-Ash Farm: "the blast smelt of icebergs, arctic seas, whales, and

white bears, carrying the snow so that it licked the land but did not deepen on it” (289). In this one sentence, sight and smell are mixed as the snow is mixed with the storm. We not only see the ice-bergs, arctic seas, whales, and white bears looming threateningly in front of us, but also smell them; yet all these do not come directly but through the all-sweeping blast, which, like a hungry beast, savagely licks at the barren land and the helpless creatures upon it.

The Sense of Reality in the Complex Characterization

Eventually the detailed descriptions and revelations accumulate to convey the verisimilitude of a character. They are the only means by which the reader can claim to know a character. Thus, Angel, the frustrated intellectual who has lost his faith in the ancient doctrines of Christianity, would strum upon “an old harp which he had bought at a sale” (117) while at the same time suspecting that “it might have resulted far better for mankind if Greece had been the source of the religion of modern civilization, and not Palestine” (158). Yet when Tess has revealed to him her past life, we see another aspect of Angel when the narrator shows that Angel “was becoming ill with thinking; eaten out with thinking, withered by thinking; scourged out of all his former pulsating flexuous domesticity. He walked about saying to himself, ‘what’s to be done—what’s to be done?’” (242) How different is the Angel who delights in the aesthetic and sensuous pagan pleasure from the Angel who is throttled by the concerns of social conventions and propriety! And the reader acquires such perception through the narrator’s artful choice of details.

Similarly, Tess is also capable of surprising the reader. Her extreme kind-heartedness makes her sympathize with the intense pain of hopeless longings felt by the other milkmaids, who also love Angel wholeheartedly, even though Tess knows that Angel only cares for her. The same kind-heartedness compels her to put an end to the sufferings of the pheasants that are gasping at death's threshold:

With the impulse of a soul who could feel for kindred sufferers as much as for herself, Tess's first thought was to put the still-living birds out of their torture, and to this end with her own hands she broke the necks of as many as she could find, leaving them to lie where she had found them till the gamekeepers should come—as they probably would come—to look for them a second time. (279)

But who would guess that Tess eventually avenges Angel and herself by stabbing a carving knife into Alec's heart!

The rich unexpectedness and complexity of Hardy's characters is one prominent characteristic that distinguishes his writing from that of many of his predecessors. While many of Dickens's characters, for example, are vividly memorable for their signature personality—the honest and gentle Joe Gargery, always kindly mumbling the brotherly promise of “have a lark,” and the theatrical Mr. Vincent Crummles with his full underlip, “as though he were in the habit of shouting very much” (Dickens 279), it is very difficult to categorize Hardy's characters into types, whether they are major or minor characters. The reader follows Tess's story to the end of her life, but he is seldom given the privilege to foresee how the life stories of other characters' will end. Unlike Dickens, who is eager to exercise his godlike power of a novelist in distributing justice and predicting each character's life track, Hardy allows his characters seemingly to have their own wills, allowing the reader only a glimpse of an episode of their life's struggle. Even Tess's mother Joan Durbeyfield, whose intelligence, we are told, is “that of a happy

child” (T. Hardy, *Tess* 37), would come to moments of self-reflection about how little she knows her own daughter. In the end, the reader does not leave the novel with a condescending knowledge of what a typical milkmaid is like or what activities constitute the simple farming life but takes away an intense experience of the rich emotional life of another fellow human being.

The Sense of Reality in the Depth of Consciousness

While discussing the construction of fictional characters, Hardy explains that “the characters, however they may differ, express mainly the author, his largeness of heart or otherwise, his culture, his insight, and very little of any other living person” (“PRF” 124). The remark may at first glance seem to anticipate the spirit of deep skepticism of certain postmodernist writers, whose distrust of the reality of characters is representatively expressed by the strong proclamation of American novelist William H. Gass: “[A character] is not an object of perception, and nothing whatever is appropriate to persons can be correctly said of him” (44). However, in Hardy’s novels, the constant invitation to the reader for the partaking in the characters’ personal lives defies Gass’s dismissal of the authenticity of novelistic characters. In fact, Hardy’s understanding of the author’s subjective involvement in constructing his characters brings him the closest in thought to the later modernist novelists, whose artistic preoccupations include the more advanced and realistic rendition of characters and the re-enactment of the natural process of knowing a person other than oneself.

One way for searching such authenticity is suggested by Conrad, who claims that when confronted by the enigmatic spectacle of human life, “the artist descends within

himself, and in that lonely region of stress and strife, if he be deserving and fortunate, he finds the terms of his appeal”(13). The intention of going deep into the self strengthened the novelistic attention to the inner qualities of characters for the novelists of the late nineteenth century. The British critic Arthur Symons in 1899 called the innovative effort of many of his contemporary artists the “attempt to spiritualize literature, to evade the old bondage of rhetoric, the bondage of exteriority” (146). Though the narrative mode of stream of consciousness as a way to break free from the bondage of exteriority was still to be developed and perfected years after the time when Hardy wrote *Tess*, Hardy nevertheless could contentedly allow his characters to take over the narrative flow and indulge in a kind of self-communing. For example, at one point of the story Angel goes back home for a short break during his stay in Talbothays Dairy learning farming. While he is on the road, contemplating whether he should propose to Tess, the narrative of the scene merges with Angel’s consciousness:

The white lane stretched before him, and his eyes were upon it; but they were staring into next year, and not at the lane. He loved her; ought he to marry her? Dared he to marry her? What would his mother and his brothers say? What would he himself say a couple of years after the event? That would depend upon whether the germs of staunch comradeship underlay the temporary emotion, or whether it were a sensuous joy in her form only, with no substratum of everlastingness.
(156)

Here the reader is given direct access to Angel’s thoughts with no authorial mediation or commentary. Angel’s tendency to rationalize emotional feelings and his unabated concern over the opinions of his family suggest themselves in a most convincing and natural way.

Another factor that determined Hardy’s particular interest in and dedication to the portrayal of the inner life of his characters came from his understanding of the

predominant literary and social themes of his age: “in perceiving that taste is arriving anew at the point of high tragedy, writers are conscious that its revived presentation demands enrichment by further truths—in other words, original treatment” (“CEF” 127). Hardy believed that the representation of late-Victorian Britain could be most powerfully achieved through the literary tradition of tragedy. Yet differing from the great Periclean and Elizabethan periods, both of which are revered for the vitality of their tragic dramas, the society of Hardy’s own age was beset with its own unique tragic elements. In Sophocles’s *Oedipus the King*, the tragedy of Oedipus lies in the inevitability of fate and the limits of free will. Despite his confidence and wisdom, Oedipus’s strong character and subjectivity are powerless in the battle against the unfathomable law of determinism. Shakespeare’s *King Lear* on the other hand, draws its tragic power both from the clash of discordant human desires and follies such as greed, jealousy, and vanity, which are often embodied by individual characters, and from the incongruity between certain unbending temperaments and a specific circumstance: Cordelia’s honest confession of love to her father’s inquiry is essentially inappropriate to the public and courtly situation where the king’s honor and esteem ought to be given priority. It is this conflict that triggers the chain of tragic events in *King Lear*.

In *Tess*, both of these two types of tragic situations exist, but the complexity of the tragedy deepens as the novelist introduces a third dimension which involves the struggle between conflicting desires and beliefs within a single character. When under Angel’s insistent request for marriage, Tess’s consciousness churns with the combatting currents of guilt and desire for affection. After their marriage and Angel’s desertion of her, Tess’s inner struggle is considerably compounded by the assaults of various

emotional disturbances such as hope, despair, self-pity, and pride. No less does Angel undergo a series of mental tests from the loss of faith in God's providence to the realignment of his moral compass. In these cases, the self becomes the battlefield, and the novelist shifts his attention to focus decidedly on the characters' inner world.

The Sense of Art in the Novelistic Form

Lastly, we come to consider Hardy's understanding of the novelistic form. According to Hardy, "to a masterpiece in story there appertains a beauty of shape, no less than to a masterpiece in pictorial or plastic art, capable of giving to the trained mind an equal pleasure" ("PRF" 120). The form or shape of a novel depends on the harmony of the interdependence of its parts. Finding Joseph Addison's understanding of the subject most precise and subtle, Hardy, for the purpose of explication quotes Addison, who defines the organic form as one in which "nothing should go before it, be intermixed with it, or follow after it, that is not related to it" (qtd. in T. Hardy, "PRF" 121) This general definition allows a broader scope with which the novelist can organize his works in various artistic ways than is the case with Aristotle's more formulaic formal characteristics such as "peripeteia" and "anagnorisis." Thus, in *Tess of the d'Urberville*, Hardy works in several structural patterns that make the novel a well-knit organism.

Among the various structural forms, the most obvious and central one is indicated by the headings of the novel's seven parts—called "phases" by Hardy himself. This rather conventional organization by chronology denotes the seven most crucial turning points in Tess's life: the claiming of kin, rape-seduction, meeting Angel, marriage and confession, Angel's desertion of Tess, re-encountering Alec, and finally reunion with

Angel and death. Behind this dominant structure are more delicate patterns of recurrence and repetition, which often resonate with the main themes of the novel. Tony Tanner, for example, points out that the color red figures large in Tess's life, especially in scenes where she interacts with Alec (220–5): there is the “red ribbon” worn in Tess's hair during the May-Day dance and her “peony mouth” to which the narrator draws the reader's attention at the beginning of the novel. Then, during the first meeting between Tess and Alec, the latter loads Tess's basket with red strawberries and roses. When they meet again after she has left Angel and started working on the Flintcomb-Ash Farm, Tess, under the renewed pressure from Alec, hits him in the face with her heavy leather gauntlet. “A scarlet oozing appeared where her blow had alighted, and in a moment the blood began dropping from his mouth upon the straw” (T. Hardy, *Tess* 331). Finally, their entangled relationship ends with Alec's murder, which Hardy reveals through the point of view of the landlady of their lodging. The woman sees from downstairs a “scarlet blot” in the middle of the oblong white ceiling, which altogether has “the appearance of a gigantic ace of hearts” (T. Hardy, *Tess* 382).

While Tanner also notices patterns of movement of different characters, Charlotte Thompson, interested in the linguistic aspect of the novel, maps out the local coherence and transformation of what she calls the novel's “logos”—a communal vocabulary representing a specific set of cultural behavior and imaginations (730). Eventually, for the more careful readers, Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* undoubtedly provides not only a wonderful story of the turbulent and tragic life of a sympathetic character, sincere sentiments, and profound reflection, but also the rare delight from the formal beauty of the delineative arts, a no less real enjoyment that cannot be obtained through the hurried

perusal of novels.

Conclusion

No matter how volcanic *Tess*'s critical reception was and no matter how disruptive it turned out to be to Hardy's writing career, the controversy over the novel was undeniably a product of the historical moment, instigated to a large extent by the social hypocrisy of the Victorian age and by the period's prevailing prudery and fastidious concern with propriety. Readers today, taking much pride in the extent of freedom enjoyed by creative artists and the capacity of tolerance of their audience, are likely to dismiss this episode in literary history as irrelevant to contemporary artistic preoccupations. Nevertheless, I hope I have shown that some issues raised in this controversy are well worth considering whenever we engage with an artwork, particularly when we read fiction. These issues include the way in which the novelist's expression is shaped by the conditions of his social environment, the ruling spirit of a specific novelist's artistic output, and the novelist's ability and skills to effectively speak to his readers. I believe these issues are immediately pertinent to our very personal experience with reading, and they further induce us to reflect upon our own expectations of and attitudes towards fiction: How do we react and interpret those aspects of fiction that surprise, shock, and offend? How do we readjust our criteria of evaluation based on the novelist's own terms and judge him accordingly? And finally, what does it say about ourselves when we are touched by a specific work?

The novelist, as a creator, is unavoidably confronted with the question about the significance of his art. Though through Hardy's example we should now realize the various constraints a novelist might have to endure—financial concerns, public taste, censorship, etc., the serious novelist holds dear what he believes to be the essence of his

creative endeavor. While R. L. Stevenson regarded it to be the novelist's ability to create wonder and let his readers dream, and Henry James made an apotheosis of the novelistic form, Hardy by intuition found it in the life of emotion that he had always treasured. However, by proclaiming that the novelist's portrayal of life is more truthful than reality, Hardy did not mean to take the essentialist position and disregard the concrete material basis of emotional feelings. In fact, it is Hardy's honesty and sincere engagement with the most tangible details of real life that make his novels retain their strong impact on readers present and past. The Victorian critics who complained and condemned that Hardy's novels did not provide enough moral uplift were, in the Victorian sense, quite correct in their judgment. But fully aware of the limits of the outlook and moral system of his own time, Hardy was devoted to a humanizing education that teaches his readers first of all how to feel.

Works Cited

- Baguley, David. *Critical Essays on Emile Zola*. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1986. Print.
- Beach, Joseph Warren. *The Technique of Thomas Hardy*. New York: Russell & Russell, 1962. Print.
- Benziman, Galia. "Thrust beneath the Carpet: Hardy and the Failure of Writing." *Studies in the Novel* 45.2 (2013): 198–213. Print.
- Brantlinger, Patrick. *The Reading Lesson: The Threat of Mass Literacy in Nineteenth-Century British Fiction*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998. Print.
- Brown, Edward. "Roman Jakobson: The Unity of His Thought on Verbal Art." *Language, Poetry and Poetics: The Generation of Teh 1890s: Jakobson, Trubetzkoy, Majakovskij*. Eds. Pomorska, Krystyna, et al. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1987. 233–57. Print.
- Bullen, J. B. *The Expressive Eye: Fiction and Perception in the Work of Thomas Hardy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986. Print.
- Carrington, Charles. *Rudyard Kipling: His Life and Work*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970. Print.
- Cohen, Morton. *Rider Haggard: His Life and Work*. 2nd ed. London: Macmillan, 1968. Print.
- Conrad, Joseph. "Preface." *The Nigger of the Narcissus: A Tale of the Forecastle*. Charleston: BiblioBazaar, 2007. Print.
- Coustillas, Pierre, and Colin Partridge. "'Introduction'." *George Gissing: The Critical Heritage*. Eds. Coustillas, Pierre and Colin Partridge. New York: Routledge, 1995. 1–46. Print.
- Cox, R. G. *Thomas Hardy: The Critical Heritage*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1970. Print.
- Darwin, Charles. *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favored Races in Teh Struggle for Life*. London: John Murray, 1859. Print.
- Dickens, Charles. *Nicholas Nickleby*. London: Vintage, 2011. Print.
- Dolin, Tim. "A History of the Text." *Tess of the D'urbervilles*. Ed. Dolin, Tim. London: Penguin Books, 1998. xlv–lxviii. Print.

- Eliot, George. "The Natural History of German Life." *The Victorian Art of Fiction: Nineteenth-Century Essays on the Novel*. Ed. Maitzen, Rohan. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2009. 121–26. Print.
- Frierson, William C. "The English Controversy over Realism in Fiction 1885–1895." *PMLA* 43.2 (1928): 533–50. Print.
- Gass, William H. *Fiction and the Figures of Life*. Jaffrey, New Hampshire: Nonpareil Book, 1979. Print.
- Gatrell, Simon. *Hardy the Creator: A Textual Biography*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988. Print.
- Gerber, Helmut E., and W. Eugene Davis. *Thomas Hardy: An Annotated Bibliography of Writings About Him*. De Kalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1973. Print.
- Gissing, George. *New Grub Street*. London: Penguin Books, 1985. Print.
- Greenslade, William. "Critical Introduction." *Thomas Hardy's "Facts" Notebook: A Critical Edition*. Ed. Greenslade, William. Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate, 2004. xv–xxix. Print.
- Hardy, Florence Emily. *The Early Life of Thomas Hardy*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1928. Print.
- Hardy, Thomas. "Candor in English Fiction." *Thomas Hardy's Personal Writings*. Ed. Orel, Harold. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990. 125–33. Print.
- . "Explanatory Note." *Tess of the D'urbervilles*. Ed. Dolin, Tim. London: Penguin Books, 1998. 3. Print.
- . "General Preface to the Novels and Poems." *Thomas Hardy's Personal Writings*. Ed. Orel, Harold. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990. 44–50. Print.
- . *The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy by Thomas Hardy*. Ed. Millgate, Michael. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985. Print.
- . "The Profitable Reading of Fiction." *Thomas Hardy's Personal Writings*. Ed. Orel, Harold. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990. 110–25. Print.
- . "The Science of Fiction." *Thomas Hardy's Personal Writings*. Ed. Orel, Harold. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990. 134–38. Print.
- . *Tess of the D'urbervilles*. Ed. Dolin, Tim. London: Penguin Books, 1998. Print.
- Hedgcock, F. A. "Reminiscences of Thomas Hardy." *National and English Review* 137 (1951): 220–8 and 89–94. Print.

- Heller, Erich. "Imaginative Literature." *The New Cambridge Modern History Volume 10: The Zenith of European Power, 1830–70*. Ed. Bury, J. P. T. The New Cambridge Modern History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960. 156–84. Print.
- Hyde, William J. "Hardy's View of Realism: A Key to the Rustic Characters." *Victorian Studies* 2.1 (1958): 45–59. Print.
- James, David. "Hearing Hardy: Soundscapes and the Profitable Reader." *Journal of Narrative Theory* 40.2 (2010): 131–55. Print.
- James, Henry. "The Art of Fiction." *Selected Literary Criticism*. Ed. Shapira, Morris. London: Heinemann, 1963. 49–67. Print.
- . *A Life in Letters*. Ed. Horne, Philip. London: Penguin Books, 2000. Print.
- . "Preface." *The Ambassadors*. Rockville: Ferenity Publishers, 2009. 5–18. Print.
- Johnson, Samuel. "Preface to the Plays of William Shakespeare." *Samuel Johnson: Selected Writings*. Ed. Martin, Peter. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009. 353–96. Print.
- Jones, Lawrence. "Imitation and Expression in Thomas Hardy's Theory of Fiction." *Studies in the Novel* 7.4 (1975): 507–25. Print.
- . "Thomas Hardy's 'Idiosyncratic Mode of Regard'." *ELH* 42.3 (1975): 433–59. Print.
- Keating, Peter J. *The Haunted Study: A Social History of the English Novel, 1875–1914*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1989. Print.
- Leavis, F. R. "Reality and Sincerity." *A Selection from Scrutiny*. Ed. Leavis, F. R. Vol. 1. London: Cambridge University Press, 1968. 248–57. Print.
- Leavis, Q. D. *Fiction and the Reading Public*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1932. Print.
- Lerner, Laurence, and John Holmstrom. *Thomas Hardy and His Readers: A Selection of Contemporary Reviews*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1968. Print.
- Lowe, Brigid. *Victorian Fiction and the Insights of Sympathy: An Alternative to the Hermeneutics of Suspicion*. London: Anthem 2007. Print.
- Mackenzie, Raymond N. "'Introduction'." *Madame Bovary*. Ed. Mackenzie, Raymond N. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2009. vii–xxxiv. Print.
- Moore, George. *Confessions of a Young Man*. Ed. Dick, Susan. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1972. Print.
- . *Literature at Nurse or Circulating Morals*. London: Vizetelly & Co., 1885. Print.

- Moulton, Richard G. *Four Years of Novel Reading: An Account of an Experiment in Popularizing the Study of Fiction*. London: Isbister and Co., 1895. Print.
- Murdoch, Iris. *Existentialists and Mystics: Writings on Philosophy and Literature*. Ed. Conradi, Peter. New York: Penguin Books, 1998. Print.
- Newton, William, A. Oklahoma, and M. College. "Hardy and the Naturalists: Their Use of Physiology." *Modern Philology* 49.1 (1951): 28–41. Print.
- Nowell-Smith, Simon. *The House of Cassell, 1848–1958*. London: Cassell, 1958. Print.
- Orel, Harold. "Hardy's Valedictory: Final Thoughts of a Master Craftsman." *Colby Quarterly* 26.1 (1990): 6–18. Print.
- Parrinder, Patrick. *James Joyce*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984. Print.
- Pemberton, Max. *Sixty Years Ago and After*. London: Hutchinson, 1936. Print.
- Pite, Ralph. *Thomas Hardy: The Guarded Life*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007. Print.
- Pope, Alexander. "An Essay on Criticism." Poetry Foundation 2009. Web. March 5 2015.
- Potolsky, Matthew. "Hardy, Shaftesbury, and Aesthetic Education." *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 46.4 (2006): 863–78. Print.
- Purdy, Richard Little. *Thomas Hardy: A Bibliographical Study*. London: Oxford University Press, 1954. Print.
- Rose, Jonathan. *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001. Print.
- Smart, Alastair. "Pictorial Imagery in the Novels of Thomas Hardy." *The Review of English Studies, New Series* 12.47 (1961): 262–80. Print.
- Smith, Adam. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. New York: Dover Publications, 2006. Print.
- Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson*. Ed. Phelps, William Lyon. Rockville, MD: Arc Manor, 2008. Print.
- . *Selected Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson*. Ed. Mehew, Ernest. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997. Print.
- Symons, Arthur. "A Literature in Which the Visible World Is No Longer a Reality, and the Unseen World No Longer a Dream." *European Literature from Romanticism to Postmodernism*. Ed. Travers, Martin. New York: Continuum, 2001. 144–46. Print.

- Tanner, Tony. "Color and Movement in Hardy's *Tess of the D'urbervilles*." *Critical Quarterly* 10.3 (1968): 219–39. Print.
- Tennyson, Alfred Lord. "Locksley Hall Sixty Year After." *Decadent Verse: Anthology of Late-Victorian Poetry, 1872–1900*. Ed. Blyth, Caroline. London: Anthem Press, 2011. 93–105. Print.
- Thompson, Charlotte. "Language and the Shape of Reality in *Tess of the D'urbervilles*." *ELH* 50.4 (1983): 729–62. Print.
- Tillotson, Kathleen. *Novels of the Eighteen-Forties*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954. Print.
- Tolstoy, Leo. *War and Peace*. Trans. Maude, Louise and Aylmer Maude. Ed. Gifford, Henry. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998. Print.
- Trollope, Anthony. *Four Lectures*. London: Constable, 1938. Print.
- Vigar, Penelope. *The Novels of Thomas Hardy: Illusion and Reality*. London: Athlone Press, 1974. Print.
- Vincent, David. *Literacy and Popular Culture, 1750–1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989. Print.
- Ward, Humphry Mrs. *A Writer's Recollections*. London: Mer Publishing, 2007. Print.
- White, Allon. "Obscure Writing and Private Life, 1880–1914." *Edwardian and Georgian Fiction*. Ed. Bloom, Harold. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2005. 89–122. Print.
- Wright, T. R. *Hardy and His Readers*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. Print.
- Zola, Emile. "The Experimental Novel." *Documents of Modern Literary Realism*. Ed. Becker, George Joseph. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963. 162–96. Print.